PERSPECTIVES ON YOUTH
HEALTHY EUROPE:
CONFIDENCE AND UNCERTAINTY
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
IN CONTEMPORARY EUROPE

Volume 3

Youth Partnership

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Council of Europe

Contents

Confidence and uncertainty for young people in contemporary Europe

Howard Williamson and Antonia Wulff

When we embarked upon *Perspectives on youth Volume 3* our working framework was "Healthy Europe". We were interested not only in the "narrow track" of the health and well-being of young people, but also in the broader canvas of what it is like to be young in a Europe faced with conflict and austerity and what it feels like to be young as transitions become ever more challenging. Reference points are shifting: How do young people feel when embarking on yet another precarious and underpaid internship, despite their impressive educational attainment? Are they just accepting of their lot, or do they wish they had taken another (possibly, ultimately, equally precarious) path? How do they relate to and deal with the fact that there was a time when qualifications meant much more in terms of labour market destinations? How do they feel about having to plan a life when the resources to support any planning are so unpredictable? Do they still plan for the future or just live for the present? In what ways can these questions be understood or conceptualised in terms of health?

Our assumption was that health remains a controversial area within youth policy, where the points of departure of policy makers on the one hand, and young people themselves on the other often are dramatically different; in fact, young people tend to interpret the dominating discourse on health as limiting, patronising – maybe even offensive. A healthy lifestyle tends to be conceptualised in normative and prescriptive ways, often asserting norms that may be impossible to live up to in a so-called knowledge-based economy.

The question of health, of course, brings the old tensions between protection and participation as well as agency and structure to the forefront. Some would argue that it is unfair to apply a framework of healthy versus unhealthy to young people as the dichotomy is far from neutral and implies that there is a choice, and that they can choose better. Others would say that a focus on health is synonymous with a focus on the individual, and consequently any health-related failures are interpreted as individual failures rather than consequences of a broader societal ill-being.

Alternatively, could the scope of health within youth policy be broadened to go beyond traditional indicators such as body mass index, and alcohol and exercise habits? What constitutes healthy participation, citizenship, or consumption patterns? What are healthy coping mechanisms for a generation that has seen the role of the state change and shrink? Can a health framework help us to explore issues from a new perspective?

As our thinking about framing this book unfolded we started to contemplate the ideas of love and hate, in an attempt to capture the often deeply embedded and emotional positions that may be held by young people. It was something of an unsuccessful attempt, as we sought to attract contributions of a contrarian, controversial, comparative and transnational character from those linked to the youth field in policy, research and practice. Perhaps we had moved so far away from more concrete conceptualisations of health that prospective contributors had no idea what we were seeking!

In a parallel vein, we really have no idea what is going through young people's minds (and bodies) as they traverse their multiple transitions in the context of their own aspirations and the expectations of others. What we know projects a rather mixed and muddled picture. Survey data relay one perspective, but qualitative material often paints another picture. The view from research can be very different from that from practice. And policy makers may persist with attempts to "put old wine in new bottles" or make connections with new realities, not least the fragilities surrounding social inclusion and increasing psychosocial disorders in a significant proportion of young people. These factors affect perhaps all young people except for those from the most privileged backgrounds. Mental health issues in young people derive less from social disadvantage and more from social dislocation, according to global analyses of scientific literature. Where do young people fit in contemporary Europe? What do young people expect of and from Europe? What does Europe expect of them?

Not all of these questions are addressed in any detail in the contents of this edition of *Perspectives on youth*, but many are touched upon. We have gone, intentionally, for an eclectic mix of contributions – to provide a diversity of argumentation and to promote reflection and debate. As has been the intention of *Perspectives on youth* throughout, we have sought to solicit and elicit the views of academics, policy makers and practitioners, presenting theoretical, empirical and hypothetical assertions and analysis.

There are some fairly incontrovertible arguments about factors that promote good health and a sense of well-being or contribute to poor health. A key determinant is invariably social class – patterns of inequality and poverty. As Richard Wilkinson (1996) has argued impeccably, the healthiest societies are those that are more equal. His later work with Kate Pickett *The spirit level: why more equal societies almost always do better* (2009) has achieved international recognition (see also Atkinson 2015). Their book was published just six months after the start of the current crisis in Europe, following the banking meltdown in 2008. It makes for salutary reading as we experience growing inequalities across Europe, within its member states, and between the generations. And we should perhaps think of the idea of spirit not just

in terms of levelling opportunities and conditions, but also in relation to zeitgeist – conceptualised as the defining spirit or mood of a particular period of history as shown by the ideas and beliefs of the time. How should we consider the mood of early 21st century Europe in the context of opportunity and experience for young people? It is certainly very different from the often quite relaxed optimism and positive expectation that prevailed only a few years ago following the fall of the Berlin Wall, the collapse of communism, the expansion and extension of human rights, democracy and the rule of law throughout an enlarging European Union (EU) and increasing membership of the Council of Europe.

Of course, policy can make a difference. The elusive concept of youth policy – all of those policies which, in some way or another, shape and affect the position and prospects of young people – can help or hinder young people's capacity to move forward in their lives, to move geographically and physically to other spaces and places, and to move psychologically in terms of their aspirations and identity. Today, such movement is facilitated or obstructed in both virtual and actual realities. But the objectives and implementation of active youth policy or, by contrast, inaction when youth policy is absent can either nurture or paralyse a sense of well-being among the young. European frameworks can set the tone, though usually it is the more specific actions of national, regional and local governments that really make a difference.

We start with an interview with Harald Hartung, the relatively new head of the Youth Policy and Programme Unit within the European Commission, to get his take on young people and health in contemporary Europe. This is followed by a strongly critical perspective from Fred Powell and Margaret Scanlon concerning the precarious state of many young people in modern Europe and the need for a more radical policy agenda. There is little doubt that policy is important, not just in the field of health per se but across many other policy domains that affect young people. Constructive, opportunity-focused education, employment, housing and training policies contribute to improved health for young people now and in the future. But the rhetoric of transversal or cross-sectoral youth policy is confusing, poorly understood and weakly implemented, as Magda Nico's analysis of the documentation from key institutions clearly demonstrates.

Prospects for the health of young people, however conceived and defined, rest significantly outside of their own control. There is broad consensus that there is a need for urgent, immediate action on environmental and ecological questions, yet the questions themselves continue to be debated and debatable, according to Beata Sochacka. Yet while the short view is critical within the environmental debate, it is the long view that is required when it comes to demography. Dragana Avmarov explores and presents what she calls the "demographic dynamic" in relation to young people in Europe, considering the risks they face and how these risks may be more equitably distributed.

The book then turns to some more specific analysis of young people's health, albeit in relation to international youth work and later in the context of what might be called, in turn, "youth for youth" and "youth from youth". Haridhan Goswami and Gary Pollock look at health and well-being in the changing context of and for young people in Europe. They confirm many things that those in the youth field would consider quite

predictable in relation to the psychological well-being of young people. But there are some surprises. A range of policy implications are advanced.

But one could place a reasonable bet that one particular group of young people are not featured in the European Quality of Life Survey. They are the young people who are desperately trying to secure what, in their terms, they perceive to be a "better life" in Europe. The increasing population of migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers seeking entry to Europe as they escape from the poverty, uncertainty, conflict and oppression of the Middle East and Africa is composed of significant numbers of children and young people. Maria Pisani considers the issues that surround their plight, taking an unapologetically political perspective anchored by a commitment to social justice. She also engages in a discussion of the theoretical deficiencies in (western European-dominated) youth studies, which, from her perspective, can appear out of touch with global realities.

Our attention then turns away from the specific social and physical condition of young people in Europe (and their theoretical implications) to broader issues around international youth work and how these may contribute to their health and well-being. Ansgar Drücker forges links between the statutory annual report prepared by the German federal government on the health of children and young people in Germany, and the potential of voluntary and international youth work to engage in practices of "implicit health promotion", particularly as concerns the self-effectiveness (or "self-efficacy") of young people that can be dreadfully under-mined by experiences of discrimination and hate speech. Drücker notes that the subject of sexual orientation (and trans- and intersexuality) is a "blind spot" in the 13th report on children and young people. This issue is taken up by Michael Barron, who points out that despite the fact that human rights violations of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people have been in the public eye for close to two decades, bringing about a plethora of international and European resolutions, conventions and initiatives to protect and promote their rights, especially with regard to establishing safe educational environments, there is now a resurgence of homophobic laws and sentiment, particularly in eastern Europe and Africa. United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon may argue that human rights must "carry the day" over cultural attitudes but, as we have also learned from Pisani's discussion of migration, principled statements from on high may often resonate weakly and ineffectually in the everyday lives of young people. Homophobic bullying and violence – as one form of identity-based bullying – severely jeopardises the positive and prospective health of those young people who experience it.

The evolution of the international youth work that might support Drücker's contention that it can support implicit health promotion and wider contributions to the well-being of young people's lives is then reflected on through an autobiographical note by Gordon Blakely, who has spent a lifetime in that sphere. There are some important caveats in his celebration of the life-enhancing outcomes of international youth work, but he argues forcefully in favour of a healthy infrastructure for a healthy Europe.

It is not, however, just structured policy and practice that may make a difference to the health and well-being of children and young people. There has been a growing interest in peer education and learning. This manifests itself in many different forms with different objectives – notably prevention, education, promotion – and is subjected

to a measured critical discussion by Yaëlle Amsellem-Mainguy. Young people are increasingly likely to take their lead on what it means to be healthy and, arguably more importantly for them, to look fit (in terms of bodily shape and image) from the Internet and through social media. This is relatively new territory – a new form of public space for self-presentation – and carries, inevitably, both positive potential for health as well as risks. This subject is explored by way of a more experiential and polemical approach by Manfred Zentner.

Inevitably, these contributions encapsulate a range of overlapping, as well as sometimes contradictory, positions. As we drew together and absorbed the various contributions outlined above, we concluded that the overarching issue was not "health and well-being", or "love and hate", but a dialogue about "confidence and uncertainty", from which – of course – health and well-being or its opposite, flow. It may be something of a truism but the perspective must always be holistic – young people who are living in better conditions are likely to have better opportunities and experiences, providing them with greater confidence and a greater sense of possibility, which in turn are likely to produce a better approach to healthy lifestyles and, indeed, a more healthy physiology. Conversely, those in more adverse predicaments, denied pathways for progress, may succumb (through some spurious choice or economic necessity) to less healthy lifestyles and the resultant physical and mental ill health. These are certainly not linear relationships. They work in multiple directions.

The authors touch on confidence and uncertainty in many different ways. There are questions about responsibility, the balance between individual and collective action, the global, the personal, and – the all-pervasive challenge – reaching and rallying the engagement of the most vulnerable and those in most difficulty, both those who are "dying inside" (through anxiety, depression, fatalism, social disloca- tion, a sense of isolation and a loss of hope in the future) and those who are really dying (following illnesses, suicide and on the shores of Europe). It is not all bad or sad news. In some respects, young people are looking after themselves better than ever before and we are looking after them. Their confidence in different sexualities is palpably stronger, even if it remains a blind spot in the German health report. The digital age may herald new possibilities for raising self-awareness, understanding and confidence in young people. But urgent attention needs to be given to inter- generational justice, the challenges for social cohesion on account of mobility and migration, commitments to human rights and, ultimately, equalities. We may never produce, nor even aspire to produce, equal outcomes, but we need to ensure equal opportunities. Health and healthy opportunities underpin the making of a confident generation of young people, rather than one imbued with uncertainty.

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Chapter 1

Interview
with Harald Hartung
on youth and health

Head of Youth Policy and Programme Unit, European Commission

Q1: **Taking into consideration the economic, social and political developments on our continent, how "healthy" (in terms of living conditions, well-being, opportunities, etc.) do you think is the present and near future for young people in contemporary Europe?**

The crisis has hit many aspects of the lives of this generation of young people – education, work, social and civic participation or health. Yet, the roughly 90 million young people in the EU are a diverse group. There are young people with relatively easy access to opportunities, but the gap between them and less advantaged groups is widening. Often disadvantages are not evenly spread: some groups of young people appear to end up with most of the disadvantages. Too often, education reproduces existing socio-economic patterns and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds are at greater risk of becoming "NEET" (not in education, employment or training). Unemployment, impoverishment or inadequate housing can also lead to mental health problems such as depression, substance abuse or suicide.

The situation of young people on the wrong side of the divide is alarming. Not investing in the human and social potential of all young people will hamper future economic growth. Jobs are important, but not the sole answer to guaranteeing the inclusion of young people and ensuring their sense of belonging to the communities in which they live. Young people who feel left out, excluded or marginalised for any reason can develop antisocial lifestyles, and negative sentiments can turn to hostility. We have witnessed a growing attraction to radical or anti-democratic ideas. The terrorist attacks in Paris and Copenhagen have shown what can happen if these ideas are taken to extremes.

Q2: What constitutes a "healthy" response from a youth policy perspective that could contribute to young people's empowerment, social inclusion, participation and well-being?

Young people are Europe's main asset for the future, and they deserve our support. Employment, social inclusion, participation, health and well-being behave as communicating vessels, so we need to address the situation of young people in a rounded way. Based on our understanding of the interaction between these factors, we need to trigger a process of turning vicious circles into virtuous ones. This calls for coherent policy responses across sectors, and for pooling our available resources.

"Healthy" responses should focus on making young people skilled and resilient, so that they can cope with adverse experiences and challenges. We should also make sure that their concerns are heard by decision makers and that young people are given the chance to develop their own contributions to civil society.

This is a task for all those who work with, support and take decisions about young people, schools, youth workers, health professionals, cultural institutions, sports clubs and so on. These organisations should work together so that their efforts are coherent and serve the full range of interests of young people. The underlying thread, which is to consider the interests of young people as a whole, cuts through the EU Youth Strategy that governs the co-operation between the European Commission and member states in the youth field.

Cross-sectoral co-operation should be pursued from local level all the way up to international forums. At local level this can, for instance, be through single access points for young people to get advice from a multidisciplinary team, as in France and Belgium, in Houses for Teens in Denmark and in Headspace centres in Ireland. At EU level, we can bring together expertise and knowledge to support national, regional and local approaches.

Q3: What are, in concrete terms, the priorities and actions of your institution in this regard?

Given that youth policy is first and foremost a national competence, the European Commission co-ordinates and complements efforts in member states through gathering comparative evidence and examples of good practice. In the spirit of mainstreaming youth issues, EU youth policy also facilitates young people's concerns being taken up in EU policy fields such as employment or health.

For example, the [2013] Council recommendation on establishing a Youth Guarantee calls upon member states to offer young people a job, apprenticeship, traineeship or continued education within four months of leaving school or becoming unemployed.

The EU's health policy gives specific attention to young people as regards nutrition and physical activity, alcohol, smoking, sexual health or drug use. For example, within the EU's Strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related Health Issues, an action plan addresses childhood obesity. Within the EU's strategy to reduce alcohol-related harm, an action plan on youth drinking and heavy episodic drinking is being developed.

Q4: How do you think that youth work could contribute to providing more "healthy" prospects for young people? How do you see the role of youth work and its limits?

An EU study on the value of youth work confirmed its role in supporting young people's personal and social development. It confirmed that youth work assists in youth empowerment, emancipation, tolerance and responsibility, leading in turn to participation in democratic societies, prevention of high risk behaviour and social inclusion and cohesion.

Given the effects of the crisis, in recent years the demand for youth work has increased, as have pressures on youth work. The challenges for young people have of course changed, but at the same time, the nature of challenges is changing. For example,

the omnipresence of the Internet and social media in young people's lives raises the need for media and digital literacy and has effects on the delivery of youth work. Also, given the growing complexity and interrelations between young people's challenges, youth workers increasingly need to be open to partnerships and co-operation with other support providers. For example, the increasing demand for transversal skills, or 21st-century skills, makes the recognition of youth work outcomes more relevant. Such co-operation should ideally be shaped in a way that allows youth work to preserve its identity and unique contribution to young people and this might sometimes be challenging. Last but not least, since the crisis, budgets have been cut in many cases and sustainable funding remains a concern.

Adapting to new realities in this context is challenging, but not impossible. Reflections and recommendations about how to handle such challenges and about the future for youth work were summarised in the declaration made at the 2nd Youth Work Convention organised under the Belgian chairmanship of the Council of Europe in April 2015.

In May 2015, the Council of Youth Ministers adopted conclusions on reinforcing youth work, highlighting its contribution to personal development, social inclusion, cultural diversity and active citizenship, announcing the development of a reference and guidance tool on quality youth work to support national youth work services and facilities, ensuring transparency and quality for young people.

Chapter 2

The youth precariat, "generationism" and the austerity city

Fred Powell and Margaret Scanlon

> It seemed to me that what they wanted was to be inside the games, within the notional space of the machine. The real world had disappeared for them – it had completely lost its importance. They were in that notional space, and the machine in front of them was the brave new world.
>
> William Gibson, *Neuromancer*

William Gibson invented an apparently nonsensical word "cyberspace" in his futuristic 1984 novel *Neuromancer*, to describe a hallucinogenic world of computers and a post-punk generation of young people, living in a world of urban decay. His vision was prompted by an experience of watching kids playing video games in Vancouver. The hallucination turned into reality; thirty years later science fiction has been transformed into a mass digital culture, where many young people teeter on the edge of virtual reality. It is psychological escape from the reality of the austerity city, where legions of anonymous young people find themselves consigned to living marginalised lives. They are called the "precariat" (Standing 2011). The word precariat conveys the precarious status of vulnerable young people in the austerity city, as a denizen class with few rights. David Harvey (2013) comments in reference to the austerity city and one of the places to start would be to focus on the rapidly degrading qualities of urban life, through foreclosures, the persistence of predatory practices in urban housing markets, reductions in services, and above all, lack of viable employment.

Young people in the austerity city face profoundly existential challenges that affect their health. At a recent EU/Council of Europe Youth Partnership conference, Beyond Barriers, held in Malta in November 2014, on the role of youth work in supporting young people in vulnerable situations, one youth participant observed that there is "no difference between dying inside and really dying". These anguished words capture the mindset of vulnerable young people in the postmodern world. Many of these young people arguably face similar challenges to displaced young people after the Second World War (Lowe 2012). While the European urban landscape has been transformed from cities reduced to rubble into prosperous centres of culture and relaxation, the psychogeography of the austerity city presents vulnerable young people with a profound sense of displacement and social exclusion.

One of the most defining features of this denizen youth class in the austerity city is their use of cyberspace to convey their anger to the world. The troll has emerged in this cultural landscape as the modern trickster, playing pranks on the adult world. Some of these trolling activities have attracted public condemnation, such as the alleged misogyny of "Gamergate" (trolls are predominantly male) (Gleick 2014). Trolls simply say "I do it for the lulz", broadly meaning "I do it for the laughs". Derived from the Internet acronym LOL (laugh out loud), it expresses the mocking humour of the precariat on the margins of urban civilisation (Gleick 2014). In this article we explore: (i) the position of youth in postmodern society in terms of lifestyle change and transition; (ii) the emergence of the youth precariat and "generationism" as a new force in politics and society; and (iii) the implications for youth policy and youth work. We adopt the concept of the austerity city as a metaphor for the growing social inequality young people are experiencing.

YOUTH IN POSTMODERNITY: A HEALTHY OR UNHEALTHY LIFESTYLE?

There are deep questions that inform and shape the definition and foundational meaning of youth, youth policy and childhood in a postmodern world where society is fragmenting and identities are destabilised. Philippe Aries (1962) advanced his thesis of the discovery of childhood as the product of modernity. Norbert Elias (1994) viewed the emergence of childhood as part of a civilisation process, which he called "civility". Talcot Parsons (1963) conceptualised youth as a product of capitalism that had created a rupture in society, resulting in an extended transition to adulthood. In modern society, a cultural space was created outside the traditional family that aimed at the socialisation of youth for more complex occupational roles and social responsibilities. Formal education became the chief mechanism by which, increasingly, the socialising functions of the family were displaced on to the state in urban industrial society. Youth work found a space in this new order to offer informal education and personal development through recreational and leisure pursuits in the community. This modernist process led to the deconstruction of pre-modern youth, as an invisible organic part of traditional extended family life within a rural agriculturally-based economy without age stages, into the structured urban industrial world of education and employment.

Postmodernity has thrown up new socio-historical cultural configurations of fragmentation, individualisation and consumerism in the risk society (Beck 1992; Giddens 1991). This is the social and cultural space that youth in Europe finds itself in as a social group, adrift in a world without clear co-ordinates or an easily identifiable purpose (Crook et al. 1992; Putnam 2000). A shrinking state and weakening civil society are being challenged to address this social vacuum in the lives of postmodern youth (Powell et al. 2012). Whither youth in postmodern society?

The Irish *National Youth Work Development Plan 2003-2007* (NYWDP) addresses the impact of postmodern change on youth in terms of a series of socio-cultural factors: demography; diversity; blurring of boundaries; complex transitions; choices and pressures; individualism and consumerism (Department of Education and Science

2003: 2-4). In the wake of the 2008 financial crash, unemployment and poverty need to be added to this list. The NYWDP notes that young people are declining as a proportion of the population but "the make-up of the youth population is much more culturally diverse than heretofore, increasing the need for intercultural/multicultural aptitudes and awareness among young people and those who work with them" (Department of Education and Science 2003: 2-3). It convincingly seeks to grapple with the foundational meaning of youth in the postmodern world, arguing that the boundaries between childhood and adulthood have become more fluid, leading to a blurring of previous distinctions. This has impacted on the transition from childhood to adulthood: "The transition that has for so long been associated with youth is being significantly extended. In addition, the transition – in fact the transitions – are becoming more complex" (Department of Education and Science 2003: 3). The NYWDP discusses the critical issues of consumerism and individualism in terms of the lifestyle choices and pressures that drive young people earlier in their lives to embrace sexuality and relationships in a world where the solidity of the traditional family and community is under strain (Department of Education and Science 2003: 3-4). The tension between group consciousness and atomistic individualism, and the interweaving of ethics and aesthetics define modern youth culture (Gilroy 2010).

Are these profound changes in postmodern society undermining the foundations of youth as a social and cultural construct? Is there a loss of meaning in a decentred world? Can we any longer address "youth" as a coherent whole? Does this present youth policy with a crisis of obsolescence? Or does it present us with an opportunity to reimagine its mission? The NYWDP (Department of Education and Science 2003: 4) concludes that young people are more alienated, sceptical and questioning of established meanings contained in traditional religious verities and the authenticity of social institutions. This might be interpreted as a Baudrillardian version of postmodernity in which youth culture can simply be dismissed as stylised and ritualised forms of activity in a world that has become lost in a black hole of meaninglessness (Barker 2008: 428). The NYWDP (2003: 4) rejects this "death of meaning" thesis, optimistically concluding that "there is nothing to suggest that young people are any less interested than before in the spiritual dimension of their lives, in developing a belief system which makes sense of their experience and informs their relationships with others and with society". But it issues a warning that youth policy must adapt to "the changing nature of youth" and see it as an "opportunity" and a "challenge" (Department of Education and Science 2003: 11-12).

YOUTH AND THE AUSTERITY CITY: THE MAKING OF "THE PRECARIAT"

In the postmodern world, young people are experiencing a serious crisis epitomised by life in the austerity city. In his influential book, *The Precariat*, Standing (2011) made four key observations on youth in the austerity city.

▶ The city is the object of utopian desire (e.g. Paris, Berlin, London, Amsterdam and Shanghai) – a shifting spatio-temporal order that is associated with both the realisation of dreams and the act of rebellion.

- The reality is that the austerity city of the 21st Century has produced a new class, called "the precariat", which are denizens (especially young migrants) rather than citizens – a dangerous cultural contradiction in the age of globalisation.
- Citizenship for the precariat is truncated by "the precariousness of residency, of labour and work and of social protection" (Standing 2011: 5).
- For the precariat, labour is instrumental (for living), opportunistic (taking what comes) and precarious (insecure) (Standing 2011: 22-23).

David Harvey (2013: xi), in his study *Rebel cities*, observes that alienated urban youth are being transformed into "idle youth lost in the sheer boredom of increasing unemployment and neglect in the soulless suburbs that eventually become sites of boiling unrest". The youth riots in both the French banlieues in 2005 and the English cities during 2011 arguably represent the negative and destructive consequences of austerity policies. These riots need to be set within the wider context of youth protest, including the Arab Spring, the Occupy Movement, Los Indignados and Pussy Riot (Powell 2013).

Unsurprisingly, anti-politics is part of young people's world view. This has led to a radicalisation of discourse about which Howard Williamson (2013: 1) has advanced "a scenario in which historically socially disadvantaged youth may connect with newly intellectually disaffected young people to produce either more toxic or more creative alliances amongst the young". Adults frequently dismiss the radicalism of youth as simply the product of adolescent idealism. But is it?

Historian Roy Foster (2014) has recently taken up the issue of youth revolt in his book *Vivid faces*, which studies the Irish revolutionary generation of the early 20th century. Foster (2014: 6) asserts "the concept of *generation* is both fertile and troublesome, especially when linked to a change in political consciousness". He further observes "we may now be coming to see the notion of *generationism* challenging or even replacing class as an organising principle of analysis: conceiving of age groups as carriers of intellectual and organisational alternatives to the status quo, acting under the constellation of factors prevalent at the time of their birth" (our italics). In Europe we talk of the "generation of 1914", the "post-war generation", "the 1960s generation", etc., suggesting particular characteristics are associated with particular historic generations. However, Foster (2014: 7) warns that "the danger of generalisation across a generation must be guarded against; even a self-conceived generation can contain within it so-called generation units which are in apparent disagreement in some ways but linked by affinities of response to their historical and social circumstances". This comment reminds us that the recognition of generations in the social memory largely happens in retrospect. As Foster (2014: 7) puts it: "a generation is made not only of conscious processes of identification and rejection in the lives of the protagonists, but also retrospectively, in their memories, and in their control of the larger territory of official and social memory". He concludes that "the changes that convulse society do not appear from nowhere; they happen first in people's minds and through the construction of a shared culture, which can be a culture of a minority, rather than a majority" (Foster 2014: 8).

Matthew Collin (2007), in his book *The time of the rebels*, examined the role of 21st century "generationism". Youth resistance movements in former communist states

(such as Serbia, Georgia and Ukraine) played a key role in the delivery of democratic change. Collin identifies the power of popular culture (the voice of youth) as a catalytic force in bringing about change. Popular cultures create shared dialogue between young people that enables them to form bonds and become agents of social and political change. Often the impact of this change is on imaginative politics (dreaming of a better future) rather than on the world of practical politics.

In the West, the network known as Anonymous is associated with a variety of protest movements, including Occupy Wall Street, Los Indignados and the advent of hacktivism on the Internet. It represents a progression from trolling to political activism (Gleick 2014: 36). Anonymous was created on the Internet forum 4chan in 2003, as an essentially prankish and juvenile activity. The title of Anonymous reflects its organisational character as a leaderless phenomenon that defies categorisation as a movement, organisation, party, etc. It is simply an invitation to participate in protest under the mask of anonymity and reimagine politics through an idealisation of the future. In this way Anonymous rejects, mocks and satirises the world of adult politics. But it also identifies the power of generationism to challenge the existing order in the interests of promoting change. Popular culture is in itself a platform for the youth population to express its view through music, theatre and comedy that focuses on the imaginative politics of social justice and political change.

It is not often clear whether generationism represents the politics of enchantment or disenchantment or the social reality or both. The conventional view of the adult world is that the individual relates to external reality as an engaged citizen. Childhood and youth are represented as a progression to adulthood during which the young person is socially constructed as a "learner". The problem with this picture of youth is that, in an era of extended transitions and blurred boundaries, it becomes highly problematic: when do youth and adulthood begin? In terms of social reality, the world splits youth and adulthood and allows cultural representation to carry out the function of bridging the barriers. The anonymity, embraced by some young people in the Anonymous phenomenon and symbolised by the wearing of masks, suggests that many young people are alienated from the public realm. Furthermore, vulnerability results in socially deprived young people falling through the safety net traditionally provided by the welfare state. That constitutes a serious challenge for youth work and youth policy.

A new youth policy initiative is needed in our view to address the austerity city. Key challenges and issues include the following.

▶ Homelessness and residual marginalisation in the banlieues (suburbs) – what Michel Foucault called the "interior of the exterior" – needs to be addressed by reimagining the city as a common space with common rights of access and easement.

▶ Social housing needs to be provided for young people in city centres at subsidised rents in partnership with civil society/youth organisations.

▶ Public spaces need to be developed, as opposed to privatised, for young people to meet, play sport, make and listen to music, engage in community art and enjoy free Wi-Fi access in the process of becoming – young people – and the narrative of sustainable futures need to be accommodated as a central goal of youth policy.

- ▶ Youth policy needs to be designed that puts young people's health and well-being at its centre.
- ▶ Youth unemployment (which is estimated to be 50% in some parts of the EU) is destroying the current generation of young people and turning them in a futureless class of denizens.
- ▶ There needs to be a European Learning Bank offering every young person three years' free tuition within new experimental universities that are informed by the values of open access, flexible learning and participative curricula and provided in partnership with youth organisations in every part of the austerity city.
- ▶ The EU Erasmus programme, which has successfully enabled student exchanges across the European Union, should be opened to all young people, with the explicit purpose of promoting shared European values, culture and citizenship.
- ▶ A new youth policy needs to combine the imaginative politics of youth – their passion for social justice – with practical political initiatives that bring about policy change.

WHAT IS YOUTH WORK: EMPOWERMENT OR CONTROL?

The term youth work encompasses a wide range of practices and is provided by a diverse group of organisations, from independent local clubs to large international organisations like the YMCA. New forms have emerged over the last decade, often in response to government policy and priorities, further stretching the boundaries of what can be described as youth work. Moreover youth workers themselves have sometimes found it difficult to articulate what it is that makes their practice distinctive. Commenting on the European context, Coussée (2009: 6) suggests that youth work suffers from "a perpetual identity crisis" in which it seems hard for youth workers "to put their work into words". Kiely (2009) reaches broadly similar conclusions in her analysis of Irish youth work, pointing to a lack of clarity in many of the terms used to communicate the values and objectives of the sector. Members of the public, on the other hand, tend to think of youth work in rather narrow terms as a form of recreation provided in a particular place (a club, "den" or centre), oblivious to the more ambitious goals which the sector sets for itself, including relationship-building, personal development and social education (Devlin and Gunning 2009).

Notwithstanding these difficulties in trying to define youth work, it is possible to extrapolate from academic and policy documents a number of key features. Youth work is generally described in terms of informal education which is based on the voluntary participation of young people. While some "learning situations" are planned (such as discussion groups or structured programmes) the majority arise in the everyday encounters between members, and between members and youth workers (Hurley and Treacy 1993: 1). The educative purpose of youth work is often seen to be personal and social development, as the Irish Youth Work Act (2001) makes clear:

> … "youth work" means a planned programme of education designed for the purpose of aiding and enhancing the personal and social development of young persons through

their voluntary participation, and which is (a) complementary to their formal, academic or vocational education and training; and (b) provided primarily by voluntary youth work organisations.

A concern with personal development and social education/informal learning is evident in government reports from the 1970s onwards, signalling a move away from the "character-building" philosophy of earlier forms of youth work (Hurley and Treacy 1993; Treacy 2009). Of course, as Kiely (2009) has rightly pointed out, "personal development" and "social education" are open to interpretation.

Voluntary participation is generally agreed to be another defining feature of youth work (Davies 2005). Young people have traditionally been able to freely join youth organisations and leave when they choose. This has important implications for the content of youth work and the interaction between adults and young people. Youth workers must develop programmes and ways of working which are attractive to participants and which they perceive to be of value in the here and now, and not just at some indeterminate date in the future (Davies 2005: 13). The voluntary principle also ensures that young people possess and retain a degree of power which they may not experience in other areas of their lives. Negotiation, "openness to a real give and take" and greater parity of esteem are therefore important elements of the youth worker/young person relationship, as Davies (2005: 13) points out: "any youth worker who patronises, rides roughshod over or simply ignores them is liable to find her or himself without a clientele to work with".

A related point is that membership of a youth club can be an empowering experience, as young people have the opportunity to make decisions, take on new responsibilities and have their views represented, experiences which are often denied them in other areas of their lives, particularly within formal education. Indeed Jeffs and Smith (2008) have argued that most people only encounter "genuine democracy" in autonomous organisations, clubs, and associations, where profit is not the prime objective, strong leadership is mistrusted and dialogue is nurtured. A range of other objectives and ideals of youth work are asserted in literature, including: promoting social inclusion (Devlin and Gunning 2009; Morgan and Kitching 2009); "starting where young people are starting" (Davies 2005: 15); fostering association, relationships and community (Jeffs and Smith 2008); being "friendly, accessible and responsive while acting with integrity" (ibid.: 278); and being available to all young people and not just to those who have been allotted "adult-imposed labels" (Davies 2005: 15).

While there is a certain consistency across the different definitions of youth work there are also, as O'hAodain (2010) points out, a number of contradictions. Youth work can be empowering, but it can also be an instrument of social control, regulation and conformity. Gilchrist et al. (2003) reach similar conclusions with regards to youth and community work, arguing that it is at its best when motivated by ideals of justice, democracy and equality, and at its worst when motivated by "fear and insecurity" to become an "unquestioning servant" of the forces of "repression and control". From the outset, youth and community work have been "constrained to negotiate the tension between domestication and liberation" (ibid.: 7). Tensions within the youth work sector are perhaps most evident in relation to targeted projects, with some commentators arguing that these initiatives undermine the ethos and objectives which the youth work sector has traditionally claimed for itself (Kiely 2009).

In order to meet the challenges of supporting young people in the austerity city youth work needs resources and investment. Youth work values that individualise young people and promote personal development, social education and empowerment should be at the centre of any inclusive youth strategy. Informal learning that empowers (Batsleer 2008) rather than socialisation that problematises young people should be the approach. Youth initiatives that problematise young people are arguably counterproductive because they draw young people into a culture of control that defines them in ways that are disempowering. David Garland (2001), in his important book *The Culture of Control*, argues that the social organisation of the postmodern order has involved a series of political and cultural adaptations that shape how citizens think and act in relation to crime and the threat of crime. These changes have shaped policy and practice in ways that have led to the targeting of socially deprived young people as a potentially criminogenic population. A youth work strategy that emphasises empowerment and inclusivity, while focusing on young people's vulnerability, needs to eschew problematisation. Targeting problematises and is the antithesis of traditional humanistic youth work values (Powell et al. 2012: 150-171); youth work ought to reach out to socially deprived young people in the austerity city by engaging in conscientisation (Friere 1972). This involves major challenges in terms of communication in order to create an informal learning culture. We live in the era of digitisation where communication, (particularly) among young people, has moved to the Internet. Youth work is challenged to shift its methodologies to meet these challenges in postmodern society. But the medium must be more than the message. Young people need to be empowered through a conscientisation that enables them to become aware of economic social and political causes of their vulnerability.

In our view, the role and task of youth work within the austerity city needs to be transformed, if it is to effectively respond to the concerns of an increasingly disaffected youth generation. Key issues and challenges include the following proposals.

- ▶ Youth work needs to embrace the Internet as a new creative space in which new empowering things happen (for example, e-activism) and potentially new possibilities for participation and deliberation exist (such as e-democracy) for young people.

- ▶ The skyscrapers have become the symbolic giants of this urban landscape – dominated by financial centres, hotels and playgrounds for rich adults from which young people are excluded – inclusion is the key to improved health and well-being for vulnerable young people.

- ▶ Youth work is challenged to contribute to the reconstitution of the psychogeography of the austerity city into an inclusive space. That means youth work needs to persuade policy makers and legislators to reconstitute the city as a common space.

- ▶ Young people need to be brought in from the borderlands of inclusion/exclusion to become real citizens of the postmodern city. Youth work is challenged to be the bridge to inclusion that is real and tangible rather than imagined in media representations of youth.

- ▶ Youth work needs to address transitional stages between youth and adulthood that focus on extending care and support to all young people up to 25 years, so that their health and well-being is assured.

- ▶ Youth work is challenged to recognise that we are living within new generational territory that is being reinvented as we speak – respect, recognition, citizenship, security and safety are vital to young people's health and well-being and require dynamic engagement that empowers.

- ▶ Values that reflect the reality of multiculturalism in a global world need to be explicit in the youth work informal education curriculum, if tolerance and social cohesion are to be maintained.

- ▶ Youth work needs to address philosophical questions exploring with young people the purpose of being in the world and their democratic right to share in its possibilities and rewards as a measure to strengthen self and identity. What are the human rights of young people? How do young people promote their right to have rights?

