

# ESA RESEARCH NETWORK 30 YOUTH AND GENERATION

## Midterm Conference 2023

**Youth in the Post-Pandemic:  
From Experiences of Inequalities to  
New Opportunities for Solidarities**

20<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> September 2023

Sardinia Hotel Flamingo Resort,  
Santa Margherita di Pula, Sardinia, Italy

The COVID-19 outbreak and now the cost-of-living crisis have led to worldwide fast-paced and unprecedented socio-economic and political changes with deep implications for young people's education, future plans and employment prospects, but also for their everyday and social lives.

The global pandemic has widened already existing gaps in education, training, wages, employment and health, including how these vary by gender, ethnicity, across generations, between different countries and between the North and the Global South. The pandemic has also worsened a labour market crisis, which is already hitting young people hard creating further uncertainty about the immediate but also longer-term future. With the lockdowns and the interruption of teaching during COVID-19 major outbreaks, many young people had to switch to online education or even drop out with deep implications for their social relationships, learning experiences, the development of new skills, their work and life prospects.

Amidst this bleak picture, it is likely that the pandemic times, and more recently the continually raising cost of living, have also brought new opportunities for young people to respond *together* to the challenges they face, developing new coping strategies and forms of collective action via both old and new youth-led forms of solidarities. We are interested in delving into whether these new (either structured or loose) forms of being and acting together are markers of a new post-pandemic youth.

In this context, the 2023 RN30 ESA Mid-term Conference in Sardinia seeks to account for the continuity between pre-pandemic and post-pandemic experiences of inequalities while also exploring how young people come together to forge new forms of solidarities channeling their active responses and commitment to change with and through companionship with their peers.

# Conference Programme

## 20 September

Check-in

Welcome 20:15

Prof. Mariano Porcu (Head DiSpol-UniCA)

Dinner 20:30

## 21 September

Opening: Valentina Cuzzocrea & Giuliana Mandich 9:00-9:15

Keynote 1

Prof Maria Grasso (Sala Nautilus) 9:15-10:45

*Generations, Crises, Inequalities and Solidarities*

Chair: Dr Michela Franceschelli

Coffee break 10:45-11:15

## Parallel Sessions 1

11:30-13:00

### I The future of youth studies (Sala Nautilus)

**Chair:** Sanna Aaltonen

**Giuliana Mandich, Caterina Satta and Valentina Cuzzocrea.** *Togetherness in ESC mobility: between established discourses and a new affective dimension of the mobility experience.*

**Rob Watts.** *Youth in the post-pandemic: from experiences of inequalities to new opportunities for solidarities.*

**Dan Woodman.** *The place of young adulthood in youth studies*

### II New imaginaries of youth (Sala Astrea)

**Chair:** Dragan Stanojević

**Valentina Cuzzocrea, Emiliano Ilardi and Alessandro Lovari.** *(Mis)representing youth?*

**Manfred Zentner.** *“Everything is online anyway” – changes in use and expectations of public space post Corona.*

**Ziwen Cui.** *The ‘lying flat’ (躺平) movement that has arisen among young people in post-pandemic Chinese society.*

### III Gender and Sexualities (Sala Alvania)

**Chair:** Sveva Magaraggia

**Annalisa Dordoni.** *Incel: New masculinities in the risk society between uncertainty and gender-based cyber violence.*

**Giulia Melis.** *Queer youth temporalities in post-pandemic times: what space for alternative futures?*

**Stephanie Daw.** *The long-term impacts of the pandemic for LGBT+ young people living in England and the transition to their self-defined markers of adulthood.*

Lunch 13:00-14:00

## Parallel Sessions 2 14:00-15:30

### IV Global Youth in Context (Sala Nautilus)

**Chair:** Cécile Van de Velde

**Marina Galstyan.** *The aim of the research is to identify, analyse and compare the practices and the nature of social adaptation of young people in the socio-economic sphere in the post-war and post COVID Armenian society.*

**Paulo Cesar Rodrigues Carrano and Maria Pereira.** *Reflexivity in young university students on everyday life in the COVID-19 pandemic.*

**Roni Eyal-Lubling and Lamma Mansour.** *Navigating multiple conflict zones: The case of young Arab women in Israel during the Covid19 crisis.*

### V Inequalities, crises and youth (Sala Astrea)

**Chair:** Elizabeth Ackerley

**Jenny Chesters.** *Just coping or flourishing: How the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated inequalities in Australia-*

**Justyna Kajta and Agnieszka Kwiatkowska.** *Navigating multiple crises. Plans and fears of young Poles in the times of the COVID-19 pandemic and war in Ukraine.*

**Maria Grazia Gambardella and Sveva Magaraggia.** *Intra-generational and inter-generational relationships: connections, solidarities, conflicts.*

### VI Mobility & migration (Sala Alvania)

**Chair:** Ilenya Camozzi

**Andrea Orio, Miriam Della Mura, and Stefania Leone.** *Mobility paths and choices to stay: the perceptions of young Italians from inner areas.*

**Michela Franceschelli.** *Inequalities and immobility: conceptual reflections on the life course transitions of young African migrants in Italy after COVID-19.*

**Patricia Loncle, Guillaume Negri.** *Young exiles and the effects of the COVID crisis on pathways to adulthood: situations of vulnerability and capacities for choice.*

Coffee break 15:30-16:00

## Parallel Sessions 3 16.00-17.30

### VII Perspectives on future (Sala Nautilus)

Chair: Giuliana Mandich

**Elizabeth Ackerley, Laura Fenton, Sarah Marie Hall, and Santiago Leyva del Rio.** *Young people's futures in a context of economic and ecological uncertainty: Early findings from the Austerity and Altered Life-Courses project.*

**Ken Roberts.** *Youth in Post-Brexit Britain: Can they really experience this as normal?*

**Veronika Pfeilschifter and Félix Krawatzek.** *Re-inventing youthful futures in times of multiple crises: The socio-political landscapes in the South Caucasus through the lens of young people.*

### VIII Education and Work (Sala Astrea)

Chair: Lara Ivana Maestriperieri

**Rūta Brazienė and Daiva Skuciene.** *Challenges of Lithuanian Rural NEETs Transitions from School to Work in Times of Uncertainty.*

**Sinikka Aapola-Kari, Antti Kivijärvi, Tarja Tolonenand, Matilda Wrede-Jäntti.** *Inequalities and uncertainties within education and employment –a longitudinal perspective on young people's life-paths in Finland.*

**Tomasz Płachecki, Michał Sitek, Jędrzej Stasiowski.** *Career diversification of vocational education graduates under the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic: The case of Poland.*

### IX Place and inequalities (Sala Alvania)

Chair: Caterina Satta

**Avril Keating, Rachel Benckekroun, Sam Whewall, Claire Cameron.** *Growing up in coastal towns in England –the role of place in understanding intergenerational differences in youth opportunities and experiences.*

**Mette Pless, Jeanette Østergaard.** *Exploring how and why Danish young adults stay in marginalised, rural communities.*

**Svetlana Jović, Jennifer M. Pipitone.** *Youth's Sense Making about Socio-spatial Disparities in New York City through their Perceptions of Urban Nature: Politics and Possibilities in a Post-pandemic World.*

## Parallel Sessions 4

17:30-19.00

### X Post-Covid & Youth Transitions (Sala Nautilus)

**Chair:** Giulia Melis

**Alix Helfer, Tuuli Pitkänen, Konsta Happonen.** *Life trajectories in the midst of a pandemic: COVID-related life events and life satisfaction among young people in Finland.*

**Sonia Bertolini, Angela Dolores Lucca, Veronica Allegretti.** *Youth and Post-Pandemic: adulthood transitions and new forms of autonomy.*

### XI The political youth (Sala Astrea)

**Chair:** Ester Cois

**Catherine Walker.** *“Normal was a crisis”: The impact of the pandemic on youth climate organising and young people’s everyday climate concerns.*

**Evelyne Baillergeau and Cécile Van de Velde.** *Everything is political!? Capturing political meaning among younger generations: qualitative methodological puzzles and possibilities.*

**Judith Bessant.** *COVID in the Anthropocene: Young People and the Resuscitation of Politics.*

### XII Work and labour market (Sala Alvania)

**Chair:** Valentina Cuzzocrea

**Ariadne Vromen, Suneha Seetahul, Meraiah Foley, Elizabeth Hill, Rae Cooper.** *Young people’s technologically enabled working futures in Australia, Japan and the UK.*

**Mihajlo Djukic, Dejana Pavlovic, Dusko Bodroza, Dragan Bjelica.** *Determinants of entrepreneurial intentions among Serbian youth – life satisfaction, extracurricular activities and institutional trust.*

**Piotr Binder.** *From coercion to choice. Polish young adults and remote work in longitudinal qualitative research.*

Dinner 20:30

22 September

Keynote 2

Prof Carmen Leccardi (Sala Nautilus) 9:00-10:30

*Chiaroscuros of the Post-Pandemic Youth*

Chair: Dr Evelyne Baillergeau

Coffee break 10:30-11:00

Parallel Sessions 1

11:00-12:30

XIII Youth activism (Sala Nautilus)

**Chair:** Michela Franceschelli

Cécile Vande Velde. *Invisible revolts. Dynamics of anger, silence and resistance within younger generations.*

Ilenya Camozzi and Marianna Musmeci. *The pandemic has shaken us up. It's now or never! Collective future, solidarity, and everyday utopias among young Italian activists in post-pandemic times.*

Maria Bruselius-Jensen. *An ideal activist in a privileged society.*

XIV Youth and digital worlds (Sala Astrea)

**Chair:** Dan Woodman

Malki Poryes. *I feel like I'm coming out of a shell" The formation of Generation Z in Haredi society.*

Airi-Alina Allaste. *Becoming a digital citizen in Estonia: what supports and hinders new migrants' participation?*

Maddison Sideris. *Youth, Intimacy and COVID-19: Longitudinal analysis of digital intimacies.*



XV Youth and solidarities (Sala Alvania)

Chair: Manfred Zentner

**Antti Kivijärvi, Eila Kauppinen, Tomi Kiilakoski.** *Creating space for youth communalities in Finnish youth work during the pandemic.*

**Eriikka Oinonen, Riikka Korkiamäki.** *Social Relations and Lived Solidarity Among Young Adults during the COVID-19 Pandemic.*

Julia Dobson. *Networks of Care: Opportunities for New Solidarities.*

Lunch 12:30-13:30

Parallel Sessions 2  
13:30-15:00

XVI Youth practices (Sala Nautilus)

Chair: Judith Bessant

Ester Cois and Fabio Bertoni. *In Between: Youth practices for a shared appropriation of urban interstices in post-pandemic cities.*

Lidia Lo Schiavo. *"Able to breathe again". The adaptative and creative practices of the pandemic generation in a multiple crisis scenario. Theoretical observations drawn from a case study.*

Fiona Del Puppo. *Youth and community living: experiences from house sharing and co-living in London.*

XVII Youth health and wellbeing 1 (Sala Astrea)

Chair: Airi-Alina Allaste

Diana de Carvalho et al. *Confined youth: young adults' mental health and future concerns during COVID-19 lockdown in Portugal.*

**Agnieszka Golińska and Justyna Sarnowska.** *Current concerns regarding crises and Subjective Well-Being of young Poles: the mediating role of perceived support in crises, sense of agency, and collectivist and individualistic values.*

**Lara Maestripieri; Acebillo-Baqué M., Delclos C., van Hedel K., Soleri Martí R.** *Economic insecurity among Spanish Youth: its effect on mental well-being.*

## XVIII Youth health and wellbeing 2 (Sala Alvania)

**Chair: Sinikka Aapola-Kari**

**Dragan Stanojević.** *Predicting the Well-being of Young People in Europe during the Pandemic: The Social Ties, Labour Market Integration, and The Mediating Effects of Social Inequalities.*

**Sanna Aaltonen, Noora Hästbacka, Oona Lipponen, Sakari Karvonen.** *People-processing in the context of youth-specific services.*

**Dr Johanne Miller,** *Killing Time: Young People and Boredom.*

Excursion to the archeological site of Nora 15:30-17:30

Dinner 20:30

23 September

Check-out

Breakfast

Departure 10:00

## SCHEDULE

20.9.	21.9.	22.9.	23.9.
<p>20:15 Welcome Prof Mariano Porcu</p> <p>20:30 Dinner</p>	<p>9:00-9:15 Opening Valentina Cuzzocrea &amp; Giuliana Mandich</p> <p>9:15-10:45 Keynote Prof Maria Grasso</p>	<p>9:00 -10:30 Keynote Prof Carmen Leccardi</p>	<p>Breakfast</p> <p>10:00 Departure</p>
	Coffee break	Coffee break	
	11:30-13:00 Parallel Sessions 1	11:00 - 12:30 Parallel sessions 1	
	13:00 - 14:00 Lunch	12:30 - 13:30 Lunch	
	14:00 - 15:30 Parallel sessions 2	13:30 - 15:00 Parallel sessions 2	
	Coffee break	15:30-17:30 Excursion to the archeological site of Nora	
	16:00 - 17:30 Parallel sessions 3		
	17:30 - 19:00 Parallel sessions 4		
	20:30 Dinner	20:30 Dinner	
*3 Parallel sessions with 3 presenters (20+10 min) each			

## BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

### Keynote

#### **Maria Grasso: Generations, Crises, Inequalities and Solidarities**

The most recent generations of young people have gone through several challenging experiences in their formative years. They have experienced economic crisis, political crisis, a health crisis, an ongoing environmental crisis, a cost of living crisis. These developments have impacted on young people in many ways including in terms of their political, social and economic outlooks, their educational paths, employment, economic security, and the opportunities available to them to flourish and enact positive social change for the future. All these experiences are likely to have impacted on young people coming of age and experiencing their formative years in profound ways leading to the formation of new values in relation to those of generations coming of age in previous periods. In particular, this could be reflected in growing support for leftist values amongst young generations coming of age through these experiences. Moreover, these experiences are variegated within generations in terms of different dynamics of experiences such as those relating to gender or class or spatial inequalities. I will critically examine these crucial aspects in relation to generations and social change and build on insights from previous work to examine how these patterns can lead to opportunities for the development of solidarities and collective political action for social change in the current socio-historical juncture.

