

Young People in Greece today: Social Conditions, Employment and Social Networks. {The Generation G (Geneo-cide)}

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Chapter 1: How we perceive and understand Youth in Greece

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The first chapter introduces a description of young people as a social group presenting their social and cultural characteristics. An analytical and theoretical effort is made for a fresh perception of youth as a social concept, avoiding a commonly stereotypical methodology that often leads to a political and administrative 'construction' of youth, based mainly on formal statistics or state employment programmes. Indeed, it seems that it is an extremely difficult task to identify youth and young people today in a way that will allow us to record accurately their social and cultural characteristics, as well as the important contemporary social phenomena that define them. Data collected through our research programme 'In4Youth' (2012-2015) contributed to an extensive elaboration of a theoretical model for youth, as well as a reflection on the various efforts young people undertake during the transition from education to work.

The chapter presents first the characteristics of what we historically call the «Generation of the Polytechnic School uprising», namely during the post-dictatorship period (1974) and secondly the current generation of young people, who are experiencing the economic crisis (2009-2015). Each generation is defined by common social characteristics (cohort), a shared historical experience, not least by the dominant spirit of the time, as well as the specific generational Life cycle. The emergence of the current young generation is closely related to the existing social structures against the wider backdrop of a semi-modernist Greek social regime. The chapter highlights the historical fact of a *Geneo-cide*, that is the social annihilation of a whole generation of young people in Greece, due to fallacies, bad policies, and lack of solidarity by older generations.

Chapter 2: Young University graduates and their transition to labour market: A Qualitative Analysis

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In Chapter two Sotiris Chtouris and Malama Rentari present the topic ‘Qualitative analysis of young people’s transition to work.’ This chapter focuses on the ways young people, who are still students or have completed higher education, use as interpretive tool both self-reflection and re-positioning, as it emerges in the framework of Focus Group interaction developed among them. This constructive interaction favours the emergence of agreement / disagreement, leading to common perceptions or differentiations. In the sixth chapter of the book we present an important methodological tool that we call *empirical dialectics*.

The four Focus Groups (FG’s) presented are:

- a) Young unemployed or occasionally working students (F.G.22)
- b) Undergraduate students who are near the end of their studies (F.G.3)
- c) Young women students who have a steady part-time job in the field of promotion and marketing of goods (F.G.21)
- d) Young independent professionals who have recently completed their studies and have started to work as doctors (F.G.9), lawyers or engineers (F.G.2)

All presentations follow roughly the same thematic sequence and structure: First, we start with the selection of each group’s participants, then the elaboration of the main topic, followed by the presentation of the family context. Family is discussed in its protective and supporting role, in parallel with young people’s individualization processes during their studies.

Chapter 3: Risk of Poverty and Social Exclusion of Young People in Greece

Dionysis Balourdos, Director of Research at the National Centre for Social Research (E.K.K.E).

The third Chapter presents Young adulthood as a stage of life where individuals pass through a series of changes: leaving home, finding a job, getting married or setting up home with a partner and becoming parents. Many of these changes are associated with several pressures and potential risks such as unemployment, poverty and social exclusion.

The research in this paper focus on the extent of poverty or social exclusion among young people in Greece, and analyzing which young people are particularly at high risk.

Our analysis takes a relatively broad definition of ‘youth’, covering young people aged 15-24; however, we often focus on smaller subgroups within this age range when it is appropriate to do so. The data was collected in 2014 while the analysis is mainly descriptive, based on appropriate indices, measures and policy prospects. We find that in Greece, poverty rates among ‘younger youth’ are much higher than among ‘older youth’, suggesting that poverty among young people is closely associated with child poverty. As with the total working age population in similar surveys, we also find there are many cases of working poor while the unemployed show the higher risk of poverty (33%). We also find that many young people feel themselves clearly poor, excluded and disadvantaged.

Chapter 4: Well-being of young people in Greece. The results of the In4Youth survey

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In Chapter Four C.P. Bellas proposes well-being measures of Greek youth. Well-being is alternatively conceived of as either satisfaction (utility) or freedom (capability) in the relevant literature. The proposed measures are based on these alternative and allegedly conflicting approaches. It is, moreover, investigated whether the measures differ significantly according to three different criteria: (i) the employment status of the persons (employed, unemployed or out of the labour force); ii) their gender; and their age (15-19, 20-24, 25-29, and 30-34). Our data are derived from our field survey conducted in 2013- 2014 by using a closed type questionnaire that was part of the research programme *Social Integration and Integration in the Labour Market of Youth during a Period of Economic Crisis (In4Youth)*.