THE "RIGHT TO HAVE RIGHTS"

Historically, young people have lacked rights and visibility. Hannah Arendt famously called this "the right to have rights". Agency over their lives is denied to young people: they have traditionally been defined as the possessions of their parents and, latterly, through the principle of *parens patriae*, they have become "welfare subjects" (Pinkney 2000) of the state, the ultimate custodian of a young person's right to care and protection. The dependency of children and young people's status on this legal and cultural framework is challenged by child abuse reports, which point to failures of adults to discharge their responsibilities towards children and young people, culturally framed as "innocent and vulnerable" (Powell and Scanlon 2015). Increasingly, questions are being asked about the youth citizen (Keane 2008). Should young people, along with other historically disempowered groups (e.g. women, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, etc.) not be empowered? Why do young people lack a public voice? Why can't they vote in elections? Does this denial of a basic human right facilitate child abuse? These are difficult questions that threaten the normativity upon which our cultural world is constructed. Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 proclaims that children and young people do have a right to public expression of their views in relation to their welfare – "the child's voice". Its implementation promises to transform children and young people's human rights (Young Bruehl 2012).

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) was signed by every member state of the United Nations with the exception of Somalia and the United States. But what does it mean for young people? Article 12 endorses a right to participation but its language is obscure. Does care stop at 18 years? What happens to vulnerable young people between 18 and 25 years, a defining period in an individual's personal development? Is this a social class issue? Does society have responsibilities towards the socially disadvantaged young person during these complex and challenging years of transition? Many will have moved beyond traditional youth work interventions but will still have major care and support needs. These care and support needs pose a major challenge for youth policy. Arguably, transformative change in youth work and social policy is needed to address the evolving needs of youth.

CONCLUSION

This article has sought to contextualise the lives of young people within the austerity city. The argument is that young people increasingly constitute a "precariat" of denizens, living on the margins of society. Some revolt, seeking to reimagine politics. This rebellion is often dismissed by adults as adolescent fantasy. In our view "generationism" constitutes a reality check on adult power. It also highlights the limitations of youth policy and youth work and the need for transformative change in society's engagement with youth. There are a number of key issues and challenges that postmodern youth policy needs to address, as the basis of an inclusive society. It concerns the basic needs of young people, which can be defined as follows:

1. citizenship, rights and recognition;

2. empowerment, information and support;

3. dignity, safety and security.

Without these basic needs young people are turned into a precarious class of denizens living on the margins of the austerity city. Youth work has a pivotal role to play in this transformative process. But it is challenged to engage with young people in a dialogue that connects with their social reality.

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Chapter 3

From holistic needs to cross-sectoral measures – An analysis of cross-sectoral youth policy based on relevant documentation

Magda Nico

1. INTRODUCTION

F eeling safe, sound and happy does not magically happen and is not irrever-
sible. It takes certain conditions of existence and minimum levels of well-being,
self-esteem and a sense of fulfilment. These conditions, necessary but not
necessarily sufficient to achieve happiness or self-realisation, are spread throughout
numerous spheres of life and, most of them at least, find relative correspondence
with dimensions of youth policy or with administrative divisions such as education,
employment, health, housing and culture, among others.

The holistic nature of life is thus supported by research but also by the common
definition of health and a multilayered understanding of well-being. The 1948 defi-
nition of health from the World Health Organization is still current, arguing that a
healthy person enjoys a "state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being
and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity". It is closely related to definitions
of well-being that combine both objective (aspects such as geographical/social
location, household income, poverty rate, employment situation, living conditions,
health status, risk behaviours and exposure) and subjective components (includ-
ing satisfaction with income, neighbourhood, quality of school life, perception of
individual relationships to parents, peers and other significant persons). Objective
issues are more easily included in the dimensions of youth policy or in administrative
divisions, whereas subjective issues are necessarily more private and more difficult to
include in policy, since they are "outside the scope of the EU policymaking" (Sacareno,
Olagnero and Torrioni 2005:5).

Young people themselves confirm this layered and holistic definition of well-being. They tend to provide holistic views of well-being that combine mental/philological, physical and, most of all, emotional and social well-being (Nico and Alves 2015: 15). But they also understand well-being as layered, thus distinguishing well-being from happiness. Well-being in this sense corresponds to the achievement of basic objective and subjective conditions of life, while happiness is at a higher level, and is usually merely momentary or gradual, or cumulative. Well-being would then be a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for happiness (Nico and Alves 2015: 16).

So "success" is not, contrary to what Oscar Wilde argued, "a science". If you have "the conditions", you do not necessarily "get the results". But you have to start somewhere. Youth policy's mission would then be to ensure that this starting point is approximately the same for all young people. It seeks to provide the minimum basic conditions for young people to achieve happiness independently of their social origin or their social background over their life course. In this sense, it is important to examine whether this holistic and layered approach to life is supported by the usage, spread, reach and implementation of the concept of cross-sectoral youth policy.

This paper intends to contribute to this topic by providing an overview of existing information on cross-sectoral policy-making co-operation based on materials produced in the context of work with the EU, the Council of Europe and specific countries with practical experience in cross-sectoral co-operation. To achieve this purpose, a certain number and type of policy-related documents collected were subject to thematic content analysis. This provided the means to analyse, on one hand, the formal or official importance and political recognition given by some of the major European institutions to the cross-sectoral features of youth policy, and, on the other, the implementation of cross-sectoral youth policy at national level. The structure of this paper follows these two goals and summarises a previous publication on cross-sectoral youth policy (Nico 2014).

2. METHODOLOGY: POTENTIAL AND LIMITATIONS

To achieve the above-mentioned purpose, a certain number and type of documents were selected from a wide range of possibilities. These were then subjected to thematic content analysis using the software Maxqda°, which allowed for the following.

1. The analysis of the formal importance and political recognition given by some of the most important European institutions to the cross-sectoral aspects of youth policy. The goal was to infer the importance cross-sectoral youth policy (CSYP) has assumed politically at international and European levels. It thus focused on the increase, decrease or stability of the references to and the content of CSYP in key documents produced by the United Nations (mainly policy documents) and some relevant European political actors in the youth field such as the European Youth Forum, the Council of Europe and the European Commission, among

others. The documents selected and used for the analysis (or "order") of the "discourse" were necessarily produced by institutions (the main actors in the youth field).

2. The analysis of the functioning and implementation of CSYP at national level. It was not possible, due to access, language and time constraints, to analyse youth policy documents directly. The main set of documents used in this (indirect) analysis are the youth policy reviews published by the Council of Europe, more specifically the contents related to what are typically referred to as "cross-cutting" issues and the issues presented in the recommendations.

However, there are some limits and limitations to this methodology and selection of documents that have to be acknowledged.

▶ Time: the window of observation had to be limited, for both practical and efficacy reasons. Anything that was produced more than three decades ago was not considered in this analysis. The conclusions are, therefore, circumscribed to "recent" trends and evolutions.

▶ Content: the access to the official documents is direct, but the analysis of the national functioning and implementation of CSYP could not, unfortunately, follow that path. It indirectly analyses youth policy through the youth policy reviews published on behalf of the Council of Europe. Only the *content* of these documents, and not their contexts of production, are analysed and taken into consideration. The analysis is not of the reviews themselves, but of the *use of CSYP concepts* in the reviews. The Council of Europe policy reviews are thus used as the available proxy for the national youth policies.

▶ Comparability: comparisons between different countries are made carefully because these documents are not completely comparable (different year, authorship, political context). Diachronical analysis is also not possible in a strict sense. Both the analysis of the evolution of youth policy reviews and the background and backstage "history" behind that evolution are not intended to be included in this paper.

3. THE OFFICIAL DISCOURSE ON CSYP

3.1. The United Nations

Since the 1990s, the United Nations has recognised the importance of "national youth policies and programmes of a intersectoral nature", tried to encourage the development of these policies on a national basis and also requested more research, monitoring and identification of good practices in CSYP at the national level. The United Nations has been promoting national youth "policies that are cross-sectoral and integrated" since the International Youth Year (1985) (UN 1999: 3) and it has been recognised as one of the "priority youth issues for the twenty-first century" at least since 1999. However, the attention given by the UN to the cross-sectoral

topic, here measured by the number of times CSYP is referred to (even if not using this specific terminology), has decreased significantly over the years. This decrease is compensated by the increase, in approximately the same period, of the attention given to the topic in European political discourse.

As to the content, it is possible to verify that the references to CSYP in the documents on youth produced by the United Nations are quite diverse. First, the understanding of CSYP used in the implementation reports is quite different from that used in the resolution documents.

In the resolution documents the idea of CSYP oscillates between two meanings. One is based on the communication and collaboration between the sector of youth organisations (and the voice of young people) and that of policy making (visible in the statement "cross-sectoral youth policies should take into consideration the empowerment and full and effective participation of young people, and their role as a resource and as independent decision makers in all sectors of society") (UN 2002: 2). The second one stresses the participation of actors such as "Member States, United Nations bodies, specialised agencies, regional commissions and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations concerned, in particular youth organisations, to make every possible effort to implement the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY), aiming at cross-sectoral youth policies, by integrating a youth perspective into all planning and decision-making processes relevant to youth" (UN 2004: 2). One refers to a vertical – bottom-up – structure of communication between governmental and non-governmental fields; while the other refers to a horizontal structure of communication between governmental or administrative divisions, bodies or agencies.

This dichotomy is at the very core of the conceptual confusion around what CSYP exactly is – and subsequently should be. The second meaning is the one used in this paper. But in this definition there is still a conceptual ambiguity, as different systems of implementation are often presented as mutually equivalent (such as collaboration, co-ordination, co-operation, etc.).

In the implementation reports, especially in the 1997 and 1999 ones, there is a great effort to advocate for and to promote the idea that youth policy design must have a cross-sectoral approach. However, this departs from a very ambitious idea that includes the two distinct views mentioned above (horizontal and vertical communication). Basically it promotes the idea that youth policy should be built on a "multi-level and cross-sectoral basis" (UN 1997: 6), and therefore includes "participation of youth-related departments and ministries, national non-governmental youth organisations and the private sector". The subsequent implementation reports approached this issue in a more contained manner, mainly stating the importance "of addressing the concerns of young people from a multidisciplinary perspective that allows for integrated and cross-sectoral policy interventions" (UN 2001: 5) and the insufficiency of sectoral approaches to the multidimensional challenges that young people face and to "to improve the well-being of young people in a holistic manner" (UN 2010: 13).

3.2. The European institutions' discourse

The following analysis took into account the key documents produced in the last two decades by the major actors in the field: the European Commission, the Council of Europe and the European Youth Forum (among others). In a comparative analysis of the meanings and importance attributed to CSYP, we can observe that although it is agreed in the youth field that the design of youth policy must be broad, multidimensional, "holistic", "integrated" and "cross-sectoral", the fact is that practical meanings associated to these terms vary considerably (Figure 1). Throughout the analysis it becomes clear that youth policy is much more than youth policy per se; it must collaborate on, communicate, encompass, integrate and/or lead a set of coherent plans, activities, programmes and policies. Often these can be the formal or legal responsibility of other policy sectors. But it also becomes clear that collaboration, communication and integration, etc. are treated as mutually equivalent, thus taking the very concept of CSYP for granted, and limiting the mention of cross-sectoral youth policy to the level of intention, ambition or target. It would be more useful to use it as a method, a plan or a process.

CSYP as "important" and "natural": the consensus

In all documents and statements about CSYP its importance is underlined. However, there are some documents where this idea exhausts the definition of CSYP. The 2012 EU Youth Report is one such case. Characteristics such as "vital" or "key" are used to describe the "creation of new cross-sectoral partnerships and development of joint projects and initiatives in the youth sector" (by the Cyprus presidency) and the development of "cross-sectoral solutions" (by the European Commission). Others documents, for instance, use the cross-sectoral concept as an inherent characteristic of youth policy, a "principle", or something that is part of the very nature of youth policy. This is the case, for instance, in the definition of youth policy shown in the White Paper 2001, where it is stated that youth policy is considered to be an "integrated cross-sectoral policy" aiming "to improve and develop the living conditions and participation of young people by encompassing the whole range of social, cultural and political issues that affect them as well as other groups in society" (European Commission 2001:73); and is also the case in the renewed framework for European co-operation in the youth field that, a decade later, stated that the "framework sees youth work as a support to all fields of action and cross-sectoral cooperation as an underlying principle" (Council of the European Union and European Commission 2012: 6).

CSYP content, role and levels: the confusion

The importance and nature of CSYP are somewhat straightforward, but this is not the case for the (i) content of CSYP, (ii) the role of youth policy together with other sectors (visible for instance, in the statement "a structured cross-sectoral policy of the youth field to co-operate with other sectors and co-ordinate services for youth – involving young people themselves in the process" (Siurala 2006), or (iii) the levels

of governance involved (visible in statements such as "Cross-sectoral cooperation should also be developed with local and regional actors" (European Youth Forum 2008) or in "Mobilising all policy areas that have an impact on young people, at different levels of governance, and developing cross-sectoral solutions is key" by the European Commission in the *EU Youth Report 2012*).

Figure 1: Meanings of CSYP in key documents
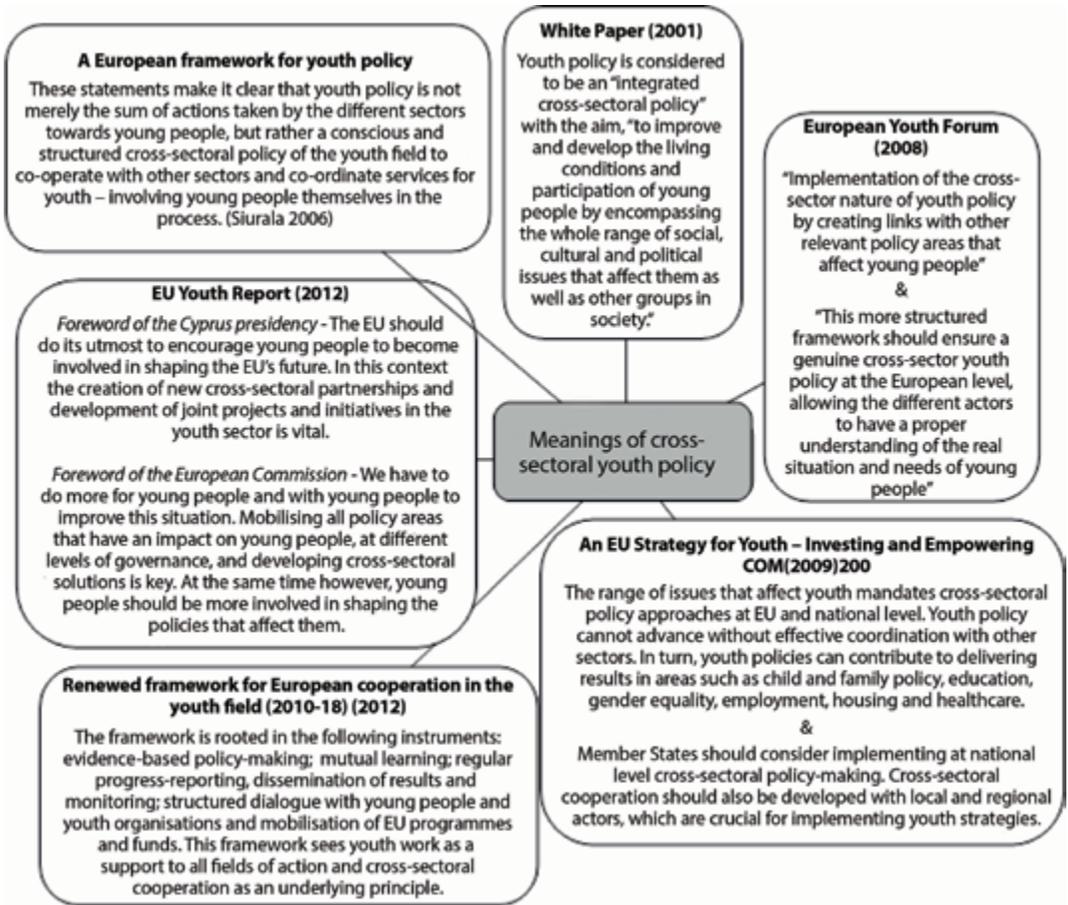
Organisation of the kaleidoscopic definition of "cross-sectoral" youth policy: a proposal

Taking the heterogeneity of the meanings of CSYP in key documents by key actors in the field of youth into account, the following table is a proposal to summarise, organise and separate the different paradigms and definitions involved. This is a tentative framework of classification of the specificities of different kinds of CSYP. Identifying the different paradigms that are behind this heterogeneity is the first step in determining what might work and in what circumstances.

Table 1: Organisation of the definitions of "cross-sectoral" youth policy

The field of CSYP	
CSYP as a principle	
Transversal	*Youth concerns all other sectors*
	Therefore "The Ministers responsible for youth policy should also ensure that youth-related concerns are taken into account in these other policies" (European Commission 2001).
	This would imply a kind of "supervision" role by the ministries responsible for youth, which is inconsistent with the position they usually occupy within the formal hierarchy.
	This principle would provide information on which sectors to select for specific policies, and on which occasions, and with what urgency this transversal approach would take place.
Integrated	*Youth is part of the interdependency system*
	Therefore both youth policy and other policies have to ensure their effective and coherent coexistence.
	This would imply mutual and regular consultation to avoid overlapping or disconnected goals.
	These consultations require every sector or office to be prepared to collect and organise, on a regular basis, relevant information.
	Policy based on this principle is extremely dependant on national organisational structures.
CSYP as a process with fixed roles	
Collaboration/ co-operation	*Youth as peer and equal partner*
	In this version of CSYP the relations are bilateral. The youth sector shares "information and competences, objectives and goals, and also results" with each of the other relevant sectors (Motamed-Afshari 2014).
	This would mean that the collaboration is fragmented into pairs, and the potential for joint solutions could be wasted. A possible solution to avoid this would be the creation of an "inter-ministerial working group as a part of the structure to develop a national youth policy" (Denstad 2009).
Co-ordination	*Youth leading the way of youth policy*
	The main difference between this vision of CSYP and the previous one has to do with the role that the youth ministry is able and willing to perform. With the right amount of means and resources, bilateral relations would be transformed into multilateral ones.
Cross-cutting issues, a process with flexible roles	
	The rule is that there is no rule
	The sectoral category of each of the youth issues is difficult to establish. For that reason, some issues might fall within different sectors at the same time, and some might be unfairly left to the youth sector to deal with alone. This also varies across different countries.
	This is one of the reasons why, although all youth issues are "cross-cutting" by nature, each of them has different attributes:
	▶ presence or relevance in each country;
	▶ urgency in each country or region;

	▶ dependency on power relations with other governmental sectors;
	▶ dependency on the work with and by NGOs;
	▶ association with prevention, intervention or sustainability needs;
	▶ partnership possibilities and constraints.
	This would imply a destandardisation of the youth policies at the national level, which might be seen from a European perspective, as a negative. However, this ensures that the following are taken into account:
	▶ the organisational structure of each country;
	▶ priorities of each country;
	▶ the complexity of each cross-cutting issue;
	▶ the respect for the main principle mentioned above, that youth policy is by nature (but must be in practice) cross-sectoral.

4. LOOKING FOR THE "CROSS-SECTORAL" IN "YOUTH POLICY"

To more fully grasp how the formal or official importance of CSYP has been taken into account in the design, review, evaluation, and monitoring of youth policy it is necessary to analyse other sources of data. There are two ways of looking for this in the youth policy reviews. One is the appearance of the topic of cross-sectoral research in documents, how frequently the topic is mentioned and how transversal to the review or report it is. For this purpose the tables of contents of the Council of Europe youth policy review reports were consulted and analysed, and a lexical search and analysis were also developed for the documents. The second way is by examining the content itself, that is, the way CSYP is operationalised, considered and classified and the recurrency of the gaps identified.

4.1. The use of the "cross-sectoral youth policy" concept

Looking at the youth policy reviews as a whole (and overlooking for now the fact that they refer to different countries, are authored by different teams and were developed in different years) we can see that the topics are usually referred to as dimensions that can be divided between "domains" and "issues". The ways in which these issues are combined are quite variable, in some cases with no sub-organisation (as is the case of the Lithuania Review Report (Breen et al. 2003)) where the topics are presented solely within the umbrella of "general issues", in others where the different kinds of "issues" are much more detailed (as in the Moldova Review Report (Vanhee et al. 2010) where the youth issues are categorised into "key, "other", "transversal" and "cross-cutting" ones).

This variability in the combinations of terms used reveals not only the natural and expected differences between the issues analysed in each policy review, but also a certain lack of consensus about the terms themselves (as a consequence of the national specificities and understanding). This lack of conceptual and analytical standardisation might be counterproductive for the exchange of good practices between countries (horizontal comparisons), for the analysis of the recurrence of certain issues across time (diachronic comparisons), and ultimately for the development

and implementation of CSYP itself. A certain level of conceptual comparability would be beneficial to the field.

There are three types of issues considered: (i) single topics, (ii) conjoint topics, (iii) cross-cutting or transversal topics. "Single", or autonomously presented, youth topics represent the minority among the three types mentioned. The few issues mentioned as single are issues on which policy emphasis and attention was unequivocally concentrated. This is justified by the importance of such topics, as in the case of education and also employment, or by the link to the heart and identity of "youth policy" and also "youth work" arenas, as in the case of "non-formal learning" (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Word cloud of the terms used to refer to single youth topics

The issues identified or grouped as "cross-cutting" or "transversal" are also in the minority. There appears to be no clear consensus about what a "cross-cutting" topic is. This reiterates the previous conclusion about the lack of terminological, conceptual and analytical consensus among the different countries. Nonetheless, the use of the term "cross-cutting issues" (topics, themes or fields) has been increasing in recent years.

The most common type of issue referred to in the youth policy review reports is the conjoint or combined one (that is, issues organised in the tables of contents in pairs or trios). This is the group where the variety of topics is wider and the consensus about some of them is clearer. They may not be "cross-cutting topics" by definition but they are by nature. These are issues – often the responsibility of separate administrative agencies, such as ministries – that interact meaningfully with another or others, in such a way that the measures, programmes and policies involving these issues, must be necessarily planned, designed and implemented by more than one sector, agency or organisation. They end up being cross-cutting issues because they represent conjoint, combined or overlapping processes of inclusion or transition to adulthood.

There are some issues that are at the centre of these interactions (education, employment, health, leisure, justice and crime, and also participation, non-formal learning and citizenship), and others that function more as "satellite issues". The centre and periphery identified in the terms used to refer to conjoint youth topics or subjects in the youth policy reviews (Council of Europe) reflect to a great extent the centre and periphery of sociology of youth and youth studies and the sociology of the transitions to adulthood (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Word cloud of the terms used to refer to conjoint youth topics

4.2. The problems identified

CSYP is an unavoidable subject in national youth policy reviews. In itself, it works as an indicator of the establishment and development of youth policy. But what are the internal and external problems identified? The national youth policy reviews of the Council of Europe provide some very direct answers.

1. CSYP that does not go beyond rhetorical exercises, mere intentions or the use of politically correct (youth) vocabulary, including:
   ▶ a lack of legal framework;
   ▶ intentions with no action;
   ▶ principles with no specific programmes;
   ▶ unclear relationships between departments, ministries or agencies.

2. A lack of efficiency in existing structures, including:

- ▶ no communication;
- ▶ no collaboration or co-ordination between departments, ministries or agencies;
- ▶ overlapping of responsibilities and disregard for what is being done outside or beyond the ministry of youth or equivalent.

3. Problems associated with the structure itself.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This document advocates clear, transparent, classifiable and flexible but sustainable CSYP. But in doing that, it develops a critical approach to and analysis of the documents and practices produced at international, European and national levels. There are two main conclusions to make.

Craving a formal definition

From the resolutions and implementation documents of the UN to the main official documents produced in the European institutions, it is clear that CSYP means different things depending on the context, document and organisation.

1. In some cases it means vertical communication (between the youth ministry or the equivalent and young people – namely through NGOs), while in others it means horizontal communication (between the youth ministry or equivalent and other ministries).

2. Even for the second approach (the one which analysis advocated here) the use of the idea of "cross-sectoral" youth policy varies from "CSYP as a principle" to "youth policy as a system". As a principle, it is well established, but this is not enough. It has to "work". And as a system, there is also much confusion surrounding the concept. CSYP can mean collaboration or co-ordination or it can simply be approaching successfully the many cross-cutting issues implied in youth policy. The use of an approach based on this last concept – which is approximately what is done in the youth policy reviews – would imply a destandardisation of the youth policies at the national level, but it would ensure that the organisational structure of each country, the priorities of each country, the complexity of each cross-cutting issue and the variety of combinations of barriers to social inclusion experienced individually are taken into account.

No such thing as a "grounded" policy

In the social sciences, "grounded theory" is the result of an inductive process from a corpus of data. It is the direct use of empirical data, without (many) theoretical preconceptions or knowledge. Youth policy cannot follow that path despite the fact that, in many cases, it seems to. The analysis of key documents demonstrated that the lack of consensus about concepts and definitions in cross-sectoral working systems is, in practice, translated by a lack of organisation in the development of

youth policy when following this holistic approach. In fact, beyond the problem of mere definitions, there are also problems of comparability, sustainability, knowledge and research.

The balance between two counterproductive temptations is needed: bureaucratisation and destandardisation. When taken to the extreme, the former will lead to interministerial groups to deal with each specific problem, multiplying and outsourcing the youth problems to "satellite" groups that usually do not have the power, resources or autonomy to completely tackle the issue. On the other hand, the latter would eliminate any chances of comparability, evaluation and sustainability.

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Chapter 4

Envisioning
a sustainable future

Beata Sochacka

> We stress the importance of the active participation of young people in decision-making processes, as the issues we are addressing have a deep impact on present and future generations and as the contribution of children and youth is vital to the achievement of sustainable development. We also recognize the need to promote intergenerational dialogue and solidarity by recognizing their views. (United Nations General Assembly 2012)

Sustainable development means a development paradigm that ensures the lasting well-being of all humans. It "is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." (WCED 1987). When presenting future scenarios that result from unlimited growth the sustainable development paradigm focuses on the misery of future generations to create moral pressure on current generations. Thus, the concept of intergenerational justice lies at the very heart of the idea of sustainable development and young people play a crucial part, being the main stakeholders and therefore the prospective change agents for a brighter future.

YOUTH AS THE KEY STAKEHOLDER IN A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Why sustainable development is in the best interests of young people

It is widely acknowledged that excessive exploitation of natural resources and increasing pollution of the environment pose a threat to the existence and well-being of current generations. But how much they also deplete the resources that future generations will have to survive on seems to receive less attention. Lack of representation of these yet-to-come generations in the policy-making process is seen as a problem for sustainable development – this lack of representation is not only contributing to a short-term (one generation) perspective on strategies for economic and social growth, but also points to a flaw in democratic processes where decisions are made without the consent of those they are most likely to affect. How can these future generations be brought to the debate if they do not yet exist? Today's young people would seem to be the most available representatives, since they are the ones that will spend the biggest share of their lifespan in conditions created by decisions made now. Some disturbing tendencies that can be observed now will already be problems that need handling by the generations still alive in 20, 30 or 50 years.

Climate change is one of problems future generations will be forced to deal with – "Addressing and adjusting to the challenge of climate change is certain to be a defining feature of the future of today's youth", the World Youth Report 2010 affirms (DESA 2010). This conviction is based on the prediction that the negative effects that accompany climate change will increase in volume and number in the forthcoming years and on the estimation that the regions that will be most severely affected by the climate change are those that have a large young population. Climate change, along with human activity, is also expected to cause biodiversity loss and the downsizing of ecosystem service provision. Today's youth will be the ones bearing the costs of replacing the benefits provided by nature. The ecosystem services provided by pollinators, which may reduce because of a colony collapse disorder, is just one example of services that may have to be replaced through the use of new technologies, along with the extra funds that accompany them. Water scarcity, caused not only by climate change but also by growing demand and water contamination, is likely to decrease the quality of life in emerging-market countries and may also cause conflicts in other parts of the world. And last but not least, economic disparities – and the attendant social and psychological consequences that are already affecting young people in many regions around the world, including Europe – are likely to make solving the environmental problems discussed above even more difficult.

Intergenerational justice – how far can it be taken?

One way of looking at this question is through the lenses of two concepts introduced first by Constanza and Daly (1992) and thoroughly analysed by Neumayer (2003) – weak and strong sustainability. Although these notions focus on the environmental dimension of sustainable development (natural capital) they can serve as illustrative examples on how intergenerational justice may be understood:

> Weak sustainability is based on the belief that what matters for future generations is only the total aggregate stock of "man-made" and "natural" capital (and possibly other forms of capital as well) but not natural capital as such. Loosely speaking, according to WS [weak sustainability – comment mine] it does not matter whether the current generation uses up natural capital, such as non-renewable resources or pollutes the environment, as long as enough machineries, roads and ports as well as schools and universities are built in compensation. ... Because natural capital is regarded as being essentially substitutable in the production of consumption goods and as a direct provider of utility, I call WS the "substitutability paradigm". In opposition to WS stands strong sustainability. (henceforth SS) ... The essence of SS is that natural capital is fundamentally non-substitutable through other forms of capital. I therefore call SS the "non-substitutability paradigm". (Neumayer 2003: 1, 24)

Strong sustainability implies that the environment should be left as intact as possible, because most of its natural capital is non-renewable – this precautionary attitude originates from the uncertainty of possible outcomes of today's actions. To ensure intergenerational justice under the strong sustainability paradigm no non-renewable resources should ever be exploited. Weak sustainability is not as rigid but it also leaves the question of adequate compensation up to a subjective decision by the current generation, running the risk that modern estimations of what this depleted capital is worth may be biased and inadequate. In practice strong sustainability implies a conservational

approach, minimising losses by keeping the status quo, while weak sustainability justifies extraction of capital with the expected benefits for future generations.

What characterises the concepts of weak and strong sustainability is that neither actually examines what future generations would expect the current generations to do – we may imagine a situation where certain natural capital depletion may be seen as neutral from the perspective of future generations (for example, oil) whereas other natural capital depletion is clearly non-substitutable under any circumstances (for example, water). The problem of representativeness of future generations, similar to the problem of representativeness of animals for example, has no clear-cut solution. It is addressed by including the youngest living generations in the debate, assuming that they are best placed to speak on behalf of the generations yet to come and are able to anticipate their concerns. It is also assumed that since it is in the best interests of the current generation of young people to ensure a better future, the decisions they make will not be determined by short-term gains that may lead to long-term losses.

How the sustainable development paradigm empowers youth as an important social actor

The interests of future generations also allow room for debate over young people's role in determining what shape development policy should take, what actions should be taken to enforce it and what long-term objectives a desirable development policy should set. In other words, with intergenerational justice as one of the fundamental concepts that the sustainable development paradigm rests upon, sustainability recognises youth as an important stakeholder in the debate over the current and future state of the world and offers it space to air its concerns and expectations. It holds that the decision makers and politicians of today should be held accountable for their long-term decisions, even if their effect is only speculative, and that young people have the right to demand that accountability.

The ideal of intergenerational justice may offer empowering potential for young people yet it may also seem blurred and open to a variety of interpretations. How can one make sure that certain actions will not lead to depletion of the resources that future generations find useful? Is it possible to assess the measures taken to ensure a sustainable future and indicate beyond any doubt that the future they provide will be better than the present? Is there a way to formulate a set of rules that would guide actions for a sustainable future? And maybe most importantly, how can the concept of intergenerational justice actually strengthen the voice of young people and include them in the debate over strategic long-term goals? On the one hand, intergenerational justice brings back moral values to the debate. It is no longer a case of unlucky economic circumstances and their periodic cycles independent of human influence as it is in the discussion about young people's unemployment. Intergenerational justice serves as a reminder that strategic decisions bear fruit and cause delayed negative outcomes, and therefore former decision makers may and should be held accountable for current crises. On the other hand, ecological crises, as opposed to social crises, are perceived as posing threats to the whole human population not just selected social (for example, age) groups. Therefore, it should be easier to be heard when talking about an issue of universal value to everyone rather than a problem faced just by some.

A question remains, however: how do we make young people care about a sustainable future if they seem to be preoccupied with the urgent and pressing problems of today? Envisioning future scenarios is one way of achieving this goal – it not only makes the future less abstract and therefore strengthens the motivation to care about it, but it also creates a space for debate for other social groups and actors.

ENVISIONING THE FUTURE

One way of including young people as stakeholders in the debate on sustainability is by creating space and conditions for young people to present and discuss their expectations and fears for the future. But encouraging young people to discuss different future scenarios and determine criteria for their assessment is not just a way of identifying the needs and interests of future generations; nor is it just a way of developing a common vision of development based on a consensus of diverse stakeholders. Asking young people to envision the future also has a long-term impact on the way they think and is therefore one of the main competencies that education for a sustainable development tries to develop. But seeing young people's vision of the future as merely an educational activity seems to diminish its importance as a voice in the debate over development and to question its power to influence decision making. One could claim it is like saying that the primary objective of voting in elections is to educate citizens on democratic values and procedures and only secondly to enable them to participate in government. Yet what is distinctive about sustainable development is that it does not seek to form a definite common vision of the future, as it is aware of the uncertainty of all estimations and mere probability of future predictions. Envisioning a sustainable future triggers discussions and raises questions, helps to avoid unsustainable solutions by raising justified doubts about them, rather than providing a ready-made set of guidelines on how to solve any emerging future problem. In other words, envisioning the future is seen as a public debate and not a ballot.

The central role envisioning the future plays in education for sustainable development was highlighted by the 2011 UN campaign promoting the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro, Rio+20. The campaign The Future We Want aimed to "engage people around the world in an exercise to envision how societies in all parts of the world can build a future that promotes prosperity, equity and improves people's quality of life while respecting our planet's limited resources." The results of this global exercise served as the basis for the document "The future we want: our common vision", which was adopted as the outcome document of the Rio+20 Summit.

Developing the skill for envisioning the future is one of the key competencies that education for sustainable development is trying to develop. Others include systems thinking, critical thinking, responsibility and leadership for transformation, collaboration and partnership building (Tilbury and Wortman 2004; UNECE 2011). It is argued that guided reflection on the future may help to:

▶ raise questions about the current state of the world, recognise and identify problems and areas that need improvement;

- ► create drivers for change and strengthen existing motivation;
- ► identify and set tangible goals that are stepping stones on the path to achieving a state that would be optimal;
- ► induce discussion over different visions of the future and identify underlying assumptions that cause fundamental differences between them;
- ► evaluate the consequences of possible actions and decisions (both on the individual and global scale).

ENVISIONING SUSTAINABLE FUTURES – PITFALLS OF SUSTAINABLE UTOPIAS AND DYSTOPIAS

With all the educational benefits that discussing different future scenarios may bring, it is easy to overlook the possible pitfalls. Critics of the sustainable development paradigm point out excessively optimistic or pessimistic predictions, blurred and intangible goals, a quietist attitude to some urgent social problems, or the absence of any coherent programme of action. Clearly, there are some tendencies that may be identified in discussions on sustainable futures that may lead to some simplified visions that become subjected to such a critique.

1. Eschatological vision

A vision which sees development as a unilinear process that will end either with ultimate happiness (or another state of optimal well-being) or catastrophe. Alternatively, a state of absolute sustainability as a goal is to be reached. This simplified vision of the future leaves out the complexity of the world.

2. Sophisticated hedonism

A vision where improvement in the quality of life of human beings is the ultimate objective and an end in itself. The environment is protected because of the impact it has on human well-being – providing beautiful sites, an uninterrupted flow of food and resources and healthy habitats that guarantee longevity. If human beings do adjust their behaviour it is because change offers additional improvements to their well-being (for example, riding bicycles is not only green, but also healthy and fashionable). The tension between a quality of life and planetary boundaries is seen as a problem that can be overcome.

3. Crisis-free zone

A vision that rests on the assumption that social and ecological crises are the result of some wrong decisions (insufficient information) or actions motivated by morally reprehensible motives (greed, personal gain, etc.). Therefore, by correcting the mistakes made in the past people can avoid crises in the future. This vision of the future is based on negatives – it focuses on things that are no longer there, such

as specific problems like unemployment – to depict a state of perfect security. It is often not so much a vision of the future but a rather a presentation of a specific solution for a given problem.

4. Naive sentimentalism

A vision that romanticises nature, creating a sharp distinction between nature (associated with everything that is good and healthy) and civilisation (associated with everything that is corrupt and harmful). Adherents of this vision overlook conflicts that are inherent in nature. They also do not acknowledge that the distinction between nature and culture is a human construct.