#### **Carmen Leccardi: Chiaroscuro of the post-pandemic youth**

Influenced by a highly individualized social landscape, experiencing ever more rapid and fragmented processes of change, which result in rising social inequalities, young people are developing new strategies for action. These forms of agency, addressing the growing uncertainty that surrounds both present and future, are yet to be fully discovered. They are expressed at an individual and collective level, and today, in post-pandemic times, they are growing characterized by the intertwining of old and new uncertainties. Also making use of the results drawn from two different qualitative researches completed in 2023, the presentation will highlight the importance, among young people, of new levels of post-pandemic awareness about biographical times on the one hand, and the role of 'everyday utopias' on the other. Through these results, the distinctive traits of young people's new reflexive practices and creative forms of action are highlighted.

### Parallel Sessions

#### I **The future of youth studies**

##### **Giuliana Mandich, Caterina Satta and Valentina Cuzzocrea: Togetherness in ESC mobility: between established discourses and a new affective dimension of the mobility experience**

The COVID-19 pandemic has made more evident than ever that despite - or perhaps because of - increasing pressure on individuals, youth might enact new forms of togetherness. Focusing on mobility experiences, we can distinguish new forms of togetherness due to a specific accent on affectivity that interestingly goes together with the short term nature of these experiences. Drawing upon the findings of the research project

'Mapping Youth Futures', we discuss two different dimensions of this 'togetherness' occurring in experiences of mobility enacted through embarking on European Solidarity Corps (ESC, previously European Voluntary Service or EVS) mobility. For this, we conducted 40 narrative interviews with photo elicitation at the outset and after the beginning of the pandemic. Through these interviews, two different forms of overlapping 'togetherness' emerge.

The first relates to the idea of being part of a larger community, that of EVS users, and more broadly that of the European Union. This is evident in the interview material, and backed up by a common language, that of European institutions sponsoring this kind of mobility. The second form of 'togetherness' is a deeply felt sociality that we are able to detect especially through the images brought into the discussion by participants. They convey a sense of 'feeling together' that is shaped in the everyday experience of mobility in the present, but also represents the idea of 'moving together' in the future that is otherwise articulated in the words used in the interview encounter. While the first form of togetherness - based on the willingness to leave 'the comfort zone'- was already known in discourses of mobility, we wish to draw particular attention to the second, as in its novelty it can better represent new forms of solidarity based on the need to face together the uncertainties of the future.

Rob Watts:

## Youth in the post-pandemic: from experiences of inequalities to new opportunities for solidarities

Many current exercises in accounting for the relation between COVID and young people, have been narrowly framed in terms of how the pandemic did or did not affect the relationship between 'individual' and 'society' (Walby 2021). Much of the social science response to the Covid-19 pandemic also presupposed (i) an anthropocentric ontological frame for representing the relations between COVID and young people, and (ii) a liberal political frame when examining political responses or policies (Rothan and Byrareddy 2020). This paper makes the case for adopting a relational, post-anthropocentric 'new materialism' and a more transformative post-(neo) liberal political frame (eg., Braidotti 2020; Klingberg 2020; Fox 2022). It is time to move on from accounting for variations and/or inequalities in the well-being of young people by reference to 'individual' and/or 'structural' factors (such as age, gender, class or ethnicity). The paper questions the reliance on conventional sociological dualisms (eg., structure versus agency) or metaphors derived from physics which emphasise the 'impact of the virus' on young people (British Academy 2021; Fattore et al 2023). The paper argue that adopting a post-anthropocentric new- materialism moves us away from the individualist/structural focus of the social-behavioural sciences and from an anthropocentric perspective, and towards understanding better how human bodies, viruses, and technologies eg., are 'actants'. This will require undertaking an ontological shift from essentialism to relationality. New materialists treat the material world and its contents not as fixed, stable essences or entities, but as relational and uneven, and always parts of assemblages and in consequence replace the duality of agency and 'structures' with 'events' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988). The paper outlines what the shift to a more-than-human, ethological account of relations between COVID and young people looks like, before highlighting the key features of a post-(neo)liberal politics grounded in a 'capacious historical- materialism'.

Dan Woodman:

## The place of young adulthood in youth studies

Taking a sociological approach to youth means that it cannot be defined purely chronologically but is understood as relational and shaped by different and changing social contexts. Youth studies researchers have extended from an original focus primarily on the teenage years well into people's 20s in recent years, in response to significant social changes that predated but were in some ways accelerated by the pandemic. Yet the field is yet to fully grapple with the conceptual implications for 'youth studies' when more of the processes that the field is interested in are extending not only into people's later 20s but even into their 30s for a greater number of people. The available research suggests that what might be called young adulthood ( $\approx$ 25-34 years) is in general very different to the experience of the teenage years, which are shaped by compulsory schooling and near universal family support, and different to the now normative experience in many countries of further education and precarious work during people's early 20s. Yet young adulthood is increasingly important to many core questions of youth studies, such as how educational credentials convert into career outcomes, the building of adult relationships, and the establishment of independent households. Further, parental support (including financial transfers) to young adult children appears to be playing a crucial role in these outcomes. Youth studies scholars need to but are yet to properly conceptualise how social change and the reproduction and remaking of inequalities unfolds differently through youth and young adulthood. Using examples from the Life Patterns longitudinal study that has used mixed methods (primarily surveys and interviews) to track two generations through to their 20s and 30s in Australia, this paper begins to sketch out this conceptualisation and what it means for the relationship between youth studies, childhood studies and life course research.

**Valentina Cuzzocrea, Emiliano Ilardi and Alessandro Lovari:  
(Mis)representing youth?**

We talk about youth a lot, in diverse outlets and in many contrasting manners. This presentation seeks to problematize the node of youth representations, many of which are often used to catch attention but then are not adequately analysed. These representations tend to mirror 'generational issues' of several kind, and entangle with what is often a multilayered social and economic marginality of youth. However, they also go together - perhaps ironically- with a dicotomization into either heroic or subjacent youth characters, who as such may loose their traits of 'youthfulness' and speak more about the wider society than youth itself. Out of such a great variety, relatively recent work has suggested to discursively framed many youth issues within 'economies of youth' (a debate initiated by Côté, 2014) and take 'youth figures' (Threadgold, 2020) seriously.

Engaging with classic literature on social generation, but also with recent scrutiny of the usefulness of metaphors on youth, the presentation revisits some imaginaries paying particular attention to the relationships that are established with the media (specifically in the attempts of public administration to 'capture' and secure youth's attention) and through a revisitation of recent history of medial products and the representations of youth that they convey. It also offers some snapshots from the experience of the pandemic, playing around figures and representations that sought to capture youth as a capable of solidarity group (and/or as a selfish one at the same time) as emerged in such a dramatic socio-economic momentum.

The presentation draws from a project called IANG (Indagine aperta nuove generazioni) funded by Fondazione di Sardegna and in particular from the findings discussed in the volume 'Giovani e immaginari: rappresentazioni e pratiche' (Youth and imaginaries: representations and practices)



Manfred Zentner:

## “Everything is online anyway” - changes in use and expectations of public space post Corona

The international project in four European cities – Vienna, Milan, Helsinki and Stuttgart – analysed how youth work realities had to change in the last years following dramatic changes of young people’s use of public space. The main focus of this project, which ran from 2020 to 2022, was on long term changes in the last decade but could not ignore the developments induced by the COVID-19 pandemic. During the project accompanied by participatory action research with youth workers in the four cities a comparative online youth survey with more than 2000 participants and an online survey with youth workers was conducted as well as in each city group discussions with young people and with youth workers and participant observations of youth workers in foreign cities were carried out. The results of this research are here compiled with and compared to those of seven social surrounding and leisure time analyses in Austrian cities carried out between 2019 and 2023.

The results point to long term trends towards more use of digital media in leisure time which gained momentum in times of lockdown but also widened social differences between young people. It is obvious that young people spend a lot of their leisure time at home or at other in other places indoor. Also after the lockdown the use of public space changed strongly since more and other groups re-claimed public space. Unobserved places serve young people as meeting points and place for identity construction but while these places become more and more restricted commercialisation of urban spaces leads to further disintegration of society and a deepening of the generation gap. Almost no youth activity for reclaiming of public place occurs but an evasion of virtual public space happens.

Ziwen Cui:

This paper analyses the ‘lying flat’ (躺平) movement that has arisen among young people in post-pandemic Chinese society

This paper analyses the ‘lying flat’ (躺平) movement that has arisen among young people in post-pandemic Chinese society. The term ‘lying flat’ appeared during the pandemic and went viral on the Chinese internet. It was coined against the backdrop of a worldwide economic downturn, and alludes to a youth culture characterised by living without ambition given the uncertain and highly competitive socio-economic environment. The Covid-19 pandemic has amplified socio-economic uncertainties across the globe, contributing to young people’s negative attitudes towards the future and their choices of lifestyles. In China, young people face a more precarious economy than they did pre-pandemic, due both to domestic policy changes and an increasingly unstable international environment. By ‘lying flat’, Chinese young people are developing their own ways of addressing the on-going severe challenges in society and their mental confusion and disillusionment by holding a pessimistic and inactive life attitude. To explore the research question – how do young people negotiate their subjectivities in pursuing a ‘lying flat’ lifestyle? – I draw on Foucauldian analysis of power, discourse and subject to analyse the underlying power mechanisms behind the ‘lying flat’ movement and the complex discursive formations that enable and constrain the continual remaking of the self in young people’s pursuit of ‘lying flat’. Leaning on a Foucauldian understanding of ‘technology of the self’, this paper analyses the self-constitution process young people negotiate when entangling with ‘lying flat’ discourses, to delineate the multiple positions of resistance young people formulate against uncontrollable structural changes. By doing so, this research contributes to reframing subjectivity work in youth studies to explore agentic reactions against structural conditions in a post-pandemic environment. Additionally, the research will provide new insights of using Foucauldian theory in the Chinese context, questioning the utility of a Foucauldian approach in an authoritarian and neoliberal society.