In particular, two sets of indices for youth satisfaction are proposed: Indices of satisfaction from private goods and indices of satisfaction from public institutions and policies. Freedom measures are subdivided into four categories: indices of consumption capabilities; measures of employment capabilities; indices of political and civil rights and indices of ability for practical reason. Finally, a general capability index of youth was calculated on the basis of the above four index categories. The crucial conclusions with regard to well-being viewed as satisfaction are: a) Relative majorities of young Greeks are satisfied from ‘private’ factors that influence their welfare. The only exceptions are

family income and health services; b) Greek youth are extremely dissatisfied with public institutions and the conduct of public policies; c) the unemployed are clearly the most dissatisfied group; d) females are almost equally satisfied with males with regard to 'private' factors of satisfaction and less satisfied than males from public institutions and policies; e) those belonging to the two lower age brackets are more satisfied from private goods probably due to the stronger economic support from their parents.

The main findings from the measurement of well-being as freedom are: a) Young persons, especially the unemployed, think that their employment capabilities are restricted; b) the unemployed stress their inadequate access to health services; c) no serious problems with regard to individual and political rights were recorded, with the ability for political participation being the salient exception; d) the unemployed think that their individual and political rights are restricted to a greater extent than the rest; e) self-respect is in general at a satisfactory level, despite the fact that stress and the threat of poverty oppress the unemployed; f) females are more deprived with regard to labour market access and consumption capabilities and g) capability for work, individual freedom and ability for practical reason are positively related to the age of the respondents. Capability for consumption is the exception, perhaps due to the increased support that persons in the two low age categories have from their parents.

The overarching conclusion emerging from the analysis of our data is that unemployment is the great scourge of Greek youth, irrespectively of whether well-being is viewed as satisfaction from private amenities, public institutions and policies or as freedom of access to material goods, labour markets, civil rights, and ability for deliberation and practical reason. The analysis also revealed the relative deprivation of females in terms of freedom rather than in terms of satisfaction, a fact that provides some empirical support for the theory of adaptive preferences and justifies the theoretical distinction of well-being as satisfaction on the one hand, and capability and freedom on the other.

Chapter 5: Finding social profile standards and integration process in the labor market using 'Multiple Correspondence Analysis'

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In fifth Chapter Giorgos Stalidis and Malama Rentari are presenting the integration of youth into the labor market. The integration of youth into the labor market and their transitions from work to unemployment or between positions are an atomic process which depends on a high degree from social parameters such as social capital and the sense of recognition through their job. In this framework, this study focuses on the detection of social profiles of young people in relation to a) the integration processes followed in the Greek labor market and b) the maintenance of the job positions they already possess. The research aims are the study of the influence of social capital on social and labor integration and the capturing of factors which improve the conditions for remaining in job positions in the labor market. For this *purpose, a field survey has been carried out on a sample of working young people, aged between 15 and 34 years old, within the research project ‘In4Youth - Processes of inclusion and integration of young people into the labour market during the economic crisis Social integration processes’*, which was implemented from 2012 to 2015. The methods which were applied were a combination of Multiple Correspondence Analysis and Hierarchical Clustering, in order to reveal the complex relations among (a) Social capital, (b) Job embeddedness, (c) Social support and labour integration and (d) Stances on tradition, values and politicization. The statistical analysis showed interesting behavioural patterns of young people and uncovered the interaction between social parameters and employment integration. In particular, unemployment or work inactivity were found to be associated with strong parental dependences, involving high levels of assistance reception and providence. Strong job embeddedness was found to be correlated with high social capital, moderate support from the families and low interest in the political stage.

Chapter 6: A Concept on the dialectical methodology of empirical research: The paradigm of *In4Youth* Focus Groups on the social and labour integration of young people

Sotiris Chtouris, Professor University of the Aegean.

Anastasia Zissi, Associate Professor University of the Aegean

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In Chapter Six Sotiris Chtouris, Anastasia Zissi and Malama Rentari are presenting the concept of **the dialectical methodology of empirical research: The paradigm of Focus Groups on the social and labour integration of young people**. The Chapter presents the methodology of focus groups

which were employed within the context of an EC funded research program called ARISTEIA I: *In4Youth* as well as with the development of a dialectic qualitative methodology. This methodological approach integrates a variety of traditions of qualitative research targeting at the creation of an instrument that analyzes social data based on the interactions of the participants as well as on the dynamic dialectic of the social phenomena as these emerge. The *In4Youth* research project is a valuable opportunity to study the dynamics of integration or exclusion of the young people in the labor market. The method of focus group reveals the dialectics of precarity of participants with regard to their biographical trajectories within the contemporary employment or unemployment.

Reference

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