5. Harmonious coexistence

A vision that is a version of naive sentimentalism, but which romanticises human nature – seeing human beings as equally interested in exactly the same values (such as happiness) and being able to attain these values if they overcome excessively individualistic tendencies. The idea of inner (authenticity) and outer (peaceful coexistence of all people) harmony is also projected on the relations between the individual and nature. The concept of balance often plays an important role in this particular vision of future – reaching a balance between different elements (for example, dimensions of sustainable development) or coming to a compromise (seen as a balance between two side's interests) solves any problem that may emerge.

6. Silver bullet

A vision that acknowledges problems may keep emerging in the future, but believes that there is always a way to solve them. The silver bullet may be technology ("technological advancements will help us solve the problem of hunger"), education ("raising awareness will reduce crime rates") or policy regulations ("new laws will stop land degradation"). Solutions that are proposed to different problems are not necessarily wrong – quite the opposite, they are usually effective. But what is typical for this kind of vision of the future is that it overestimates the role of a single factor in solving complex problems. Alternatively, this version of the future states that there is a single change agent (a particular social group) that can change the paradigm of development and determine the shape it will take. Such a specific group could, for example, be young people, and this is discussed below.

YOUTH AS THE CHANGE AGENT FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Identifying young people as key stakeholders in a sustainable future may create the impression that they are also bound to be its principal change agent. This conviction could be listed among the misleading tendencies discussed in the previous section, as it fits into a certain simplified future scenario pattern. It does not mean that young people will not become change agents for sustainable development, but it does

mean that one has to be careful before accepting excessively optimistic visions in which no other conditions have to be met before young people take up that role.

Before targeting young people as the principal social actors in social change that we would like to see, it may be important to reconsider the following questions.

1. How do societies change? Rarely, if ever, can one see a significant social change induced by a single factor. Although a certain group may trigger a conflict or verbalise the tensions that have been latent, its role should neither be overestimated nor underestimated nor shown without proper context. Favourable conditions would usually include the attitude of the other groups (both opposing and sympathetic) and the environment of the group (economic, political, social, physical).

2. Who belongs to the category we call "young people"? One thing to consider is how we distinguish between individuals that can be called young people and those who cannot: What age do we choose? How do we adjust to historical and geographical variations in lifestyle? But what is even more important is how young people define themselves. Do they see themselves as a distinct social group? Can young people form a social movement?

3. Is a sustainable future really in young people's interests? When we speak of young people we talk of members of different social classes, representing different nations, traditions and lifestyles, but most importantly having different priorities. Sustainable development, and what it implies for natural capital management and social security, can actually impair some groups' chances for economic advancement. On an individual level, provided everyone does the same, taking actions based on personal gain may be an effective winning strategy.

4. Are young people willing to take up the role of change agent for sustainable development? In this time of crisis young people may actually refrain from taking on additional responsibilities and wait for the situation to improve. Situations of distress (unemployment, lack of security) do not necessarily produce social and political activism. Neither do they necessarily prompt thinking from a long-term perspective. In other words, even if a sustainable future is in the best interests of today's young people they may not be willing to take up the role of leading the change.

5. In the current circumstances, can young people really influence the future? Do policy makers hear out their postulates and take young people's opinions into account? What political tools do young people have to influence existing policies and business practices? It seems that the current circumstances are particularly unfavourable for young people. Arguably, the crisis has disempowered young people in comparison to the situation in the last century.

These closing remarks on young people's ability to influence change were not meant to discredit the belief in the transformative power of envisioning alternative futures. Rather, they were meant to point to the complexity of the interrelations between young people and sustainability and the need to take a sober look at the prospects for engaging youth in the creation of a sustainable future. Young people may be key stakeholders in a sustainable future, they may be willing to contribute with their visions of the future, but their active engagement may require building a more favourable environment for intergenerational dialogue on the topic of sustainability.

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Chapter 5

Youth transitions: chances and choices – Global demographic and social challenges

Dragana Avramov

INTRODUCTION

When addressing the question "How healthy is the present and the future in Europe", I take the approach which deals with both the macro-scale socio-demographic change, following the logic of the world-system analysis (for example, Wallerstein 1974), and the individual-level analysis of life-course events looking at trends and capacities of individuals and ways people take decisions related to transitions. Combining the two levels of analysis is particularly relevant in the context of the current economic crisis and austerity policy, runaway globalisation, and global demographic and ecological challenges.

Youth transitions are essentially to do with crucial changes in the human life course – the transition from one level of education to another, the transition from education to work, the transition from parental care (and home) to independent life or own family life – all the phases increasingly associated with mobility across borders.

Youth transitions occur not only against the background of individual biosocial growth and developmental processes, but are also strongly conditioned by societal processes determined by demographic, cultural, and socio-economic dynamics. Hence, before looking at individual-level life-course events, I want to mention some societal developments, mainly in the domain of demographics, that help to understand some of the challenges and opportunities with which young people are likely to be confronted.

DEMOGRAPHIC DYNAMICS

Young people as an age group

Age is a biosocial phenomenon dependent on the biological process and the living conditions and norms by which borders between different age groups are defined (for example, Cliquet 2010), although for some authors age is mainly a historically and culturally constructed, institutionalised and controlled phenomenon (for instance, Wyn and White 1997; Côté and Allahar 2006).

The common meaning of youth is the period between childhood and adult age, but there are different interpretations of the age range. For instance, in its report *Youth in Europe* Eurostat defines young people as those aged between 15 and 29. In Europe, this age group accounts for some 20% of the total population.

In the coming decades the population in Europe aged between 15 and 29 will gradually decrease, whereas in surrounding regions it will strongly increase (see for instance, the differential development of the population aged 15-24 in southern Europe and North Africa in Figure 1).

Figure 1: Population of age 15-24 in North Africa and southern Europe (United Nations 2012, medium variant scenario)
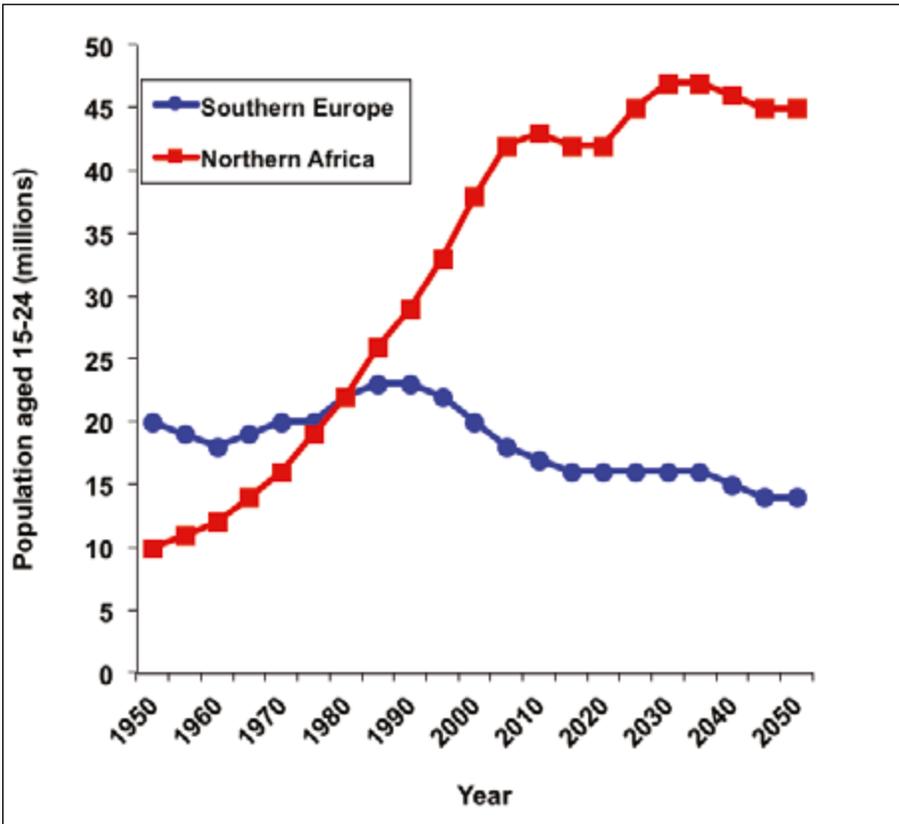
Decreasing labour supply

As a consequence of past demographic trends – the dying out of the post-Second World War baby boom, the persistent below-replacement fertility rate – Europe will experience a gradual decrease in its population of working age in the coming decades (see, for instance, the population prospects for those aged 20 to 64 in Figure 2), except in cases where there is an (unlikely) increase in fertility rates or high immigration. The European prospects are in sharp contrast with developments in Africa or India, for example.

Figure 2: Population prospects for those aged 20-64 in selected regions of the world (United Nations, 2012)
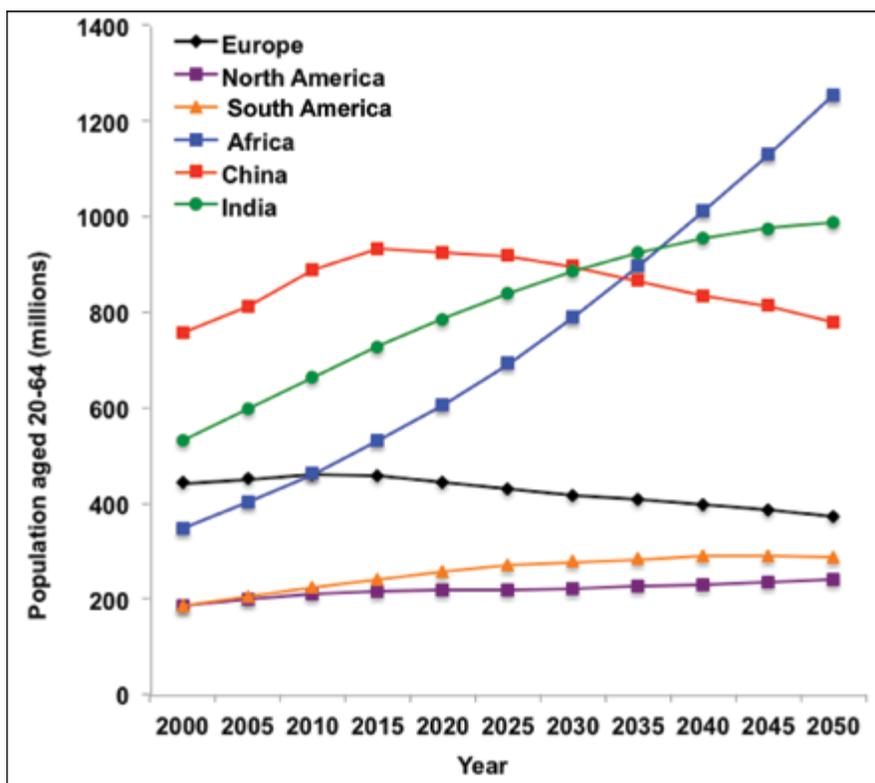
In some scientific and policy quarters, the shrinking population of working age causes concern about a possible shortage of labour supply, but in others this is seen as an opportunity to contribute to the dilution of unemployment and in particular youth unemployment, because the present reserve labour supply which is available in the unemployed population will be absorbed. However, the future might be more complex than this expectation may suppose. The development of the relationship between labour supply and unemployment is not necessarily straightforward. The increasing concentration of unemployment among less qualified and less skilled people forms an indication that, in a technologically progressive culture, a shortage of labour supply might coexist with an assorted unemployed population (Blanchet and Marchand 1991).

The expected decrease in the population of working age might induce several societal advantages, such as the adaptation of labour organisation in a more flexible way, in increase in work opportunities for women, the activation of older people, etc. Overall, a shrinking population on the densely populated and highly consuming European continent might contribute to alleviating pressures that are already too high on the world's natural resources and ecosystems (Meadows et al. 2004; Ehrlich and Ehrlich 2008; Cliquet and Avramov, forthcoming). But these opportunities come with a price tag.

Increasing old-age dependency ratios

Modernisation goes hand in hand with a considerable ageing population, both in absolute and relative terms. The two causes of this phenomenon are well known: increased longevity and low fertility rates.

The oft-heard complaints, particularly in policy quarters, about the disastrous societal consequences of population ageing are somewhat odd, because modern societies are doing everything to prolong longevity, and are obviously in good health (Avramov and Cliquet 2005).

Nevertheless, an ageing population leads to high costs for covering pensions and the health and welfare care of senior citizens. More dependent seniors mean a higher financial and care burden on the active population. Already in the mid-1970s, the Economic Commission for Europe estimated that the public cost of maintaining one elderly dependent was three times that of a dependent child. Figure 3 shows that the old-age dependency ratio has been increasing in the last few decades and will continue to increase in the near future. It is a trend to which modern societies will have to adapt by means of a multitude of policy measures. It is a phenomenon that is of the utmost importance for young people to understand, in order to prepare for adaptive changes in attitudes in their adult life and the behaviour towards seniors, as well as their own life in old age.

As concerns demographic processes, inequalities in life chances between generations (see Figure 3) and between populations in different countries (see Figure 4) will persist, since they are partly embedded in demography.

Immigration: the miracle solution?

The future of Europe's youth population and its transition to adulthood will also be influenced by the immigration policies European countries adopt: large numbers of immigrants who usually belong to younger adult age groups may increase competition for jobs; massive immigration from culturally/religiously different areas where universally recognised rights – including those of freedom of expression and ideology, sexual/gender equality, individual emancipatory opportunities (rights) – and democratic decision making are largely absent or do not exist at all may intensify in-group/out-group conflicts or may threaten fundamental values generally accepted in European countries (Avramov and Cliquet 2005).

It is beyond doubt that in the coming decades Europe will increasingly be confronted with high immigration pressures from African and Asian regions dealing with considerable demographic/economic imbalances and from areas of conflict.

Figure 3: Dependency ratios for Europe (United Nations 2012)
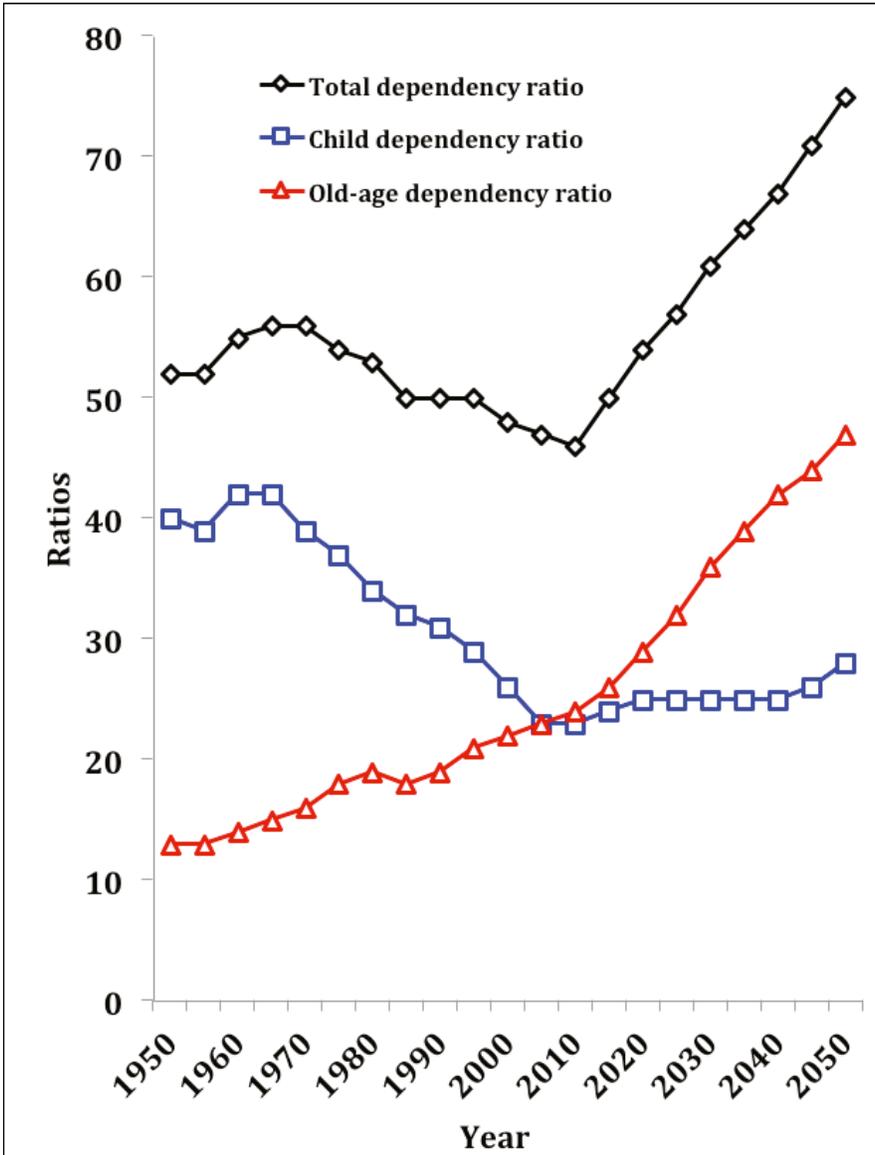
Legend:
Child dependency ratio is the ratio of the population 0-14 to the population 15-64
Old-age dependency ratio is the ratio of the population 65+ to the population 15-64

Figure 4: Population pyramids Austria and Ethiopia, 2010 (United Nations)

Population Austria in thousands   Population Ethiopia in millions
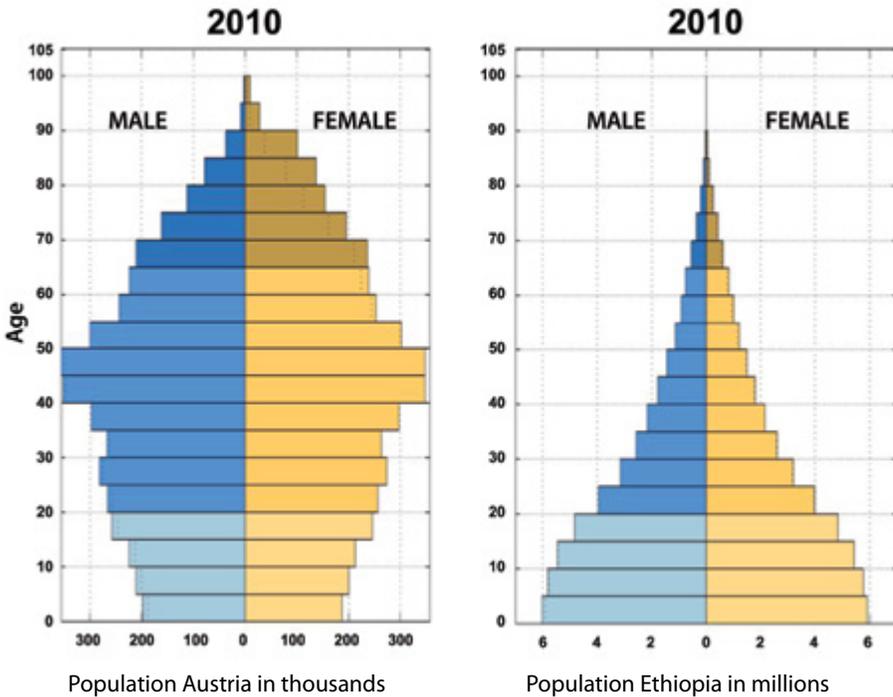
Some European policy makers believe that immigration is the miracle solution to the existing or expected population ageing and population decline. Whereas it is true that mass immigration can quickly compensate losses in population numbers (although not without provoking many other societal problems), demographers have for a long time shown that mass immigration appears, in a long-term perspective, to have no substantial effect on the population age structure (e.g. Blanchet 1988; Espenshade 1987; Lesthaeghe et al. 1988; Steinmann 1991; Prinz and Lutz 1993). The "replacement migration" (see United Nations 2000) is no adequate long-term solution for demographically ageing societies (e.g. Coleman 1992; Feld 2000; Avramov and Cliquet 2005).

Younger generations will have to consider immigration policies more carefully than previous generations did, not only taking into account the available scientific knowledge about the longer-term demographic and social effects of migratory movements, but at the same time acknowledging the fact that the inevitable further globalisation of human activities in diverse fields such as commerce, scientific research, tourism, and policy making requires increasing levels of mobility between countries and continents. In a comprehensive and multidimensional policy approach selective migration must have a place, but in this perspective a migration policy is very different from an approach in which population ageing or decline would only be compensated for by massive immigration. An efficient immigration policy requires a well-prepared and multifaceted integration and fitting-in policy in order to avoid enclosing the new immigrants in minority ghettos of lower socio-economic strata with few opportunities for upward social mobility and higher risks of social exclusion.

LIFE-COURSE CHANGES

A characteristic feature of modernity, in particular since the Second World War, is the prolongation of the youth phase in the life course.

Contrary to what one might think at first sight, it is not only the important increase in the extension of the educational phase that is responsible for this prolongation. Major changes in labour market conditions, such as the increasing difficulty to enter the labour market, casual work, precarious employment, and part-time work, contribute to this prolongation process (Blossfeld et al. 2005). Finally, the availability of modern birth control methods, changes in norms regarding sexual behaviour and factors such as the increased wealth of parents and the leisure and travel opportunities for young people, in tandem with the educational and labour market changes, allow young people to postpone major life decisions such as leaving the parental home, couple formation in a household independent from the parental home, and parenthood.

Education and life chances

Figure 5: Population in tertiary education – absolute figures in millions – extrapolations to 2030 and 2050 on the basis of 2000-05 trends
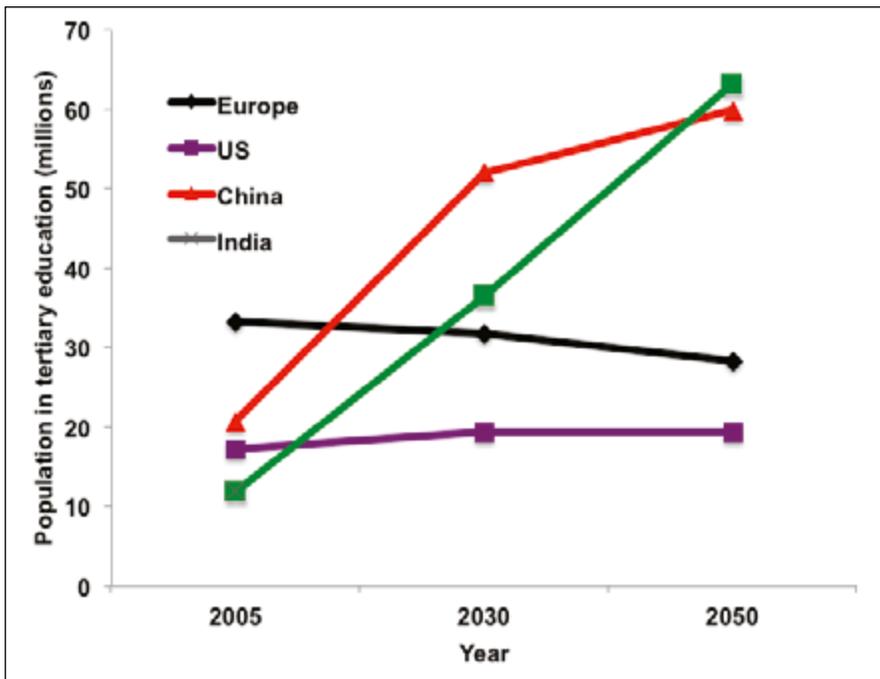
Legend: Hypotheses about the proportion of students in tertiary education in the population range aged 20-24 for calculating absolute numbers in tertiary education in 2030 and 2050:
2030: Europe (including Russian Federation) and US: 80%; China: 60%; India: 30%
2050: Europe (including Russian Federation) and US: 80%; China: 80%; India: 60%

In an increasingly complex modern culture and society, with their scientifically, technologically and bureaucratically driven dynamics, prolonged and high quality education becomes a key instrument for further scientific, technological and societal progress.

From this perspective it is useful to have a look at educational trends worldwide. In Figure 5, using population data from the United Nations World Population Prospects (2012) and educational data from the UNESCO database, the numbers of students in tertiary education in major parts of the world have been extrapolated on the basis of recent developments.

Although the relative share of students in tertiary education is different between the West and major Asian countries, the latter will soon surpass the western world in absolute numbers of people with higher education because of their huge population base. Hence, in the near future, the younger generations in the West may expect stronger competition on a global scale, not only because of the modernisation of major developing countries, but also because of the work ethic prevailing in some of those countries.

Some fall through the cracks

Education, which is a key instrument for preventing and overcoming social exclusion, in practice often compounds and reinforces social inequalities. Children from families with interlinking social disadvantages such as poverty, unemployment, bad housing, low initial education of parents, poor literacy, immigrant or ethnic minority background, are over-represented among school dropouts in all European countries.

Early school leaving persists as a serious social problem. Although there has been a slight improvement in the early 2000s, Avramov warned the EU Council of Ministers that goals set to substantially reduce the percentage of early school leavers by 2010 were not likely to be reached. Additional efforts were needed to reach the benchmark levels set for 2010 (Avramov 2008). Indeed the target of 10% was not reached and the European Commission has simply delayed reaching this target for another decade, until 2020.

Transition from education to work

In Europe, this transition mainly takes place between the ages of 18 and 24. In 2006, 59% of young people aged 18 were exclusively in education or training, and only 13% were exclusively occupationally active. Conversely, by the age of 24 these proportions were reversed. However, 20% of all Europeans aged 18 and 16% of those aged 24 combined education or training with economic activity (Eurostat 2007).

Youth unemployment (for those under 25) is unacceptably high at almost 22% (http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1036). By 2020, it is estimated that 35% of all jobs will require high level qualifications, combined with a capacity to adapt and innovate, compared to 29% today. This means 15 million more jobs requiring high level qualifications. But the EU economy is currently hampered by a shortage of highly

qualified Information and Communication Technology (ICT) practitioners, and fewer than one person in three in the EU has a higher education degree compared to over 40% in the US and over 50% in Japan. Too many young people today leave school early, increasing their risk of becoming unemployed or inactive, living in poverty and causing high economic and social costs. Currently, 14% of 18 to 24-year-olds in the EU have less than upper secondary education and are not in further education or training. Europe also has to do better on literacy, as 24% of 15-year-olds are low performers in reading literacy and this share has increased in recent years. What is worse, however, is that unemployment is also currently high among young graduates from different levels of education and training. European systems have been slow to respond to the requirements of the knowledge society, failing to adapt curricula and programmes to the changing needs of the labour market.

Young workers are very often hired on temporary contracts, which may allow firms to test the skills and productivity of workers before offering them an open-ended job. However, too often, temporary contracts are just a cheaper alternative to permanent ones. This is particularly the case in countries where the dismissal regulations are very different for temporary and open-ended contracts. The result is a segmented labour market, where many young workers experience a sequence of temporary jobs alternating with unemployment, with little chance of moving to a more stable, open-ended contract and thus have incomplete contributions to pension provisions. Young women are particularly at risk of falling into this segmentation trap. Finally, the indicators for youth labour market performance do not fully capture that an astonishing 15% of 20 to 24-year-olds in Europe are disengaged from both work and education (NEETs: not in education, employment or training) and risk being permanently excluded from the labour market and dependent on benefits. The most recent presentation of statistics on NEETs (e.g. Eurydice and Eurostat 2014) merges the age groups by presenting data on 15 to 29-year-olds that mask the high levels of the 20 to 24 age group.

Transitions to couple formation and parenthood

The 20th century, in particular the period since the Second World War, was also characterised by many changes in the timing of key biosocial events in the life course of young people.

The average age of people experiencing their first sexual encounter decreased in the course of the last century, from over 20 years to below 18 (Cliquet 2003). In recent years this age has decreased even further and the average now lies at around 16 years in the Nordic countries (Durex Network Research Unit 2009). Premarital sex has in most countries become a general behavioural pattern, although differences in age at the time of the first experience of intercourse continue to exist – it is earlier in northern Europe than in central Europe and, especially, southern Europe.

In contrast, the age of people marrying for the first time has increased and in many north-western European countries it is around or even above 30 years of age (UNECE Statistical Division Database 2014). However, in many cases marriage is being preceded by unmarried cohabitation or couple formation whereby both partners live in separate households – known as LAT ("Living Apart Together") relations (see, for example, Kiernan 2002; OECD Family Database 2012).

Another change in household formation concerns the fact that more young people leave the parental home to live on their own before cohabiting or marrying. This results in an increasing number of single-person households of young adults.

Finally, since the mid-1970s, the mean age of people giving birth for the first time has increased continuously, from the early 20s to the late 20s. The average now lies between 25 and 30 years (UNECE Statistical Division Database 2014). Choosing to have children later partly explains the decreasing or low fertility rate levels, because there is insufficient recuperation at higher ages, either because of increasing sub-fecundity or because choosing to have children later easily leads to renunciation of family building once a particular lifestyle without children or with a small number of children has been adopted (Lesthaeghe 2001).

RETHINKING THE 21ST-CENTURY LIFE-COURSE PARADIGM

An individual's living circumstances largely depend on his or her history, which is a mix of chances and choices regarding health, education, work, family life, personality features and socio-cultural environment in which opportunities have been enhanced or limited.

More effective ways are needed of spreading the risks associated with competition in the labour market; the low-income/high-needs nexus, stress at work and high demands on time in the workplace and by the family over the entire life course.

Past public policies have rather badly managed the economy of time of individuals and families in the life-course perspective. The highest burden of duty is on young people during early years of adulthood in which they have to combine ongoing education, establishing themselves in the labour force, setting up an independent household and forming a family. In contrast, there is much free time after statutory retirement – time that is being spent unproductively by the overwhelming majority of elderly people.

Figure 6: Rethinking the life course (Avramov and Cliquet 2003)
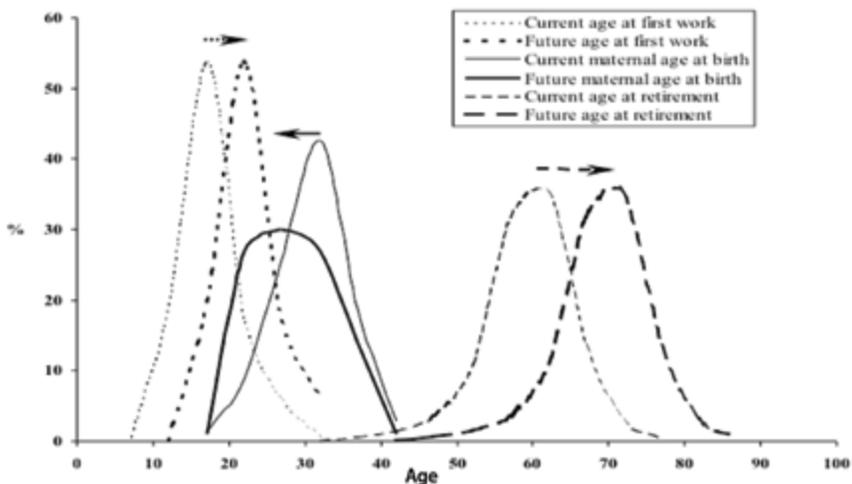
Hence, the life-course distribution of time for the main activities relating to studies, paid work, domestic activity, partnership, parenthood, care provision, and active and passive leisure needs be reshuffled by means of active welfare policies enabling individuals to spread more innovatively paid and unpaid work and leisure time over the entire life course (Figure 6). This reshuffling requires rethinking the organising principles of the entire economy and in particular the normative basis of labour market policies – a difficult task because obstacles to such innovation reside not only in the current market mechanisms and forces, but also in the attitudes of older adults who oppose proposals for increasingly active life at a later age (Avramov and Cliquet 2003; 2006; 2008).

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Chapter 6

Correlates of mental health and psychological well-being of European youth: evidence from the European Quality of Life Survey

Haridhan Goswami and Gary Pollock

INTRODUCTION

Youth well-being is fundamental to that of society as a whole. Promoting youth well-being is not only vital in order for young people during their years of youth, but also as a firm basis for their future well-being as adults (Rees et al. 2012). How young people fare through critical points of development affects their quality of life, their productivity, welfare dependency and the transmission of their later-life outcomes to their own children (Richardson 2012).

In recent years, youth well-being has become a priority for the European political agenda. As part of European co-operation on social protection and social inclusion, the EU has expressed strong political commitment to promoting well-being among young people, as is reflected in (among other initiatives) the establishment of an EU Task Force on Child Poverty and Child Well-Being in 2007 (TARKI Social Research Institute 2010).

The EU Task Force went on in 2008 to produce a report (EU Task Force 2008) spelling out recommendations for analysing, monitoring and assessing child poverty and well-being at EU, national and sub-national levels. The Task Force report, together with its recommendations, was formally endorsed by the Social Protection Committee (SPC) and the European Commission and is now part of the EU *acquis* (Social Protection Committee 2012).

Although EU co-operation on social issues (in particular through the Social Open Method of Coordination) has provided the main framework for addressing child poverty and child well-being in an EU context, many other policies have touched upon the issue: education and training policies (in particular in relation to early school leaving, early childhood education); the EU Agenda for the Rights of the Child; reconciliation, work and family policy (among others in the framework of the European Alliance for Families); health policy; and cohesion policy (through the development of childcare and/or housing infrastructures and support for deinstitutionalisation) (Social Protection Committee 2012).

The Europe 2020 strategy gives a new impetus to efforts addressing child poverty and social exclusion in the EU. A number of member states have set specific targets or sub-targets relating to child poverty/social exclusion as their contribution to the headline European target to reduce the number of people at risk of poverty and social exclusion by at least 20 million by 2020 (Council of the European Union 2012). Therefore, Europe 2020 has given priority to fighting poverty and social exclusion and improving the well-being of children and young people.

In the context of these European policy developments, one of the biggest challenges for the EU is to improve youth well-being using robust empirical evidence. Fortunately, there are a number of pan-European surveys which contain invaluable data on well-being. Researchers across Europe are now analysing these data and publishing results. These findings provide valuable insights into the overall state of well-being and allow the EU to map out its different member states and regions in relation to various domains of well-being. In addition, these studies have collected data on a number of factors which are commonly believed to be associated with well-being. Although most of these studies identify age as an important factor in well-being, they appear to be reluctant to accept that young people's well-being is distinct from that of the general adult population. In this regard, Fattore et al. (2007) argue that the concepts of well-being developed for adults are not directly transferable to the measurement of youth well-being. Moreover, Bradshaw (2009) argues that the limited number of well-being domains prepared for adults do not provide the full picture on the state of well-being for young people.

This paradigm shift of research on youth well-being is reinforced by the socially structured transitions that young people face on their journey to adulthood, trajectories that themselves have increasingly become non-linear (Pollock 2008). Furthermore, Croxford et al. (2006) argue that for over a decade, we have observed a transformation in the nature of young people's transitions in the wake of changes in the labour market, in compulsory and post-compulsory education and in higher education. Today, the EU is experiencing major economic, environmental, political and social changes that directly affect children and young people. Children in the EU face a higher risk of relative poverty than the population as a whole (20% for children aged 0 to 15 and 21% for those aged 16 to 24, compared to 16% for adults) (Commission of the European Communities 2006). Moreover, the percentage of children living in poverty or social exclusion is on the rise in a number of member states as a result of the impact of the economic crisis (Council of the European Union 2012). Demographic changes, for example higher life expectancy and lower fertility rates, together with changing gender roles in relation to childcare and employment are factors that

influence the family context in which children grow up. New challenges arise due to the higher mobility demands of the labour market, which may complicate and reduce the possibility and/or frequency of intergenerational familial contacts.

New family structures have arisen as a result of an increase in divorce rates: single-parent families, step-families and patchwork families. In addition, more and more children are growing up in migrant families throughout European countries (Perrig-Chiello 2009). In order to understand how these factors (and others) are linked to youth well-being, further analysis focusing specially on subgroups of youth is essential. This paper therefore focuses on the well-being of European youth and aims to identify the demographic and psychosocial factors which are related to their well-being. These findings are a useful starting point in identifying specific Europe-wide similarities and differences and as such should help to inform the policy processes which aim to improve youth well-being across the whole of Europe.

WELL-BEING: PSYCHOLOGICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH ASPECTS

Despite substantial academic and policy interest in well-being over the decades, there is no universally accepted definition of the concept. In academic literature, it is used as an overarching concept to refer to the quality of life of people in society (Rees et al. 2010).

In defining the concept of well-being, a distinction is also made between the hedonic and eudaemonic approaches (Ryan and Deci 2001). Scholars influenced by the hedonic approach view well-being in terms of subjective happiness and the experience of pleasure versus displeasure broadly construed to include all judgments about the good or bad elements of life. Although there are many ways to evaluate the pleasure/pain continuum in human experience, most research within the new hedonic psychology has used assessment of subjective well-being (SWB) (Diener and Lucas 1999). SWB consists of three components: life satisfaction, the presence of positive mood and the absence of negative mood, together often summarised as happiness.