Annalisa Dordoni:

Incel: New masculinities in the risk society between uncertainty and gender-based cyber violence

Numerous studies pointed out that male violence often is implemented as a backlash against women who do not adhere to traditional models (Kottig et al., 2017) and is justified by self-victimization narratives (Kaufman, 1999). Young men accompany violent online discourses against women with justification based on anxieties and fears about the future and the economic instability (Dordoni et al., 2021), changing what is a real condition of social exclusion, especially for young people (Unt et al. 2021), into hate (Kimmel, 2013). Young people in contemporary society are faced, on the one hand, with the risks of the intensification of gender-based violence and the thrust of old and new forms of discrimination, and, on the other, with the risks of flexibilisation of the labour market and the succession of economic crises and phases of austerity. An ethnographic observation in Italian Incel and Red Pill online groups on social media was carried out for one entire year in 2020 - 2021, during the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Italy has been chosen as privileged Country to observe to identify the aspects and dimensions of youth exclusion, because of the centrality of flexibilisation process in the labour market and the stagnation of salaries in the last decades. Young Incels, not investigated enough in the literature, perceive frustration and marginalisation, turn them into hate and redirected them against women or minorities. The study adopts an intersectional socio-economic approach, focusing on gender-based violence, cyberhate and marginalised masculinities and integrating the theoretical framework with the literatures on youth work, job flexibility and social exclusion. The paper will contribute to identify key aspects of the Incel phenomenon, useful in future for designing social risks prevention policies and proposing different imaginaries and prospects for the youngsters.

Giulia Melis:

## Queer youth temporalities in post-pandemic times: what space for alternative futures?

This presentation explores the experiences of LGBTQ youth dealing with chrono-normative [1] representations of adulthood. When analysing youth trajectories from a temporal perspective, a distance emerges between the expectations to adhere to predefined representations of adulthood and the everyday practices of young people that negotiate such expectations with social institutions. This ambivalence becomes more tangible when considering categories of youth that fall outside of the heterosexual norm: to this regard, temporality appears as a vector of power that produces new hierarchies and disciplines those experience that fail to comply.

Empirical data from the last decade documents how the temporal dimension has structured life trajectories and engendered multiple forms of epistemic injustice [2] in relation to non-heterosexual experiences, often resulting in refusal to legitimate alternative life trajectories. Along with the efforts to fulfil “dreams of ordinariness” [3] where social expectations are bent to include complementary life courses, others reclaim failure as a tool to disrupt normative representation of time and propose alternative queer futures [4] that aim to reconfigure existing representations to adulthood [5].

With the socioeconomic turmoil generated by the pandemic, along with the efforts of institutions to reshape a new normality, more challenges add to the scenario. Comparing empiric evidence before and after the struck of the pandemic forces us to reconsider the potentials and limits of these practices in relation to a time of crisis [6, 7]. In conclusion, the final remarks will try to discuss to what extent a post- pandemic society limits or enables the creation of alternative futures that make space for queer youth experiences.

Stephanie Daw:

‘The long-term impacts of the pandemic for LGBT+ young people living in England and the transition to their self-defined markers of adulthood’.

Youth is a distinct and complex life phase. Young people go through the lived experience of being a young person while simultaneously undergoing transitions to becoming an adult and grappling with life-defining questions on their future. Much less is known about the experiences and perspectives of LGBT+ young people, particularly around what being an adult means to them. Since the announcement of COVID-19 as a global pandemic, LGBT+ young people have been consistently overlooked in policymaking decisions and by researchers exploring how the pandemic has affected young people. As we move into a world where we are told we must live with COVID, prolonged impacts for LGBT+ young people are not yet understood, and more qualitative longitudinal research is needed to fully understand how the pandemic is still affecting LGBT+ young people’s lives and the implications of this for their transitions to adulthood. In accordance with these issues identified, and informed by a life course theory approach, the aims and research questions of this paper are twofold: (1) To understand what being an adult means for LGBT+ young people, and (2) To highlight how the pandemic is still affecting them reach those self-defined markers. This paper will draw upon findings from an ongoing 12-month qualitative longitudinal study, commenced November 2022, which is using biographical interviews and scrapbooks among 15 LGBT+ young people aged 18-30. It will draw upon key themes around what being an adult means to this cohort and it will develop individual- based case studies, supported by scrapbook excerpts, to narrate how the pandemic is still affecting them reach those self-definitions. Using creative and participatory methods, this paper will centre an often- hidden voice to disseminate key messages on how this cohort’s transitions to adulthood are being impacted in a post-pandemic opportunity structure, and the outcomes this has led to.

**Marina Galstyan:**

The aim of the research is to identify, analyse and compare the practices and the nature of social adaptation of young people in the socio-economic sphere in the post-war and post COVID Armenian society.

Youth is an intermediary stage of life when people transition from a dependent childhood to independent adulthood. Youth is a time of life when people experience enormous changes due to physical maturation, which is accompanied by cognitive, social/emotional, and interpersonal changes. In the frames of the research the main theoretical concepts on social adaptation are discussed (Piaget, Spencer, Parsons, Merton, Toffler). The aim of the research is to identify, analyse and compare the practices and the nature of social adaptation of young people in the socio-economic sphere in the post-war and post COVID Armenian society. The sociological understanding of social adaptation makes it possible to discover what adaptation models young people have used in the post-war reality. The primary issue, so often voiced on all public platforms and confirmed through numerous studies in Armenia, is the broken link between the education system and the labour market. It seems that when a young person responds “Potentially unemployed” to the question “What do you do?”. COVID-19 pandemic stressed this situation. Young people with soft skills succeeded and more vulnerable youth became more vulnerable. The research results showed that inequalities among Armenian youth became deeper. The Deprivation and imitative type adaptations are among the dominant models: deprivation and imitative type adaptations are mostly common among unemployed. And among students, employed young people, a compensatory type of adaptation is noticeable. The youth independence and social adaptation practices will be presented in the paper. For the analysis of social adaptation practices of youth in Armenia, data from the following sources obtained between January and November 2022 have been used:

- **Quantitative interviews** among 600 young people;
- **Qualitative interviews** with youth, youth workers, researchers, experts and policy-makers;
- **Document analysis** – legal acts, statistical data, sectoral analysis, reports.

## Paulo Cesar Rodrigues Carrano and Maria Pereira: Reflexivity in young university students on everyday life in the COVID-19 pandemic

Our research seeks to understand the everyday life and the individuation processes (BOIS-REYMOND, 2008) of young university Brazilian students during the COVID-19 pandemic. The empirical data comes from a reflexivity exercise; students represented their daily lives through photographs and narrative texts. Fifty-one individual essays with 344 photographs were produced, organized into four coding categories: Care and self-care; Home: work, study and leisure; Pandemic Reflections; and Emotions and Affections.

The present communication focuses on the category "Pandemic Reflections", which included 40 narratives produced by 21 students. Reflexivity affects actions, thoughts and emotions playing an important role in the process of identity building and achievement of autonomy. Through the process of self-reflection young people make conscious decisions, a fundamental key in complex, unequal societies marked by uncertainty (GIDDENS, 2002; MELUCCI, 2004, LECCARDI, 2015).

The results indicate that this group reflected on the precariousness of affective bonds, the reconfiguration of time, and the value of aesthetic experiences to resist the challenges imposed by the pandemic. The digital technologies did not supply the demands of sociability and affection felt by the students, which made it difficult to cultivate relationships in a situation of social isolation. The data did not identify collective answers to the common tasks. Loneliness marked the pandemic everyday life, and the lack of reference to find meaning in today made the reading of tomorrow even more hazy.

Young people articulate support (MARTUCCELLI, 2010) to tackle the challenges of subjective experimentation of youth in a context of societal crisis. In the analyses of the impacts of the pandemic on the Brazilian students, negative aspects are highlighted, such as the widening of school inequalities and mental health problems. The research reveals, however, that they were called to reflection and through this process elaborated creative responses to face the context of adversities.

## Roni Eyal-Lubling and Lamma Mansour: Navigating multiple conflict zones: The case of young Arab women in Israel during the Covid19 crisis

While the term conflict zone usually refers to an area where war or political instability disrupts essential services and activities (e.g. transportation, education, work, healthcare; Prasad & Prasad, 2009), we propose that young Arab women in Israel face different kinds of conflict zones as they navigate the transition to young adulthood.

We base this paper on a large-scale mixed-methods evaluation study of a nation-wide community-based program which supports young Arab women's personal, educational and economical development in Israel. Drawing from interviews with young Arab women, their mothers and professionals in the field, and adopting an intersectional-feminist lens, we seek to explore the barriers and risks that young Arab women encounter in their daily lives. The intersection of several marginalized social locations of these young women (i.e. gender, young adulthood and Arab ethno-nationality), exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, forced them into various familial, communal and political conflict zones.

This paper will unpack these conflict zones further, examining how they manifest in the lives of young Arab women as well as the ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic on the ways that the young women navigated them. Implications and suggestions for youth work with marginalised young women will also be discussed.



Jenny Chesters:

### Just coping or flourishing: How the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated inequalities in Australia

As the COVID-19 virus began to spread across Australia, a 6-week national lockdown was implemented in March 2020. Australians were largely confined to their homes as workplaces, schools, 'non-essential' shops, recreational facilities etc. were closed. Subsequently, state and territory borders were closed and lockdowns were implemented at various times in various states and regions to further control the spread of the virus. To examine how the restrictions associated with the pandemic impacted on the working lives of young Australians during the 2020 lockdowns, I draw on data generated from semi-structured interviews conducted with 42 participants from the Life Patterns project [aged 32 years]. The interviews were conducted in September and October 2020 and were professionally transcribed. A thematic analysis of the interview data reveals how one's occupation determined the impact of the pandemic. During the lockdowns, some participants, such as those in the hospitality sector, were stood down whereas other participants either worked from home (eg. professionals and white collar workers) or continued working as usual after being classified as essential workers (eg. nurses and doctors). From a class perspective, the lockdowns associated with the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated existing inequalities related to occupation. Participants who were stood down immediately were left to fend for themselves until the Federal Government introduced JobKeeper payments. They had to rely on their annual leave, withdraw money from their superannuation accounts and/or move in with family or friends just to survive. Participants who were able to keep working saved money due to be confined to home and not being able to go out with friends or take overseas holidays. In other words, after the lockdowns, some young people had depleted their savings whereas others had been able to build on their existing wealth.

Justyna Kajta and Agnieszka Kwiatkowska:  
Navigating multiple crises. Plans and fears of young Poles in the times of the COVID-19 pandemic and war in Ukraine.

The process of transitioning to adulthood occurs amidst increasing uncertainty. However, the COVID-19 pandemic, followed by Russia's 2022 attack on Ukraine, and, as a consequence, the economic, migration, and housing crises, acutely heightened the sense of insecurity and uncertainty among Polish youth. High inflation and rising housing prices made becoming an independent adult more difficult. Moreover, the risk of geopolitical consequences of war has resulted in an overwhelming sense of insecurity. Against this backdrop, this paper aims to investigate the attitudes toward the biographical and social future among young adults.

Based on the survey conducted in January 2023 among young Poles (18-35) and two waves (May- November 2021 and March-June 2023) of longitudinal qualitative research with 35 young adults, the paper seeks the answer to the question about the attitudes towards planning the future while navigating multiple crises. What are the dominant types of attitudes and how do young people explain their planning strategies under uncertain conditions? Do they refer to the crises while narrating their biographical futures? If, and how, do gender or economic situation intersect with the presented attitudes? While focusing on the biographical futures of young adults, we are interested in the “content” of their plans and fears, but seen in the context of their general orientations towards future planning.

Firstly, the survey results will let us explore the general picture of attitudes towards planning among young Poles, including differences regarding gender and economic situation. Secondly, since the first wave of qualitative interviews was conducted a year after the pandemic started, and the second wave – at a similar distance from the beginning of the war in Ukraine, we can explore the ways of narrating both crises through the temporal lens.

**Maria Grazia Gambardella and Sveva Magaraggia:**  
**Intra-generational and inter-generational relationships: connections, solidarities, conflicts.**

In Western societies, the processes of transition to adulthood have become greatly complicated. Young people are increasingly engaged in transition paths that are not only dilated, but suspended (Furlong & Cartmel, 2007; Walther, 2006, 2013; Wyn et al. 2020) especially in relation to economic, social and cultural fractures caused by effects of the Covid19 pandemic first, and of the Russian war in Ukraine subsequently.

In the case of Italy, we are talking about a real pathology, especially in relation to territorial and gender differences.

Although, however, grappling with social processes generating growing inequalities and forced to deal with the obligation to build their own biography without being able to count on the support of institutions capable of proposing real models for action, young people express a repertoire of creative abilities developing strategies that allow them to keep the main coordinates of life under control (Leccardi, Raffini 2017).

This contribution intends to present some of the results that emerged from the Prin "Mapping youth futures: forms of anticipation and youth agency".

In particular, through the intersection of three dimensions - time (past, present and future), relationships (social, institutional, political), agency, we will look at the experiences of young men and women, aged between 25 and 34 years, involved in extra-institutional forms of political participation (Cuzzocrea et al. 2021).

A specific focus will be devoted to the analysis of intra-generational and inter-generational relationships, the connection that forces adult and young generations to explore each other, to question each other, to conflict and to find compromises in the various crucial issues (Besozzi 2012). The paper will therefore highlight the ways in which young people face the great epochal issues, from the fight against inequalities to actions in support of people's dignity, from issues of climate justice to the fight against precariousness.

Andrea Orio, Miriam Della Mura, and Stefania Leone:  
Mobility paths and choices to stay: the perceptions of young Italians from inner areas.

One of the main issues in the debate on youth mobility in Italy is the migration of young people regarding both internal flows and international ones. These flows have had negative consequences on demographics and on the territorial capital of our country, especially - but not exclusively - in “inner areas” (De Rossi 2018). Due to these problems, the study of mobility processes has been characterized for a long time by a mobility bias (Schewel 2020) focusing only on the people who leave. However, in recent years attention has increased towards aspects which, although they do not reverse the main trends, seem qualitatively interesting and to concern above all the younger generations, such as the “restanza” (Teti 2014; 2019), neo inhabitants in small areas (Membretti et al. 2019) and new forms of rurality and socio-economic models based on environmental sustainability (Carrosio 2020).

During the Covid-19, which has inevitably reduced mobility, it has been observed in some empirical studies that many young italians from both urban (Bichi et al. 2022) and inner areas (Barbera et al. 2021) wish to stay in their hometown and plan their personal and professional life there.

The paper offers an analysis of the perceptions of young Italians who live in southern italian inner areas and are engaged in socio-territorial requalification processes that are activated within associations, cooperatives or informal organizations.

The empirical study is based on interviews conducted in Puglia in 2022, considering both respondents who have always lived in inner areas and those who have also lived in other places. We discuss the following research questions: 1) what are the main reasons and goals for young people to live in inner areas?; 2) what role did covid 19 play in influencing young people's mobility and associative commitment choices?

The main dimensions that will be considered are the biographical paths, personal ambitions, the perception of the local community, the relationship with the institutions and with other associations in the area.

Michela Franceschelli:

## Inequalities and immobility: conceptual reflections on the life course transitions of young African migrants in Italy after COVID-19.

The COVID-19 pandemic and now the current cost-of-living crisis are incentivizing pre-existing global and local inequalities with deep implications for the lives of vulnerable young migrants. This article reflects on the life course transitions of young African migrants in the context of deepening global inequalities, increasing migration flows to Europe and the crisis of the European migration and asylum regimes. Through the analysis of a particular case study emerging from fieldwork and interviews conducted on the Italian island of Lampedusa,

the article follows the experiences of 'immobility' of young migrants navigating the malfunctioning, highly bureaucratic and policing-led Italian asylum system. In so doing, the article seeks to make sense of the complex relation between time, asylum systems and migrants' life course transitions.

Research from the Global South has particularly questioned the ethnocentric character of normative life course transitions by emphasising how life course is also shaped by the institutional fabric and the global interdependencies that define the relationships between countries and economies. Based on research in Mozambique, South Africa, Senegal and Tunisia, Honwana (2012) argues that the idea of 'waithood' could play a role in reshaping the conceptual framework of adulthood and related processes of coming of age. In this context, waithood is defined as a liminal space – 'a neither here nor there state' – and so a period of suspension which causes an involuntary delay in reaching a state of adulthood (Ibid).

In this context, the paper also explores whether the concept of '*waithood*' can provide insights onto young Africans' experiences of immobility within exclusionary migration and asylum regimes while also reflecting on how migrants respond to these challenges which have implications for the development and achievement of their adult identities.

Patricia Loncle, Guillaume Negri:

Young exiles and the effects of the COVID crisis on pathways to adulthood: situations of vulnerability and capacities for choice.

Among the youth population, exiled persons, regardless of their administrative status, may be of particular interest when it comes to understanding how the health crisis and its aftermath affect the pathways to adulthood.

Indeed, the Covid crisis has considerably disrupted situations already marked by numerous uncertainties for the young exiled population (regarding access to rights, particularly in the area of accommodation) (Poisson et al., 2022). This has had a profound effect on the lives of young exiles. They have had to make changes, assert their agency (Evans, 2002) on their own or with the help of others—peers, their community or significant others of various kinds (Berger, Luckmann, 1966)— and develop strategies to live/survive and move towards autonomy and adulthood.

For this conference, we propose to address the following question: between constraint and choice, how did young exiles adapt to the Covid crisis and its lingering consequences on their pathways to adulthood?

To answer this question, we will draw mainly on qualitative materials: individual and group interviews, and observations. These were gathered since June 2020 during three research projects—funded respectively by the French National Research Agency, the EU Commission, the Région Bretagne— concerning young exiles, their capacity for choice (especially regarding accommodation) and the influence of the Covid crisis.

Our intervention will include three parts. We will present the profiles of the people we met, before looking at the systemic upheavals induced by the crisis and the different public and collective actions that have affected the situation of young exiled persons. Finally, we will analyse the ways in which individuals have made progress during and after the crisis, either alone or with the support of various actors, in order to reorient their pathways to adulthood and cope with the disruptions caused by the crisis.

Agnieszka Golińska and Justyna Sarnowska:

**Current concerns regarding crises and Subjective Well-Being of young Poles: the mediating role of perceived support in crises, sense of agency, and collectivist and individualistic values.**

Recently, young Poles have faced numerous crises, starting with the COVID-19 pandemic, through Russia's invasion on Ukraine and the influx of refugees from Ukraine to Poland, and consequently, economic and housing crisis. Concerns about those crises impact the Subjective Well-being (SWB), a state in which a person believes that their life is good and enjoyable, regardless of how others perceive it (Diener, 2009), of young Poles. Empirical evidence shows that SWB is influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors (Gomez et al., 2009), thus both psychological factors and life events should play an important role as determinants of SWB.

Within the study presented we focused on the young Poles and sought to understand the relationship between their current concerns regarding multiple crises and SWB. The paper is based on the national survey conducted in January 2023 as a part of the bigger research project "ULTRAGEN: Becoming an adult in times of ultra-uncertainty: intergenerational theory of 'shaky' transitions" funded by National Science Centre of Poland. The representative sample consisted of 2104 young Poles (49% of women) within the age range 18-35 ( $M = 27.55$ ;  $SD = 4.99$ ). We measured SWB using the modified Personal Wellbeing Index (International Wellbeing Group, 2013), a scale that adopts a domain-level representation of global life satisfaction. To measure current fears, for the purpose of this research project, we developed an 8-item scale that assesses the degree to which youth are concerned with potential crises such as a pandemic of a new virus, Russia's invasion of Poland, migration crises, climate changes, economic crises or Poland's exit/removal from the EU. We analysed if demographic variables (e.g. age, education level, the size of the place of residence, income, assessment of the financial situation, religiosity), as well as psychological variables such as perceived support in crises, sense of agency, and collectivist and individualistic values, mediated the relationship between the individuals' current concerns and their SWB.

**Elizabeth Ackerley, Laura Fenton, Sarah Marie Hall, and Santiago Leyva del Rio: Young people's futures in a context of economic and ecological uncertainty: Early findings from the Austerity and Altered Life-Courses project.**

Drawing on in-depth biographical interviews with young people aged 18-35 across Sardinia, Barcelona and Greater Manchester, this paper offers some initial reflections on how young people view their futures in times of economic and ecological uncertainty. The paper draws on early findings from the Austerity and Altered Life-Courses project, based at the University of Manchester. The project uses oral histories and futures methods to explore how the socio-economic context has shaped and continues to shape young people's lives across three autonomous regions: Sardinia, Barcelona, and Greater Manchester. Since 2008, austerity policies have had devastating impacts on young people's life-course biographies, causing significant disruption ('socio-political ruptures') throughout young people's formative years. The AALC project aims to understand the ongoing impacts of austerity policies on young people's lives, as well as how these policies influence young people's views of the future in relation to family childbearing decisions, employment opportunities and housing situations. In particular, the project asks 1) In what ways have young people experienced overlapping socio-political ruptures to their life-courses, according to local austere contexts?; 2) How do young people articulate and envision the impacts of these socio-political ruptures on their future biographies?; and 3) How can life-course perspectives on austerity shape understandings about and applications of the social life of policy? In this paper we first outline the theories and ideas underpinning our research, including life-course theories and theories of youth. Second, the paper describes the methodological approach adopted, considering how oral histories and futures methods can create space for reflection, connection, and solidarity. Finally, the paper offers some initial reflections on early findings from the Austerity and Altered Life-Courses project, considering how austerity shapes young people's pasts, presents and futures in intimate and wide-reaching ways.



Ken Roberts:

## Youth in Post-Brexit Britain: Can they really experience this as normal?

On successive occasions since the Second World War, changes in youth's condition which were experienced as outrageous by vanguard cohorts have quickly become accepted as just normal. Normalisation occurs through comparison groups being proximate peers rather than youth in other regions or countries, or parents when they made their own youth transitions around 30 years previously. Examples of rapid normalisation include:

- Raising the school-leaving age to 15 in 1947.
- A further rise to 16 in 1972.
- The disappearance of jobs for 16 year olds in the early-1980s.
- The imposition of student fees, loans and debt in successive stages from 1999-2012.

And now in the 2020s young people face hazards unknown to previous generations:

- Long Covid psychological and social scars.
- Flat or declining real salaries.
- Generation rent.

Meanwhile:

- The UK sinks to the bottom of the G7 in GDP per capita while its wealthiest increase their wealth and are among the world's wealthiest.
- Inter-generation transmission of wealth plays an enhanced role in social reproduction.
- Governments revert to their 200-plus years norm in prioritising balanced budgets ahead of balancing and growing the economy.

A hypothesis:

Politically active youth mobilise for radical change, but a more widespread response repeats normalisation with parents and their young people seeking the best futures for themselves within the new normal.

Veronika Pfeilschifter and Félix Krawatzek:

Re-inventing youthful futures in times of multiple crises: The socio-political landscapes in the South Caucasus through the lens of young people.

Young people's (post-)pandemic social experiences in the South Caucasus have been characterized by a continuation and re-activation of multiple crises: Following the ceasefire agreement between the Armenian and Azerbaijani governments after the second Nagorno-Karabakh war, tensions between the societies have remained high and in the midst of prevalent material injustices, renewed military violence remains a realistic scenario. In Georgia, a country which has once invested drastically into its liberalist outlook to imitate a Western capitalist model of development, the government's isolationist authoritarian behavior has led to increased disillusionment among major parts of the population. All three societies face disenchantment with the post-socialist present and struggle with a (re-)articulation of political imagination. However, amid all those struggles, how do young people in the South Caucasus interpret the socio-political landscapes they are surrounded by? What are their views towards contemporary politics and how do they envision their futures? How have past experiences and political ideologies been re-interpreted in times of uncertainty?

These are the central questions that our paper seeks to explore. In our joint contribution, we investigate the socio-political spaces that young citizens of the three South Caucasian countries articulate. Based on that, we want contribute to a bottom-up perspective on the structures of the political landscape that resonates with local discursive dynamics. We embedded the discursive structures in time and space through applying Andrew Abbot's approach of lyrical sociology. Lyrical sociology encourages to focus on the recreation of a moment of social discovery and reflect emotionally on empirical data. In terms of methods, we draw on a unique combination of quantitative and qualitative data, notably focus group discussions conducted at the end of 2021 and a nationally representative survey conducted in 2022 across Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia among young respondents (14-29).

We argue that young people's understanding of politics might not fit the Western left-right schema, but that their political and social ideas can instead be heuristically articulated in a two-dimensional space that complements the left-right dimension with a perspective on individualism and collectivism.

Rūta Brazienė and Daiva Skuciene:  
Challenges of Lithuanian Rural NEETs Transitions from School to Work in Times of  
Uncertainty.