On the other hand, the eudaemonic approach maintains that not all desires – not all outcomes that a person might value – yield well-being when achieved (Ryan and Deci 2001). It focuses on meaning and self-realisation and defines well-being in terms of the degree to which a person is fully functioning. Ryff and Singer (1998, 2000) have explored the question of well-being in the context of developing a lifespan theory of human flourishing. Ryff and Keyes (1995) spoke of psychological well-being (PWB) as distinct from SWB and presented a multidimensional approach to the measurement of PWB that taps six distinct aspects of human actualisation: autonomy, personal growth, self-acceptance, life purpose, mastery and positive relatedness.

Self-determination theory (SDT) (Ryan and Deci 2000) is another perspective that has both embraced the concept of eudaemonia, or self-realisation, as a central definitional aspect of well-being and attempted to specify both what it means to realise oneself and how that can be accomplished. Specifically, SDT posits three basic psychological needs – autonomy, competence, and relatedness – and theorises that fulfilment of

these needs is essential for psychological growth (e.g. intrinsic motivation), integrity (e.g. internalisation and assimilation of cultural practices) and well-being (e.g. life satisfaction and psychological or mental health) (Ryan and Deci 2001).

If we look at the progress that has been made so far on well-being research following these two paradigms, it appears that research on youth SWB (hedonic approach) is more dominant than research on youth PWB (eudaemonic approach) (Rees et al. 2013). Large-scale surveys less frequently include questions linked to this approach (Eurofound 2013). Rees et al. (2013) argues that the reason for this might be linked to the fact that in many cases traditional measures of PWB are not suitable for young people. This paper addresses this research gap on youth well-being by identifying the demographic and psychosocial factors which are associated with youth mental health and their PWB.

DATA AND METHODS

Data for this paper were obtained from the third round of the European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS), which is run every four years by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions. The third wave of the EQLS, which was carried out in 2011 and 2012, included people aged 18 years and older from 34 countries (EU-27 plus Croatia, Iceland, Montenegro, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", Serbia, Turkey and Kosovo[1]). In all countries, data were collected via face-to-face interviews and respondents were selected by multistage random sampling. The overall response rate was 41%. For a more detailed description of the survey, see Eurofound (2012). This paper uses data from just under 5 000 young people aged 18 to 25 who took part in the third wave of the survey.

MEASURES

Dependent variables

Psychological well-being

The EQLS included three items, focusing on feeling worthwhile, autonomy and optimism. These items were *a*. "I generally feel that what I do in life is worthwhile", *b*. "I feel I am free to decide how to live my life" and *c*. "I am optimistic about the future". Respondents replied using a five-point scale from "Strongly agree" (score = 4) to "Strongly disagree" (score = 0). A principal component analysis with orthogonal (varimax) rotation extracts one factor (total initial eigenvalue 1.84) explaining 61.33% of the total variance. Therefore, these items measure a single construct of "PWB". Internal consistency analysis of these three items obtains a Cronbach alpha of 0.68, which indicates moderate reliability of the scale. Scores for these items are added to create a summated scale ranging from 0 to 12, a higher score indicating a greater level of PWB.

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1. All reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

Mental health

Mental health was measured using five items that the World Health Organization originally developed (Bech 1998). Respondents were asked how close they felt to each of these statements over the last two weeks. The statements were: *a*. "I have felt calm and relaxed", *b*. "I have felt cheerful and in good spirits", *c*. "I have felt active and vigorous", *d*. "I woke up feeling fresh and rested" and *e*. "My daily life has been filled with things that interest me". Responses were recoded as "All of the time" (score = 5), "Most of the time" (score = 4), "More than half of the time" (score = 3), "Less than half of the time" (score = 2), "Some of the time" (score = 1) or "At no time" (score = 0). The results of a factor analysis suggest that these items load under one factor (eigenvalue of 3.18 explaining 63.69% variance) indicating a unidimensional nature of the construct of "mental health". A Cronbach alpha value of 0.85 suggests strong reliability of these items for a scale. Scores for each item were added to create a summated scale of "mental health" ranging from 0 to 25, where a higher score indicates greater quality of mental health.

Independent variables

Demographics

In the survey, respondents were asked to self-report their age and from this the youth segment (18 to 25) was identified for this paper. Using equivalised income, four income quartiles were derived each reflecting a particular household income group (1 signifying the lowest and 4 signifying the highest). The lowest income quartile is used as a reference category. In order to measure household income, respondents were also asked to compare their own household financial situation with most people in their country and position themselves among the following categories: "Better", "Same", or "Worse". "Better" is used as a reference category. In order to measure household solvency, respondents were asked to describe the level of difficulty the household faced in making ends meet. Responses were grouped into one of two categories: "Easily" or "With difficulty". In order to measure respondents' expectations on future changes in household finances, they were asked whether their financial situation would be "Better", "Worse" or the "Same" in the next 12 months. Citizenship status was measured by asking respondents whether or not they were a citizen of the country they lived in. Respondents defined themselves as being "Disabled" or "Not disabled". To measure urban density, respondents described their area of living as being one of four response options: "Open country", "Village", "Medium-sized town" or "City". The European countries that took part in the survey were grouped into one of five categories based on their geographical position: Nordic (reference category), UK and Ireland, central Europe, Mediterranean and eastern Europe.

Psychosocial factors

Accommodation quality

To measure accommodation quality, respondents were asked whether they had any of the following problems with their accommodation: (a) shortage of space; (b) rot in the windows, doors or floors; (c) damp or leaks in the walls or roof; (d) lack

of an indoor flushing toilet; (e) lack of a bath or shower; or (f) lack of a place to sit outside (e.g. garden, balcony, terrace). Respondents who said "No" to any of these six problems were counted and this produced an index ranging from 0 to 6 (higher scores indicating a better quality of accommodation).

Support network

The EQLS asked respondents from whom they got support in the following five situations: (1) help around the house when ill; (2) advice about a serious personal or family matter; (3) help when looking for a job; (4) feeling a bit depressed and wanting someone to talk to; and (5) an urgent need to raise money in an emergency. Respondents chose answers from four options: family or relative; friend or neighbour; a service provider; or none. Respondents who said family or relative, friend or neighbour, or a service provider were counted, which resulted in an index ranging from 0 to 5 (higher scores indicating a greater support network).

Social tension between old and young people

In order to measure social tension, respondents were asked how great they thought the tension was between old and young people in their own country. Responses were collected on a three-point scale and were scored as follows: "No tension" (score = 0); "Some tension" (score = 1); or "A lot of tension" (score = 2).

Interaction with friends and neighbours

To measure interaction, respondents were asked how often they had contact with their friends or neighbours. Responses were collected on a five-point scale and were scored as follows: "Every day or almost every day" (score = 4); "At least once a week" (score = 3); "One to three times a month" (score = 2); "Less often" (score = 1); and "Never" (score = 0).

Caring responsibility

To measure the degree of caring responsibility that young people have, they were asked how often they were involved (outside of their work) in caring for elderly or disabled relatives. Answers were collected on a five-point scale and were scored as follows: "Every day" (score = 4); "Several days a week" (score = 3); "One or twice a week" (score = 2); "Less often" (score = 1); "Never" (score = 0). Higher scores indicate a greater caring role for young people.

Satisfaction with the economic situation of the country

To measure satisfaction with a country's economic situation, respondents were asked to score on a 10-point rating scale ranging from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 10 (very satisfied).

Public service facilities scale

To assess public service facilities, respondents were asked to describe their level of difficulty in getting access to the following services: (a) postal services; (b) banking;

(c) public transport; (d) cinema, theatre or cultural centre; and (e) recreational or green areas. The level of difficulty for each service was measured on a four-point scale (from "very easy" to "with great difficulty"). A principal component analysis with orthogonal (varimax) rotation extracts one factor (total initial eigenvalue of 2.83) explaining 56.65% of the total variance. Therefore, these items are taken to measure a single construct of "public service facilities". Internal consistency analysis of these five items obtains a Cronbach alpha of 0.81, which indicates a very high consistency of the scale. A summated scale is developed by adding the scores. The scale ranges from 5 to 20; a higher score indicates a higher quality of public service facilities.

Quality of neighbourhood

Respondents were asked to report the degree of problems (major, moderate or no problems) of the following six aspects in their immediate neighbourhood: (a) noise; (b) air quality; (c) quality of drinking water; (d) crime, violence or vandalism; (e) litter or rubbish on the street; and (f) traffic congestion. The results of a factor analysis suggest that these items load under one factor (eigenvalue of 3.04 explaining 50.63% variance) indicating a unidimensional nature of the construct of "neighbourhood quality". A Cronbach alpha value of 0.80 suggests very strong reliability of these items for a scale. Scores for each item were added to create a summated scale on the "quality of neighbourhood", ranging from 6 to 18 where higher scores indicate a higher quality of neighbourhood.

Religiosity

To measure the level of religiosity, young people were asked how often they attended religious services (not including weddings, funerals or christenings). They provided their responses on a five-point scale ranging from 0 ("Never") to 4 ("Every day or almost every day").

Physical activity

A five-point scale ranging from 0 ("Never") to 4 ("Every day or almost every day") was developed to measure the amount of physical activity undertaken by young people.

Data analysis

As can be seen above, factor analysis along with the Cronbach alpha was used to evaluate the psychometric properties of scales. The univariate analysis consisted of percentages as well as mean and standard deviation. For bivariate analysis the t-test, ANOVA and Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated.

Results

Background characteristics of the respondents

The average age of the young people aged between 18 and 25 analysed here was 21.61 (standard deviation = 2.21). Females (53%) slightly outnumbered males. Slightly less than half (46%) and almost one quarter of them were in education and employment respectively. Almost one in six thought their household income was worse

than their fellow citizens. Slightly less than half of the respondents (46%) described how they had difficulty making ends meet with their household income. Almost all of the respondents (96%) were citizens of the country they lived in. Nearly one in 10 reported having a disability. Of those who responded, 61% lived in a medium-sized town or city and the rest lived in a village or open country.

Youth psychological well-being by European country

Figure 1: Mean score on the PWB scale by European country
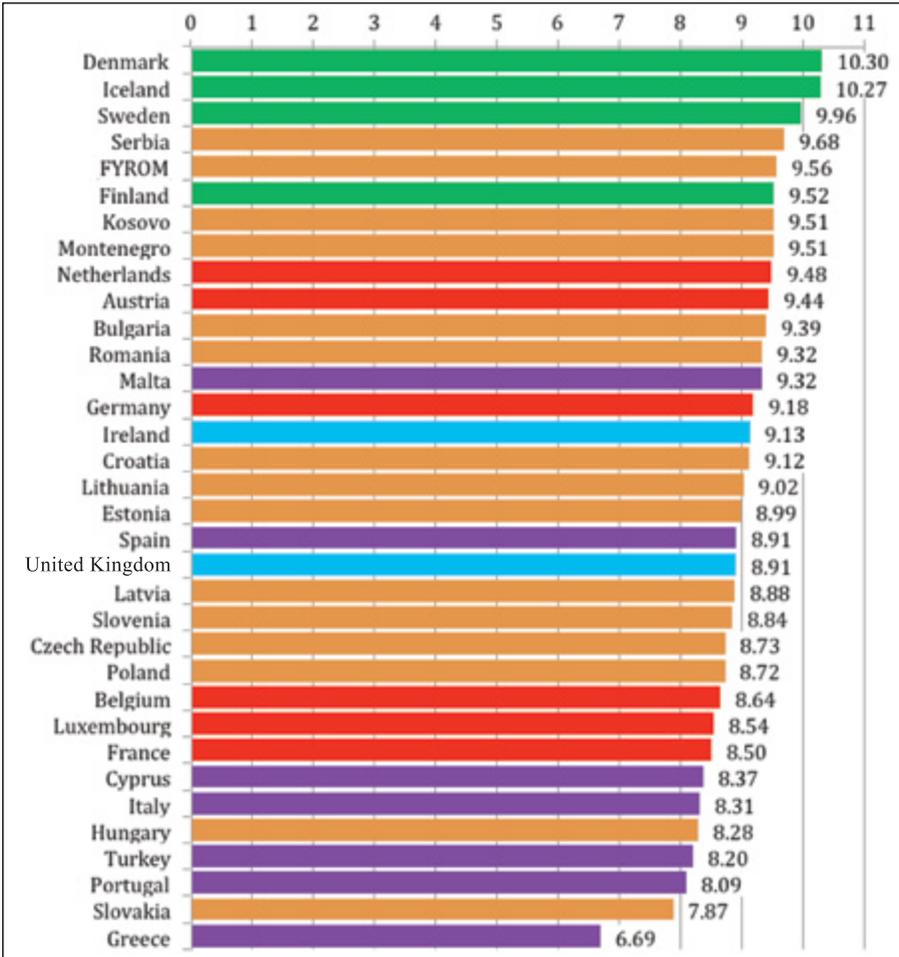
The average score for PWB for all young people in the survey was 8.98 (out of a maximum of 12). The results in Figure 1 suggest that this average varies widely across the countries surveyed. The bars in both Figures 1 and 2 are colour-coded in relation to the geographic region used as a covariate in tables 1 and 3 below (Nordic, central Europe, Mediterranean, UK and Ireland). Young people from Denmark, Iceland and Sweden reported the three highest average scores on the PWB scale, whereas their counterparts from Greece, Slovakia and Portugal scored the three lowest averages.

Indeed, there is a suggestion that there is a strong regional dimension to PWB with Nordic countries tending to score highly and Mediterranean countries the opposite.

The association of demographic characteristics with youth PWB

Out of the 11 demographic characteristics in Table 1, nine have a statistically significant association with youth PWB. Although the degree of association was low, "older" young people reported having significantly lower PWB. Young people in education reported having higher PWB compared to those in employment. However, those unemployed reported significantly lower PWB than employed youth. Household income plays a significant role as the young people living in the highest quartile reported having higher PWB compared to those living in the lowest household income quartile.

PWB appeared to be significantly lower for those young people who felt that their household financial situation was worse than those citizens they felt were doing better. In this regard, young people who reported that their household made ends meet "with difficulty" had significantly lower PWB. Future financial concerns appear to play a key role in youth PWB because those who expected their household finances to get worse reported significantly lower PWB. Young people with a disability reported having significantly lower PWB. Moreover, compared to those young people living in the Nordic region, the PWB of young people living in all other regions in Europe (UK and Ireland, Mediterranean, central Europe and eastern Europe) was significantly lower. Gender and citizenship status did not show a significant association with PWB.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics and youth PWB

Demographic characteristics (comparison group)	Number	Mean	Test statistic	Sig., two-tailed
Age	4710	8.98	$r = -0.04$	0.006
Gender			$t = 0.571$	0.568
Male	2201	9.00		
Female	2509	8.97		
Employment status (Employed)			$F=28.37$	0.000
Employed	1609	8.97		N/A
Unemployed	627	8.26		0.000
Student	2173	9.25		0.004
Family care	215	8.58		0.166
Other	86	8.67		0.811
Household income (Lowest quartile)			$F=5.42$	0.001
Lowest quartile	956	8.75		N/A
Q2	703	8.99		0.192
Q3	738	9.03		0.087
Highest quartile	650	9.19		0.002

Demographic characteristics (comparison group)	Number	Mean	Test statistic	Sig., two-tailed
Perceived income compared to others (Better)			F=63.57	0.000
Better	1184	9.39		N/A
Same	2688	8.99		0.000
Worse	735	8.25		0.000
Ability of household to make ends meet			t=14.51	0.000
Easily	2476	9.40		
With difficulty	2084	8.48		
Expectations for household finances in 12 months (Better)			F=137.24	0.000
Better	1315	9.38		N/A
Same	2164	9.16		0.016
Worse	817	7.90		0.000
Citizen of county			t= −1.15	0.250
Yes	4508	8.99		
No	202	8.81		
Having some disabilities			t= −4.03	0.000
Yes	438	8.81		
No	4247	9.10		
Urban density (City)			F=7.03	0.000
Open country	425	9.16		0.355
Village	1411	8.81		0.436
Medium-sized town	1421	9.15		0.082
City	1444	8.94		N/A
Country regions (Nordic)			F=47.49	0.000
Nordic	385	10.00		N/A
UK and Ireland	266	8.98		0.000
Central Europe	816	8.96		0.000
Mediterranean	1087	8.36		0.000
Eastern Europe	2156	9.13		0.000

Psychosocial factors and youth PWB

Apart from the intensity of the factors relating to a caring role and religiosity, the remaining eight psychosocial factors have a statistically significant association with youth PWB (Table 2). Higher accommodation quality, support networks, interaction with friends and neighbours, and satisfaction with one's own country's financial position are found to be significantly associated with higher PWB of young people. Moreover, young people who reported high for physical exercise, public service and neighbourhood quality appeared to have higher levels of PWB. Interestingly, lower PWB was associated with greater tension between young people and old people. The degree of association of these psychosocial factors suggests that satisfaction with one's own country's financial position is the most important factor, followed by public services, neighbourhood quality and support networks.

Table 2: Correlation matrix for the psychosocial factors and youth PWB

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Accommodation quality (1)	1										
Support networks (2)	0.07***	1									
Tension between old and young people (3)	-0.05***	-0.03	1								
Interaction with friends and neighbours (4)	0.10***	0.04*	-0.02	1							
Caring role (5)	-0.10***	-0.04**	0.02	-0.08***	1						
Satisfaction with a country's economic situation (6)	0.10***	0.06***	-0.08***	0.01	-0.02	1					
Quality of public services (7)	0.07***	0.06***	-0.10***	0.14***	-0.07***	0.09***	1				
Neighbourhood quality (8)	0.19***	0.04**	-0.10***	0.07***	-0.09***	0.13***	0.15***	1			
Religiosity (9)	-0.03*	0.05***	0.02	-0.07***	0.13***	-0.01	-0.13***	-0.12***	1		
Exercise/sports (10)	0.04**	0.05***	-0.01	0.09***	0.08***	0.09***	0.01	-0.02	0.10***	1	
PWB (11)	0.10***	0.11***	-0.05***	0.09***	-0.02	0.21***	0.12***	0.11***	0.02	0.10***	1
Mean	5.30	4.87	0.83	3.27	0.41	4.28	15.38	15.45	0.92	0.99	8.98
Standard deviation	1.09	0.48	0.69	1.06	0.94	2.37	3.05	2.74	1.04	1.26	2.17

* p <.05; ** p <.01; *** p <.001.

Youth mental health by European country

The average score for mental health for all young people in the survey was 16.82 (out of a maximum of 25). As with PWB, the mental health of young people differs widely between European countries (Figure 2). In this regard, young people in Macedonia, Bulgaria and Montenegro appeared to be doing well when compared to those in some other European countries, such as Iceland, the UK and Sweden. An interesting pattern is observed when the results in Figure 1 and Figure 2 are compared. Although young people from the Nordic countries placed themselves high on the PWB scale, on average they tended to report lower, relative to the other countries, on mental health (Pearson r = -0.023).

Figure 2: Mean score on youth mental health scale by European country
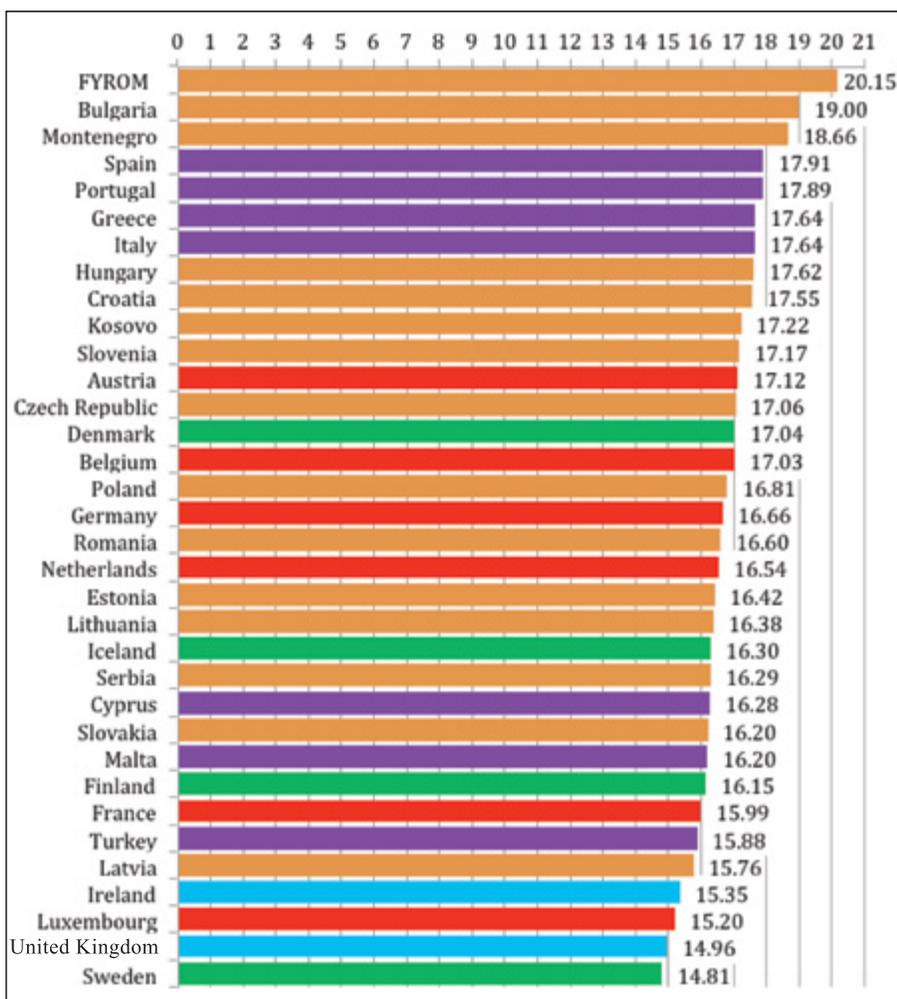
The association of demographic factors with youth mental health

Older youth, females, those with a disability and young people living in a household that finds it difficult to make ends meet reported significantly lower levels of mental health (Table 3). Although students appeared to have higher mental health scores than those in employment, young people in charge of family care reported lower mental health scores. Compared to those in the lowest quartile of household income, young people living in the second, third and the highest quartiles had significantly higher mental health scores. Young people who evaluated their household finances to be worse than their fellow citizens reported significantly lower levels of mental health than those who reported being better off. Those who feared worse household finances over the next twelve months had significantly lower mental health scores. Young people living in open countryside (as opposed to city-dwelling youth) and those living in Mediterranean and east European countries (as opposed to the Nordic region) reported significantly higher mental health scores. However, the citizenship of young people did not have any significant relationship with mental health.

Table 3: Demographic characteristics and youth mental health

Demographic characteristics (comparison group)	Number	Mean	Test statistic	Sig., two-tailed
Age	4724	16.82	r=−0.06	0.000
Gender			t=5.86	0.000
Male	2205	17.26		
Female	2519	16.44		
Employment status (Employed)			F=15.26	0.000
Employed	1617	16.63		N/A
Unemployed	640	16.29		0.672
Student	2158	17.32		0.001
Family care	218	15.27		0.004
Other	91	15.74		0.564
Household income (Lowest quartile)			F=13.35	0.000
Lowest quartile	963	15.76		N/A
Q2	709	16.84		0.000
Q3	745	16.89		0.000
Highest quartile	655	17.11		0.000
Perceived income compared to others (Better)			F=44.76	0.000
Better	1183	17.45		N/A
Same	2691	16.91		0.006
Worse	746	15.37		0.000

Demographic characteristics (comparison group)	Number	Mean	Test statistic	Sig., two-tailed
Ability of household to make ends meet			t=11.67	0.000
Easily	2484	17.56		
With difficulty	2088	15.90		
Expectations for household finances in 12 months (Better)			F=31.7	0.000
Better	1324	16.88		N/A
Same	2148	17.28		0.055
Worse	827	15.73		0.000
Citizen of country			t=-0.84	0.399
Yes	4519	16.83		
No	205	16.54		
Having some disabilities			t=-12.19	0.000
Yes	447	14.21		
No	4255	17.11		
Urban density (City)			F=3.67	0.012
Open country	423	17.41		0.019
Village	1417	16.81		0.637
Medium-sized town	1420	16.94		0.253
City	1452	16.57		N/A
Country regions (Nordic)			F=20.46	0.000
Nordic	386	15.87		N/A
UK and Ireland	268	15.10		0.399
Central Europe	819	16.46		0.409
Mediterranean	1094	16.77		0.042
Eastern Europe	2157	17.37		0.000

Psychosocial factors and youth mental health

Except for those in a caring role, nine psychosocial factors in Table 4 are significantly associated with young people's mental health. In this regard, better quality of accommodation, support networks, interaction with friends/neighbours, satisfaction with a country's economic situation, public service quality, neighbourhood quality, religiosity and physical exercise are all linked to better mental health in young people. However, higher tension between the young and old is significantly associated with poorer mental health among young people. Among those psychosocial factors, accommodation quality appears to have a stronger association, followed by satisfaction with a country's economic situation, support networks and public service quality.

Table 4: Correlation matrix for the psychosocial factors and youth mental health

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Accommodation quality (1)	1										
Support networks (2)	0.07***	1									
Tension between old and young people (3)	−0.05***	−0.03	1								
Interaction with friends and neighbours (4)	0.10***	0.04*	−0.02	1							
Caring role (5)	−0.10***	−0.04**	0.02	−0.08***	1						
Satisfaction with a country's economic situation (6)	0.10***	0.06***	0.08***	0.01	−0.02	1					
Public service quality (7)	0.07***	0.06***	−0.10***	0.14***	0.07***	0.09***	1				
Neighbourhood quality (8)	0.19***	0.04**	−0.10***	0.06***	−0.09***	0.13***	0.15***	1			
Religiosity (9)	−0.03*	0.05***	0.03	−0.07***	0.13***	−0.01	−0.13***	−0.12***	1		
Exercise/sports (10)	0.04**	0.05***	−0.01	0.09***	0.08***	0.09***	0.01	−0.02	0.10***	1	
Mental health (11)	0.15***	0.10***	−0.05**	0.08***	−0.01	0.14***	0.10***	0.09***	0.07***	0.09***	1
Mean	5.30	4.87	0.83	3.27	0.41	4.28	15.38	15.45	0.92	0.99	16.82
Standard deviation	1.09	0.48	0.69	1.06	0.94	2.37	3.05	2.74	1.04	1.26	4.85

* p <.05; ** p <.01; *** p <.001.

Main findings and their implications

This paper identifies the demographic and psychosocial factors that are associated with mental health and the PWB of a representative sample of young people in Europe. This section highlights the main findings and discusses their implications both in terms of theories and youth policies in Europe.

Young people in European countries vary widely in terms of the level of both psychological and mental health. At the aggregate level, although some countries, in particular Nordic ones, are doing well on youth PWB, the youth mental health of some of these countries appears to be relatively low. Perhaps the negative association between PWB and mental health that we observe in aggregate terms can be explained by the popular psychological concept of "affluenza" which James (2007) uses to explain the prevalence of higher rates of mental disorders in wealth-seeking consumerist nations. At the individual level, however, both the mental health and PWB of young people are significantly related to a range of demographic factors, including age, employment status, household finances, disabilities and the area in which people live. Moreover, the mental health and PWB of European youth are significantly linked to accommodation quality, support networks, interaction with friends/neighbours, satisfaction with a country's economic position, public service quality, neighbourhood quality and exercise/sports.

These findings have theoretical implications as they contribute to our knowledge of youth well-being using a eudaemonic approach that is relatively less well developed for research with children and young people. Apart from the theoretical significance of this, these findings have a number of implications for European youth policies.

Significant negative associations of age with both mental health and PWB suggest that more systematic interventions, targeting "older" young people, are required. Young people who have family care roles, are in unemployment or have a disability should arguably receive more support, since a lack of support is likely to contribute to worsening mental health and PWB. Macroeconomic policies, especially the policy of alleviating youth poverty, are essential for European countries. Maintaining high quality accommodation, neighbourhoods, public services, sports facilities and support networks are crucial because many of these services are affected by austerity. Policies both at the national and the EU level should identify regions or localities where more resources are required because of wide variations in youth mental health and PWB by country and residential area (rural, city, etc.). Overall, policies on social protection and care, local government, citizen engagement, education, health and finance should aim to improve youth mental health and PWB by considering the relations between these demographic and psychological factors.

Limitations and future directions

Despite their theoretical and policy significance, the findings of this paper should be treated with some caution. This section identifies a number of limitations that future studies need to address.

1. This paper uses a correlational design. Therefore, causal connections cannot be established between demographic and psychosocial factors and youth mental health

and PWB. For identifying cause–effect relationships, longitudinal data are required and a Europe-wide longitudinal study of children and young people's well-being is the only way of doing this.

2. This paper focuses on a specific youth cohort using data from the EQLS that collected data from those aged 18 and above. Therefore, the results do not reflect the views of younger cohorts (aged under 18). Although there are challenges, future studies should also aim to collect data on mental health and PWB from younger groups.

3. Results on the associations between demographic and psychosocial factors and youth well-being for this exploratory paper were drawn from bivariate analysis. These factors need to be examined more closely in the future using multivariate statistical techniques. In this regard, multilevel modelling may achieve more robust results because of the structured nature of the data (individual respondents nested in country).

4. To identify the demographic and psychosocial factors of young people's mental health and PWB, this paper explored only individual-level variables. Although these are crucial factors, future studies should examine their associations taking into account a range of contextual/macro-level factors – such as youth unemployment of a country, population density, expenditure on education and health – at the time of the data collection.

5. This paper examines eudaemonic well-being focusing on PWB and one of its key domains – mental health. There are a number of other aspects of youth PWB, such as autonomy or personality, which future studies on youth well-being should explore in detail.

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"Illegal bodies" on the move – A critical look at forced migration towards social justice for young asylum-seekers

Maria Pisani

INTRODUCTION

*H*omo Migratus. A term I coined to make a point – an important point: human beings move. It is what we have always done; it is nothing new. Indeed, contemporary trends indicate that international migration is now an integral part of globalisation. This, according to Castles and Miller (2009) is the "Age of Migration". But what is the "Age" of migration? The UN Youth Report of 2013 suggested that by mid-2010, the global number of international migrants aged 15-24 was estimated to be around 27 million, making up around one eighth of the global migrant population (estimated at that time to be around 214 million). According to another UN report, young people aged 19-29 constitute somewhere between 36% and 57% of international migrants (United Nations 2013). Young people move for a variety of reasons, be it for education, employment opportunities, voluntary work abroad, for love even. There are also those who are forced to flee their home as a result of an existential threat. Statistics on asylum claims throughout the EU are significant. In 2014, almost four in every five asylum-seekers in the EU-28 were under 35 years of age (79%). Those aged 18-34 made up just over half of the total number of applicants (54%), while minors under the age of 18 accounted for just over one quarter (or 26%). In 2014, more than 23 000 unaccompanied minors (UaMs) requested asylum in one of the EU-28 countries (Eurostat 2015).

In this paper I will be focusing on young people who have been forced to flee their homes, specifically those fleeing sub-Sarahan Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, who have made their way to the European Union.[2] The paper is divided into two sections. In the first section I provide an overview of the forced migration trends crossing the Mediterranean. My analysis will contest the neo-liberal liberal agenda and the immigration policies of "Fortress Europe" that extend well beyond the blue (sea) border: political processes and practices that structure realities at a global, regional and local level. I then look at the case of young asylum-seekers who have arrived in Malta,[3] and secondary containment within the EU. I describe human rights violations, poverty and social marginalisation, and I expose processes of democratic exclusion: the day-to-day realities experienced by illegalised young bodies positioned discursively and *de facto* outside the law. In the second section I illustrate how a "statist" hegemony is ubiquitous within youth research. I illustrate how the "citizenship assumption" within youth studies has failed to interrogate the "nation state" as a unit of anlaysis. I conclude by arguing that the prevalent, uncritical stance towards notions of the nation state and democracy is fundamentally problematic, inherently exclusionary, and out of touch with a global reality lived out by millions of young people: young bodies positioned as "illegal" wherein the "right to rights" cannot be assumed (Arendt 1968).

This paper adopts a critical approach to the study of youth and forced migration. In the spirit of a critical approach to knowledge production, one must necessarily draw on a wide spectrum of disciplines, paradigms and theoretical approaches. In this paper I draw on, *inter alia*, critical international relations, post-structuralism, post-colonial studies and intersectionality. What each of these theoretical approaches share is the rejection of any notion of objectivity or neutrality in language, concepts and categories, arguing instead that knowledge is always embedded in historical and social processes. In adopting a critical approach to the study of youth and forced migration, this paper seeks not only to question, expose and understand domination and oppressive structures, but also to move towards a project of praxis and social transformation (Habermas 1993). In this regard, this paper does not claim to be objective or neutral; rather, it is unapologetically political and geared towards social justice. This paper does not provide an all-inclusive account of youth and forced migration, nor does it seek to do so. Rather, it marks a humble – desperate

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2. For the purposes of this paper, forced migration is defined as the movement of individuals resulting from an existential threat and includes persons displaced as a result of war, persecution, conflict, famine, natural or environmental disasters. The term "forced migrants" includes refugees, internally displaced people (IDPs), as well as persons displaced by natural or environmental disasters, chemical or nuclear disasters, famine or development projects (see also Betts 2009; IASFM 2014). Migration is often premised on the distinction between forced and economic migration – the former being associated with the category of "refugee", the latter assumed to be "voluntary". Such a dichotomy – that of volition and coercion – is inherently problematic (Crisp 2008). There is a fine line between fleeing one's home in search of safety and as a means of subsistence and survival. In reality the line is complex and blurred wherein the need for human security must not be limited to violence and persecution, but must include socio-economic threats (Pisani and Grech 2015).
3. Located in the centre of the Mediterranean, south of Sicily and north of Libya, Malta (and the sister islands of Gozo and Comino) is the smallest of the European Union (EU) member states, with a population of just over 400 000.

even – attempt to stimulate further debate on youth and forced migration – an issue that urgently deserves theoretical engagement, informed intervention and practice, and legal and policy change in order to ensure the right to rights and social justice.

CONTEXTUALISING SOUTH/NORTH FORCED MIGRATION

Over the past few months, the asylum flows across the Mediterranean have received considerable attention in the international media as the death toll has continued to rise – now well into the thousands. Up to April 2015 the guesstimates were around 1 780 (IOM 2015). This blue border has emerged as the most deadly sea route used by refugees and other forced migrants around the world. We will probably never know exactly how many lives have been lost, positioned and construed as "illegal"; their bodies are rendered disposable. However, we do have some statistics on arrivals – albeit inconsistent ones. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and IOM report that more than 10 000 unaccompanied minors risked their lives crossing the Mediterranean in 2014 (UNHCR and IOM 2014). Other sources suggest that the same year witnessed 12 164 in Italy alone – a third of them now reported as missing (Malta Independent 2014). In 2014, more than a quarter of the arrivals in Malta were under the age of 18 and travelling alone, young people (generally aged between 15 and 17) largely (but not exclusively) from Somalia and Eritrea, fleeing war, conflict and/or poverty in search of a better life in Europe.

Political and humanitarian responses to this reality have all too often adopted a fig-leaf response that "at best ignores underlying causes, and at worst, legitimates structures perpetuating forced migration" (Betts 2009: 131). I want to begin by first looking at the context that forced migrants crossing the Mediterranean are leaving behind. Castles (2003) has argued that such forced migratory movements are a fundamental element of North/South relations, and intrinsicaly linked to global social transformations. Neo-liberal globalisation has continued to exacerbate a hierachy of wealth and global inequalities that have proved to be detrimental to poor people's rights and livelihoods. Undaunted by the risks involved in crossing the Mediterranean, for years now young people (in particular young men) from sub-Saharan Africa have been fleeing poverty and war, risking their lives in search of security and the hope of a better life, embodying the discursive, historical and geopolitical formations that capture these new forced migrant flows (Ifekwunigwe 2013). Despite some economic improvements, sub-Saharan Africa remains, by far, the poorest region in the world (Economist Intelligence Unit 2014), a reality that must be set against another uncomfortable truth: the economic interests of the richer countries of the world have also contributed to triggering and perpetuating wars. Indeed, poverty, all too often (and by no means coincidentally) is associated with fragile states wherein a weak justice system, human rights violations, corrupt regimes, insecurity, repression and persecution are commonplace, generating the structural conditions that push people to cross international borders in search of safety, security and protection (see also Castles 2003; Betts 2009; Grech 2011). If we look at the statistics for Malta, over the past 12 years the top countries of origin boat arrivals have almost consistently been Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Sudan. As of 26 June 2015, more than 120 000 asylum-seekers have reached the shores of Italy

(62 000) and Greece (63 000), the vast majority coming from Eritrea and Somalia, and Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq respectively (BBC 2015; UN 2015).