The school-to-work transition in Lithuania and other countries has become much more difficult and extended than before. Many young people are experiencing long periods of unemployment, temporary employment, or inactivity. The present study looks at different dimensions of rural youth transition from school to work in the context of increasing uncertainty (Bauman 2013, Beck 1992, Castells 2005), the post- COVID-19 pandemic, socioeconomic crises (ILO 2021, Eurofound, 2021, OECD 2021, etc.) and the growing demands for new skills, including digital for labor market integration. The theoretical background of the study is based on the many different ways of evaluating the quality of transitions from school to work that has been considered in the scientific literature (Gebel 2020, Brazienė, 2020, Baranowska-Rataj et al., 2017, Brzinsky- Fay 2013, etc.) and concept of employability (McQuaid, Dale (2005), etc. Research questions: How do currently rural NEETs evaluate their prospects in the labor market? What is the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on youth transitions? What are the obstacles in the search for employability? What is the role of PES for rural NEETs youth employability? Based on survey research data, this study investigates how rural youth that are not in education, employment, or training (NEET) in Lithuania face challenges toward labor market access. The main dimensions of the study are unemployment and job search behavior, and subjective evaluation of employability skills. This research is also focused on how NEET youth interact with Public Employment Services (PES) and how different types of support (digital, mediated, and human-based) might be associated with young people's employability. Analyses were based on survey research of Lithuanian NEETs aged 25–29 years living in rural areas and registered to PES (N = 265). This research is supported by the "Tr@ck- IN: Public employment services tracking effectiveness to support rural NEETs" European Funded Project EEA and Norway Grants Fund.

Sinikka Aapola-Kari, Antti Kivijärvi, Tarja Tolonenand, Matilda Wrede-Jäntti:  
Inequalities and uncertainties within education and employment -a longitudinal  
perspective on young people's life-paths in Finland.

In our presentation, we will be looking at inequalities and uncertainties in the spheres of education and employment for a group of Finnish young people whose lives we have followed since 2015 in our longitudinal research project Youth in Time. There were about 100 young participants in the beginning, and more than half of them are still included in the follow-up. Our subsample consists of young people coming from Helsinki region; there are about 25 of them, with substantial minorities coming from Swedish-speaking and immigrant backgrounds.

Young people's lives when growing up tend to fluctuate and take ever new turns, which becomes apparent in a longitudinal research approach. The corona pandemic has strengthened some inequalities that were observable before the pandemic. It has had different effects on young people coming from different backgrounds. It has increased the uncertainties in nearly all young people's lives, but those with more resources have generally had less severe setbacks; their plans have in some instances been postponed but not cancelled. However, those coming from less privileged backgrounds have more often had to renegotiate their educational paths, lost opportunities of employment and in many cases, as a result, lost their income and had to return to their childhood homes. However, some of them have found also new opportunities in the midst of the crisis.

In our presentation, we take a look in young people's life-courses before, during and after the pandemic and show the inequalities apparent in their lives via case-studies.

Tomasz Płachecki, Michał Sitek, Jędrzej Stasiowski:  
Career diversification of vocational education graduates under the influence of the  
COVID-19 pandemic: The case of Poland.

The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on young people entering the labour market. The pandemic has made it difficult for students to acquire the knowledge and skills needed for their future work, especially for those in initial vocational education and training (IVET) preparing for occupations that are difficult or impossible to learn remotely (Eurofound, 2021). Entering the job market during an economic downturn often leads to longer job searches and lower-quality job opportunities, resulting in unfavourable employment outcomes, including reduced earnings and unstable job situations. This "scarring effect" has a long-term negative impact on an individual's career path, as demonstrated by research studies (Kahn, 2010; O'Higgins, 2010; Scarpetta et al., 2010; Verick, 2010; Koczan, 2022; Svabova & Gabrikova, 2021).

Within the group of young vocational education graduates, the impact of the pandemic likely varied. The pandemic could have affected existing inequalities, such as those based on gender, or generated new ones, such as those related to whether a profession can be performed remotely (Eurofound, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic primarily affected industries like trade, hospitality, gastronomy, and hairdressing/cosmetics (Albanesi & Kim, 2021), leading to a disproportionate impact on young people and women, as these groups are overrepresented in the service sectors most affected by restrictions. Just as a rising tide does not lift all boats, not all graduates have been equally affected by the pandemic.

In the presentation, we will answer the following questions: How did the COVID-19 pandemic affect the beginning of professional careers for graduates who completed their vocational education during this period in Poland? What inequalities emerged in the context of the pandemic? Why did different groups experience unequal outcomes in this regard? Our answers will be based on an analysis of data from the system for monitoring the careers of secondary school graduates, which was launched in Poland in 2020. Based on combined register data from various sources, the system covers the majority of the graduates and is a valuable source of information on the distribution of the risk of labor market failure among particular groups of graduates. Additionally, we will use data collected during online surveys carried out among students and graduates of Polish vocational schools in 2020-2021.

Avril Keating, Rachel Benchekroun, Sam Whewall, Claire Cameron:  
Growing up in coastal towns in England - the role of place in understanding  
intergenerational differences in youth opportunities and experiences.

This paper considers how youth opportunities and experiences have changed over time in coastal communities in England. In the 1950s and 60s, coastal towns in England were thriving centres of commerce, with long-standing traditions in industries such as tourism and fishing. Since the 1980s, however, many of these towns have experienced a stark economic decline and these communities often face a number of challenges, including a preponderance of precarious work, low quality housing, and poor educational and health outcomes.

Against this backdrop, this paper considers how youth opportunities and experiences in different generations have been shaped by the changing economic, educational, and built environment of coastal towns. To do so we draw on qualitative data from 69 residents in two coastal towns in England (39 aged 16-26 and 30 aged 60-80). We used arts-based and participatory methods alongside interviews and focus groups and combined, these data enable us to compare youth opportunities for education and employment in the local area, as well as youth access to leisure, civic and public places.

By adopting an intergenerational lens, we focus attention on how some youth opportunities have expanded over time (particularly as regards education), but young people today face new challenges and obstacles that did not exist in earlier decades, particularly in relation to precarious work, but also in how contemporary youth feel marginalised by the economic, geographic, and built environment of coastal towns. These factors fuel the widespread (intergenerational) perception that the best option for contemporary youth is for them to leave their towns, to 'move out to move up'. Those who stay tend to be stigmatised as lacking aspiration. This contrasts with the experience of previous generations, who were able to build their lives locally and were not required to engage in geographic mobility as part of their journey to adulthood.

The findings draw on and contribute to an emerging comparative literature on coastal youth (Kjørholt et al, 2022; Corbett, 2009; Wenham, 2022), mobility aspirations (Roberston et al, 2018) and the growing interest in the impact of spatial inequalities and place-based habitus on young people (Farrugia & Favn, 2022; Donnelly & Gamsu, 2019; Allen and Hollingsworth, 2013).

Mette Pless, Jeanette Østergaard:

Exploring how and why Danish young adults stay in marginalised, rural communities.

Studies of young people and transitions in rural areas tend to reflect a powerful rhetoric – ‘a mobility imperative’ (Farrugia 2014) – that presents rural life as economically and socially lacking and young people who stay as rejecting the normalisation of neo-liberal aspirations and the better prospects to be found in cities and larger towns. Such rhetorics are repeated in governmental discourses about ‘Peripheral Denmark.’ The last few years have seen a growing interest in immobility and staying in rural areas (Mærsk et al. 2021; Farrugia & Ravn 2022; Bæck et al. 2019), but still, as Stockdale, Theunissen and Haartsen (2018: 3) state: “the processes of staying by young adults are not well understood.” The purpose of this paper is to understand what it means for marginalised young people to *stay* in rural areas. In the paper we propose an understanding of staying as a dynamic and shifting process, involving entanglements of ‘*stillness*’ and ‘*stuckness*’ that young people constantly have to reflect upon in their everyday life (Cresswell 2012; Jefferson, Turner & Jensen 2019). Inspired by Holmes’ (2010) vision of emotional reflexivity as interactive, we show how place and space are embodied in the young informants through (present and) former experiences and memories, so that staying must be understood as an inherently relational process where participants reflect on their past and future biographies.

The paper is based on qualitative, longitudinal research with fifty young rural Danish men and women (17-24 years old) on the margins of the educational system. Using qualitative longitudinal research (Thomson and McLeod 2015) we undertook three interviews with each informant. Furthermore, we used participatory methods: ‘object-oriented dialogue’ (Thomson & Østergaard 2021), ‘mobile-probe dialogue’ (text and photograph) (Power, Norman, & Dupré 2014), ‘walks’ and ‘drive-alongs’ (Kusenback 2003; Wegerif 2019).

Svetlana Jović, Jennifer M. Pipitone:

Youth's Sense Making about Socio-spatial Disparities in New York City through their Perceptions of Urban Nature: Politics and Possibilities in a Post-pandemic World.

Contemporary urban landscapes are characterized by socio-spatial inequalities that may translate into landscapes of exclusion for young people. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted how closely health and well-being are interconnected with issues related to inequality and belonging. For example, much pandemic-era research revealed upticks in the use of urban green spaces, as well as upward shifts in their perceived significance and importance for one's physical and mental health. However, several of these studies suggest changes in use and perception varied across race, ethnicity, gender, and overall sociodemographic characteristics of neighborhoods. Drawing from a participatory action research project in the South Bronx that used photography, writing, and mapping (through photo-geotagging) as diverse platforms for storytelling, this presentation explores youth's pre-pandemic perceptions of nature and how their experiences of power arrangements in New York City may relate to their sense of belonging. Our analysis of master narratives that the youth affirmed, objected, or challenged through their storytelling about their own communities raises questions about the role nature may play as yet another vehicle that promotes *othering* between privileged and underprivileged communities in multicultural cities. Grounded within the framework of urban green equity and drawing from pandemic-era research on people's relationship with urban green spaces, we consider politics and possibilities for a post-pandemic era in which youth recognize urban nature as socially, culturally, and historically constructed, and thus subject to political (re)definition and (re)articulation. Therefore, with the right actions, even ones as non-ambitious as our project, young people's sense-making about

urban nature can be reframed so it does not serve as a means for deepening the feelings of not belonging in one's own city, but as an entryway toward enhanced sense of ownership and empowerment to make decisions and contribute to positive change in one's immediate communities and beyond.



Alix Helfer, Tuuli Pitkänen, Konsta Happonen:

Life trajectories in the midst of a pandemic: COVID-related life events and life satisfaction among young people in Finland.

**Intro.** Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the everyday life of young people was heavily impacted. In Finland, restrictive measures were on average less pervasive than in the rest of the world. However, even without drastic measures such as curfews, the life satisfaction of Finnish youth dropped during the pandemic, leading to concerns of a “pandemic generation”. The article examines the demographics and determinants of the drop focusing on COVID-19-related life events; e.g., job loss, distance schooling or restricted access to services. We approach youth transitions in the frame of a liquid risk society.

**Data.** Finnish youth (12-24-year-olds) were interviewed by phone on their life satisfaction, service use, corona-related questions and wellbeing with five rounds of surveys (2020-2022). Ordinal regression models were built for statistical analysis. Also, qualitative data derived from open-ended answers, from which themes were categorized with content analysis.

**Results.** The results show that life events were associated with lower life satisfaction during the pandemic, rather than the pandemic itself. Lower life satisfaction was associated with life events related to a more negative personal economy, restricted access to services, and cancelled leisurely activities during the pandemic. Some groups that reported more life events associated with decreased life satisfaction were 20–24-year-old young adults, women, and people who had a foreign first language.

**Considerations.** Our results show that even amidst international comparison quite mild pandemic-related policies had long-lasting negative effects on the well-being of young people and highlight the importance of paying special attention to the effects of restrictive measures on young adults. It is important to depict which factors create vulnerability during similar crises. Youth is a stage in life which involves many changes and decisions heavily impact future life trajectories. Well-being of youth should be monitored, as the effects of disturbed life transitions might show with delay.

**Keywords:** Young people, COVID-19 pandemic, life satisfaction, life transitions, wellbeing.

Sonia Bertolini, Angela Dolores Lucca, Veronica Allegretti:  
Youth and Post-Pandemic: adulthood transitions and new forms of autonomy.

Young people in Europe and especially in Italy were already in a context of great uncertainty before the pandemic, as labor market flexibility have generated within youngest cohorts a strong sense of precariousness, to the extent that they have been called the 'losers of globalizations' (Mills, Blossfeld & Klijzing, 2006). Young people are often unable to make long-term plans and therefore they have to postpone decisions that traditionally represent fundamental stages in the transition to adulthood (Leccardi, 2005; Cangiano & Sarnataro, 2020; Cuzzocrea *et al.*, 2020).

In this context, the Covid-19 pandemic acted as an "exogenous shock" (Campello, Zucco 2020) that required the search for new strategies to cope with the situation (Bertolini *et al.*, 2022), similarly with other disruptive events (Rodriguez, Quarantelli & Dynes, 2007), and the outcome of uncertain contexts can be particularly strong on young people, who have to make important decisions regarding their futures.

Starting from this theoretical background, the contribution will present the results of the second wave of the research "Youth and Pandemic", which aspires to compare the condition of youth during and after the Covid-19 outbreak. The questionnaire, which partially incorporates the first survey, aims to investigate:

- What have been the consequences of the uncertainty brought by the pandemic on young people's psychological wellbeing?
- Which forms do the expectations, desires, skills, and strategies take among those who are taking their first steps in the post-pandemic labor market?

The main themes investigated by the survey are:

- Emotions during the pandemic;
- Uncertainty in job careers;
- Strategies and life skills activated to cope with the pandemic and its consequences.

On an empirical level, the research intends to provide an in-depth knowledge on the condition of young people and their transition to adult life, a fundamental element for policy makers in order to better respond to the needs of this target group.

Catherine Walker:

“Normal was a crisis”: The impact of the pandemic on youth climate organising and young people’s everyday climate concerns.

As the world adjusted to life under lockdown in 2020, the youth-led Fridays for Future (FfF) movement, transformed across 2019 into a global campaigning force (see Han and Ahn, 2020), initially showed renewed vigour. FfF reorganised online, encouraging activists to upload protest photographs with the hashtags #DigitalStrike and #ClimateStrikeOnline, as well as a weekly themed hashtag such as #NoForestsNoFuture. Webinars on the weekly theme offered opportunities to continue to debate and coordinate action. Covid-19’s stark demonstration of the ecological chaos wrought by human societies seemed to further galvanise many young activists to fight for a better future. As climate activist Naomi Klein said in a FfF online event in March 2020, ‘There is a lot of talk about returning to ‘normal’ after the COVID-19 outbreak. But normal was a crisis (...) the Coronavirus is a crisis - but it is not the only crisis that we face’ (quoted by Sorce and Dumitrica, 2021, p.8).

Three years on, little has been published on more long-term impacts of the covid-19 pandemic on young people’s engagement with and understanding of climate crisis. This paper considers this both in terms of FfF’s online organisation and communications, and young people’s everyday concerns and sense of agency to respond. The paper will use qualitative social media framing analysis (Sorce and Dumitrica, 2021) and analysis of interviews and focus groups conducted with 14–18-year-olds in Manchester, UK and Melbourne, Australia for the Young People at a Crossroads project (Walker et al., 2022). Taking a compassionate view of the challenges faced by young people, the paper will explore how young people understand the relationship between the climate and other crises (for example, economic, health, racial justice) and the extent to which ‘climate justice’ as a framing is helpful for building understandings of interconnections between different forms of crisis.

Evelyne Baillergeau and Cécile Van de Velde:  
Everything is political!?! Capturing political meaning among younger generations:  
qualitative methodological puzzles and possibilities.

In current 'unsettled times', trust in institutional politics is largely challenged, but other forms of civic practices and collective engagement seem to emerge (or resurge), in particular among the younger generations. What kinds of meaning-making are involved in those practices? What is 'political' according to young people involved? In addition, alongside heightened distrust towards institutional politics come new forms of anger: what do these emotions tell us about how young people relate to political action? And how can we – as sociologists – grasp the sense-making at stake?

Researching new forms of solidarities and new forms of collective action among the younger generations is tricky for quantitative sociology, but what are the advantages and limitations of well-established qualitative methods to capture the ways in which young people grant political meaning to what they do and/or to what they observe? What kinds of methodological innovation should we think about and what can we bring in?

We propose to contribute to this debate based on our respective recent research: we will discuss the worth of 'methodological pluralism' (Lamont & Swidler, 2014) to address the challenge of grasping the (future) temporal dimension of political agency, based on youth-led participatory action research (YPAR) combined with individual in-depth interviews (Evelyne Baillergeau), and on travelling methods using a radio studio to capture 'invisible anger' (Cécile Van de Velde). Drawing on these examples, our aim is to open a broader discussion with the audience, thereby probing potential interest among youth sociologists for a follow-up collective activity in that area.

Judith Bessant:

## COVID in the Anthropocene: Young People and the Resuscitation of Politics.

This paper considers the political significance of the ways children and young people are experiencing global warming *and* COVID. One thing COVID helped clarify is the 'intersecting' nature of the 'crises' which Serres says are like 'converging tectonic plates', which we will experience as an 'upheaval whose intensity will be proportionate to the length of the wait' (2015: 20).

Some researchers see COVID and global warming as 'diseases of the Anthropocene' (Gordo and Anto 2020). With this mind I ask what is the political significance of the fact that children and young people bore the brunt of COVID lockdowns (Flaxman et.al 2023), and are bearing the main burdens of global warming (Sanson et.al 2019, Thiery et.al 2021)?

How eg., should we understand the contrast between the speed and dexterity with which governments developed policy responses to COVID and the inertia, indeed lethargy, characterizing state responses to global warming? While young people were excluded from decision-making during COVID, they have increasingly made their voice heard about global warming especially since 2018.

Applying Mouffe (2005) and Ranciere's (2010) conception of 'the political' highlights the political significance of young people as 'newcomers' (Arendt 1972). Rather than consolidating neoliberal hegemony, COVID may impel us toward a more democratic society (Mouffe 2022). Millions of youngpeople rendered invisible by conventional electoral politics have refused to stay silent or comply as conventional political institutions are neutralized by neoliberal politics (Streeck 2014). Children and young people across the global are now engaging in a range of innovative and inclusive agonistic politics as they call for and create 'real democracy'. I consider several ways this resuscitation of politics is bringing forth genuine alternatives that will address these entangled crises.

Ariadne Vromen, Suneha Seetahul, Meraiah Foley, Elizabeth Hill, Rae Cooper:  
Young people's technologically enabled working futures in Australia, Japan and the UK.

During the pandemic, technology became ubiquitous in the working lives of many young workers. It enabled some to stay in work, as they rapidly shifted from workplaces to working from home during lockdowns and shifted their working lives online. Others lost work as sectors of the frontline service economy started to collapse. Post-pandemic some areas of work have become rapidly automated and not returned at all. This paper uses an original dataset from a representative attitudinal survey undertaken in late 2022 with 6000 young workers aged 16 to 40 in Australia, Japan and the UK. It looks at two dimensions of technologically shaped work. First, it focuses on what young workers perceive as the main technological threats to job security and displacement in the workplace. UK and Australian young workers are similarly concerned by tech-driven intensification, surveillance, routinisation, and extended work hours, while young Japanese workers are significantly less concerned by these factors. Instead, Japanese workers are much more concerned about shrinking industries and the rise of automation as tech-driven threats to their work. The paper analyses gender differences and contrasts, high and low paid, professional and service economy workers to better understand how technology shapes their concerns for their working futures. Second, the paper looks more in-depth at young workers' attitudes towards working from home in the future, as this will be enabled by everyday digital technologies. Here we find a remarkable shift from past practice where the majority of workers rarely ever worked from home, to nearly 80% of young workers in the UK and Australia, and 56% of Japanese workers, expecting to have future jobs where they are able to work from home much of the time. This desire will present a fundamental challenge for employers, particularly when youth labour market growth areas, post-pandemic, remain in service and caring economy jobs.

**Mihajlo Djukic, Dejana Pavlovic, Dusko Bodroza, Dragan Bjelica:  
Determinants of entrepreneurial intentions among Serbian youth - life satisfaction,  
extracurricular activities and institutional trust.**

The largest impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the labour market has been detected among vulnerable workers, ones with insecure (temporary or part-time), informal and low-paid jobs. Youth preparing to enter the labour market have been perceived to be at higher risk if compared to the rest of population taking into account difficulties characterizing school-to-work transition. Self-employment could be an effective alternative for strengthening employability among youth, being particularly important in the case of limited jobs supply. Apart from pandemic related challenges, decision to run a business might depend on various factors such as life satisfaction, quality of education, entrepreneurial environment, institutional trust, etc. This research aims to explore the main determinants of entrepreneurial intentions among Serbian youth (18-24) currently under the process of secondary or third level education. A questionnaire survey was done using the sample of 1,600 students, out of which around 22% confirmed planning to engage in entrepreneurial activities after completing their education. Aiming to detect the main driving factors of youth decision to run own business, we developed multinomial logit regression model using entrepreneurial intention as an independent variable. Entrepreneurial intention refers to participants' response to become entrepreneur rather than planning to work as an employee in public or private sector. Following Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and the results obtained in previous studies, we developed a set of independent variables which might explain critical elements of one's idea to become entrepreneur including socio-demographic factors (sex, age, level of education), family capital (financial situation of the family), youth social capital (participation in extracurricular activities and life satisfaction) as well as personal values and perceptions with a particular focus on institutional trust. Research results might provide important inputs for the policy makers in creating more favorable entrepreneurial environment and developing more effective education policies in the field.

Piotr Binder:

From coercion to choice. Polish young adults and remote work in longitudinal qualitative research.

keywords: *young adults, remote work, boundary theory, life-course effect, longitudinal qualitative research*

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, remote work has become popular and has the potential to generate lasting changes in labor markets. However, the generational dimension of this phenomenon remains relatively underexplored.

The proposed paper is devoted to the experiences of young adults in the context of remote work. Its purpose is to answer whether the relatively upbeat assessment of work from home expressed early in the pandemic will be consolidated or whether it will be rejected as incompatible with the needs and values of people on the verge of adulthood.

In the theoretical dimension, the analyzes are embedded, on the one hand, in the boundary theory rooted in the field of reflection on remote work, and on the other, they are inspired by the life-cycle effect.

The empirical basis consists of interviews with 27 young adults who started working remotely at the beginning of the pandemic. Each participant was interviewed thrice at annual intervals as part of three waves of the longitudinal qualitative study in 2020-2022.

The results indicate that working from home was perceived by young adults as a generally friendly and desirable experience in the future, and the perceived benefits compensated the respondents for losses in the sphere of social contacts. It concerned both respondents in relationships and singles. The commitment to remote work extended beyond the "honeymoon" phase. At the same time, the solution preferred by young adults was primarily a hybrid variant involving a certain proportion of direct professional contacts. Working from home was conducive to focusing on close ties. Having partners living together made it possible to manage the boundaries between work and non-work more effectively. In terms of life-course, after the "pandemic pause" in the first year, biographical acceleration was evident in the respondents' life in the subsequent period.



Cécile Van de Velde:

Invisible revolts. Dynamics of anger, silence, and resistance within younger generations.

Youth revolt is most often associated with street protests and collective movements; in this paper we would like to show the existence of more individualised forms of revolt among younger generations, which, lacking an outlet, cannot be expressed in the public space. These revolts target a social, institutional or political power, but they remain silent, or silenced: we call them « invisible revolts ». We argue that these revolts constitute a « latent energy » (Morin, 1969) of our democracies and in this respect, they deserve the attention of social scientists: we propose to build bridges between the sociology of youth and the social sciences of emotions to better capture the generational tensions and resistance within the life course.

Drawing on the comparative analysis of more than 150 interviews conducted among young adults in Madrid, Paris, Montreal, Santiago de Chile and Hong Kong on the social ordeals experienced, the emotions they generate and their modes of politicization, we bring out the 'common script' of the injustice and revolt narratives, and shed light on the emotional dynamics of anger, silence and resistance among these young adults. We argue that there are « competing revolts » in our democracies: while some revolts can be more easily collectivized and have legitimate access to a public voice, others remain invisible and sediment in the life course, and lead to other forms of resistance. More precisely, we will show the existence of three main « narratives of revolt » among younger generations, fundamentally linked to the type of injustice felt - Dispossession, Wear and Tear, and Rejection- and which will each lead to a different form of politicization and collectivization. Finally, drawing on comparative cases, we are going to highlight how these experiences of injustice and revolt among young adults may be shaped differently by states, historical contexts and cultural norms.

Ilenya Camozzi and Marianna Musmeci:

The pandemic has shaken us up. It's now or never! Collective future, solidarity and everyday utopias among young Italian activists in post-pandemic times.

Despite media and common-sense representations of youth disinterest in political participation and activism, youth studies literature shows that young people are frequently interested in unconventional forms of political engagement (Pitti 2018) and adopt innovative approaches and repertoires of action (Juris and Pleyers 2009). Moreover, it shows that young people's practices of political activism combine a deeply disenchanted view of politics with a solidaristic approach to participation (Della Porta and Portos 2020). Finally, scholars show that although the political projects in which young people are involved appear to be much more attuned to the present and are mainly individually oriented, they can be observed as the outcome of an unprecedented signification of the collective and solidarity on the part of young people (Alteri, Leccardi, Raffini 2016).