THE GLOBAL DIVIDE

In order to understand the contemporary policy context, we need to look to the recent past. The end of the Cold War witnessed a new world order and new migration flows. The political and economic interests of the rich northern countries shifted, and with them, their agenda. As migration movements transformed, the EU adopted a policy of containment, and so developed what has rightly been coined as "Fortress Europe". Spurred on by 9/11, the strengthening of border controls, an emphasis on securitisation, a more rigorous refugee determination process, and visa restrictions, among other measures, can all be seen as designed to prevent North/South migration or, more specifically, that refugees from the global South remain in the South (Koffman et al. 2000). As a young refugee recently shared in a conference organised in Malta, "It would have been easier for me to get a visa to Mars, than to get a visa to Europe." For this reason, and contrary to popular perceptions in the EU and beyond, the vast majority of displaced people are hosted by countries in the Middle East, Asia and Africa. Indeed, at the end of 2013, the poorest countries in the world were hosting 86% of the world's refugees (UNHCR 2014), a reality, then, that must also be understood within the broader context of North/South relations.

While the causes of forced migration are global, the responsibility for hosting refugees is clearly local. The majority of the world's refugees and displaced people have been residing in protracted refugee contexts (that's for at least five years) because they have nowhere else to go. For many host countries in the global South, chronic refugee contexts contribute to insecurity, presenting challenges to economies that are already weak, and posing a political and economic dilemma vis-à-vis the security of its own citizens. The ongoing situation in the country of origin and the policy responses of the host country go some way to explain the causes of protracted refugee contexts, but do not provide the whole picture.

The restrictive asylum policies of the rich countries of the North have ensured the externalisation of borders to the South, perpetuating the disproportionate responsibility on the global South (Milner 2014). And herein lies what Hyndman (2011) has described as the "conundrum ... a contradiction, or more simply geopolitics" (2011: 7). The world's richest states have found ever more convoluted ways to avoid their legal obligations as enshrined within the 1951 Geneva Convention. The aid, policies and strategies put in place by liberal democratic countries are a flagrant denial of the liberal democratic norms and human rights established to protect refugees. This containment policy has contributed to millions upon millions of the world's forgotten people – refugees – remaining warehoused in limbo, denied the most basic rights to work, residence and mobility, their legal status restricted (ibid.). As Chimni (2009: 11) has convincingly argued, restrictive access to international rights must be historically contextualised and recognised as deliberate, reinforcing what he calls the "myth of difference between second and third world refugees". In the absence of durable solutions and effective protection, some refugees will continue their journey, resulting in irregular secondary movements (Moret, Baglioni and

Efionayi-Mäder 2006). This of course has implications regionally, and also internationally. Some – and as the statistics indicate, by no means all – will head to Europe. Take, by way of example, the Mai Aini and Adi Harush camps in Ethiopia, which have been housing Eritrean refugees for more than a decade. Facing a life in limbo, thousands of young Eritrean refugees have moved on to third countries, many en route to Europe or the Middle East (UNHCR 2011).

FORTRESS EUROPE

This containment policy, coinciding with restrictive immigration policies, has witnessed the birth of "Fortress Europe". Similar to Australia's "Operation Sovereign Borders", the policy debilitates asylum-seekers' access to refugee protection. The strategy has led to deadly repercussions as the EU member states have sought to construct an increasingly impenetrable fortress to keep the unwanted out – regardless of the desperate measures they are willing to take to seek protection. In an effort to "defend" its external borders the EU has gone to extraordinary measures, placing borders over lives, sovereignty over rights.

Take the Greece/Turkey border, for example, where barbed wire fencing, thermal night vision cameras and border patrols are among the means used to prevent what is construed as a national security threat (Council of Europe 2010). If we look to the eastern borders, in response to a dramatic increase in the number of asylum-seekers originating from countries like Afghanistan and Syria, the government of Hungary just recently announced a plan to build a 13-foot (4-metre) high wall along the 109-mile border with Serbia (The Wall Street Journal 2015).

Another case in point would be along the southern borders. In 2014 the EU took the decision not to replace the Italian Mare Nostrum operation and support search and rescue operations in the Mediterranean, claiming that it would encourage more migrants to attempt the crossing. Needless to say, migrants continued to board the boats; the desperate attempts to reach protection did not cease. The decision to stop search and rescue operations contributed to the hundreds of drownings we witnessed in spring 2015.

Academic literature has demonstrated how "illegal" migration flows are a product of ever stricter border controls. The emphasis on securitisation has produced illegality and the criminalisation of forced migrants by law, policy and a "plethora of practices" (Scheel and Squire 2014: 189).

The absence of legal safe means of travel has witnessed the proliferation of ever more dangerous and unscrupulous smuggling networks. The Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants, François Crépeau, has illustrated how the 2000 Palermo Protocol against the smuggling of migrants is a repressive tool used to serve state interests. He argues that the tool demonstrates a simplistic understanding of the phenomenon that is not only dangerous, but also dismisses the rights of refugees. The anti-smuggling protocol can be differentiated from the anti-trafficking protocol on the basis of coercion and consent – the onus here being on agency. This is not to suggest that the smugglers are not profiting from the circumstances of desperate people, nor indeed that they are not exploiting their vulnerability; rather, it is to emphasise the volition of the migrant and understanding of the risks involved,

in contrast to the deception and coercion prevalent in trafficking. Politicians will often confuse smuggling with trafficking – and it would be naive to suggest that this is not intentional – generating the conditions necessary to justify a hardline approach with the smugglers (Crépeau 2003). Indeed, following the deaths in the Mediterranean, the EU member states drafted a UN Security Council resolution to secure a UN mandate allowing miltary action in Libya to curb the asylum flows by "targeting trafficking networks" (The Guardian 2015). Theresa May, the UK Home Secretary, justified such action by arguing that:

> we should use military, intelligence and crime-fighting assets not only to deliver search and rescue mechanisms, but also to crack down on the traffickers who are putting people at risk. (International Business Times 2015)

Another reading of smuggling networks is sustained through academic research. The failure of migration policies has witnessed the emergence of the migration industry – including NGOs (including the organisation I form a part of), counterfeit documents, and smuggling networks among others. Paradoxically, then, in its efforts to keep the unwanted at bay, "Fortress Europe" has contributed to an increase in irregular migration; the rise in smuggling networks has been described as a direct result of state and regional measures to ward off "unwanted" migration. In simple terms, in the absence of a safer option, smugglers have responded to the needs of forced migrants by providing a far from ideal alternative. If there were a safer alternative, common sense tells us that most people would take it, rather then risk his or her life in the watery graves of the Mediterranean, or indeed anywhere else in this divided world. As things stand, the route is by no means available to all, and research has demonstrated how the forced migratory process intersects with, *inter alia*, age, gender, dis/ability, socio-economic status, "race" and ethnicity (UNHCR and Integra Foundation 2015). An increasingly restrictive migration and asylum regime has increased the costs of reaching safety beyond the blue borders, and the end result is that protection for refugees – access to rights – is a commodity to be bought, and thus only available to those who can afford it (Zetter 1991). Migrants' access to different forms of capital (economic, social, cultural, symbolic and human) determines how the migratory process will pan out (van Hear 2004). The journeys are often long, dangerous, and physically demanding (Pisani and Grech 2015). It comes as no surprise, then, that the majority of asylum-seekers making the crossing are young men (Ifekwunigwe 2013; Pisani and Azzopardi 2009). And yet, despite the human rights framework, the 1951 Geneva Convention and the specific provisions under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), young forced migrants with an irregular status are subjected to enforcement measures that violate their rights (Global Migration Group, UNICEF and OHCHR 2013).

"ILLEGAL BODIES"

We are often exposed to images of misery in the media: the plight of "refugees" in Africa, the Middle East and beyond. The "wretched of the earth" (Fanon 1963) represent a faceless pitiful mass removed by history and a comfortable distance. By the time these same people reach the shores of the EU, the label "refugee" has morphed into labels such as "illegal immigrant", "klandestini", "illegal asylum-seekers" and so on. The heterogeneity of asylum-seekers is erased, often replaced by an

"essentialised blackness" (Ifekwunigwe 2013: 221). Labels are not unproblematic – the shift in discourse does not happen in a vacuum – rather they are driven by states' migration policies and operational concerns (Zetter 1991). Such criminalising hegemonic discourse upholds power relations that serve the interests of the global North, not only defining, but also justifying hardline policies that all too often are a barefaced violation of human rights. It's a lot easier to violate the rights of an "illegal" body – surely, one may even go so far as to question whether such bodies actually have the "right to rights" (Arendt 1968).

Upon arrival in Malta, for example, asylum-seekers are detained for up to 12 months, or until their asylum claim is determined; rejected asylum-seekers are detained for 18 months. In 2011, the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe asserted that Malta's policy of mandatory and prolonged administrative detention is "irreconcilable with the requirements of the European Convention on Human Rights and the case law of the Strasbourg Court". The Court found that none of the remedies available to migrants "constituted an effective and speedy remedy for challenging the lawfulness of the applicants' detention" and as such are a violation of the right to liberty as set out in the European Convention on Human Rights (Commissioner for Human Rights 2011). The conditions in detention have also received widespread criticism, reported to be "beyond the threshold of degrading treatment" (International Commission of Jurists 2012: 31).

The Geneva Convention is a status- and rights-based instrument, underpinned by a number of fundamental principles, most notably non-discrimination, non-penalisation and *non-refoulement*. Importantly, the convention prohibits penalties for unlawful entry (UNHCR, n.d.: 3), and yet in the case of "illegal bodies", "rights" are confined to the citizen imbued with humanity. Evidence has demonstrated how the detention centre is, as Agamben has argued, the definitive paradigm of the "state of exception"; a depoliticised space wherein, by virtue of their political – and ontological – exclusion, lives are suspended, dehumanised, they are reduced to "bare life" and outside the reach of law (see Agamben 1998: 174). Such is the fate of the "illegal body"; the cost of state security is borne by the politically insecure, their "right to rights" denied (Arendt 1968). The detention policy remains unchanged.

Pending age verification, unaccompanied minors are also subject to the mandatory detention policy – a policy which is also a violation of the UNCRC that can never be justified as being in the best interests of the young person (aditus 2014).[4]

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4. Upon verification of age, a care order is issued by the minister officially placing the child under the care of the Minister for the Family and Social Solidarity, and the UaMs are transferred to an open centre, where they are assigned a legal guardian and the asylum procedure resumes. A recent report published by aditus highlights a number of key concerns vis-à-vis age assessment and guardianship, including (but not limited to) the need to regulate the age assessment procedures, and increase transparency; age assessment should not be conducted in detention, and minors should not be detained with adults; UaMs are presently obligated to undergo the age assessment procedure and interviews in the absence of a guardian or legal representative; appropriate and accessible information is not made available to the UaMs, hindering their participation in the age assessment process. The duties and responsibilities of a legal guardian for UaMs are not clearly specified in law or policy and UaMs do not have immediate access to a guardian or legal representative upon arrival and while they are in detention (aditus 2014: 35-42).

Discursive practices serve to position the "illegal body" outside the national political community; the onus is on national security, not only protecting the citizenry, but also reinforcing the citizen–non-citizen relationship. The following statement, made by the former Maltese Minister for Home Affairs, captures this notion well:

> Given Malta's small size you cannot expect the government to release illegal immigrants into the streets, especially in light of increasing numbers. This would send the wrong message and spell disaster for the country ... As a minister I am responsible, first and foremost, for the protection of Maltese citizens. (Calleja 2009)

The regimes of discourse and power, informed by a devout Roman Catholic narrative that plays into contemporary times wherein the victory over Islam is still celebrated,[5] are inscribed on the body, reconstructing the subject; the black illegal immigrant is rendered docile (Foucault 1976).

The detention policy is symptomatic of the insidious, but ever-present, abuse of power of governments around the world, resulting in the imposition of policies and practices that are directed by national interests and political gains. Given the values that we would normally associate with a "liberal democracy" – justice, rights, equality, and so on – the very notion that a state can imprison thousands of people where no crime has been committed, and where the notion of "guilt or innocence" does not feature, beggars belief. Let me be clear, this would not be happening if these young people were citizens of the nation state.

Space limitations do not allow me to delve into the lived realities of unaccompanied minors and young asylum-seekers' lives in Malta.[6] It is worth noting that the majority of asylum-seekers in Malta – almost 80% in 2015 (UNHCR Real Time) – are granted international protection in recognition of the conditions they left behind in their home country. However, for the majority of them this protection is limited to subsidiary protection, which grants them freedom of movement in Malta, residence (renewable) for one year, access to employment, core state medical care and core social benefits, access to state education, and travel documents (UNHCR Malta 2010). They do not have the right to apply for citizenship.[7] Those whose request for protection has been denied remain in Malta in a tolerated state, pending deportation. The chances of them being deported are very limited; many cannot return due to the conditions they left behind and so they remain in limbo – discursively,

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5. The arrival of asylum-seekers has largely been perceived as a threat to Maltese society, and to the myth of cultural homogeneity. Malta is a Roman Catholic state; societal discourse has responded with the mobilisation of communal symbols (not least the "nation's religion" or "Christian values") and collective memories that subsume the heterogeneity and social hierarchy into some kind of larger collective, albeit imagined, national identity (Borg and Mayo 2002).

6. See, for example, JRS Malta (2010); aditus (2014); UNHCR and Integra Foundation (2015).

7. Beneficiaries of Refugee Protection are granted the right to apply for citizenship; however, as Debono (2013) has argued, the Maltese citizenship regime and the sub-field of naturalisation are governed by a "protectionist position" and "immigration concerns". The legal aspects and practices of naturalisation give rise to critical questions related to fairness and justice. Describing it as a "damning practice", Debono argues that the minister's discretionary power – which lacks transparency and the possibility of appeal – indicates a "distinction and a hierarchy between a citizen and a non-citizen" that is likely to remain intact thanks to general political support (Debono 2013: 10-11).

ontologically and legally they exist at the margins. Stripped of any political existence, power decides for them – their voices denied by the sovereign state, outside the law, they are silenced (Agamben 1998).

Over the past 13 years more than 20 000 asylum-seekers have reached the shores of Malta – a guesstimated 6 000 remain in Malta. Of those who left, some of them were resettled through the US resettlement programme; a few hundred were relocated to other EU member states. A few hundred were repatriated, some voluntarily. But thousands have left Malta and we have no idea where they now are – this includes unaccompanied minors: a recent report suggested at least two are reported missing every week – and never found (aditus 2014). So what's happening?

SECONDARY CONTAINMENT – THE EUROPEAN DIVIDE

In order to answer this question I must now turn my attention to the policy of containment within the EU, and secondary irregular movements. It is by now more than evident that the will to come up with a Common European Asylum System (CEAS) is fractured (aida 2014). Far from harmonised, differences exist in the number of asylum claims, and indeed in refugee recognition rates – an asylum-seeker's chances of being granted protection (and the quality of protection received) depend very much on where in the EU they apply. The Dublin Regulation determines which state is responsible for examining an asylum application, and this is determined by point of entry, which will – for reasons I explained above – generally be one of the external border states; given the immigration restrictions there are few alternative ways to reach the EU as an asylum-seeker. The upshot of this has resulted in a north/ south divide within the EU. The countries of the north have pushed for humane asylum policies, but have simultaneously argued that asylum-seekers remain in the country of asylum, while the countries of the south – and increasingly also the east – are arguing that the Dublin Regulation puts a disproportionate "burden" on the external borders. As things stand, the Dublin Regulation ensures – on paper at least – that asylum-seekers remain contained in the first country of asylum; this is reinforced through the EURODAC system. Upon arrival, asylum-seekers are systematically fingerprinted, the records stored in a database – allowing for identification and return back to the first country of asylum (The Migration Observatory n.d.). European Commission requests to "share the burden" with a mandatory quota for the relocation of 40 000 beneficiaries of protection from within the EU and 20 000 from outside were rejected by the member states. In July 2015, following what was described as a "diplomatic slanging match" (Robinson 2015: n.p.) the majority of the member states agreed to relocate 40 000 over a two-year period, on a voluntary basis and with no set quotas (Bulgaria and Hungary were exempted, the UK opted out). The agreed number stands in stark contrast to the number of arrivals in 2014 and the first few months of 2015 alone – indicative of the absence of solidarity between the member states, and even less with the refugees and forced migrants. The agreement is tokenistic at best.

There are 28 individual member states looking out for their own national interests: immigration issues are generally electoral issues. The powers that be are more likely to take a "hardline" stance, strategically shifting their stance and discourse, to ward

off the threat of the increasingly popular far right. Indeed, all too often, for fear of being punished at the ballot box, the "illegal body" – and indeed in some countries, albeit to a lesser degree, the broader category of "migrant" – becomes the sacrificial lamb: the scapegoat to explain the country's woes. Power is determined by votes, and "illegal immigrants" do not have votes; indeed, the political clout of the "illegal body" is non-existent,[8] and the possibilities of exercising political agency are small, defined by a social reality that is experienced as an individual, constituted at the political level and established in law. In the meantime, the production of the apolitical state of "bare life" is resisted by asylum-seekers; they move on regardless, exercising their agency at the micro-political level, crossing internal borders and residing within the fortress with an irregular status. And so again, we witness the production of illegality within the EU, evidenced in endless media reports as France and Switzerland beef up their borders with Italy, and "illegal immigrants" take desperate measures to cross from Calais to the UK, and so on.

ILLEGAL YOUTH – AN EPISTEMOLOGICAL SHIFT

The majority of asylum-seekers who arrived in Malta are now residing elsewhere in the EU and beyond. We cannot know how many for sure – such is the reality of irregular migration. The situation I describe, while contextually specific, is reproduced within the EU and further afield. Within the EU, data are generally inaccurate and unreliable; the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) estimates that around half a million undocumented migrants enter the EU annually. In 2007 – prior to the intensification of the Mediterranean and eastern European migrant flows – it was estimated that between 10% and 15% of Europe's 56 million migrants were undocumented (PICUM 2013). That's a lot of people. That's a lot of young people.

What I have tried to illustrate so far in this paper is how an understanding of forced migration, and more specifically irregular migration and asylum flows, cannot be divorced from issues of geopolitics, neo-liberal globalisation, and importantly the nation state. The sovereign nation state demarks not only the border with another state, but also the border between the citizen and the non-citizen – and it is this reality that goes to the core of how liberal states treat the "illegal body" (see also Pisani 2012; Pisani and Grech 2015).

I want to pick up on this issue in relation to the field of youth studies and what I would describe as a "statist" hegemony that sits alongside what I have defined elsewhere as the "citizenship assumption" (Pisani 2012). By way of example, I refer to Andy Furlong's introduction to youth studies (2013). Furlong (2013: 210) does acknowledge that not all "residents of a country are entitled to citizenship rights" and goes on to note that they "may be formally denied certain rights and, in these cases, the state may limit entitlements or make them conditional upon a range of criteria that are more strict than those available to its own citizens … their position is

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8. Given that Malta is an emerging country of immigration, the absence of a diasporic voice within the citizenry is also felt. The local situation can be compared to the US, for example, where the Hispanic vote has had considerable influence on the political debate on "illegal immigration" and citizenship (see, for example, Cooper & Gabriel, 2012).

highly ambiguous". The fact that the non-citizen is acknowledged is commendable. However, the analysis stops there and fails to interrogate the implications for the "illegal" youth. Furlong goes on to state that:

> [all] young people are granted the rights normally accorded to citizens in a piecemeal fashion, and while the age at which voting rights are bestowed usually represents an important landmark, an additional package of rights are frequently held back until a later stage (ibid.)

The assumption, therefore, is that while all young people face restrictions with regard to citizenship, the discrimination is "temporary" even though "it still involves the state-sanctioned denial of various rights and obligations of citizenship" (Furlong 2013: 25). In the case of "illegal" youth, the transition from minor to adult will not provide for the "right to rights".

In the following text, taken from Bernard Davies' "Youth Work: A Manifesto For Our Times – Revisited" (2015), this assumption is taken further:

> Youth work's commitment to tipping these balances in young people's favour needs to be seen in this contemporary context. But it needs to be understood, too, in a much broader way: explained bluntly as "young people are citizens, too – and now". Though apparently a simple notion, this needs to be asserted uncompromisingly at a time when so many current policies assume that, just because young people (and indeed children) have to be prepared for citizenship, they are therefore *not already* citizens (Davies 2015: 103)

The passage not only emphasises what I refer to as the "citizenship assumption", that is, that all young people are, or will be, citizens, but I think the passage also illustrates how we may be complicit in the creation of the social schism: citizens and non-citizens, those with rights (and a right to rights), and those without. If a young person is not a citizen, then he or she is officially excluded by the state, and this is sanctioned – or actively encouraged – by the "citizens", who also form the majority. Citizenship – a formal status granting a set of legal, exclusive rights – thus represents a state-sanctioned form of discrimination: democracy undermines democratic processes. This is problematic when, for example, in the following extract, Tony Jeffs (2015) does not problematise democracy, but rather takes it on as a utopian goal:

> Youth work was a way whereby they might widen horizons, expand perceptions, encourage empathy and instill respect for democracy (Jeffs 2015: 80)

Paradoxically, the "illegal body" is excluded from the core values inherent to youth work and youth studies, namely, democracy, freedom and equality. The notion of a level playing field in the eyes of the law, and indeed, access to human rights, cannot be taken for granted (Pisani 2012). Parker and Brassett (2005) demonstrate how democracy cannot perform the task of justice since it is subsequent to the demarcation of the "national community". Those persons thus excluded from this demarcation are consequently also denied the possibility of engaging as critical citizens. Herein lie the limitations of transformative youth work practice and the possibilities of transformative action in advocating for a democratic process, paradoxically, within a "national" democratic space from which the "illegal body" is excluded.

EXPOSING THE ASSUMED: MOVING BEYOND THE HEGEMONIC NATION STATE MINDSET

So now what? As Furlong (2013) reminds us:

> Youth research … is not simply about policy, about the concerns of the powerful or about understanding cultural change. The examination of young people's lives provides a unique window on processes of social and economic change and facilitates the exploration of some of the big theoretical concerns in social science. In this context, youth research is concerned with social justice, class, "race", gender and spatial divisions. It focuses on issues of power and privilege on the one hand, and deprivation and exclusion on the other" (pp. 5-6)

As a political project, youth studies illuminate the relationships within knowledge, authority, and power. As a transformative pedagogy it is committed to exposing the hegemonic processes within society and how dominant perceptions and knowledge beliefs uphold existing power relations. The concept of hegemony can also be employed as the basis for a political strategy that aims to establish an alternative hegemony that does not serve to maintain the oppressed in a subordinate position (Mayo 2010). In this regard, youth researchers can take the lead in exposing the citizenship assumption within discourse, theory and practice, and highlight the implications and consequences for the "illegal body". As researchers, and as practitioners, we also have a responsibility to understand the international and national politics of migration, the implications of legal status and the right to rights, and how normalising discourses shape policy and service provision. This is part of our commitment to social justice.

CONSTRUCTING A COUNTER-HEGEMONIC VOICE: AN EPISTEMOLOGICAL SHIFT

Hannah Arendt's (1968) solution to the crisis of the "illegal body" was the creation of a supranational law consisting of one human right: the right to belong to a political community. The fortification of the border that surrounds the EU, a space fraught with the tension and contradictions between globalisation and the sovereign state, suggests that such a solution is a long way off. And so, within the hegemonic nation state paradigm, how is social justice – for all human beings – best achieved?

Homo migratus is what we are. As long as young people are denied citizenship they will be denied the rights conferred by that same citizenship. "Illegal bodies" will remain with us as long as the right to exclude is founded on sovereignty, fortifying the state system and reinforcing the rights of the citizen: human rights will remain trumped. In the meantime, an epistemologial shift in the way we theorise the non-citizen may introduce a counter-hegemonic voice – towards transformation. As we have advanced in our own theoretical frameworks, we have identified and accounted for multiple sites of oppression, be it class, gender, disability, race, and so on. Legal status cannot be excluded from this analysis. Democracy – as we know it today – cannot deliver the emancipatory possibilities it claims to deliver, and the right to rights cannot be assumed.

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Chapter 8

Self-effective, active and healthy – Health promotion in international youth work

Ansgar Drücker

The German federal government is required to present a report on children and young people during each parliamentary term. The 13th such report (BMFSFJ 2009) focused on the health of children and young people in Germany. The reports are drafted by an independent committee of experts and published with a statement by the federal government. The 13th report pays little attention to (voluntary) youth work and none at all to international youth work and has not therefore been properly taken on board in these areas; however, it does include findings which can be applied to these two areas of child and youth welfare and which are described in greater detail below.

The self-effectiveness of young people referred to in many instances in the report can be significantly undermined by experiences of discrimination and hate speech. Health promotion therefore also includes measures to curb discrimination and combat hate speech effectively. The origin, sexual orientation or identity, or physical disabilities of young people can play a major part here. Reference is therefore made at the end of this article to the current buzzwords of diversity and inclusion.

FINDINGS OF THE 13TH REPORT ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE RELEVANT TO (VOLUNTARY) YOUTH WORK AND INTERNATIONAL YOUTH WORK

In the section of the report entitled "Greater opportunities for growing up healthy", we find the following in section 20.4 ("Implicit health promotion"):

> Extensive areas of child and youth welfare work can easily be seen as forms of health promotion or – in other fields – of health-related prevention that have not been consciously recognised to date. This does not only involve implicit, not directly intended side-effects as it were, but in many cases constitutive elements of the relevant practice which have not yet been addressed as such (BMFSFJ 2009: 244).

The empowerment approach explained in section 3.2.3 of the report also corresponds to the ideals and goals of international youth work and can, in particular, serve as a starting point and method for health promotion in work with disadvantaged young people. Participation as "a central requirement for experiencing 'self-effectiveness'" (ibid.: 72) is also a constitutive element of international youth work – and simultaneously "a fundamental construct of health promotion" (ibid.).

"Positive experiences of self-effectiveness make it easier for children and young people to cope with potentially stressful events and also foster future problem-solving skills. At the same time, they have a positive effect on psychological well-being" (ibid.: 117). That is precisely what (voluntary) youth work offers and does, and exactly that is also made possible by international youth work activities.

Effectiveness of action and self-effectiveness are necessary experiences for young people and should be firmly established parts of their daily lives. The committee consistently refers to these two aspects as key requirements for effective health promotion – and they are also central to the educational objectives of (voluntary) youth work:

> A third, health-related dimension of (voluntary) youth work becomes apparent when you realise that many young people regard youth associations as key forums in which they can experience themselves taking effective action. This is a not insignificant factor in the attractiveness of youth associations – including in contrast to school (ibid.: 209).

On the one hand, it is clear that (voluntary) youth work and international youth work provide an ideal framework for activities which include and permit health promotion. On the other hand, however, it is also clear that not all types of work in these areas can readily be interpreted as "implicit health promotion", and there is also a need for deliberate designing and possibly structuring so as to make (voluntary) youth work activities and offerings identifiable and effective as forms of health promotion too. For instance, the specific conditions of international youth exchanges, such as the coming together of the groups over long periods and the high level of biographical relevance (cf. Thomas et al. 2006), offer a particularly good basis for providing effective impulses for health promotion.

Alongside the praise for the potential of (voluntary) youth work and international youth work, the report does also indicate grounds for self-criticism:

> The often longstanding traditions in the areas of rescue work, nature conservation and the arts (especially dance) and the many leisure activities that have been common for

years, such as camping, trips and tours, provide such wide scope for experiences and adventure that any additional activities here run the risk of seeming to be artificial. Although that does not apply to the whole range of health promotion, it does apply to such central areas as exercise and body awareness, as well as social integration and social learning. It should be noted at the same time, however, that the themes of health-related prevention and health promotion have not so far been among the core themes or objectives of day-to-day activities in the (voluntary) youth work sector. Associations still tend not to interpret their own work from this angle. To date, health has not been a distinct objective of (voluntary) youth work but rather a means of achieving the respective associations' objectives more effectively ... It should be underlined here that specific activities, programmes and campaigns depend to a very large extent on committed individuals. (BMFSFJ 2009: 208-09)

Accordingly, health promotion only rarely forms part of the conceptual core of the activities offered, although health-promoting effects clearly do occur. Conceptual broadening of the activities of (voluntary) youth work and international youth work is therefore particularly appropriate if the activities are to attract larger numbers of disadvantaged young people, for whom, as will be explained, health promotion activities can have a particularly marked effect.

THE HEALTH OF YOUNG PEOPLE FROM MIGRANT BACKGROUNDS

The committee warns against taking a cultural or ethnic approach to health problems and instead places the emphasis on social disadvantages, while describing young people's belonging to multiple different cultures as a "key resource for children and young people from migrant backgrounds" (ibid.: 235). Leading on from this positive and appreciative approach to young people from migrant backgrounds, they are nevertheless clearly presented as being disadvantaged in health terms and suffering disproportionate levels of health problems – a frequently neglected aspect of the structural discrimination they face.

Intercultural aspects of health promotion are therefore of particular significance in child and youth welfare activities geared towards exchanges. They are frequently part of the conceptual approach of international youth work. This opens up additional learning opportunities, including through different approaches to and perceptions of health. This does not specifically involve culturally oriented interpretations of health (problems) but, rather, approaches which are open to target groups with differing make-ups and to different perceptions of health and different settings in travel and leisure. From this angle, for instance, intercultural differences among the target groups of such various methods and approaches are regarded as part of diversity: the health promotion methods and approaches applied should be as attractive and accessible as possible for people with quite different personal histories and attitudes, cultural backgrounds and images of health.

SOCIAL ASPECTS OF HEALTH PROMOTION

Both the international and the social policy dimensions of the subject become clear when the report states: "Among developed countries, it is not the richest which have

the best health levels but those with the smallest income differences between rich and poor" (ibid.: 48). It further states that "the health and well-being of young people are closely related to their social opportunities" (ibid.: 33). The relationship established here between social status and standing on the one hand and young people's state of health and well-being on the other is not taken properly into account in either child and youth welfare or health policy. It represents a further justification for anti-discrimination policy and makes it clear that personal responsibility for health is a necessary but in no way sufficient means of ensuring maximum well-being. For educational practice, this also means that because of the above-mentioned intertwining of individual and social factors in the health of young people, health promotion must take account of these two levels; in other words, it can assume neither that well-being will automatically be achieved among all participating young people even with the best health promotion approaches nor that an improvement in the state of health of individual participants can be brought about automatically merely through a stance based on diversity and anti-discrimination.

STATEMENTS IN THE REPORT ON CHILD AND YOUTH TRIPS AND INTERNATIONAL YOUTH WORK

Although the particular benefits and potential of child and youth leisure activities (including child and youth trips and international youth exchanges) are only hinted at in the report, the tone is positive: "Leisure activities such as camping, trips and tours provide such wide scope for experiences and adventure that any additional activities here run the risk of seeming to be artificial" (ibid.: 209). The fact that the committee nevertheless believes that trips by children and young people play a major part in promoting health can be seen in section 20.4 under the heading of "Implicit health promotion" with the example of a group of young people who go on trips, where self-effectiveness, getting to know their physical capabilities, accepting responsibility and taking part in adventures are all implicitly involved. It is also pointed out that "the issues of exercise, body awareness and the testing of young people's own limits are at the forefront of many activities" (ibid.: 209). On the basis of an example, the report also indicates that

> these trips also impart a great sense of self-effectiveness, which anyone who knows the young people involved even a little would confirm immediately. The ways of getting to know their physical capabilities which are connected with the trips but are now rare in daily school routines prove to be just as individually and biographically formative as the need to accept responsibility for themselves and keep on successfully surviving adventures in unfamiliar environments (ibid.: 244).

These experiences are also typical of the wide range of activities of international youth work and when they go well can also actually even be enhanced through the stimulating, challenging and exciting aspects of individual encounters with people from other countries.

THE OTTAWA CHARTER

The committee for the 13th report on children and young people mentions the World Health Organization (WHO) Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion and refers

several times in terms of content to this fundamental document on health promotion from 1986. The goal of complete physical, mental and social well-being has still not become an automatic part of health policy, health promotion or child and youth welfare. Being healthy is more than just not being ill. And only if we succeed in making health a positive concept will the activities geared towards health promotion reach children and young people at the most pleasant times of the day or the year, namely during their leisure time or when they are going on trips. Only then will physical and mental well-being and complete well-being in their own bodies, their own roles and their own spatial, ecological and social environments take centre stage. People who feel free inside, who feel they are able to shape their lives positively, people who like to make contact with other people and can shape such contact positively are on average healthier. This is particularly true of young people.

The holistic approach to health promotion under the Ottawa Charter is also closely related to the daily activities of (voluntary) youth work and is described in the report as a "hidden reference" or hidden "borrowing": "'The strategic principles of the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion have a clear affinity with the principles of social work' (Franzkowiak 1998: 173)" (ibid.: 160). The resulting "direct connectivity" leads to the conclusion that "good child and youth welfare activities are always also a form of health promotion" (ibid.). Making this clearer and presenting it in a comprehensible manner is one of the major challenges for child and youth work that stem from the 13th report on children and young people. "Comprehensive support for the psycho-social development of young people and young adults in an increasingly complex society" (ibid.: 41) requires child and youth welfare work to connect more closely again with health as an issue (cf. ibid.: 43).

INTERIM CONCLUSION

The German federal government's 13th Report on Children and Young People points out that there is insufficient awareness to date of the significance of promoting young people's health in (voluntary) youth work, while also stating that the latter has significant potential in terms of implicit health promotion. At the same time, however, this potential is at best hinted at through examples in the report and the analysis of health promotion in (voluntary) youth work includes only a limited number of conceptual references.

In the years ahead, (voluntary) youth work will focus increasingly on mental health problems among children and young people. Under headings such as "difficult participants", "coping with eating disorders" and "problematic young people", they are actually already addressed in training courses for youth leaders or in preparations for the educational side of trips and leisure activities, as well as international youth exchanges. Overall, however, little systematic knowledge that can guide action in this area exists in (voluntary) youth work. At the same time, given the longer duration of the activities, the new environment and the intensive exposure to the other members of the groups during trips and leisure activities – for instance, the issue of how to deal with psychosocial health problems in that context – the need is particularly acute.

Issues such as stress management, increasing frustration tolerance regarding outside influences and dealing in a relaxed manner with criticism and conflicts are examples of key demands placed on youth work by changed social conditions. Disadvantaged young people can derive particular benefit from what child and youth welfare have to offer in the said areas. The activities' voluntary nature and low entry threshold are of particular importance here. Especially in the context of the constant focus on resources rather than on young people's problems, measures forming part of deliberate health promotion through (voluntary) youth work and international youth work can play a major part in empowering disadvantaged young people. Special emphasis is therefore placed on promoting the self-effectiveness of children and young people. The connection with mental health is particularly striking here. Although it is particularly important, it has only rarely been explicitly addressed in child and youth welfare.

PARTICULAR OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED BY (VOLUNTARY) YOUTH WORK AND INTERNATIONAL YOUTH WORK

(Voluntary) youth work and international youth work also live from their values and values play a key role in the area of health promotion too. There can therefore be no single solution for all youth associations or international youth work bodies. This applies in particular to sensitive and morally or ideologically charged areas such as physicality, sexuality, motivation, equal opportunities, ideal body images and ideals of beauty.

Health promotion can be carried out in a manner critical of consumerism, emphasis can be placed on aspects of sustainability, performance can be assessed mainly positively or mainly negatively (that is, mainly as a form of pressure or mainly as a form of positive self-effectiveness) and sex education can be seen as a natural part of health promotion or as the primary responsibility of parents, etc. These examples suggest that each organisation is required to develop its own specific health promotion approaches for its activities. This also ensures that the activities offered reach different target groups in the widest range of ways possible, that aspects of peer counselling and learning from and with people of the same age on an equal footing play a greater part and that an implicit normativity of preventive approaches with implied notions of conformist, normal behaviour on the one hand and deviations from the norm on the other is countered with empowerment approaches and individually configurable health promotion strategies.

Since existing experiences and approaches, methods and routine practices have so far only occasionally been perceived as forming part of health promotion and often occur outside or only within the context of a diffuse approach to health promotion, it seems necessary and appropriate to group together, specify clearly and properly formulate the often unexpressed and unrecorded concepts and approaches.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION – A TABOO?