Starting from the analysis of 42 narrative interviews carried out during the first year of the COVID- 19 pandemic (January 2020-January 2021) with young-adults (25-34) engaged in unconventional political groups in four Italian cities (located in the North, Centre, South and Islands of the country), the contribution focuses on the consequences of the pandemic crisis on the forms and meanings of youth activism, paying particular attention to the temporal dimension. Results show that, despite an initial moment of strong disorientation, young activists re-significated the crisis in terms of an unexpected opportunity to reshape their aims and repertoires of action through the development of new forms of mutualism and solidarity (more attentive to the contingency of needs, more circumscribed to places and marked by the reconstruction of a sense of community). This re- signification takes the form of real utopias (Cooper, 2014; Wright 2010) that while unfolding in the everyday also take on an active idea of the future (Mandich 2023) and, in doing so, it seems to reshape the relationship between the vision of the personal future (marked by structural and institutional uncertainty) and the vision of the collective future.

## Maria Bruselius-Jensen: An ideal activist in a privileged society.

This presentation explores how narratives about privilege shapes both the aims and the modes participation of young Danish activists. Based on a qualitative study about motivations for youth activism, this study gives the backseat to the political agendas of the studied organizations. Inspired by researchers who argue that everyday micro actions and political agency should be seen as much more interwoven, introducing conceptualisations such as 'everyday makers' (Bang & Sørensen, 1999) and 'lived citizenship' (Lister, 2007; Walsh et al., 2018; Wood, 2014), this study focus on the underlying crosscutting normative ideals that guides how the activists internally negotiate and practice being activists.

The chapters draw on 14 group and 5 single interviews with 85 young people in their early or mid-twenties who can be defined as 'very engaged' at the time of the interview. They represent in 19 youth organizations selected to represent a variety in aims, forms and sizes. To identify modes of participation and motivations guiding the activist internal practices and negotiations, a cross-cutting abductive analysis of the whole empirical dataset was performed inspired by hermeneutics (Gilje, 2017) and thematic analysis (Schreier, 2012).

Findings indicate that, amidst a times of global crisis, the young danes still has strong perceptions of having privilege, which is defining for the ideals that guide how they negotiate and practice being a good activist. Three guiding ideals were identified: Firstly, activism should be motivated by using your privilege to make a difference for somebody or something outside yourself. Secondly, activists should be fully inclusive towards other young people's possibility to join. Thirdly, collaboration and dialogue, also with adults, are an acceptable and pragmatic way to accomplish goals. The presentation will discuss how these ideals both reproduce societal discourses of being privileged and seems to form a new political agenda of equality and solidarity.

Malki Poryes:

“I feel like I'm coming out of a shell” The formation of Generation Z in Haredi society.

Covid-19 accelerated the rise of Internet use in Haredi society. The Haredi leadership viewed this as a break in the enclaved culture and a crack in its protective shell. With its inherent lack of oversight and control over the content, cyberspace offers a chance to experience different cultures and worldviews, and interactions between the sexes. Adolescents' presence in this forbidden space could result in significant punishment. Nevertheless, despite attempts to prevent young people from using the Internet, the age of Haredi surfers is steadily decreasing.

This paper is based on data collected in a study on the formation of a Haredi Generation Z. The study sought to understand Haredi young people's Internet use in light of community restrictions. Building on Herzog's (2007, 2009) sociology of generation thesis, the research provides an in-depth look at generational experiences. In Herzog's view, people of the same age group share a collective memory, often using the same terms to describe their formative experiences.

Airi-Alina Allaste:

## Becoming a digital citizen in Estonia: what supports and hinders new migrants' participation?

The idea of digital citizenship is potentially important to how we practice politics. 'Digital citizenship' can be both an aspect of and precursor to political participation, something that enables individuals to participate in society. Potentially that might create new opportunities, encouraging participation among different groups, including migrants and Estonia presents a good case in which to study this idea.

The paper focuses on young new migrants' - both secondary school and university students - political participation. Using evidence from the qualitative interviews, the paper analyses the meanings informants give to their experiences in integrating and participating in Estonian society with a focus on digital opportunities. Estonia is a country that has been described as the 'first digital nation' with extensive and easy access to e-services but also characterized by limited levels of civic engagement, with discrepancies in participation rates between different groups. New migrants are a rapidly growing group in Estonia. The participation of young people who live in another country temporarily has not been studied much previously. Interviews with 16 students (16-29) were conducted from October 2021 to April 2022. The informants came from or lived during childhood in Europe, Middle East, North America or Asia<sup>[1]</sup>. They had been in Estonia for one to five years and had open plans. All transcribed interviews have been analysed using the combination of open and axial coding with the software NVivo 9.2.

Analyses indicate that access to various E-services and transparency of the state, increase trust and encourage participation. However, the conditions for participating are highly dependent on cultural integration into the host society and social networks in Estonia, which could be better enhanced in digital environments.

Maddison Sideris:

Youth, Intimacy and COVID-19: Longitudinal analysis of digital intimacies.

A growing area of research, *digital intimacies* (e.g., Byron, 2021; Dobson et al., 2018), explores our relationships in a digitally saturated world. This presentation will explore the preliminary findings of my PhD research on how Australian youth aged 33-34 years old negotiate intimacy through digital practices, in their transition to adulthood and through the COVID-19 pandemic. In this presentation I will focus on affective atmospheres (Anderson, 2009; Duff, 2010) and affective practices (Wetherell, 2012), to examine how youth use digital practices to construct intimacy. This will seek to bring together the material, embodied and temporal aspects of how youth experience intimacy over time and place. I draw on the longitudinal mixed methods Life Patterns Project, which has tracked a cohort of young Australians for 17 years. Firstly, I analyse survey data that has been collected through 17 waves, to understand the broader life patterns of this cohort. Second, I will be presenting initial findings from a digital photo voice method and first round of interviews. The longitudinal nature of the project enables an examination of digital practices before, during and after the pandemic. This allows for the unearthing of patterns of continuity and change in youth digital practices tied to the construction of intimacy. As relationships are pivotal to everyday life, understanding intimacy over time will provide us with considerable insights into understanding digital intimate practices today and into the future.

Antti Kivijärvi, Eila Kauppinen, Tomi Kiilakoski:

Creating space for youth communalities in Finnish youth work during the pandemic.

For young people, the Covid-19 pandemic was less a health crisis than it was a crisis of peer sociability (e.g., Bengtsson et al. 2022; Kauppinen & Laine 2022; Lahtinen et al. 2022). Throughout the world, various lockdown measures included severe restrictions on group and leisure activities. It is highly likely that pandemic years caused some changes also in youth work – a process designed to support the social relations and growth of young people.

The fundamental tasks of youth work have been described with metaphors of *creating spaces* and *building bridges* (Declaration of the 2nd European Youth Work Convention). Creating spaces refers to providing young people opportunities to spend time with each other while building bridges denotes to strengthening young people's links with services and institutions (e.g., Kiilakoski et al. 2018a, 601). Creating spaces most often means group-oriented approach and stressing informal sociability while bridges are often built by supporting individual young people in their transitions (Kiilakoski 2015, 161–162).

In this paper, we examine youth work as a platform for youth peer communalities and solidarities during and after the pandemic. We ask how the pandemic affected the fundamental tasks of youth work. We use a two-wave survey sample representing Finnish municipal youth services in 2021 and 2023. Based on the survey in 2021 (n=158), youth work services reacted quickly to the Covid-19 restrictions during the spring 2020 and there was a shift towards an approach that stresses bridge building, to somewhat at the expense of an approach in which creating spaces is highlighted. With the data collected in spring 2023, we will examine whether the observed changes in youth work provision continue exist and how does Finnish youth work continue to support youth peer solidarities in the 2020s.

Eriikka Oinonen, Riikka Korkiamäki:

## Social Relations and Lived Solidarity Among Young Adults during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

This paper explores young adults' experiences on their social relationships and their negotiations of lived solidarities during the pandemic. During COVID-19, young people had to consciously choose who, how and where they wanted to meet, and which communities they wanted to belong to and participate in. This had not been typical for most youths who, pre-pandemic, flexibly moved between groups and communities.

The paper analyzes expressions of solidarity in higher education students', aged 24 to 28, descriptions of their everyday lives during the pandemic. The data was collected in 2020 and 2021 and it is composed of essays (N=19), diaries (N=11) and thematic interviews (N=21). The analysis draws on the concept of 'spatial solidarity' which provides a frame for studying solidarities by distinguishing sources, places, and politics of solidarity and, thus, makes visible how lived solidarities are negotiated in the everyday life and what are the reasonings and consequences of these negotiations.

The data-based content analysis reveals that the most common sources of solidarity were close relationships and compassion for the disadvantaged groups in society. As everyday places of lived solidarity, solidarities were negotiated specifically at home, in public spaces and in social media. These negotiations were politicized by disputes about the 'right' way to act under the circumstances. In addition, young adults became more conscious than earlier in determining with whom and how they share private, semi-public, and public spaces. Social media was perceived as a forum for control, social pressure, and guilt. The crucial factor in negotiating solidarity in everyday life was a careful assessment of who are their meaningful others. Consideration of the relevance of relationships became a key argument for organizing social relations, social life, and participation.



Julia Dobson:

## Networks of Care: Opportunities for New Solidarities.

It has been widely recognised that the pandemic has accelerated a mental health crisis amongst young people. Both the European Commission and United Kingdom-based studies reported significant increases in young people's mental ill health in 2022, recognising the crucial role of school and education policy in addressing this crisis. In this conceptual paper, I consider how, why and if young people might become actively involved in creating communities of care within their schools, in response to these challenges. As the pandemic has demonstrated, the nature of the school community and the extent to which young people feel listened to within this space impacts on their mental well-being. Focusing primarily on the UK, I problematize disconnectedness and disempowerment within school communities and pastoral systems. In contrast, I argue that re-imagining school communities around an expansive, agential ethic of caring, may invite new youth-led solidarities to take form. I draw on literature and practice to suggest that young people themselves can play an important role in creating agential caring communities. Drawing on Owis's theory of a queer ethic of care and Critical Participatory Action Research, I argue that the co-creation of youth-led, participatory networks of care within schools holds the potential to disrupt disconnectedness and support flourishing (Fine et al., 2021; Owis, 2022). This paper will consider the possible implications for policy, research, practice and activism of fostering expansive, youth-led, solidarity within our school communities.

Ester Cois and Fabio Bertoni:

**InBetween: Youth practices for a shared appropriation of urban interstices in post-pandemic cities.**

After being locked up at home and blocked in front of their computers in endless distance learning sessions during the lockdown imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, or collectively stigmatized as bearers of dangerous urban gatherings between one wave and another of the contagion, the "reconquest" of a 'right to the city' has been problematic for young people.

Based on fieldwork in the city of Cagliari (Italy) with a sample of young people during the recovery phase from the health emergency, this presentation aims to outline some mechanisms of re-appropriation of urban public spaces implemented in cities at that point transformed by the pandemic. The existential condition of transition to adulthood (still struggling to free itself from the last echoes of adolescence as a rite of passage) finds a meaningful material expression through the exploration of urban interstices, due to their intermediate function of spaces "in-between" (Brighenti, 2013).

These youth' spatial daily life - as a representation of a public "self-becoming", in Goffman's sense - appears animated by a constant exercise of identifying edges to conquer, occupy, share and freely signify against the rather rigid order of urban maps, so as to experience and claim their substantial citizenship in conditions of gradual autonomy (Farrugia & Ravn, 2022). A real conquest of "what is left of the city", of all those areas not yet regimented by precise and no longer negotiable functions, on the basis of municipal regulations and zoning formalized by urban plans.

The presentation draws from a project called IANG (Indagine aperta nuove generazioni) funded by Fondazione di Sardegna and in particular from the findings discussed in the volume 'Se non qui, dove? Città giovani e appartenenze' (If not here, where? Cities, Youth and Sense of Belonging), authored by V. Cuzzocrea, E. Cois and F. Bertoni, EGEA 2023.

Lidia Lo Schiavo:

“Able to breathe again”. The adaptative and creative practices of the pandemic generation in a multiple crisis scenario. Theoretical observations drawn from a case study.