Unfortunately, the subject of sexual orientation (and trans- and intersexuality) is a "blind spot" in the 13th report on children and young people. The fact that young

lesbians and gays are coming out earlier and earlier is leading not only to greater openness and acceptance but also to additional or differently expressed (health) risks. Moreover, the increased suicide rate among young gays and lesbians and among young people who are unsure about their sexual orientation indicates the need for immediate action. The German government is actually entirely aware of this, given its reply to a parliamentary question from Bündnis 90/Die Grünen (Alliance '90/The Greens) on young people in Germany (Bundestag publication 16/1554):

> In [a] study, more than two thirds of the 15- to 25-year-old gay men surveyed said that being gay meant they had to cope with greater stress levels than heterosexual males of the same age. A quarter of those surveyed had already sought psychological support, most frequently because of depression, anxieties or family problems. A large proportion of young gay men suffer from loneliness. The majority of findings published to date on the psychosocial situation of young gays and lesbians also show a high (attempted) suicide rate. According to a 1999 study by the Berlin government department for education, youth and sport, 18% of young gays and lesbians had already attempted suicide at least once and more than half had considered suicide. The suicide risk among young homosexuals is therefore four times higher than among young heterosexuals.

It follows from the above that longer-term child and youth welfare activities, for instance international youth exchanges, are under a particular obligation to ensure the least discriminatory environment possible with regard to sexual orientation and other criteria for exclusion. Taking account during planning of the fact that gays, lesbians and trans- and intersexual persons who have or have not come out will be among the participants would be a first step towards overcoming the structural neglect of non-heterosexuals in child and youth welfare activities.

In the federal programme, Live Democracy! Actively Combating Right-Wing Extremism, Violence and Bigotry, launched in 2015 by the Federal Ministry for Family, the Elderly, Women and Youth, homophobia and transphobia have been explicitly addressed for the first time as themes in the fight against right-wing extremism.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

In German-language literature, the term "inclusion" is mainly used to refer to the integration of people with disabilities. However, it first of all describes the automatically assumed equality of individuals who diverge from a socially dominant normality along widely varying lines of differentiation. This normality disappears under a diversity-aware approach to inclusion. It is replaced by a society that is immediately perceived as diverse, being composed of different groups of individuals whose particular needs and concerns are taken into account from the outset. In this connection, the last two years have seen the establishment of a Network for Diversity-Aware (International) Youth Work, DIVE (see www.netzwerk-diversitaet.de), whose approach will be outlined below.

The goal of a diversity-aware approach is to broaden or alter perspectives: diversity-aware teaching seeks to raise awareness of the existence or possibility of different perspectives, it seeks to highlight existing or possible heterogeneity and the opportunities involved and to question the often unconscious and matter-of-course assumption that everything is the way we ourselves know or perceive it to be.

Diversity-aware teaching takes wide-ranging differences into account. Recognising the very heterogeneous ways of life and daily realities in individual countries and the very different positions within national subgroups in international settings can help to overcome the focus on nationally or culturally determined differences and counter the need for classification.

Avoiding cultural or other forms of categorisation does not, however, mean that differences are not taken seriously. They do exist, they have different backgrounds and causes and they also have an impact in group situations – the critical perspective is directed primarily against attaching too great an importance to one-dimensional or supposedly culturally determined explanations for varied and often complex group situations and is geared to raising awareness of the mechanisms and effects behind such simplistic approaches.

It is also important to look self-critically at views which we take for granted – it is often only then that we open up to perceiving and recognising other people's realities.

CONCLUSION

Health promotion approaches which incorporate this diversity-aware perspective would seem particularly suited to taking proper account of the wide range of youth cultures, the multifaceted life situations and identities of young people and their many different environments and backgrounds, without losing sight of the overall group or contributing to the success of a form of normality which would reproduce social exclusion mechanisms and in any case barely exists in intercultural contexts. Instead, under a diversity-aware and inclusive approach, both individual and social aspects of the health of young people can be taken into consideration. Taking account of the intertwining of these two sides of health promotion offers the only way of addressing the issue effectively in the context of child and youth welfare. There are particularly good opportunities for this in (voluntary) youth work and international youth work.

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Chapter 9

LGBT young people and homophobic and transphobic bullying – The European and international human rights context

Michael Barron

INTRODUCTION

I n December 2011 UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon described homophobic bullying of young people as a "grave violation of human rights". He went on to say:

> [I]t is also, for States, a matter of legal obligation. Under international human rights law, all States must take the necessary measures to protect people – all people – from violence and discrimination, including on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity.[9]

Using this historic statement as a backdrop, and outlining some of what we know of the extent and nature of homophobic and transphobic bullying globally, this paper draws on European and international human rights law and interpretations to clarify how and why homophobic bullying violates young people's human rights.

Sexual orientation and gender identity were not originally named grounds in international human rights law. Protections for LGBT people, including young people, emerged through the use of these instruments in more recent years. Although there can be a lack of clarity and significant controversy in this area, this paper makes the case that a great deal of international law aims to protect LGBT young people against homophobic and transphobic bullying. It highlights that all LGBT people are protected through rights ascribed to "all people", and additionally as members of a minority group. It further makes the case that LGBT young people are specifically protected through the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (again as part of "all children", but also as a named group in interpretations of the convention), and specifically protected in schools, the site of much homophobic and transphobic bullying, through the right to education.

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9. New York, 8 December 2011, Message to Event on Ending Violence and Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, delivered by Ivan Simonović, Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, www.un.org/sg/statements/?nid=5747.

In an Irish context discrimination towards LGBT people is curbed through national equality legislation (the Employment Equality Act and Equal Status Act) and similar legislation exists in some other countries, but by no means all. We are witnessing a rise in anti-LGBT legislation and sentiment in some countries, including Russia and Nigeria, a situation which has particularly devastating effects on LGBT young people. The following analysis introduces a hate crimes/incidents frame to homophobic and transphobic discrimination and bullying and addresses the issue of the often-cited friction between cultural/religious rights and LGBT people's human rights.

WHY WE NEED A SPECIFIC FOCUS ON HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC BULLYING

According to the United Nations *World Report on Violence against Children* (2006), most bullying is sexual or gender-based – in terms of the selection of those who are bullied and the nature of the abuse. It particularly affects young women and children and young people who are seen to be gender non-conforming and its content is most often related to sex and gender. "This reflects irrational fears of sexual diversity and atypical gender identity and is therefore described as homophobic or transphobic bullying" (UNESCO 2012a: 5). Homophobic bullying impacts on all young people, not only LGBT young people.

In terms of its specific effect on LGBT young people, the former Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights Thomas Hammerberg, in his comment "Schools must stop spreading homophobic and transphobic messages", stated:

> In schools across Europe young persons are being harassed because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Homophobic and transphobic bullying is an everyday reality in the lives of many. It is time to react – especially in view of several national studies and reports warning that there have been a number of suicides among young lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) persons feeling rejected by their peers and families.[10]

In Ireland, the youth organisation BeLonG To and the Equality Authority have described homophobic and transphobic bullying as forms of "identity-based bullying". The Equality and Human Rights Commission in Britain describes identity-based bullying as follows:

> [It is] any form of bullying related to the characteristics considered unique to a child's identity, such as their race, religion, sexual orientation or physical appearance. These forms of bullying are not only targeted at an individual, but reflect negative attitudes towards a wider sub-community or group to whom that individual identifies with (or is believed to identify with). Young people in such groups may be more vulnerable to or at risk of experiencing bullying and can benefit from more targeted support (Tippett et al. 2010: 3).

This additional risk experienced by some groups is recognised in Ireland in the national Action Plan on Bullying, which states that the Department of Education

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10.   http://commissioner.cws.coe.int/tiki-view_blog_post.php?postId=181.

and Skills has "gained a greater understanding of how a significant proportion of bullying in schools is not merely behavioural, but is rooted in lack of respect for diversity and in social inequalities, both of which have their foundation in wider society" (Department of Education and Skills 2012: 24).

It is useful to look at homophobic and transphobic bullying in terms of hate crimes and hate incidents. To mark International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHOT) in 2011 UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay warned of the increase in homophobic hate crime. She stated:

> Homophobia curbs the capacity of individuals to realize their aspirations and potential. Discrimination and harassment in families, schools, workplaces and the military on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity lead people to drop out of school, prevent them from getting jobs and inhibit millions across the globe from seeking crucial health services.[11]

The Crown Prosecution Service in Britain has defined a homophobic or transphobic hate incident as "any incident which is perceived to be homophobic or transphobic by the victim or any other person" (Crown Prosecution Service 2009: 3). Stonewall and the Equality and Human Rights Commission in Britain have argued that "hate crimes and incidents can range from insults to inciting others to hatred, serious physical assault and murder. Perpetrators of homophobic hate incidents are motivated by prejudice or hostility towards their victim's actual or perceived lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) sexual orientation" (Equality and Human Rights Commission 2009: 3).

Paul Iganski in his work on tackling violence and hate crime in Europe and in his analysis of British Crime Survey data found that hate-related incidents and crimes have a more damaging psychological effect on victims than other types of crime. He argued against categorising certain hate-related incidents as "low-level" (as bullying often is) concluding that "verbal abuse, pranks and harassment can be just as damaging psychologically and emotionally as a physical attack" (Iganski 1999).

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) collects annual data on hate crimes and has developed expertise in this area. It has highlighted the difference between hate crimes and other crimes in terms of their impact on the victim and the community they are from.

> The impact of hate crimes can be far greater than that of crimes without a bias motive, particularly in their impact on individual victims, those immediately associated with them and wider society. This greater impact is one of the key reasons why hate crimes should be treated differently than the same crimes committed without a bias motivation (OSCE/ODIHR 2009:17)

The OSCE goes on to say:

> Hate crimes and hate-motivated incidents frequently leave victims in fear of future attacks and of increased violence. This fear comes from the rejection of the victims' identity that is implicit in hate crimes. Additionally, hate crimes and incidents send the message that victims are not an accepted part of the society in which they live. Other

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11.   www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=38406&Cr=Pillay&Cr1#.U9TwDlyup-Q.

members of the target group can feel not only at risk from future attacks, but may be as psychologically affected as if they were themselves the victims. These effects can be multiplied where victims are from groups that have been discriminated against and subject to prejudice for generations (ibid.).

WHAT IS THE SCALE OF THE PROBLEM AND ITS IMPACT ON YOUNG PEOPLE?

In Ireland, homophobic bullying has been found to be one of the most widespread forms of bullying (Lynch and Lodge 2002). One study found that among LGBT people 50% reported experiencing verbal homophobic bullying, 40% were verbally threatened by fellow students, 25% said they were physically threatened by their peers and 34% heard homophobic comments from their teachers, while only one in five LGBT young people who were experiencing homophobic bullying sought any support from their school or teachers. This study also found extraordinarily high levels of mental ill health associated with these experiences and a correlation between homophobic bullying and suicidal behaviour among LGBT young people (Mayock et al. 2009). Irish teachers have also reported witnessing very high levels of homophobic bullying. Research funded by the Department of Education and Skills and carried out by Dublin City University found that 79% of teachers were aware of homophobic bullying in their school. The same study found that 41% of teachers found it more difficult to deal with homophobic bullying than other forms of bullying (Norman and Galvin 2006).

These findings are in line with the international evidence. In a 2006 ILGA-Europe and IGLYO survey with over 750 respondents from 37 European countries, 53% of LGBT people said they had experienced bullying in school (Takács 2006). In 2013 the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) published a Europe-wide survey of over 93 000 LGBT people on experiences of discrimination, violence and exclusion. At least 6 in 10 of all respondents had experienced negative comments or conduct at school because they were LGBT; 9 in 10 of all respondents in each LGBT group had experienced negative comments or conduct (at least "rarely") because a schoolmate was perceived to be LGBT and two thirds of all respondents said such behaviour occurred "often" or "always" at their school. In addition, around three quarters of respondents (72%) recalled hearing or seeing negative comments or conduct during their schooling before the age of 18 because a teacher was perceived to be LGBT (EU FRA 2013).

Studies conducted in North America, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa also show extremely high rates of harassment, exclusion and assault experienced in schools by LGBT young people (Taylor et al. 2011; Kosciw et al. 2012; Stephens A. 2011).

Evidence from South Africa suggests high levels of discrimination (verbal abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and negative jokes) experienced by lesbians and gays in schools in KwaZulu-Natal. The primary source of victimisation reported was other learners (65%), followed by educators (22%) and principals (9%) (Stephens A. 2011 cited in UNESCO 2012a).

WHAT DO INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW AND AGREEMENTS SAY ABOUT STATES' OBLIGATIONS TO PROTECT LGBT YOUNG PEOPLE FROM HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC BULLYING?

The following focuses primarily on the United Nations human rights standards, but reference is also made to the Council of Europe, the EU and the OSCE.

Under UN international covenants and the European Convention on Human Rights sexual orientation and gender identity are not explicitly named but they have been recognised as prohibited grounds for discrimination through more recent interpretation and legislative or judicial developments specific to LGBT people, children and education.

The principles of equality and non-discrimination are fundamental elements of international human rights law. The International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) oblige states to ensure the enjoyment of human rights without any discrimination on grounds of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Although gender identity and sexual orientation are not explicitly named grounds here the respective treaty bodies have interpreted the covenants in their case law or in a "general comment" as including sexual orientation and gender identity within the scope of the open-ended lists of grounds.[12] For instance, the following remarks are included in General Comment No. 20 from the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights:

> States Parties should ensure that a person's sexual orientation is not a barrier to realizing covenant rights, for example, in accessing survivor's pension rights. In addition, gender identity is recognised as among the prohibited grounds of discrimination; for example, persons who are transgender, transsexual or intersex often face serious human rights violations, such as harassment in schools or in the workplace.[13]

In July 2014 Ireland appeared before the UN Human Rights Committee for a monitoring of its compliance with the ICCPR.[14] Although LGBT issues did not feature heavily (with the exception of the need for gender recognition of transgender people), the committee's findings were damning in relation to women's rights. The appearance demonstrated the significance of the ICCPR and its mechanisms, which can be seen in the level of media coverage and in the response from the Department of Justice and Equality, which committed to bringing the UN report on Ireland's human rights record to the "heart of the Oireachtas [national assembly]".[15]

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12. UN Human Rights Committee, *Toonen v. Australia*, Communication No. 488/1992, 30 March 1994.

13. UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Comment No. 20 on Non-Discrimination in relation to Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 2009, paragraph 32.

14. For more information on Ireland's appearance at the UN Human Rights Committee in July 2014 see the ICCL "roundup" – http://iccl.ie/a-roundup-of-coverage-of-ireland's-iccpr-examination-14--25-july-2014.html.

15. The Irish Examiner, 25 July 2014, "Damning report set for 'heart of the Oireachtas', www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/damning-report-set-for-heart-of-the-oireachtas-276667.html.

In her landmark report to the UN Human Rights Council on Discriminatory laws and practices and acts of violence against individuals based on their sexual orientation and gender identity,[16] the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights explained how UN mechanisms, including human rights treaty bodies and the special procedures of the Human Rights Council, have highlighted human rights violations of LGBT people for close to two decades. She also outlined how UN entities – including the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) – have integrated issues of sexual orientation and gender identity into their work. Central to the High Commissioner's report is the point that universality, equality and non-discrimination are core to all international human rights law:

> The application of international human rights law is guided by the principles of universality and non-discrimination enshrined in article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights". All people, including lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) persons, are entitled to enjoy the protections provided for by international human rights law (p. 4).

LGBT young people under the age of 18 (as most school-goers are) also have their rights recognised in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 19 of which provides that "States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence". In reference to this article, in its General Comment No. 13 (2011) the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child states clearly that "bullying" is a form of both physical and mental violence.[17] This general comment also states that "violence among children, including physical, psychological and sexual violence, is often by bullying". Importantly it goes on to state that "children in potentially vulnerable situations", and "groups of children which are likely to be exposed to violence" include those who are "lesbian, gay, transgender or transsexual".[18] It is clear here that the bullying of LGBT children and young people – homophobic and transphobic bullying – constitutes violence which is prohibited under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and against which signatory states to the convention are obliged to take measures to protect children and young people.

In terms of the right to education, UNESCO in its "Review of Homophobic Bullying in Educational Institutions" (2012b) states:

> Violence, fear and intimidation should have no place in educational settings. Yet bullying is a pervasive practice that adversely affects the health and well-being of learners and is recognised as such by the United Nations.[19]

In creating a climate of fear and intimidation, bullying makes schools and other edu-cational settings fundamentally unsafe places. In so doing, as well as undermining

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16. A/HRC/19/41, November 2011.
17. UN Committee of the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 13 (2011) pp. 9-10.
18. Ibid., p. 27.
19. United Nations (2006), World Report on Violence against Children.

the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child[20] together with fundamental human rights to health, safety, dignity and freedom from discrimination and violence,[21] bullying poses a significant threat to the universal right to education as reflected in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the Millennium Development Goals and related actions of the Dakar Framework for Action.[22] (UNESCO 2012: 4).

The UN Special Rapporteur on the right to education has argued that impartial information in schools can overcome prejudice and save people from inflicting or suffering violence:

> Sexual education must pay special attention to diversity, since everyone has the right to deal with his or her own sexuality without being discriminated against on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity. Sexual education is a basic tool for ending discrimination against persons of diverse sexual orientations.[23]

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child has recommended that states include sexual education in the curricula of primary and secondary schools, which may also imply that laws that prevent young people educating themselves about their sexual orientation conflict with the convention (Council of Europe 2011).

In terms of a UN-level call for education and prevention, in 2011 UNESCO brought together NGOs and government bodies from around the world in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil for the first UN-sponsored global consultation on homophobic bullying. At this meeting the bodies represented published the Rio Statement on Homophobic Bullying and Education for All, which concluded with the declaration that:

> We call upon all governments to live up to their responsibility to provide universal access to a high-quality education by eliminating the barriers created by homophobia and transphobia, including the unacceptable and devastating prevalence of anti-LGBTI bias and violence in elementary, secondary and tertiary levels and settings of education around the world.[24]

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, in her 2011 report mentioned above, highlighted her concern about discrimination against LGBT young people in schools,[25] and specifically about homophobic bullying. She included a recommendation that states "support public information campaigns to counter homophobia and transphobia among the general public and targeted anti-homophobia campaigns in schools" (p. 25).

The Council of Europe also has a role here. Article 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights and Protocol No. 12 to the Convention contain open-ended lists of

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20. Together with other international principles, such as the Yogyakarta Principles, that address impediments to the right to education faced by victims of bullying and/or violence.
21. United Nations (1948), The Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
22. United Nations (2000), United Nations Millennium Declaration, United Nations, New York; World Education Forum, The Dakar Framework for Action, UNESCO, Paris; UNESCO (2005), Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2005, UNESCO, Paris.
23. Report of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to education, A/65/162, 23 July 2010, paragraph 60.
24. Rio Statement on Homophobic Bullying and Education for All – including a list of participants.
25. A/HRC/19/41, November 2011.

grounds for the prohibition of discrimination. Neither Article 14 nor Protocol No. 12 specifically mentions sexual orientation nor gender identity as prohibited discrimination grounds but the commentary on the provisions of the protocol stipulates that the list of non-discrimination grounds is not exhaustive.

As with the UN conventions, it is clear that both sexual orientation and gender identity have become grounds for discrimination in more recent years. The European Court of Human Rights confirmed in 1999 that sexual orientation is a discrimination ground covered by Article 14 of the Convention. Similarly, in 2010, the Court explicitly mentioned transsexuality.

The Court has issued several judgments on discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation in which Article 14 has been invoked. In 2011, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted the Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. The non-discrimination article of this convention includes the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity thereby making it the first international treaty to include explicitly both sexual orientation and gender identity as prohibited grounds for discrimination (Council of Europe 2011).

Specifically relevant to work to combat homophobic bullying, in 2009 the European Committee of Social Rights affirmed that "educational materials [should] not reinforce demeaning stereotypes and perpetuate forms of prejudice which contribute to the social exclusion, embedded discrimination and denial of human dignity often experienced by historically marginalised groups such as persons of non-heterosexual orientation" (Council of Europe 2011).

In 2010, the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers adopted a recommendation on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity, inviting member states to ensure that the stipulated principles and measures are applied in national legislation, policies and practices relevant to the protection of the human rights of LGBT persons. The recommendation covers a wide range of areas including hate crime and education. While it is not a legally binding instrument, all Council of Europe member states should implement this recommendation. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe also adopted resolutions and recommendations on the subject.

It is widely held that the EU treaties say little about education or LGBT rights but the FRA points to a significant role of the EU in this area. It says:

> Despite the limited protection against discrimination granted by EU legislation to LGBT persons beyond the employment sector, individuals enjoy a substantial protection through a variety of legal instruments at national and international level. Moreover, the enjoyment of the right to education, protected by Article 14 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights or Article 2 of Protocol No. 1 to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), can be affected by discrimination, which is prohibited by Article 21 of the EU Charter (EU FRA 2013: 18).

The Council for Global Equality, an NGO in the United States which works to "encourage a clearer and stronger American voice on human rights concerns impacting LGBT communities around the world",[26] has described the OSCE as "an obscure but

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26. From the Council for Global Equality's website: https://globalequality.wordpress.com/about/.

influential international organisation that focuses on a range of security and human rights issues". It goes on: "Created as a mechanism to engage the Soviet Union and its satellite states, in the messy aftermath of the Cold War, the OSCE has emerged as an important platform for promoting tolerance and non-discrimination."[27] LGBT rights issues have been very controversial at the OSCE for many years and under the Bush administration the US "worked with the Vatican to block discussion of LGBT human rights concerns" (ibid.). More recently, due in no small part to the change in US administration, LGBT human rights issues have come to be discussed. In December 2012, during the Irish Chairpersonship of the OSCE, the Civil Solidarity Platform of the OSCE, which included an involvement from the Irish youth organisation BeLonG To, made recommendations to member states on LGBT rights and specifically on homophobic and transphobic bullying. The document "Civil Society Recommendations to the participants of the OSCE Ministerial Council Meeting in Dublin, 6-7 December 2012" contains the following text:

> We are concerned about the growth of violence against LGBT people and restrictions of the freedom of expression of the LGBT community … homophobic and transphobic bullying of LGBT young people in schools is of particular concern. Such bullying can seriously affect young people's education and health, and can be a causal factor in self-harm and attempted suicide. Such bullying is often compounded by lack of support from teachers and non-inclusive school curriculums.

The document goes on to recommend that OSCE participating states take "actions to provide for safe education for LGBT students and combat homophobic and transphobic bullying in schools".[28]

There are of course frictions when it comes to supporting LGBT people, including young people, to access their rights – specifically when cultural rights are set in opposition to LGBT people's human rights. Addressing this ongoing issue the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has said:

> We know how controversial the issues surrounding sexual orientation can be. In the search for solutions, we recognize that there can be very different perspectives. And yet, on one point we all agree – the sanctity of human rights … As men and women of conscience, we reject discrimination in general, and in particular discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Where there is a tension between cultural attitudes and universal human rights, rights must carry the day.[29]

The Secretary-General's statement is highly relevant to the tensions that exist in Russia, much of the Middle East and increasingly in Africa, where homosexuality has been increasingly criminalised and where in some countries the death penalty is a reality. In Russia the infamous anti-gay propaganda laws which have come into effect specifically target young people and educationalists – making work to combat homophobic and transphobic bullying close to impossible.

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27. https://globalequality.wordpress.com/category/organization-for-security-cooperation-in-europe/.
28. For the full text of "Civil Society Recommendations to the participants of the OSCE Ministerial Council Meeting in Dublin, 6-7 December 2012", see: www.civicsolidarity.org/sites/default/files/civil_society_recommendations_for_mcm_in_dublin_final.pd.
29. Secretary-General comment SG/SM/13311 HR/5043.

The "Camden Principles on Freedom of Expression and Equality" address the perceived and often-cited "incompatibility" between freedom of expression and equality, often highlighted by those opposed to LGBT people accessing their rights. These principles, drawn up in 2009 by Article 19: Global Campaign for Free Expression, claim that there is an affirmative rather than oppositional relationship between equality and free speech. They state:

> The Principles assert the affirmative relationship between freedom of expression and equality, identifying the complementary and essential contribution they make to the securing and safeguarding of human dignity, and the fact that together they are key to the indivisibility and universality of human rights. Observed and upheld they enable and strengthen respect for human rights for all (Article 19 2009: 3).

WHAT IS BEING DONE INTERNATIONALLY IN REFERENCE TO INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW IN THIS AREA?

As mentioned above, in December 2011 UNESCO organised the first ever United Nations consultation on homophobic bullying in educational institutions, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The consultation revealed the scope of the problem worldwide and the impact of homophobic bullying on the right of LGBT young people to education, on their health and well-being, and on the learning environment for all students. Examples of good policies and practices from governments and development partners in this area were shared, and future priorities identified and agreed. BeLonG To, with the support of the Irish Department of Children and Youth Affairs, was a core member of this consultation. Its work was presented as an example of good practice[30] and UNESCO has committed to working in partnership with BeLonG To in delivering its global work programme in the coming years (UNESCO 2013).

The findings of the consultation were compiled in the publication *Education Sector Responses to Homophobic Bullying,* which includes practical guidance for the development and implementation of policies, interventions and practical tools to prevent and address homophobic bullying in schools. This resource was launched in May 2012 at an event associated with IDAHO Day and is available in four UN languages and five non-UN languages, including Korean, with a foreword by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

UNESCO's work in this area is carried out within the framework of Education for All (EFA). As such it evokes the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child together with the universal right to education as reflected in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the Millennium Development Goals and related actions of the Dakar Framework for Action. UNESCO has developed a work plan in this area (July 2013 to December 2016) and is working with partners globally to "collect solid evidence on the nature, scope and consequences of homophobic bullying in educational institutions in countries where there is little or no data available; document and share best practice for action; raise awareness and build coalitions; and facilitate

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30. www.thejournal.ie/unesco-praises-irish-anti-homophobic-bullying-campaign-as-global-best-practice-303945-Dec2011/.

country-level action to prevent and address homophobic bullying in educational institutions" (UNESCO 2013: 1).

In Europe, the Council of Europe has developed an LGBT Unit to support LGBT people across the region to access their rights. This work includes initiatives to combat homophobic bullying and provide safe education for LGBT people. The work of the unit is based on three key legal instruments – the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (commonly known as the European Convention on Human Rights), the European Social Charter and the Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.[31] To date the unit's work has included the promotion of LGBT youth rights among member states within the context of the rights of the child, and the development of school-based LGBT awareness materials and training courses in Poland, Montenegro, Latvia and Albania (the latter carried out in partnership with BeLonG To).[32]

Even within the OSCE we can see some movement. In September 2013 at the OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw a panel took place on the theme "The role of education in promoting mutual understanding and respect for diversity in sexual orientation", on which activists from Russia, Ukraine and Ireland spoke about their work to combat homophobia among younger people.[33] The following month, as part of Ukraine's OSCE Chairmanship, and based on the Civil Solidarity Platform recommendations developed in Dublin in 2012, the Ukrainian Ombudsman hosted an event to explore ways in which Ukrainian schools could tackle homophobia.

ILGA-Europe, which is the European region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association, has prioritised work to combat the exclusion of LGBT people from education. While it works on education on a number of levels (including supporting member organisations and building alliances with European education stakeholders), some of its most effective work has been in the field of advocacy for European policy change. ILGA-Europe monitors the development within the European institutions, and provides input whenever possible: "The aim is to increase the legal protection against discrimination of LGBTI people in access to education. This can be done by securing a new European anti-discrimination legislation and promoting effective implementation of relevant international and European human rights instruments".[34]

In the Irish context the Department of Education and Skills' national Action Plan on Bullying cites UNESCO's *Education Sector Responses to Homophobic Bullying*. Drawing on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child it describes homophobic bullying as "a threat to the universal right to education" (Department of Education and Skills 2013: 24). Also in Ireland *Better Outcomes, Brighter Future: The National Policy Framework*

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31. For more information on the Council of Europe LGBT Unit, see www.coe.int/t/dg4/lgbt/Documents/Instruments_EN.asp.
32. www.coe.int/t/dg4/lgbt/themes/theme6_en.asp.
33. www.nhc.nl/en/news/archive_2013/Education_key_in_countering_discrimination_of_LGBT_persons.html?id=205.
34. www.ilga-europe.org/home/issues/education.

for Children and Young People 2014-2020 applies the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (Department of Children and Youth Affairs 2014: 2, 98, 120), and recognises that "prejudice, including homophobia and transphobia, is a significant underlying cause of bullying amongst adolescents" (p. 79).

CONCLUSION

This paper has presented an outline of the European and international human rights contexts for tackling homophobic and transphobic bullying and creating safe educational environments for LGBT young people. It has examined why homophobic and transphobic bullying need specific responses and by looking through a hate crimes/incidents lens has highlighted the particular impact such harassment has on young people. It has paid particular attention to the UN but also referred to the role of the Council of Europe, the EU and the OSCE, drawing together what various treaties, interpretations and statements say about states' obligations to LGBT young people. With a growth in homophobic laws and sentiment, particularly in eastern Europe and Africa, much of which use education as an instrument (the Russian anti-propaganda laws are essentially anti-LGBT education laws), it is timely to highlight states' obligations under international human rights law to combat homophobia and homophobic bullying among young people.

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Chapter 10

Reflections on a lifetime of engagement in the youth field – Persisting questions

Gordon Blakely

INTRODUCTION

To take a personal view on the meaningful international involvement of young people is a welcome opportunity. This is a fairly subjective and culturally biased view stretching over 40 years. It will concentrate mainly on developments in the wider Europe.

Although I have worked with China for over 20 years, had sporadic projects with several African countries, run a volunteers' scheme in Sri Lanka, talked policy co-operation with Japan, Argentina and Mexico, and even spent time on a strategy for youth engagement with the USA, it is the European neighbourhood that has taught me most about the possibilities, and the realities, of that elusive "meaningful" inter-cultural connection.

Through some ad hoc selective illustration, I would like to consider a few basic questions that we always seem to need to deal with so that our individual ability to improve the way we work is more effective.

The rapidly rolling calendar of history does not permit us to dwell on a "done deal", a "safe haven", a "job completed" or a "journey ended". Change is the norm. If only the positives learned during such change were also the norm!

Recently, I revisited the site of Petra, in Jordan. My first visit was a very time-pressured one during the launch conference of the EuroMed Youth Programme in 1996. The massive complex overlay of history stands there starkly. The Nabataeans, an astute trading tribe, settling over 2 000 years ago, built their links as far as India and China. The profits of trade allowed a great show of self-proclaiming buildings and sophisticated social architecture, held together for generations, in a unique setting, by the force of battle and the nuance of diplomacy. By 106 (CE), this kingdom was annexed to the Roman Empire. Next came the spread of Christianity; the impact of Islam in the region; and, ultimately, the all-embracing arms of cultural tourism.

Walking among the ruins, it is easy to see the layers of influence and the absorption of one set of values into the functions of another: temples become churches; burial chambers become houses; murals lie undisturbed; and marble artefacts disappear. However, throughout the timescale the whole site is skilfully sustained by a drainage and irrigation system so carefully calculated that it still looks, today, ready to serve its purpose. The best structures are adaptable; the most valuable are timeless.

To consider how we have intervened to involve and to use the meeting of young people as a tool for cultural and economic diplomacy, it is useful to look at some of the enabling structures, partly as historical indicators, but also as systems that enabled social change. Many of those structures working today were very active in varied ways 40 years ago and have constantly changed.

FEELING APART

Question: What did I learn from feeling like a stranger?

In the context of "mobility" it does not take long to realise that the crossing of a border is all at once political, physical, social, cultural and generational.

In order to close the gaps and remove the threats from each other externally (and to keep things calm internally), the international policies of many nations were summed up as: get to know my (high) culture; learn my language; buy my goods; and, thereby, be my friend. Nation-building, externally, was a strong commodity for internal consumption. Reputation and economics were allied.

My first meeting, when I started international work in 1975, was to attend a young workers' forum at UNESCO, in Paris. In a very large conference room filled with serious, competent officials, I felt a complete and ill-prepared stranger.

The next week I was at a Youth Service meeting in Northern Ireland, part of the United Kingdom – never, then, far from our news pages – where I felt a complete and ill-prepared stranger.

As the months moved on, another task was liaising with the Romany Guild in London to prepare some British Roma families to travel through France to the Camargue (for the baptism of the horses) to be filmed by the BBC. I felt a complete and ill-prepared stranger. This feeling became even more acute when I spent three weeks living with them on the road in France.

Another duty was to attend an austere committee of the Royal Commonwealth Society in a large room of oak-panelled splendour. As I sat in leather chairs surrounded by old men in older suits, speaking eloquently over a heap of paper files, I felt a complete and ill-prepared stranger.

I realised that institutions are organic, deep, restless bodies, dominated by personality. I understood that history can bring prejudice and grievance in large amounts. I appreciated that I had a culture apart from others, and others valued their culture being apart.

STRUCTURES: INTERNATIONAL, TRANSNATIONAL, INTERCULTURAL, MULTICULTURAL

Question: How do we structure and facilitate the way people meet?

I was employed by a government-sponsored agency and given the job of building programmes for young people to improve their understanding of the world, which, in turn, helped to improve my country's reputation, and also, by some not so visible process, achieve greater prosperity and keep us at peace. That was an unwritten theory, with perhaps much less good practice. In reality, out in the world, it was all something that took place through the energy of a dispersed group of like-minded individuals; linking community interests of a particular cultural bias, and a genuine, yet ill-organised set of youth movements that lurked below the established surface and who were ready to break down many, many barriers.

There were very limited available and accessible international opportunites for young people. There was a strong historical series of volunteering programmes. Their objectives varied. Volunteering was, and is, for individuals, or for a small group, or a buddy system. A more focused process of bringing together numbers of young people under their ownership of their interests needed serious investment. This was putting groups of young people together, not simply to study formally, as on a campus, but to meet as equals and to develop partnerships which would invigorate those points of common interest. From the formal, governmental political perspective, this needed to be done in carefully orchestrated, managed structures.

The best known structure in this field was the Franco-German Youth Office (FGYO) – a unique, and never to be repeated, phenomenon of post-World War Two strategic thinking. Other countries had neither the resources, nor the will, nor perhaps the reason, to create an operational body managed bilaterally, running and supporting youth projects, school links and civic agreements. The FGYO stands alone, but there were other routes to the same objective, if destined to become vulnerable to political mood, as their operational structures were also responsible for handling public money.

Nearly all what were called "Western" European countries held regular bilateral mixed commissions. As part of the foreign relations platform with "friendly" states, this was a processing route for government support (including cash) which would also give some better guarantee that an event, conference or programme would happen, because both sides had agreed it. Under these elaborate deals, several countries had chosen to form a youth sub-committee. It was here that the precious governmental funds for youth projects, high-level youth-focused events, and mutually agreed schemes could be approved.

By far, the UK Government's major youth partner was the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). There were over 1 200 civic links (or town twinning as the British preferred) with the FRG and a similar number of school links.

It was an important shade of emphasis that "youth" exchange became a concept in its own right. Formal education looked after its own business and the high-level cultural world absorbed "scrubbed up" youth cultural activity. So, we were able to

deal with youth issues and examine the priorities that public funding could achieve for youth projects, study visits, and special programmes of activity (this item allowing some developmental initiative). On any scale of financial measurement, though, "youth" funds were small.

In this same structured process, next for the UK in volume of business, came France, then formal arrangements with Italy, less formal with the Netherlands, and later, among others, Portugal and Spain. From memory, the FRG's second largest formal youth partner was Israel. The geopolitical message was hard at work.

We also had agreements with ministries in countries such as Israel, Japan and the USA – all without funds attached. This was perhaps specifically British. There was no intended ideological interference by the system to prevent youth coming together to subvert the system. It was the earmarking, the specificity, of funding, that civil servants avoided energetically. If a department of government dispensed public funds that had too clear an identity, those funds were exposed to be cut. This became an endless financial game that still plays.

Countries of "eastern" Europe had more restrictive cultural agreements which were both detailed and stifling. However, under a general clause on youth and student co-operation, the agreements approved youth study tours; language learning summer courses; sports events and cultural performances; and, occasionally, an elementary exchange of youth leaders. The last exchanges, on the eastern side were quite often the not-so-young of the party youth wing, and on the UK side predominantly student-based and tourist Marxists, who wanted to see what elsewhere really was like.

In a very British committed affection for the past, we also set up the Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council (CYEC). It was managed by grants from the Foreign Office, plus contributions from local government, who became active members. The governance of CYEC took some strong inclusive steps. Youth organisations were at the table for decision making on funding applications and discussion of priorities. Looking at a fluctuating membership of plus or minus 50 Commonwealth countries the founders' hope was to create a trans-Commonwealth youth exchange programme, open to all and supporting the most in need. This was not to be so.

As with many Commonwealth structures, the ideology is quite sound, has broad democratic and inclusive goals, has significant support as a concept, but no way of deepening funding. This is an example of something we know in youth programmes elsewhere, endemically.