Between disillusionment and anger, atomization and protest, psychological distress and aspirations for improved social, economic and political conditions, the picture of young people in contemporary societies is a contradictory one. Still facing huge inequalities and precarious working conditions, there is little room for their demands to be met. More than ten years ago, the “lost generation” was hit by the austerity crisis and a radical global wave of neoliberal reforms, whilst millennials and gen Z are now dealing with the pandemic, the climate crisis, and war returning to the political scene. These successive generational units have tackled multiple crises both adaptively and creatively, experimenting with and partially renewing mutualistic and participatory practices based on solidarity and “care”. The pandemic has been a litmus test for resilience and resistance capabilities, and also a testbed for experimenting with new forms of solidarity to counter atomization, isolation, and the disruptive effects of the enduring competitive, neoliberal mechanisms. In this context, we need to investigate both the different modes of adaptation adopted by young people, and the ideas of the future they express. Drawing on recent contributions in critical youth studies and combining the two pivotal concepts of generation and transition to adulthood, it is worth exploring the most constructive approaches for studying the youth condition and young generations’ adaptive and disruptive practices. A longitudinal case study on three Italian student organisations (in two stages: 2017-2019 and 2021- 2022), based on both direct observations and interviews – more than 80 in person and 20 online, conducted pre- and post-pandemic – along with an analysis of the documents and social media content produced by these organisations, provided a fruitful testing ground to address the contradictory aspects of youth condition and agency. Theoretical observations drawn from the empirical research support the contents of the paper proposal briefly illustrated here.

Keywords: generational units, crisis, pandemic, disillusionment, care, student movements.

Fiona Del Puppo:

Youth and community living: experiences from house sharing and co-living in London.

In the UK, shared non-family living arrangements are becoming more and more common (Stone, Berrington, and Falkingham 2011). This echoes some contemporary dynamics at stake in the production of housing placing more value in shared living spaces and embracing the re-emerging idea of “commons” as a political idea (Bourdon 2019). Besides, the global pandemic has only insisted on the importance of a close community, and informal mutual support in social networks in proximity. In reality, shared housing remains mainly motivated by economic constraints (Heath et al. 2017), and the young people choosing and embracing this lifestyle are mainly found among the most advantaged sharers (Kenyon and Heath 2001).

A new housing model – co-livings – is emerging in cosmopolitan attractive cities and is presenting itself as a new form of communal living while mainly targeting young internationally mobile professionals (Casier 2023). Those who have the resources to play this game of international mobility are not the most vulnerable during this during times of increased risk and uncertainty. Yet, we argue that through their residential practices, this privileged population is shaping new cultures of house sharing. Are solidarities fuelled by this living arrangement? What are their actual practices of community living in this housing model? Are they reinforcing inequalities with those who do not have access to quality shared spaces like the ones provided by co-livings?

The presentation will rely on 30 semi-directed interviews with young professionals staying either in a shared housing or a co-living space in London, as well as the data collected during a 4-month ethnographic observation in this same co-living . We will emphasize on the different spatial resources encouraging communities and solidarities to form, and how these resources can vary based on social class, gender, or ethnicity.

Diana de Carvalho et al:

### Confined youth: young adults' mental health and future concerns during COVID-19 lockdown in Portugal

In a post-pandemic scenario, exacerbating the uncertainty and precariousness nature of transitions to adulthood, it is crucial to understand how young adults envision their futures and the impacts of such context on their subjective well-being. Lockdown experiences, social distancing, mobility restrictions, and the challenges of remote schooling and teleworking were especially detrimental for young adults' mental health and aspirations. Adopting a life-course perspective and a mixed-method approach, we focus on two main questions: 1) how was young adults' well-being affected by their differentiated living situations associated with sociodemographic factors, work conditions, adaptation to home-schooling, family- biographical circumstances, and household conditions? 2) what were the main worries of young adults regarding the future during the 2021 lockdown in Portugal? We draw on quantitative and qualitative data from the online survey "The social impacts of COVID-19 in Portugal", which was applied during a second period of strict lockdown (11-15 February 2021) to a purposive sample of 7500 residents in Portugal. Focusing on a subsample of individuals aged 19-35 years old (N=2595), we followed two analytical steps: a) to measure individuals' well-being, we used the self-reported scale CORE-OM, which covers different domains of psychological functioning (e.g., depressive symptoms); and we ran a regression model to identify the role of sociodemographic factors (e.g., sex, age, income); new professional and educational status (e.g., satisfaction with remote work), and family-biographical factors (e.g., household composition, family conflict); b) through content analyses of an open-ended question, we explored young adults' main concerns about the future. Findings stress the relevance of understanding how young adults' mental health is strongly shaped by social inequalities and their future perspectives on what concerns education, economic conditions, work, unemployment, social life, family dynamics, and autonomy.

Lara Maestripieri; Acebillo-Baqué M., Delclos C., van Hedel K., Soleri Martí R.:  
Economic insecurity among Spanish Youth: its effect on mental well-being.

The most recent crises (2008-2014 and 2020-2021) have demonstrated the vulnerability of youth to economic downturns. The main economic determinants of youth vulnerability include high levels of temporary and involuntary part-time employment, greater exposure to in-work poverty, low salaries, and widespread difficulties securing financial independence from the family of origin. Yet youth vulnerability extends well beyond the labour market. Rising housing costs (particularly in urban areas), high rates of dropouts from education, low return of investment in tertiary degrees, limited public funding in youth-oriented policies and exclusion from existing minimum income schemes also contribute to this phenomenon. Since the Russia-Ukraine war, the uncontrolled growth of inflation has also put access to basic goods, e.g. mobility, food, and health services, at serious risk.

In this context, youth are increasingly feeling precarious and vulnerable to economic insecurity. Intersectionality theory suggests that certain individual characteristics (gender, ethnicity, functional and sexual diversity, etc.) might worsen the situation. While the SARS-CoV2 pandemic brought greater attention to the phenomenon, some scholars claim the increasingly precarious conditions of youth are giving way to a diffuse mental health crisis marked by rising exposure to stress and anxiety. To shed light on this situation, this communication presents preliminary results from primary data collected in Spring 2023 with funding from the LaCaixa Social Observatory (FS22-1B) on the diffusion of mental health stressors among the Spanish population ages 20 to 34. We will present the results of our examination of the potential relationship between these stressors and precarious labour conditions by applying an intersectional analytical framework and measuring pandemics' impact on personal well-being.

Keywords: economic insecurity, intersectionality, youth, mental health, precariousness

Dragan Stanojević:

Predicting the Well-being of Young People in Europe during the Pandemic: The Social Ties, Labour Market Integration, and The Mediating Effects of Social Inequalities.

This presentation aims to investigate the relationship between social ties, labour market integration, and the well-being of young individuals during the COVID-19 pandemic in Europe, while taking into account the mediating effects of social inequalities. The study hypothesizes that the level of integration among young people during the pandemic was critical to their well-being, but strongly influenced by SES, given the unequal impact of the pandemic on different social groups. The study will use data from the European Social Survey Round 10 on a population of young individuals aged 15 to 30 years, collected during the period 2021-2022. The degree of satisfaction with overall life will be used to express well-being, while the indicators of integration will be the degree of social integration (number and frequency of contacts) and the participation (online, in-office, etc.) in the labour market. Inequalities will be expressed through the level of education, subjective indicators of exclusion, and personal and household income. The analysis will be conducted in two steps: aggregated at the level of the entire sample as well as at the national level of 32 countries. The findings indicate that both forms of integration are significant predictors of well-being, but are strongly mediated by SES at the European level. Associations at the national level will be specifically discussed.

*Key words:*

Well-being, Young People, European Social Survey, Social Inequalities, Social Integration

Sanna Aaltonen, Noora Hästbacka, Oona Lipponen, Sakari Karvonen:  
People-processing in the context of youth-specific services.

This presentation aims to shed light to institutionally embedded professional practices that shape lives of young adults in vulnerable positions. By institutions we refer to targeted youth services as well as youth specific health and social services that aim to protect and promote the wellbeing of their young clients. Drawing upon interviews with professionals of these services, we take the notion of 'people-processing' as our starting point to ask how young adults and their perspectives are processed and positioned within services. 'People-processing' can be understood as an institutional technology that involves assessing individuals and controlling access for further services (e.g. Hasenfeld 1972; Stranz et al. 2016) and in this context it is essential to ask, how young people's aspirations and perspectives can be taken into account in these processes. The presentation illustrates key principles and practices of processing of young adults within the service system, a system that may be characterised by the logics of "passing through" and "acceleration", the drive for more efficient processing due to the increase in the number of clients.

The presentation is based on a research project that scrutinizes the effects of a recent major health and social services reform that transferred the organisation of services to (larger) wellbeing services counties (N 21) and created an administrative gap to youth services that are organised by individual municipalities (N 309). The specific focus on multiprofessional practices in the re-organised youth sector guided the data collection to produce 40 individual and focus group discussions where professionals such as youth workers, social workers and nurses were engaged to discuss young peoples' position in services with the help of a vignette. The data were collected in two diverse wellbeing services counties, North Savo in Eastern Finland and Vantaa- Kerava in Southern metropolitan area during spring 2023 and analysed by combining thematic and case study analysis.



## Dr Johanne Miller, Killing Time: Young People and Boredom

A prisoner banging their head off a wall (Bengsston, 2012), a gang member initiating a fight (Miller, 2018), or a young person taking drugs and alcohol (Wiligang, 2014) are all examples of young people reacting to the experience of boredom. Yet, there is a dearth of knowledge on boredom and the strategies people engage in to alleviate it. One of the main theoretical developments in the study of boredom highlights the difference between situative and existential boredom (Svensden, 2005). Situative boredom is an emotion that contains a longing for something desired which can be fulfilled through activity. It is the type of boredom experienced by most people at various points in their lives. Whereas existential boredom refers to a deeper malcontent, not only a discontent with what is, but a disconnect with society, similar to Durkheim's anomie or Marx's alienation (Seeman, 1991) it is the withdrawal of purpose or meaning. During the pandemic experiences of boredom intensified resulting in more young people experiencing isolation and mental health problems than ever before (McMellon and MacLachlan, 2021).

This research explored the lived experience of boredom with young people with and without justice contact in Scotland employing Charmaz's (2008) constructivist grounded theory approach. By employing arts-based research methods in the form of collages with young people to depict their concept of boredom alongside individual interviews exploring their coping strategies, this paper shares how boredom is an embodied concept that is symbiotic with time and temporality and meaning-making processes. In having a comparative study of those who have experience of the criminal justice system and those who do not I share the different coping mechanisms young people engage in and how the systems they operate in affects their experiences.

## List of participants

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## The Youth and Generation Research Network of the European Sociological Association

The RN30 Youth and Generation is a dynamic network of researchers interested in youth from a variety of angles. It was founded in Budapest in 1995, during the second ESA Conference, by French sociologist Jean-Charles Lagrée. Since then it has grown steadily and now counts over one hundred affiliates. Its purpose is to promote research in the field of youth and to provide the main forum for sociological advancement and debates in Europe in this area.

Active affiliates conduct research in this field either/both on empirical ground, using a wide breadth of methods; and/or theoretically diverse traditions such as cultural sociology and beyond. RN30 is an inclusive network and it welcomes affiliates at any stage of their careers, recognizing the epistemological issues involved in studying youth and the richness of insights that may derive.

RN30 has been very active organizing not only paper sessions at ESA biannual conferences, but also several well attended semi-plenary sessions at the same conferences. Since 2007, RN30 has organized successful midterm conferences. These are kept relatively small and normally focus on a specific substantive focus, keeping a specific format. Thus, RN30 overall provides outlets of different kinds for the discussion of youth issues.

*Afilrouge* of these events, spanning among several subtopics, has been to discuss how research on youth which is done nationally can be compared and contrasted internationally, and how to collaborate more broadly by constituting international research groups and other means of confrontation. Most notably, in recent years collaborations with ISA RC 34 Sociology of Youth have been established.

The activities of RN30 are planned and coordinated by the board consisting of the following members for the period 2021-2023

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### Network membership

We highly recommend you to become an affiliated member if you wish to continue getting information about the Youth and Generation network, and mainly if you wish to be a member of the Research Network.

You can pay the fee at the same time that you pay or renew your ESA membership, via the ESA webpage.

<http://www.europeansociology.org/membership.html>

[http://www.europeansociology.org/membership\\_rn\\_affiliation/](http://www.europeansociology.org/membership_rn_affiliation/)

*The Youth and Generation board*