UNESCO and the UN had similar well-intentioned youth participation concepts. As for funding, they were impoverished and unsupported by their member countries with regard to the movement of young people, with some small exceptions in volunteering and conference representation. They had no access points to communities, nor outreach to interest groups which were driving from the bottom upwards.

The Council of Europe, in principle, seemed a much more flexible and user-friendly body, if mind-numbingly difficult to understand in practice – not just in terms of how it worked, but why. Youth was on the Council of Europe agenda. There were meetings for non-governmental bodies who had youth as their constituency, and

there was a small pool of funds for assisting youth councils and other youth structures to develop. This was, of course, something useful, but something remote and hard to reach.

The standout structure for funding; engagement and policy development; where there was political will for cohesion, would be the EU.

MODEL EUROPE

Question: What do we take with us from systems and structures to save, utilise and develop?

The political edginess of EU affairs seems mostly to have been British-inspired, very often through criticism of cost and value, underscored with political protection of identity and subsidiarity. The officials and the leaders of the "European Project" countered this with a move to the people-centred approach – under the banner of a "People's Europe". What would matter would be greater mobility, educational opportunity and sharing good practice. This would be enshrined in improved, new and far-reaching programmes of activity.

I had a meeting with a European Commission official in December 1982. We discussed how youth programmes internationally worked in the UK in a vaguely useful sort of way. From continuing rounds of discussion, it became clear that the Commission was embarking, through wide-ranging consultation, on a whole range of more people-centred programmes, and that a youth mobility programme was a distinct possibility. This, for our work, would be a fresh breeze blowing over the structural funds and customs tariff reduction that seemed to obsess EU debate. A focused series of papers, meetings and inputs took place with great positivity and great hope. This would end in the formulation of Youth for Europe in July 1988.

The aim was to take the best practice of the multilateral institutions (including the Council of Europe Youth Foundation), the bilateral intergovernmental working groups and formal committees on youth exchange, and ally any programme to the essential mobility clauses of the Treaty of Rome.

Article 50 of the Treaty of Rome supported the limited, but fairly adequately funded, exchange of young workers to improve their basic skills. This article allowed small groups to be sent on medium-term individual placements. Not surprisingly, willing uptake in the pro-European lobby came from the Young Farmers' associations, which made best use of these funds. As a colleague observed, language should not be a problem for, after all, a pig is a pig. "Article 50. Member States shall, within the framework of a joint programme, encourage the exchange of young workers" – Treaty of Rome March 1957.

So, developments were possible on a legal basis. Intervention in secondary education was still a hot political issue, which meant that good things for youth outside of the formal school setting could have an independent life. Higher education co-operation was given the Erasmus programme. It had a smooth inception backed by articulate academics and graduate-qualified civil servants. Despite the pressure to leave core education alone, schools could not be left out and had SOCRATES as

a solidly funded programme. The original young workers were easily transformed into a more rounded programme, LEONARDO da Vinci.

No one could find an eponymous programme title from a mythological deity, or outstanding European figure, that would do for "youth". There was a fleeting discussion around YES for Europe (Youth Exchange Scheme) but an anglophone title was way beyond political agreement at the top levels. Youth for Europe in its abstract form emerged into general use during 1989, with a clear set of objectives and a funding process.

So, we had structure in place that shared transnationally the issues, challenges and contributions that youth organisations could make to the diplomatic landscape. The use of "organisations" is crucial here, because that was the only way to secure some kind of youth voice – organised youth and established organisations were first in line to benefit. For those who were seeking wider, deeper youth representation, as always, they were challenged with "Why choose them and not us?" There was a constant theoretical angst about youth representation. But first we needed something that was up and working to fight over.

There was significant preparatory time debating how to maximise support for the constituency – disparate as it was – and with a listening, yet cautious Commission, all member states fought for clear priorities. This led to two core points: a system of national agencies for the programme, with significant devolved decision making, and a written priority that projects should focus on communities of the "less advantaged". I will say something below about the latter point, but comment on the structural point brought in by the national agencies first.

The national agencies (NAs) were to be the third side of the triangle of Commission, member states' officials, and the programme users. This was bound to lead to conflict in several ways. Some member states would not relinquish, nor had the power to do so, decision making on public funds to a non-accountable structure, as defined by their appropriate law. Most set up something, with a firmly placed hand on the shoulder of the agencies' operation. However, the NAs had now a peer group to link with, and they had an ever-thickening line of communication to the Commission.

Many of the NAs immediately launched national consultations on the Youth for Europe (YFE) content and uptake. The finer points of grant percentages would take up whole meetings. But whole meetings would also be spent on involvement of minorities, gender equality, innovation in training and outreach to the remote rural edges and urban housing estates of the European landscape. Not all of this was met with national approval – a commitment to a policy idea is a commitment to spending in practice. The Commission more or less allowed the discussion to flow. This was not the world of formal education, the aspirations of universities, the bottom-line of business – this was the stuff of European society.

Common issues of youth policy were hard to agree on because once the step was taken to follow the analysis that always meant funding. Even by the end of the 1990s, it was the Commission, through its White Paper on "Youth" (European Commission 2001), which took on board the discussion of a European Youth Policy – intangible to this day, but a debate worth having – and at the very least to agree on priorities – even unfunded priorities.

As best they could, limited by size of budget, and competing youth political forces seeking their funds, the NAs moved the programme forward towards new ideas for mobility and new geographies as the EU continued its expansion. An official NAs meeting was held in Bruges in November 1990, the first "official" programme meeting outside Brussels. My diary notes bilateral co-operation, under the programme, with Slovakia (1995), Poland (1996), Slovenia (1998) and Turkey (1999) – a slow, gradualist process. However, the real momentum was for the multilateral.

The end product of the initial phases of YFE was a strong network of self-standing and politically active NAs, plus a no-going-back message that multilateral activity, at all levels, had replaced bilateral arrangements. The European programmes had disseminated the formal principle that European activity existed for a more complex interaction by young people. How this could be achieved in relation to principles demanded, equally strongly by the field, for inclusiveness and accessibility, was the source of a corporate headache.

In parallel to building a set of national agencies for programmes, the Commission opened an envelope for funding trans-European youth structures, seeking new possibilities and underpinning the best of the old. This borrowed heavily from the Council of Europe leading, at least structurally, to Youth Partnership between the Council of Europe and the EU in the field of youth.

The most important youth body the Commission supported was the European Youth Forum (EYF). With a certain patchy pedigree the original European, World and UN-type youth hierarchies had attracted a powerful set of individual representatives, with governmental support that varied from total control to total disinterest, but no set of policies or arguments that meant much to the street. With a solid chunk of guaranteed funding, the EYF would report to the Commission and to member states through a work plan and consultation at a political level.

For me, coming from the national agency and governmental perspective, the EYF meant debate with some outstanding individuals; vigorous meetings, and a growing series of papers about what needed to be done, with less equivalent report-back on what had been done. It seems an important training ground for political leadership. It may appear to the outsider, the struggling youth project, a door half shut rather than a door half open.

As all the European programmes developed, there were additions and contractions. There were economic housekeepers who would have preferred one large pyramidic European mobility programme, with one set of reporting procedures. It was clear to the youth lobby that this would mean the demise, dilution and dispersal of clear and sustainable youth policy intervention. For over a decade the Youth for Europe programme played a role in gathering intelligence about social change, created a massive range of youth networks, and set up innovative systems for consultation. It did not welcome consolidation.

However, with pressure on public funding, as ever, and constitutional change being pressed by the EU leadership, consolidation was a reality. As treaty change was being rolled out during 2004/05 the Commission began drawing up a single Lifelong Learning Programme. This would be the next structure. But the outcome of the French referendum on the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe, in May 2005,

was a victory for the "No" campaign, with 55% of voters rejecting the treaty. In the Netherlands, 61% rejected the proposal. On analysis it was clear, contrary to internal belief, that youth were no more for a more legally constituted EU than their elders.

With some dexterity the Commission led the argument that there needed to be a sharper focus on youth engagement. The investment in youth was not complete – a different animal than study, training and trading. So, the Youth Programme survived alongside Lifelong Learning. But, finally, after the major economic failure of financial services erupting in 2008, currently still felt, the latest overarching grand mobility programme is in place with Erasmus+. There are youth chapters with the same intentions on exchange of good practice, policy and network building. However, the process as the programme moves forward may not live up to that initial, now obscured priority that there should be a clear set of opportunities to include the "less advantaged".

It is not always a straightforward progression, as structures evolve, for practice to evolve more positively.

SOME THEMES AND ISSUES THAT COULD NOT BE IGNORED

Question: How do we safeguard our principles in long-term practice?

To look at a few of the themes that have developed over the years, an observer might feel angst that not much has changed in the lives of whole sections of young people. During 2012, in the midst of the second International Youth Year, a colleague from Open Society Foundations did a liberal addition of the cost of international youth events as posted on the UN calendar during the year. With some confidence, considering items such as travel, staffing, and donated time, the hundreds of activities covering important, sharp and incisive agendas came to over a billion US dollars. This left us to open an argument around the webpage headline: "A billion spent and no change".

Landmark events that let off steam, even with quality representation and articulate critiques of public policy, were doomed by their finiteness to be mere debating cul-de-sacs, off-road, going nowhere, or even worse were given a "thanks, but no thanks" response by the audience.

There is a tendency to re-invent the old in the image of the new. Getting stuff done and making it work bears the greatest risk.

A cornerstone in international youth mobility has been volunteering. It has existed for many years, for various motivations – ideological; faith-based; political; calls for justice; and a route for individual escape. This last point led to the real difficulty in managing many volunteering schemes. Such was the havoc caused by homesick, depressed and uncontrollable 18-21-year-old volunteers that, in the late 1970s, Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) thought long and hard about taking inexperienced and poorly skilled volunteers into very challenging, underdeveloped social environments. They simply stopped recruiting young people.

That policy has come full circle for VSO with a carefully nurtured induction policy. However, volunteering throughout the 1980s did not take off to soak up significant numbers, in particular as national military service was increasingly disbanded across Europe. It was not until the European programmes were well underway in the 1990s that volunteering was given a fresh remake (or a concept hijacked, as some argued).

European Voluntary Service (EVS), announced in a European Commission White Paper on Education and Training (European Commission 1995), came into the second phase of Youth for Europe. EVS can produce quality experiences, with necessary and essential preparation and guidance. However, the unexpected exposes us all. During the first period of the UK EVS operations, we had three young people die through accident and self-harm, and two arrested for theft and menacing behaviour. Those events challenged us and we saw our areas of weakness – some in the placement, a lot in the preparation – and we felt starkly the ambiguity of open, inclusive recruitment.

Because EVS is focused on individuals, it gave the programme managers better awareness of micro-management and quality decision making. It also began to fully open our eyes on who was accountable for what when we pursued mobility schemes.

Other key issues were not so much in the operational area, but in outreach and accessibility. The initiatives to kick-start these were by no means original – planning consultations at national level; working groups to set objectives; meetings with the Commission. Then, up went the hand of a member state to host the kick-off event.

I give three examples from the UK side.

During the 1990s, there was a positive coming together by youth organisations and the NAs on the issues of disadvantage and social inclusion. This is never an easy path. It exposes our own ignorance of culture and social hierarchies. It pushes us to create new favourites. It drives us to quotas.

The UK hosted, in Gateshead (1991), our first superficial European-wide attempt to engage with disadvantaged youth. It was clear that, unless within our particular hinterland of national youth policy the same inclusive priorities operated, the chance of success would be limited. This was probably true for all participants. We knew our limitations. On the basis of that, or nothing, we continued with the message that this was an open European programme. The challenge was taken up. The practice evidence of what happened next is less easy to sum up and examine.

The second change-making workshop we hosted was in Bradford (1994), which considered the access of minority cultures to European programmes. We not only exposed differing national and local strategies to the issue, but we began to under-stand different sets of values. There was quality debate; ideas were put to the test; personal prejudices examined honestly. It was, by whatever definition, accepted that inadequate as Youth for Europe was, the other EC programmes were not even seriously considering these inclusiveness issues.

Moving forward 20 years it would become unthinkable that any youth/education meeting would not be dealing with multi-faith questions and be highly aware of the complexity of race and identity.

A third area where I believe the Youth Programme took the lead was on child protection. There was considerable good practice embedded in country legislation and civil society bodies, but it was sparse and often untested. There were nightmare possibilities. Who vetted volunteers? Who did risk assessment for a host partner 1 000 km away? Who really knew the individual participants, their behaviours, their backgrounds? Youth work was under scrutiny. There was some darkness surrounding the hard-to-reach issue of abuse and psychological harm.

This hit us in 1999 when a senior British police officer produced an analysis of child abuse in English language schools. There were hundreds of these unregulated schools, using families as hosts. Each summer some 800 000 teenage young people came to England unaccompanied. Youth organisations were adamant that they took child protection seriously, but the mass influx on language trips shone a harsh light on youth mobility in general. International youth projects were tarnished by association.

We responded. A large European meeting shared doubts and proposed solutions. A working group set up by the Commission revised funding application procedures; insisted on closer scrutiny of leaders and volunteers; pressed member states to revise legislation; developed a form of mutual risk assessment for both hosting and sending groups, and individuals. Guidelines and a help site were established. There was an effect.

Consideration of these quite large-scale initiatives, reflecting support from 20+ countries, reveals the pace of change as being overly slow. Radical answers cause us difficulty. To respond and move forward across societies is perhaps a more demanding process than moving practice across cultures. State systems are robustly structured – they resist disturbance. Like-minded cultures will adapt more quickly to change. To some extent that is a headline in itself for "youth culture" – it progresses in spite of external intervention. It has its own vitality.

Much practice in international youth work remains in the areas of joint study visits, exchange of people and ideas, combined projects, seminars, conferences and workshops – the tools of the trade – augmented in the advancing technologies by webinars and online face-time. The really big issues diminish and return; an ebb and tidal flow often distant from public policy.

What really changes people is why people are meeting each other: for active curiosity; for making change happen; to be refreshed by difference; to be better equipped to make change real. I hope so.

THE LINK TO POLICY, OR NOT

Question: How does what happens somewhere else matter to what happens where you live?

Things happen. Policy is shaped by research and evidence. Then it happens to you and around you. In the international youth field there have been some valuable handshakes from the centre to the policy makers, and vice versa.

The development of training for youth organisations by the European Youth Programme has strong links to local needs. There is an excellent, but limited example – SALTO.

The oddly named SALTO training support strands of the Youth Programme (their origins around 2003) are excellent examples of responses to wider needs. The limited funds for the SALTO units have allowed them to punch strongly above their weight. They improved the political understanding of "new" programme member countries, as they arrived into the programme, by providing real local expertise. They tackled good operational practice and quality preparation. They worked at improving realistic levels of inclusion, and they offered skill-building in cultural diversity.

None of this would mean very much except that the spin-off and content of the SALTO events helped inspire and inform a positive critique of national youth policies, themselves, at various levels of implementation. The ripple effect produced a network of committed individuals.

There are thousands of examples of valuable youth work practice, educational skills, and strengthening human resources, at a thousand levels from all forms of international events. The impact for the individual cannot be underestimated. What has some way to go is the impact on policy development.

To achieve any part of this policy and practice costs considerable amounts of money – to not only operate at a significant level, but to monitor and sustain. International youth work deserves better scrutiny, and a more visible policy platform.

THE MONEY THING

Question: How was the money spent and was it worth it?

As cited, the Article 50 Young Worker Exchange Programme was the only EU source of funds for a very long time. I was more than pleased to, literally, get my hands on it, in 1976, with an idea to run a European Young Fishermen's conference. A very amiable senior official in the EC Agriculture and Fisheries Directorate General did the application for me, while I sat in his office. Young fishermen, on the open seas, did not get on well with each other. There were actual "cod wars". We thought we would bring numbers of them together as a force of good. To make that more interesting, we chose Northern Ireland as a host venue.

During the event I was paid in cash – I recall Belgian currency, as the ecu was not widely available. The point of this story: not all European funding transactions are this smooth.

National bilateral budgets for youth programmes had been refined to a simple formula – a percentage of travel and a percentage of hosting costs. There was a sliding-scale offering a greater percentage for greater disadvantage. To decide who got what – this is what committees are for.

On a more global scale, the first problem we suffered in the European context was additionality. If the EC brought something to fruition that had a budget, and you

had that type of thing in your own country budget, the proportion of funds was deducted. So, we in UK were at first excited to have the Youth for Europe programme, only then to have almost all our existing bilateral youth funding axed.

Once you have, with "x" countries, hammered out the funding principles (it sounds easy), then comes the stampeding herd of elephants in the room – accountability. Looking at my diary notes I see in bolder letters as the years progress: annual report to the Commission; then, final three-year report to the Commission; then, meeting with Commission auditors; then, meeting for assessment with KPMG; then, with the frisson it deserves – visit by the Commission and the external auditors.

I think I can argue without contradiction that the initial enthusiasm, belief and flexibility that youth work centred programmes should have were severely tested (if not punished) by the rigorous, many say necessary, policing of expenditure. After all, the Commission had experienced the purge of its financial indelicacies, so why not us, the national agencies of the day?

Were the funds ever applied well enough to make real change? Well, to contradict the great sage, Bob Dylan, "When you ain't got nothin', you got nothin' to lose", the youth constituency would argue, "When you ain't got nothin', a percentage of nothin' is nothin'". There was always something to fight about.

The funding provided a baseline to ask for more, or complementary, resources. As long as Europe was a friend and provider, then European money meant that you had a foothold to ask for more elsewhere.

Over time, the natural political process affects money as much as money affects policy. The second decade of the 21st century has placed China high on the EU external relations agenda with an EU–China youth agreement. This shift follows at country level, with India, Mexico, and others catching investment attention. And priorities for connection can fall victim to wider forces. The EuroMed youth initiative of the late 1990s seems alive now in intention only. Youth resources, meanwhile, at many levels, are spread even thinner.

COMMUNICATIONS: A REAL CHANGE

Question: As we communicate, do we understand each other?

A real high-impact change, both in speed and in accuracy, over the years lies solidly in communications technology. My diary of 1992, something of a watershed period in the development of systems, has me scheduled for an AMIPRO course. What it did is now forgotten. One of the national agencies' moments of change was the agreement to use fax machines (allowed to be purchased in their management grant).

In an early meeting with our partner from the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, we asked, as things had been pretty quiet, how the installing of the fax machine was going. Our helpful interpreter stopped taking notes 10 minutes into the reply. Her summary of the response was as follows: "You need to remember it is only a fax machine. Now, it has to work in an Italian Ministry".

The standards and efficiency of communication improved geometrically. We could dwell for a long time on the use of language, and the shortcomings of us native English speakers, who have exploited and often obscured good communication. That point needs attention. However, my point remains that what we say we need first to understand ourselves, and then we need to be understood.

Andrew Keen, in his book *The Internet Is Not the Answer* (Keen 2015) estimates that during every single minute of 2014 Internet users, around 3 billion of them world-wide, sent 204 million e-mails, posted 216 000 photographs, and spent US$83 000 on Amazon – every 60 seconds.

We all have some easy kind of access to information around the world. To examine it critically is our task.

JOURNEY'S END

Question: Where are we going and what are we learning?

Even if youth work has to follow the money, its contribution through non-formal learning is immense. We are certain now what non-formal learning offers. We can measure it in practical terms. It is not some spiritual belief. It brings another set of opportunities for young people; emphasising the additional capacity to reach those struggling the hardest, or those most alienated.

The youth issue, for now, will be dominated by employability, as the panacea to European dysfunction. A demographic of moody, ill-tempered young people, prone to radicalisation, feeling failed, is where the mass of investment has been forced to be directed.

Looking back, there is a history. We presented the value of international youth work at a business conference on youth unemployment in Birmingham in 1993. I have notes on an "employability" study visit by members of the European Parliament in May 1998. More recently, the report of our expert working group on Non-Formal Learning and Employability was delivered to the Commission in April 2014. This is a long road, well travelled, and has not in any way reached a destination.

Youth work can benefit from, and bring benefit to, new partners. It demands a reshaping of its workforce using the competence to deal with tough situations on the streets and in cafés, to be reinforced by the confidence to sit in boardrooms, or deal with human resource managers. It is not too difficult. A revised curriculum to scale-up youth work training can be found in existing practice (transferable, but not supplanting local priorities and interpretation).

A counter argument over time can reasonably be: mobility is easier. Most nation states are accessible, just about. Petrol is cheap. Air fares are cheaper. Take the bus, or train. Do it yourself.

Let us still argue that well-managed and thoughtful international experience can bring quality benefits to participants, and that a haunting belief remains that this could contribute to peace and prosperity.

Over the past few years, we have begun to value intercultural fluency – a way of living, surviving, translating into practice that complexity that makes us curious: by breathing a different air; smelling, tasting, hearing difference.

Intercultural fluency offers a better understanding of how we can successfully live together; work in new places; enjoy, and participate in, a globalising world, where culture is an added complexity to already complex lives.

We all need to understand ourselves within our own culture. We need to create trust across cultures, manage and resolve our conflict.

Starting young, through mobility experience, we begin building relationships. From that point, we can create a shared purpose, gaining the active support of other people in a project, joint event, or in our workplace. We continue to increase that experience to develop better team work across cultures. We become more accountable being part of a wider cultural context. The feeling is that we can shape the future.

These experiences blend seamlessly with local youth initiative. Significantly, they are also the abilities championed by employers as skills for the 21st century.

Youth work is a success story. International youth work should be too. As I noted with ancient Petra, the big structures are recycled. Not all that is of value is carried forward. But somewhere, like the water supply system, there is a structure that is more than just functional – it is life-enhancing. I think international youth work does that job, whatever the issue, whatever the economics, in spite of the politics.

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Chapter 11

Youth, peer education and health: a questionable solution to reduce social inequalities in health (SIH)

Yaëlle Amsellem-Mainguy

> The question of young people's health engages the attention of all public authorities today, from local to European authorities by way of conurbations, countries, districts and regions; all levels of decision profess interest in this question. Likewise, many structures dedicated to youth now include the health dimension in their actions (schools, youth information centres, local task forces, young workers' hostels, etc.) and new specialised facilities are frequently created (young people's care and counselling desks; youth centres, for example). Conversely, health mechanisms hitherto of general scope deploy more systematic actions directed at the "young" public; this is true especially of mobile psychiatric teams, standby services for hospital admission and care, area-based health promotion, urban health workshops or low-threshold reception centres. (Amsellem-Mainguy and Loncle 2010)

As Patrick Peretti-Watel explains,

> Health has applications in every sphere today: a pupil with poor marks is "maladjusted to school", just as a man dissatisfied with his erections may consider himself in "ill health" sexually. Health is therefore supposed to be happiness … In this context, when prevention campaigns conduct promotion of "good" health behaviours (balanced diet, physical exercise, etc.) and combat "risk behaviour" (smoking, alcohol abuse, illicit drug use, etc.), this antithesis between wholesome and unwholesome conduct necessarily takes on a moral complexion (moreover, etymologically unwholesomeness is at once what is detrimental to health and contrary to morality) … With regard to juvenile risk behaviour in particular, prevention campaigns are very likely influenced by a stereotyped conception of the "young person". (Peretti-Watel 2010)

The health policies directed at young people (16-25) are still built for the most part on representations linked with the risks attending this age group, to the detriment of an approach bearing on the "resources and aspirations of youth" as regards their health issues. This aspect shows the inadequacy of young people's effective participation in framing the official policies that concern them, as well as arousing in them the sense of being stigmatised by "grown-up" society, possibly leading to distrust or even defiance of the actions implemented by the professionals. Although this "gap between young and adult society" on various planes (young people's representations, poor participation in the political realm) is not specific to the health context alone, it is clearly necessary to propose alternative arrangements for prevention and health education targeting young people which best meet their expectations and needs. In that sense, peer education for health can be a genuine opportunity to narrow this "gap" and to help limit the development of social inequalities in respect of health.

Enlarging on her analysis in the case of AIDS, Florence Maillochon accordingly suggests that

> the projection of young people into midfield of the preventive apparatus is presumably the outcome of syncretism between epidemiology, sociology and psychology. This syncretism has succeeded in associating with an age band that defines youth as a plain demographic category the idea of a nature peculiar to young people, one characterised by irresponsibility, carelessness, proneness to influence and hostility towards adult society, and expressed by provocations, transgressions and deliberate risk-taking.

This is the background against which peer prevention actions are conducted today throughout the territory. Yet this unprecedented escalation of the problem of young people's health is not correlated with a worsening of their state of health.

Education for health aimed at young people cannot be apprehended in just one way, quite the contrary; it necessitates a strategy of multiple interventions taking different forms (on the initiative of adults under a programme defined or prompted by young people on the basis of a shared appraisal) and addressing the issues in a varied way. All the cogitations pursued underline the importance of reflection on health education methods and their diversification, emphasising young people's active and interactive participation with the overall aim of involving them in their learning processes and enabling them, as it were, to realise their capacity to act and gain more power over their lives (in other words, empowerment). Among the approaches which have set out to strengthen young people's position as agents of health education and promotion, peer approaches have had the wind in their sails for 20 or so years in France and require a closer look.[35] Numerous peer health prevention-education-promotion schemes flourish in France, particularly aimed at young people. The interest in this type of prevention scheme[36] on different health-related themes (addictions, diet,

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35. One should note, however, the French "lag" on this question of peer education behind the English-speaking countries for example, which made arrangements as early as the 1970s, particularly in the field of preventing addictions. This move followed the finding by researchers and prevention operatives that it was more effective to involve young people and to build their competence than to gear the programmes to risk alone.

36. As illustrated by the call for submission of projects under the Fonds d'expérimentation pour la jeunesse AP2, issued in 2010 by the ministry responsible for youth, which gave rise to a national assessment by ESPAIR (Education santé par les pairs) conducted by Éric Le Grand.

access to care, sexuality, etc.) is also growing among varied populations: the elderly, persons engaged in prostitution, in a situation of hardship, etc.

From the outset, the term peer education has been used to describe "the education of young people by young people", but behind this simplistic description lurks a diversity of approaches and interests at stake (INSERM 2001). Thus it is already possible to query the idea that membership of one age group suffices to define peer status to the extent that inequalities between young people are considerable (Labadie 2012), that the diversity of life paths no longer requires proof, and that the process of identity building is also conditioned by the existence of groups of affiliation marked by affinities, lifestyles, etc. often contrasting with each other.

The peer approach was initially used for primary prevention (heading off the health problem or illness; it is found to include, for example, vaccination or actions on risk factors). Peer health education promotion is now also used for secondary prevention (acting more at an early developmental stage of the illness) and risk reduction (the main aim being to reduce risks of damage linked with drug consumption). These actions should be conceived today in a non-competitive, but rather complementary and cumulative, light.

DEFINITIONS

Prevention for health

Prevention comprises all "actions aimed at lessening the impact of deter-minants of diseases or health problems, at averting the onset of diseases or health problems, at halting their progression or at limiting their consequences. Preventive measures may consist in medical intervention, control of the envi-ronment, legislative, financial or behavioural measures, political pressure or education for health".* The actions range from the means to be applied for preventing the appearance of pathologies to the control of their evolution; it may also be a matter of eliminating risk factors and possibly attending to patients' social rehabilitation.

Education for health

"Health education should enable the citizen to acquire through life the pro-ficiencies and the means to protect, ideally to improve, his own and the community's health."**

"A strategy principally centred on learning processes, with an effect on knowl-edge, attitudes, behaviours, values and modes of decision-making. These are linked with objectives of health prevention, protection or promotion, and also of rehabilitation and adherence to medical and pharmaceutical treatment. It is also concerned with the contexts in which the learning processes are the most favourable (relationship of interpersonal assistance, clinic, small group, mass audience)."***

"PEER PREVENTION" OR "PEER EDUCATION"?

The European Commission defines peer education as follows:

> This educational approach calls upon peers (persons of like age, social background, position, education or experience) to provide information and promote types of conduct and values. Peer education is an alternative or an adjunct to traditional health education strategies. This approach is founded on the fact that at certain stages of life, particularly among adolescents, the impact is greater than other influences."

The peer approach is consistent with the idea of symmetry but also of reciprocity and equality. In other words, the attraction of the approach lies in the construction

of a relational dynamic which gambles on the resemblance between the individual holding the role of facilitator and the one holding the role of recipient (or beneficiary). This approach is founded on determination of the peer group's importance for the identity-building process, particularly in adolescence, through the establishment of common norms and prescribed/proscribed practices, and more generally on socialisation. Family and school do not operate singly in the process of socialisation, and pass on sometimes contradictory norms. In this context, young people are alert to scrutiny by their peers but also take notice of the messages widely disseminated by the media, also involved in their socialisation. That is to say, young people come to terms with the different agencies of socialisation (family, school, peers, etc.), despite agendas which do not always converge, so that it may be appreciated how closely their representations are linked with a selection of transmitted norms.

In this context, the questions of exchanges and interpersonal relations are central to this method of operating, which sometimes helps strengthen and/or bring to light communities or groups sharing the same concerns. From the outset, the peer's role is thought of as a contact person's, acting in a specific field of prevention.

Initially, health prevention action by peers is not structured in a rigid framework of attitudes and behaviours to adopt or not to adopt, or founded on conviction or persuasion but, on the contrary, embedded in a narrative of self, reflecting the interplay of constraints and possible choices. Preventive action by peers has this proximity and authenticity at its core, all the more significantly in the knowledge that the more credible an information source, the more attractive it appears to the recipient.

POINTERS

Different peer configurations

"A peer is so called because he is 'like'. But if like, how can he be different? How then is he placed at the necessary remove that keeps him a peer without making him an outsider? Which degrees of likeness are necessary, which others are nefarious, or superfluous, or insufficient? Besides, there is always the underlying risk of his being a 'peerot'. A likeable, forceful young person, ready for every good deed, he becomes the mouthpiece for adults' sensible sayings, and passes on their good practices. Often his only claim to peerdom is his age, and does that suffice to be a peer? If a peer is completely like me, what can he offer me? But if he knows and says things otherwise than myself, is he still me? Is he then my peer? And in teenager talk, if he blitzes me with good practices thoroughly learned from the school sick bay, he is a clown, not a peer but a 'peerot'. Thus the peer's proper position would be more as an intermediary between the message and its addressee, as a conveyor rather than spokesman. Someone 'just like me-not quite like me' knowing how to work on this fine distinction." (Chobeaux 2012)

In view of this, different classifications have been proposed to register the diversity of peer approaches. Two main paradigms may be distinguished (Baudier et al. 1996):

> ▶ **"multiplier" peers** are responsible for spreading a number of information items and recommendations on a given topic in their living environment;

> ▶ **"mutual aid" peers** are trained to listen to their pals and where appropriate to perform a pinpointing role (for young people displaying problems) or of liaison between these young people and specialised persons or facilities.

The recent studies conducted on peer education (Bellot and Rivard 2012) go further and show that three main fields of peer intervention may be distinguished: **social influence** (where the peer's role is shaped around the mechanisms of influence which he can use on those close to him with a rationale of preventing or promoting changes in behaviour, attitudes or values); **social resource** (the peer's role is shaped around the relationships of mutual assistance and exchange which he maintains to ensure his own and other people's well-being – here, the peers form themselves into a group which becomes a resource for all its members); and **social liaison** (where the peer is a person who, by belonging to opposite or different social realms, builds symbolic or material bridges between those realms – here, peers are mediators or "conveyors").

PROXIMITY AND RELATIONSHIP AT THE CORE OF THE APPROACH

Young people's day-to-day life is marked by the strong and significant presence of peers in the identity-building process. But, more broadly, young people, like adults, surround themselves with others resembling themselves. The resemblance may hinge on age (applies to adolescents or young people generally), gender, but also on statuses and roles or again on values and customs (partying) or consumptions (self-support groups). Yet these factors of proximity do not suffice in themselves, and require a strong interaction, a relationship which is chosen and recognised but also prestigious in order that the other may become a peer. In adolescence in fact, young people are torn between the family circle and the peer group, each playing its own part in their lives. The peer group is all the more important for assisting the young people who gradually separate from their birth family and for helping them towards adulthood; nevertheless every individual has some elbow-room to build his own personality vis-à-vis his peers. Thus it is understood that "the concept of peer is not strictly a static concept but indeed a dynamic concept in which the interaction between the self and the other will define this resemblance through the relationship maintained" (Bellot and Rivard 2007).

Youth first, specific role second

This proximity, then – actual and sometimes putative – is the primary foundation for the peer approach, but it goes further, on the basis of the relational dynamic,

in assigning specific roles to the peers. If the peer is to be regarded as a "like" or "kindred" individual, it implies closeness to those in respect of whom he will perform a specific role. This peer approach presupposes horizontal communication that is quite opposite to the customary top-down interventions of experts. This smallest common denominator of generational proximity is very often sufficient to set in motion the action of peer intervention. By contrast to what happens in a more "conventional" social intervention, it is indeed crucial for peers to be alike, to be recognised as similar to the young people to whom they relate, before having a specific role to perform in the preventive action to be conducted. This, however, does not make the interaction obvious or simple thereafter: in the context of work in schools, admittedly the young "peers" must, for example, come to terms with the wait-and-see attitude of the other young "pupils", who are accustomed rather to more directive interventions. This frequently observed wait-and-see attitude is often connected with the innovativeness of the approach, requiring this type of action to be sustainable. It is in fact necessary that the other young people get used to these young peer educators and fully grasp their roles.

A relationship based on authenticity

The aforementioned proximity between young people also operates as regards sharing the real-life experiences which young people look forward to, and constitutes a major relational asset. It implies that the young peers are recognised by other young people as authentic, genuine individuals wishing to remain themselves, that is, not seeking to become models but rather conveyors of experience and information. Moreover, because they seek to give what they have received (or on the contrary because they have been deprived of it), peers participate in proposing positive models of young people who stay themselves but act for/with others. This authenticity favours the possibility of feeling secure and respected.

YOUNG PEOPLE VOLUNTEERING AS PEERS BENEFIT MOST

Usually peers are selected on a voluntary basis, even though not all volunteers are accepted and a selection is made according to more or less explicit criteria depending on each programme of action and the objectives set. In other situations, peers are singled out because they have attracted the favourable attention of the adults in the environment where they live (teachers, social workers, association members and others). That is why the profile of young peer people cannot be straightforwardly and uniformly established but must be a subject of discussion and a concern among the adults running these programmes.

As the studies emphasised as early as the start of the present millennium, the effects on young people are variable even though a constant is noted as regards personal enrichment for committed peers (INSERM 2001). This sense of personal development comes out in self-assertion, self-confidence or ability to be effective, and more broadly in the ability to be oneself a producer of well-being for self and others (withstanding group pressure or being able to handle the stress and emotions of certain situations, to mention but two examples). In more general terms, they gain in proficiencies

(listening, empathy, support, mediation) which may be transferable at the time of choosing a specific educational stream and/or entering the world of work.

It may thus be regretted that young peers are very often already committed, involved young people. Now, taking the example of the school setting, peer health education programmes help enhance adult–pupil relations. Where peers are already class delegates or representatives of high school life, they consolidate their attainments and knowledge without making it possible for those who have more of a struggle to improve their proficiencies, beyond the expected school performance. However, all research carried out emphasises that the participation of pupil peers in the life of the school has a positive impact on their self-image and the images they project, and this is not without implications for their quality of life (self-esteem), academic success and for the reduction in absenteeism. The question then arises how to rally the young people in greatest difficulty round to participate in peer health education projects to enable them to turn other proficiencies to account and thereby rediscover some legitimacy in their presence within the school. On a wider plane, young people in a state of vulnerability are those who stand to gain most from becoming "peers", even casually, even if it presupposes a different time and type of training. The risk is that by dint of coaching and exercise in their "peer" role, the young people may turn professional and become, as it were, "peer workers" (in the sense of becoming professionals recruited for their layman's knowledge) or "peer pupils" (thus corresponding to a purely academic exercise with a concern to do right and be well regarded).

The peer approach to health education/prevention/promotion only becomes meaningful if constructed in tandem with other action programmes, aimed in particular at changing a young person's immediate environment (a perspective of health promotion being adopted). Thus, if young peers highlight dietary questions, organisational aspects, for example the accessibility of the school canteen, also need examination. Likewise, if the young people pinpoint the difficulties of access to care, it may be useful and necessary to ask about the accessibility (timetables, location) of care in the establishments implementing this type of project. Peer health education in no way makes it possible to stand in for and replace the professionals, and it cannot be sufficient in itself, otherwise the young people may be made to shoulder "too great a responsibility". Young people's expectations do not tend in that direction anyway; while they want more room to be left for the experiences of other young people or of persons living in their situation, they do not want it to be exclusive for fear of being isolated.

POINTERS: SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON HEALTH

The question of peer prevention calls for some clarifications regarding sources information on health for young people.

Women seek more information than men

Women are generally more careful of their health than men, it is they who usually handle these questions in the family, and the Internet has not changed behaviour patterns in any way. Accordingly, mothers have a major role in health information

for young people.* Besides, young women are found to be over-represented in their recourse to information on health via the media: 7 out of 10 women as against 1 out of 2 men follow television or radio broadcasts on health.** These findings tie in with the apportionment of domestic tasks according to gender, in which those assigned to women are education and upkeep, care and attention.

Information is also channelled through institutions

The data presented in the survey on sexuality in France provide a worthwhile insight into the sources of health information. For example, on contraception, the results show that the three main sources mentioned by young females*** are, in that order, school, television and mother; young males mention school, television and pals. Evolution over time is marked if the younger and the older generations are compared. There is a relative decline of the peer group and women's magazines, which constituted the first two information sources for the over-50 generation. The school's role is increasing. The mother's is holding its own. Among the youngest females, the doctor is ahead of friends. Among boys however, peers continue to have a specific role.****

The Internet

The Internet has added to the available supply of information on health. Where young people's practices are concerned, the data of the French Baromètre santé 2010 (INPES) show that virtually all those aged 15-30 years are websurfers; slightly under half (48%) have already connected to the Internet in health matters (seeking information, obtaining advice). Use of the Internet for health increases with age: 39% of the 15 to 19-year-olds; 50% of the 20 to 25-year-olds and 55% of the 26 to 30-year-olds. Here again, gender disparities are noted: young females tend more than young males to state that they seek health information on the Internet. The legitimacy of the practice is also to be examined, so apparent is it in interviews that for young people "It's a girl's thing".*****

It must be realised, however, that while information helps to shape knowledge and representations, it also conveys norms. While information on health has the effect of drawing the attention of a given public to a specific issue and thus arousing awareness, all the studies undertaken in the health field emphasise not only that information is indispensable but that informing and convincing do not suffice to bring about a change in behaviour and representations.

* Amsellem-Mainguy Y. (2006), "Prescrire et proscrire des conduites, véhiculer des normes: les mères comme actrices privilégiées en matière de prévention de sexualité and de contraception", *Recherches Familiales* No. 3, pp. 49-59.

** Baromètre santé 2010, "Sentiment d'information et craintes des jeunes en matière santé", INPES.

*** The Internet was not among the suggested replies in this survey.

**** Bozon M. (2008), "Premier rapport sexuel, première relation: des passages attendus", in Bajos N. and Bozon M. (eds), *Enquête sur la sexualité en France, Pratiques genre et santé*, La Découverte, Paris, pp. 118-19.

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Chapter 12

Body, health and the universe – A polemic and critical review of youth health behaviour

Manfred Zentner

INTRODUCTION

Youth cultures and scenes can be understood both as means for identity building and stages for socialisation, and as platforms for and symbols of protest against adult society. Research on both forms has been carried out and it is obvious that identity creation and protest do not have to be exceptional, either in youth or in adulthood. This paper focuses mainly on the socialisation role of youth cultures and its impact on health behaviour, as well as on sustainable consumption. The short – and cynical – version of it might be: even the best and socially most preferred behaviour has to be set on a stage and performed in front of an audience – or else it is not worth the effort.

YOUTH, IDENTITY AND SELF-(RE)PRESENTATION

Growing up was never an easy task. It always meant leaving the safe haven of childhood to reach the dull shores of adulthood by crossing a stormy sea of uncertainty – well, this is just a metaphor and should only set the stage to describe the challenges of youth. I by no means believe that childhood was ever safe for the majority of humankind, nor do I believe that adulthood is always boring (even when I believe that more evidence exists for latter statement). But being young in times of globalisation, individualisation, pluralisation and virtualisation in an achievement-oriented, consumer, network, risk and migration society means that more opportunities for young people are being complemented based by even more challenges and duties.

During the second half of the 20th century freedom of decision became greater for more and more people. They were no longer obliged to live their lives as if they were predestined by birth to live in certain social surroundings. The influence of the social structure of society on people's future and chances did not vanish, but their degree of freedom of decision increased remarkably. This trend, called individual-isation, allows people to decide for themselves in many areas of life and they are no longer forced to act only according to traditions and in the same way as people from the same background. Nowadays people have the chance to decide on but are also responsible for their own educational paths, their own way into the labour market, their own legal status, their own health, their way of life and even their own sexual identity. Consequently lifestyles can be chosen – if not completely freely and independently of social and cultural background – and social structure is not the only discriminatory factor in society. The *hexis* – described by Bourdieu (1982) as an outcome of cultural and economic capital as well as leisure activities, behaviour and even attitudes – can be chosen more freely nowadays than it could 40 years ago.

Bauman (2009) noted that even values and attitudinal behaviour can, since they may be chosen, be nothing more than a symbol for a certain lifestyle group, just like a certain outfit or a certain music preference would be. The reason why people display various forms of behaviour lies in a tendency of the consumer society that forces everybody to become not only consumers but at the same time goods or rather brands, as Bauman explains. All of us who are living in consumer societies are not only used to using and consuming the varieties of things on offer – from clothing to food, from electronics to furniture and from information to culture. We use them as an investment in our own market value as brands in the consumer soci-ety; our consumption becomes the showroom of ourself, which is our own brand, for the market. Therefore we present certain facets of ourself to the market for the "consumer" we expect in this market: when trying to find a new job, we will present our knowledge and skills rather than our music preferences; when we want to find a new partner we will rather show our dancing skills and family attitudes than our puzzle skills and sporting interests (or the other way round – depending on the partner we want to find, and what we believe makes us irresistible for this particular one). If we want to gain respect in our group of friends we present certain values, certain behaviour, and on the other hand tend to hide certain preferences, be they for music or books. So the presentation of ourselves depends on the market we are in and the consumers we want to reach, and thus even the attitudes we have (since we present them) might depend on the values of customers in the market we expect. Bauman does not claim that this is a conscious process, but it still happens.

The presentation of the self and the reaction of others, the audience, form the process of socialisation and thus identity creation, as described by Erving Goffman (1959) in his theory of symbolic interaction. This process of presenting and adjusting the presentation according the reaction of the audience, also described as "impression management", has gained more and more recognition by the public and it seems people react consciously according to this credo. Therefore this identity-creating role-playing is becoming more and more common among people but often it remains unclear who the important audience is, whose reactions influence the self-presentation. So the style, behaviour, patterns of consumption and even attitudes are significant symbols in this presentation.

The Internet and especially online social communities like Facebook, Myspace or LinkedIn have created a new form of public space for self-presentation. Here it is common to present leisure activities, music preferences or cultural interests, as well as one's education or professional position. Our legal status, sexual orientation and values and attitudes are also presented via social networks like Facebook, Myspace or Tumblr. These various facets of a self and an identity are presented voluntarily and consciously – and they evoke reactions from the audience: people comment or even share one's status, add like statements or links, or leave the friends list because they do not appreciate certain statements. Illouz (2012) points out that this form of self-presentation in electronic media also has an influence on offline relationships. Since online representation constantly asks for positive feedback by the audience, people get used to and depend on the culture of positive affirmation in offline relationships too. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that in the time of online social communities, all facets of a person are visible to everyone simultaneously and permanently. In the past, people presented various facets of their selves too, but consecutively, and only those people who were actually present could see a certain facet. And the Internet as a stage for self-presentation has fostered a trend towards self-portraits taken with a digital camera, often with the smartphone, and put online on a social network – the "selfies". Thus the electronic media serve as a new platform to present all facets of oneself and one can permanently receive affirmation or critical feedback that can be considered in further self-representation.

The range of choice, or rather the inspiration for a certain decision, derives not only from the traditional culture of the region, or even of the country people are born in, but it can come instead from anywhere in the world. Globalisation, migration and the network society (Castells 1996) changed and widened the offers in the supermarket of attitudes and styles, just as they did for music and fashion. Cultural exchange intensified because of globalisation, migration and media. International media companies transmit not only regional news but broaden the range of information and culture visible to people. Culture-pessimistic analyses of this trend observe the loss of local cultures to global Western – normally American – culture, and thus see a loss of local and regional identity. And regional traditions too gain a bigger audience via the globalised media industry but especially because of the Internet, which allows user-generated content. The World Wide Web now allows us to get information from everywhere and to inform ourselves about our own way of living.

Another trend promoting the diversity in the Western world is the change in the concept of migration and integration. Integration still requires a good command of the language of the host society, but the need to have contact and exchange with people from the host society outside of education and the labour market has grown less urgent. Migrants do not have to adapt completely to the host society any longer, but can quite easily keep contact with their own (or their predecessor's) culture and traditions. Modern communication media allow the maintenance of contact with people from the same cultural background all over the world, and some migrant groups in host countries have grown in size, allowing interpersonal private contact to be kept more or less only inside the same culture. Therefore the variety of elements of different cultures that can be found in a small region has increased over the last few decades. In some countries conservative politicians and analysts point to the alleged development of parallel

societies. Liberal migration policy and multiculturality are commonly blamed for this development, which is held responsible for the increase in violence, unemployment, poverty or the loss of "native" traditions, culture and community feeling.

Furthermore, international media and the Internet foster knowledge about the economic and ecological interdependencies of countries, people and actions around the globe. Nowadays, more and more people in Europe are aware that their consumption behaviour can have tremendous effects in other world regions. These effects can be both on the economy and on the ecological conditions in other parts of the world and can be positive or negative. Consequently these local or regional developments might change the conditions for the world economy, and can influence world climate and thus migration trends. These interdependencies existed before as well, but knowledge about them was less common. Recently, this awareness of the consequences of one's own behaviour for the whole world has led to self-reflection and even to conscious consumption.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SELF IN YOUTH CULTURES

This short description of the recent situation should set the framework for an analysis of youth cultures and scenes where the various approaches to health, the body and to sustainable consumption can be focused on. Youth cultural scenes are defined as networks of people who share certain forms of a material and/or mental collective style. This collective style is put on stage, presented and developed in typical places, at typical times, and/or in typical media (Hitzler et al. 2001). Contrary to traditional youth organisations, these scenes are fluid both in their symbols and in young people's affection for them. Youth cultural scenes are – as networks – defined by weak ties among the members and self-defined attachment to the scene. Thus, these youth scenes function as places for socialisation, as do families, friends, school or work settings or organisations, but since the ties in and to the scene are self-defined, the setting of youth cultural scenes allows more freedom for both autonomous role playing and identity work (Grossegger et al. 2001). Generally, socialisation means the integration of any person into a society. It is the process of acquiring the knowledge and skills to understand the values and follow the rules in certain groups, to enable one to participate in this setting and also to fulfil the expectations of other people as to a certain role in a given setting.

Youth scenes have three different pillars (Zentner 2008) or elements that can be described for every scene. Youth scenes are not only networks of people who look similar. Research shows that people in a certain scene share not only style preferences but also a correlation with attitudes and values. Furthermore, typical forms of bonding models can be found in scenes. For example, hip-hop is not only defined by rap, break dance, graffiti and fashion, but followers of hip-hop typically long for respect for their authentic behaviour and the feeling of belonging to smaller groups, a gang or a "posse" is characteristic. Youth culture research cannot explain if there is any causality between scene belonging and values, but it can highlight correlations.

For this paper, the connection between health behaviour, body image or conscious consumption and youth cultural scenes and certain phenomena is of interest.

I'M TOO SEXY FOR MY SHIRT – IDENTITY CREATION IN YOUTH CULTURAL SCENES

It seems that during the last three decades the importance of the body as a key element of the self has grown and thus its involvement in the presentation of self has become more essential. This could be derived from the fact that even in mainstream media, such as TV, as well as new media formats, there exists a focus (primarily) on the presentation of health, looks, and the body. Among these formats are TV series such as Nip/Tuck, model casting shows or reality formats where body improvement and aesthetic surgeries are the main topics. Health and fitness programmes are no longer informative – and rather boring – presentations or discussion rounds by various medics, but are "reality shows" presenting people who want to lose weight, live healthily or cope with their ill-health. This trend towards the growing importance of the body can also be observed in the behaviour of people, especially young people. More and more people are investing in aesthetic surgery, go to fitness centres or undertake body modification, such as tattooing. The public presentation of the body has also changed. Fashion allows showing well-trained muscles, flat bellies or artificially improved body parts, as well as tattoos and piercings. Irrespective of whether people go out to dance in a club, do sports or go to work, clothing is cut to present the body, and it is socially acceptable to present it. Thus, one can observe that the body becomes a medium. Some recent media reports have focused on a new trend in men's self-presentation called "spornosexuality". Spornosexuality can be understood as the successor of the 90s trend of metrosexuality, when men started to take care of their body by caring about weight, using lotions and investing in haircuts and clothing. Spornosexuality takes this one step further as men shave their body hair and train their bodies to have well-defined abdominal muscles because they "have to" look like sportsmen or porn actors (thus the name spornosexuality).

This growth of importance of the body was the basis for the success of the fitness scene. More and more young people declared themselves to be part of the fitness scene, and over the years the average age in the scene has decreased, as studies on youth cultures among 10- to 30-year-olds in Austria showed. The data also showed that a higher percentage of young men compared to women are part of the scene and it also indicates that young people with migrant backgrounds are represented more than in other youth cultures. The data also showed a high correlation between "being in the fitness scene" and agreement with the statement that "people who look good have better chances in the labour market". The inclination to have cosmetic surgery and also to use dietary supplements is higher than average. So one can deduce that placing a high level of importance on looks and the body not only automatically implies a healthy lifestyle and a high level of health awareness, but also the will to be successful at work. It is interesting that this element of success is also highlighted in an analysis of the TV format of model casting shows (Stach 2013). It is particularly important that the facial expressions of the young candidates should not reveal any strain during the challenging tasks that they have to perform during the show, to give the appearence that they find the task easy.

Another interesting element in the fitness culture is the egocentric (though not automatically egoistic) attitude. The individual is of the utmost importance in the culture.

"It is your own body and it is you who is in charge of it and who is responsible for how it looks", is a key message in the fitness scene. And that is also evident when you have a closer look at the setting in fitness centres: the machines are parallel to each other; a monitor for the individual choice of supporting entertainment is in front of each machine; the people are concentrated on their own movements, at their own speed, their own rhythm; personal trainers – even if every user of a fitness club has the same one – are here to give advice to one single person at a time. So we can see that the whole stage is set up to promote the individual and the power to make it on his or her own. Regarding this individual approach, the fitness culture is different from other forms of body-centred scenes such as beach volleyball, and even the approach of CrossFit (which does not show the characteristics of a scene yet) is completely different. In CrossFit the group is important, even though not everybody does the same at the same time, but success is easier in the group and the group supports the individual.

This individualistic self-centred approach in the fitness scene might explain the higher representation of people from socially disadvantaged groups than in other scenes. Since everyone has the power over his or her own body, it needs "only" self-discipline, the will to train and the time it takes and one will see positive results. Thus the message in the fitness scene is: "I did this myself, I managed that, I alone was successful and I can also do it outside the fitness studio in the labour market".

In other sports scenes the guiding values normally differ strongly from those in the fitness scene. In beach volleyball, which is also a highly expressive body- and looks-centred culture, one doesn't see this focus on success and achievement. Here, partying, a good mood and an easy-going attitude seem more central. Furthermore, the way the female body in particular is presented in the media is far more sexualised, and therefore many claim that the scene is sexist. As in the fitness scene, health issues, besides a "well-defined" body, are not more important for the average young person. A healthy lifestyle is also not the driver for being part of broader scenes like surfing or skateboarding. On the contrary, skateboarders or snowboarders tend to display risk behaviour closely connected to the sport. Skateboarders are not afraid of sports injuries, but they are rather proud if they have some scratches or sometimes even more severe injuries. Such cuts and bruises, shown when boarding, are again proof of devotion to training and the almost obsessive wish to improve skills. Thus, skateboarders are happy to see sports injuries as the price they pay on their way to perfection.

Gender roles and stereotypes are the main elements in various youth scenes. In sports scenes girls are often either a decorative surplus (like cheerleaders in American football) or distracting elements (like the "Betties" in skateboarding)[37], or reduced to their looks and not their achievements. In many music scenes too we find stereotypes, not only in the lyrics but also in the presentation of the musicians and dancers. The most explicit recent model of this is hip-hop, where females are presented in

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37. Skateboarders often called girls in the scene "Betty" if they were more interested in the boarders than in boarding. It is good if girls are also in the audience and admire the skills of the boarders, but, "Betties are dangerous if they want to distract the boarders [from] the really important things in life; then you cannot accept them", as a Viennese boarder aged 13 once explained in an interview, referring to skateboarding as the "real[ly] important thing".

an over-sexualised way, offering their bodies to a man who is in charge and able to have all the girls (irrespective of his own looks, skills, behaviour or charms). In some lyrics of gangsta rap songs females are even blamed for aggressive or violent behaviour against them (Herschelmann 2013). So the stereotypes are very clear and also include body images. Women should have flat bellies, big breasts, slender legs and nice buttocks, and should use these body parts to please a man – at least this is the model presented in music videos. One symbol for this role of females in the scene was "twerking", the lascivious rotating dance movement. This symbol became a mainstream phenomenon, even outside hip-hop, featuring in, for example, Miley Cyrus' music videos. It should be remembered, however, that the body has been an expressive element in music for a long time, though gender stereotypes were not always promoted and consolidated, certainly not across all musical styles.

A youth culture that is not focused on the body image but still on the body is LOHAS – Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability. This lifestyle is more interesting for young adults than for teenagers but still can be counted within youth cultural phenomena. This lifestyle can be characterised by conscious consumption in various areas. Among these are ecological and social sustainability of production, preference for regional products but also healthy living conditions, use of renewable energy and others. People who see themselves as LOHAS claim that their approach to sustainability does not imply abstinence from consumption but consideration of the production methods and options for recycling and energy usage when deciding for or against a given product or brand. Thus, LOHAS can use electronic goods or wear designer clothing if they are produced, shipped and sold in coherence with values of sustainability. Nevertheless, people committed to LOHAS often live as vegetarians or vegans, since the production of these food products needs less energy and produces less harmful by-products than meat or fish. Personal health and well-being are also important for those following LOHAS, therefore they often do relaxation sports like Tai Chi or Yoga. The LOHAS values are typically post-materialistic, as described by Inglehart (1982). Inglehart differentiated between materialistic values and post-materialistic values, where the former is described by the search of the individual for economic security and the wish to gain wealth, make a career, have a nice house and possess status symbols. The latter is described as those values that can gain importance only if materialistic needs are fulfilled. These values include self-realisation, participation, global solidarity and justice. Thus LOHAS followers tend to be post-materialistic, which consequently explains why socially disadvantaged people seldom seek out a LOHAS lifestyle. Youth scenes that can be seen as an introductory form to the lifestyle of LOHAS are the "Ecos" and "Alternatives". But in these scenes a healthy lifestyle is not a defining element of the values; Ecos focus on ecological sustainability and often animal rights, while Alternatives concentrate on economic justice and are against the economic primacy of globalisation. Both of these scenes are also very critical of fashion and brands and tend to present themselves in no-name and or second-hand clothes. On the other hand, for those concerned with LOHAS it is important to have decent and fashionable clothing as well.

All in all, we can find some youth cultural scenes that do care about health, the body and the universe, but not all of them with similar attitudes or aims. Nevertheless all the scenes mentioned communicate their attitudes via various symbols such as a trained

body, sexualised presentation of body parts or ostentatious conscious consumption. However, besides the culturally embedded behaviour, we can see attitudes or behaviour independent of the youth cultural scene, particularly in the online world.

(UN-)HEALTHY BEHAVIOUR ONLINE

Health and body images are not only key elements in certain youth cultural scenes. The importance of these topics can also be seen in other – often youth-related – phenomena like self-presentation and presentation of others, but also in the online discussion and presentation of nutritional trends and even of eating disorders.

We can observe a trend towards presenting oneself online and sending self-portraits via mobile phone that has gained momentum over the last five to seven years, especially with the growing importance of smartphones. This form of visual self-presentation led to the hype of selfies. In the beginning these selfies were nothing more than pictures of oneself but they became an art form, with various modes of composition being fashionable for a short time. For self-portraits the "duck face" was at one point very popular, as was the nude self-presentation of the back some years ago, made trendy by Scarlett Johannson. Recently the exposure of colleagues, ex-friends or ex-partners by presenting embarrassing (often nude and/or sexual) pictures in online communities became a phenomenon of online mobbing (also) among youth. Such incidents, called "sexting", expose the body of a person and thus damage the reputation of that person. Here it becomes obvious that the situation is perceived as more incriminating than the body image is supportive, and the negative impact strikes the victim harder than the perpetrator, who – in most cases – was involved in the scene as well. This is a phenomenon that needs further research on the modes of perception and of assessment in such situations. Online mobbing, being an important element in psychological problems and mental disease of young people, is a more general form of negative exposure than sexting. In the study "EU Kids Online II" (Livingstone et al. 2011) it is stated that approximately every seventh young person has already received sexual messages or pictures, but only 3% confirmed that they had already sent such messages. In a recent Austrian study 30% of interviewees aged 14 to 18 claimed that it is normal to send nude or almost-nude pictures of themselves to a partner (saferinternet.at/jugendkultur.at, 2015).

Another model of the presentation of health and body image in virtual surroundings is online interest groups on eating disorders. These communities were in the beginning a kind of online support group for concerned people where they could exchange their experiences and gain mutual understanding and support. However, these groups become problematic if the online support starts contradicting medical treatment offline. In particular, "pro-ana" and "pro-mia" blogs and communities promote diseases and eating disorders as desirable lifestyles. Pictures, stories and advice that inspire people – but primarily young females – to become and stay thin are the main element of these webspaces. These "thinspiration" pictures show very thin (often anorexic) models professionally styled and set on stage by professional photographers. Such pictures illustrate a "lifestyle" of anorexia nervosa, portrayed as preferable and not unhealthy. Thus eating disorders are presented as widespread and normal and their risks are trivialised and played down.

A similar effect of belittlement and feigned normality is created with videos of risk behaviour in street traffic, such as speeding. Other forms of risky behaviour are also presented online via videos, pictures or text and might thus have an effect as models for other young people. This possible effect is mentioned by some pedagogues, who refer to the dissemination of videos and pictures of risky behaviour, from unsafe sex to violence and from substance misuse to auto-aggression. Obviously such media dissemination exists online, and its effect and impact on youth behaviour has yet to be analysed in further research.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we can see that health and the body have become elements of the self-presentation to an audience on- and offline and induces reactions that influence the further identity creation of young people. Consumer behaviour too, has become an element in the creation of the self-image for public gaze and thus an element of self-expression. The body has become an instrument for communication and a symbol of success and of (apparently) healthy living.

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Abstracts

THE YOUTH PRECARIAT, "GENERATIONISM" AND THE AUSTERITY CITY

Fred Powell and Margaret Scanlon

This article explores the position of young people within the austerity city, which is used as a metaphor for postmodern society. The article addresses the rise of a youth precariat in the 21st century and its impact on changing society and politics. At the core of the article are the questions "How do youth policy and youth work need to change?" and "What measures and practices are required to adapt youth strategies and services to the needs and aspirations of young people in postmodern society?" We suggest that a radical strategy of transformative change in both youth policy and youth work is needed to promote young people's health and well-being.

FROM HOLISTIC NEEDS TO CROSS-SECTORAL MEASURES – AN ANALYSIS OF CROSS-SECTORAL YOUTH POLICY BASED ON RELEVANT DOCUMENTATION

Magda Nico

Feeling safe, sound and happy does not magically happen and is not irreversible. It takes certain conditions of existence and minimum levels of well-being, self-esteem and a sense of fulfilment. These conditions, necessary but not necessarily sufficient to reach happiness or self-realisation, are spread throughout numerous spheres of life and, most of them at least, find relative correspondence with dimensions of youth policy or with administrative divisions such as education, employment, health, housing and culture, among others.

Young people themselves confirm this layered and holistic definition of well-being. They tend to provide holistic views of well-being that combine mental/philological, physical and, most of all, emotional and social well-being (Nico and Alves 2015: 15). But they also understand well-being as layered, thus distinguishing well-being from happiness. Well-being in this sense corresponds to the achievement of basic objective and subjective conditions of life, while happiness is at a higher level, and is usually merely momentary or gradual, or cumulative. Well-being would then be a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for happiness (Nico and Alves 2015: 16).

But is this holistic approach to life supported by the usage, spread, reach and operationalisation of the concept of cross-sectoral youth policy? "Success" is not – contrary to what Oscar Wilde stated – a science. If you have the conditions, you don't necessarily get the results. But you must start somewhere. Youth policy's aim would then be to guarantee that this starting point is approximately the same for all, that the minimum conditions to achieve happiness are guaranteed.

This article intends to contribute to this topic by providing an overview of existing information on cross-sectoral policy-making co-operation based on materials produced in the context of work within in the EU, the Council of Europe and specific countries with concrete experiences in cross-sectoral co-operation. To achieve this purpose, a certain number and type of policy-related documents collected were subject to thematic content analysis supported by the software Maxqda˚. This provided the means to analyse, on one hand, the formal or official importance and political recognition given by some of the major European institutions to the cross-sectoral features of youth policy and, on the other, the implementation of cross-sectoral youth policy at national level.

ENVISIONING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Beata Sochacka

Youth commitment to creation of a sustainable future has been a recurring theme in the discussions on sustainable development, drawing attention to the complicated interrelations between youth and sustainable development. Perceived as a key stakeholder in a sustainable future, youth is expected to take the lead in bringing the transition towards a more sustainable development paradigm. The article argues that although the youth role in envisioning the future and leading social change is certainly a crucial one, there are important questions that need to be asked to make sure youth's role in leading the change is not yet another element of a simplified vision of a sustainable future in which the importance of one social actor is overestimated.

YOUTH TRANSITIONS: CHANCES AND CHOICES – GLOBAL DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL CHALLENGES

Dragana Avramov

Youth transitions concern crucial changes in the human life course – the transition from one level of education to another, the transition from education to work, the transition from parental care to independent life or own family life.

In this contribution, I first address societal developments, mainly in the domain of demographics that help to understand some key challenges and opportunities with which young people are likely to be confronted. Next I look at individual-level life-course events related to transitions regarding sexuality, education, work and family life.

In their transition to adult life, today's European youth will constitute a decreasing part of the population, whereas Asia and Africa will be facing strong increases in this age group. Today's young people in Europe will in adult life also be confronted

with an increasingly ageing population. The later stages of life and the working conditions of today's European youth will partly be influenced by demographic trends and differentials in the educational competition, labour supply, migration pressures and old-age-dependency ratios.

Young people in Europe today require heavy individual and societal investments in education, are confronted with labour-integration difficulties produced by a maladapted world economic system and face incompatibilities in the domain of work- and family-building relations.

The life-course distribution of time for the main activities that relate to studies, paid work, domestic activity, partnership, parenthood, care provision and active and passive leisure need to be reshuffled over the entire life course in order to better adapt life chances to the changed socio-economic and demographic framework conditions.

CORRELATES OF MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING OF THE EUROPEAN YOUTH: EVIDENCE FROM THE EQLS

Haridhan Goswami and Gary Pollock

Youth well-being is becoming more central to European social policies both in the European Union and at a national level. The study of well-being has come far in recent years such that the focus has shifted from interpretations with a focus on objective measures towards a nuanced analysis including a variety of social and psychological dimensions. At the same time, there have been significant advances in the development of common research instruments and cross-national surveys, both of which facilitate a comparative analysis of well-being. This paper uses evidence from the European Quality of Life Survey 2011 to highlight national differences in mental health and psychological well-being (PWB) and begins the process of establishing which factors appear to predict positive experiences.

"ILLEGAL BODIES" ON THE MOVE – A CRITICAL LOOK AT FORCED MIGRATION TOWARDS SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR YOUNG ASYLUM-SEEKERS

Maria Pisani

This paper seeks to look at human mobility and, more specifically, the experiences of young refugees who cross the Mediterranean in an effort to find peace and security in Europe. This is a contemporary issue that has recently witnessed a surge in political, academic and media interest. The majority of asylum-seekers reaching the coast of Malta are young people. In 2014 one quarter of the asylum-seekers claimed to be unaccompanied minors, reflecting a global phenomenon (UNHCR 2014).

Forced migration does not happen in a vaccum, but must be positioned within neo-liberal globalisation and social change. The securitisation of borders has made it increasingly difficult for refugees from the global South to seek asylum in the EU. Such

policies have contributed to the proliferation of unscrupulous smuggling networks: in 2014 an estimated 3 000 people lost their lives trying to cross the Mediterranean. Inhumane policies adopted by the EU and the violation of human rights are justified through hegemonic discursive practices that define and represent the "illegal" body, fuelling fear and heightened nationalism.

In this paper I look at the Maltese context and the broader EU policy on forced migration and the securitisation of borders. I also draw on my experiences as a practitioner and activist to make the case for a more critical understanding of forced migration that, in the search for social justice and respect for human rights, must challenge the statist hegemony that is ubiquitous within youth studies. The paper argues that the "right to rights" cannot be assumed and that the prevalent, uncritical stance towards notions of the nation state and democracy is problematic, exclusionary, and out of touch with the lived reality experienced by millions of young people around the world.

SELF-EFFECTIVE, ACTIVE AND HEALTHY – HEALTH PROMOTION IN INTERNATIONAL YOUTH WORK

Ansgar Drücker

The German Federal Government's 13th Report on Children and Young People focused on the health of children and young people in Germany. The report pays little attention to (voluntary) youth work and none at all to international youth work and has not therefore been properly taken on board in these areas; however, it does include findings which can be applied to these two areas of child and youth welfare and which are described in greater detail in the article.

The report describes many aspects of successful health promotion in child and youth welfare work which have not been conducted intentionally to date and can at best be described as implicit health promotion. The report attaches great importance to positive experiences of self-effectiveness by children and young people, which it states have a favourable impact on mental health. International youth work activities also make precisely such experiences possible.

The drafting committee warns against taking a cultural or ethnic approach to health problems and instead places the emphasis on social disadvantages, while describing young people's belonging to multiple different cultures as a key resource. Leading on from this positive and appreciative approach to young people from migrant backgrounds, they are nevertheless clearly presented as being disadvantaged in health terms and suffering disproportionate levels of health problems – an oft-neglected aspect of the structural discrimination they face. Intercultural aspects of health promotion are therefore of particular significance in child and youth welfare activities geared towards exchanges. They are frequently part of the conceptual approach of international youth work.

The relationship established in the report between social status and standing on the one hand and young people's state of health and well-being on the other is not taken properly into account in either child and youth welfare or health policy. It represents a further justification for anti-discrimination policy and makes it clear that personal

responsibility for health is a necessary but in no way sufficient means of ensuring maximum well-being. For educational practice, this also means that because of the intertwining of individual and social factors in the health of young people, health promotion must take account of these two levels; in other words, it can assume neither that well-being will automatically be achieved among all participating young people even with the best health promotion approaches, nor that an improvement in the individual state of health of individual participants can be brought about automatically merely through a stance based on diversity and anti-discrimination.

The self-effectiveness of young people can be significantly undermined by experiences of discrimination and hate speech. Health promotion therefore also includes measures to curb discrimination and combat hate speech effectively. The origin, sexual orientation or identity, or physical disabilities of young people can play a major part here. Reference is therefore made at the end of the article to the current buzzwords of diversity and inclusion.

LGBT YOUNG PEOPLE AND HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC BULLYING – THE EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS CONTEXT

Michael Barron

In recent years we have seen increased attention paid to LGBT young people across Europe and globally, and in particular their experiences of homophobic and transphobic bullying in schools. In 2012 UNESCO initiated the first ever international consultation on addressing homophobic and transphobic bullying in schools and released two related publications: "Review of Homophobic Bullying in Educational Institutions" and *Education Sector Responses to Homophobic Bullying*. In 2011 UN General Secretary Ban Ki-Moon described homophobic bullying of young people as a "grave violation of human rights". This paper draws on European and international human rights law and interpretations to clarify how and why homophobic bullying violates young people's human rights, making the case that a great deal of international law aims to protect LGBT young people against such harassment and as such states have legal obligations in this area. This paper is of particular significance as we are witnessing a rise in anti-LGBT legislation and sentiment in some countries including Russia and Nigeria, a situation which has particularly devastating effects on LGBT young people. The following analysis introduces a hate crimes/incidents frame to homophobic and transphobic discrimination and bullying and addresses the issue of the often-cited friction between cultural/religious rights and LGBT people's human rights.

REFLECTIONS ON A LIFETIME OF ENGAGEMENT IN THE YOUTH FIELD – PERSISTING QUESTIONS

Gordon Blakely

This article looks, over a period of some 40 years, at how we have created and, more importantly, managed, meaningful international, indeed intercultural, co-operation

between young people. By asking a series of questions related to our learning through experience; about the structures we develop to deliver such a public policy; and the values we choose to emphasise along the way, we can reflect on what results have some permanence. This is focused on the interventions at a European level, but the analysis easily spreads to the wider connected world.

In an ever changing environment, on political, social and personal levels, much is lost and some lessons never fully learned. One thread which remains is that in all its stimulating, and often chaotic, forms the values, practice and reach of imaginative non-formal learning have survived many tests of time and systems. Whatever label we use to describe this form of engagement – youth work, focused on and led by young people – it is a major instrument in securing positive intercultural security.

YOUTH, PEER EDUCATION AND HEALTH: A QUESTIONABLE SOLUTION TO REDUCE SOCIAL INEQUALITIES IN HEALTH (SIH)

Yaëlle Amsellem-Mainguy

This article seeks to summarise that health education for young people requires a multiple intervention strategy, at the initiative of adults in a defined programme or on the initiative of young people from a shared observation. For 20 years, the target has been to involve young people in their learning in a process of empowerment, through education peer programmes.

BODY, HEALTH AND THE UNIVERSE – A POLEMIC AND CRITICAL REVIEW OF YOUTH HEALTH BEHAVIOUR

Manfred Zentner

In times of individualisation and in an era when appearance gains ever more importance, even health becomes a symbol for personal success. It seems that staying healthy is everyone's task; threats to health are induced rather by the (wrong) individual lifestyle than environmental circumstances, and thus healthy lifestyles have gained a higher reputation. Therefore the body – as a main expression of health – became more important as a symbol for health and thus for personal success and motivation. Healthy lifestyles are still not the most popular among young people; nevertheless cultural codes try to communicate health and sustainability as important factors of a personal lifestyle. And personal lifestyles are part of identity building, and thus part of the investment in the self for the product "me" in various markets. This paper deals with the relationship between healthy lifestyles and body image and how it is designed and performed in youth cultural scenes. Youth cultural scenes are arenas for finding the own self, for identity creation and definition. Body, looks and health are closely interlinked, but in youth scenes the performative, expressive act is of highest importance, and therefore a closer look behind the appearance is needed to understand the needs and wishes of young people in these scenes. The symbols and codes of body images and health behaviour are described in this article.

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Volume 3 of the series *Perspectives on youth* focuses on "healthy Europe", not just in the narrow sense, but in the broader sense of what it is like to be young in a Europe faced with conflict and austerity, and what it feels like to be young as transitions become ever more challenging. The assumption when planning this issue was that health in this broader sense remains a controversial area within youth policy, where the points of departure of policy makers, on the one hand, and young people themselves on the other are often dramatically different; in fact, young people tend to interpret the dominating discourse as limiting, patronising, maybe even offensive.

The question of health brings the old tensions between protection and participation as well as agency and structure to the forefront. Not all questions are addressed in detail but many are touched upon. It is, intentionally, an eclectic mix of contributions, to provide a diversity of argumentation and to promote reflection and debate. As has been the intention of *Perspectives on youth* throughout, we have sought to solicit and elicit the views of academics, policy makers and practitioners, presenting theoretical, empirical and hypothetical assertions and analysis.

Perspectives on youth is published by the partnership between the European Union and the Council of Europe in the field of youth in co-operation with, and with support from, four countries: Belgium, Finland, France and Germany. Its purpose is to keep the dialogue on key problems of child and youth policies on a solid foundation in terms of content, expertise and politics. The series aims to act as a forum for information, discussion, reflection and dialogue on European developments and trends in the field of youth policy, youth research and youth work while promoting a policy and youth work practice that is based on knowledge and participatory principles.

The editorial team of this volume is composed of 12 members representing the supporting countries, the Pool of European Youth Researchers (PEYR), the co-ordinator of the youth policy reviews of the Council of Europe, the EU-Council of Europe youth partnership and the co-ordinator of the editorial team.

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