

Young people & Societies – October 2010, 28th, 29th and 30th

Call for papers :

**Young people at the beginning of the 21st century:
From reasons for concern to reasons for hope**

The economic crisis has led to concern about the way our societies are evolving and their ability to see themselves as such. What place do they offer young people? What is their point of view?

The diversity of situations undoubtedly questions what is described as an age group : the heterogeneity of young people cannot be ignored. However, besides the difficulties this involves, does the crisis not above all amplify existing inequalities? What impact is the crisis having on young people from both an effective and a subjective point of view? Is the gap not widening between young people who are successful and those who are not, in today's tense economic climate? What conceptions of equality are used here? Who are the young people facing the effects of crises and dealing with the various devices set into motion to solve the crisis ?

The figures confirm the seriousness of the situation, in some cases more than others. Although this period of economic crisis has quickly led to an increased average rate of unemployment throughout Europe, the 15-24 age group is the most seriously affected. The effect is not however only cyclical since, for young school leavers, atypical employment (fixed-term and short-term contracts, temporary jobs and other public employment schemes) is tending to become the standard form of recruitment. In parallel, with the crisis the employment situation of young people in the countries of North Africa and the Middle East is undergoing a trend reversal at a time when demographic pressure is at its highest.

However, the fragility of increasingly "exposed" young people tends to conceal great disparities based on school level of and qualifications, and great variations based on sex, ethnic origin, cultural and/or economic capital of the family, etc. The crisis, far from levelling down, aggravates the disparities that new analyses of inequalities and discriminations should enable to be better explained.

The crisis, by amplifying the context of uncertainty in which it plunges individuals, both exacerbates effective inequalities, by essentially affecting the most fragile, and also consolidates feelings of inequality by altering the image that young people have of their future in a much more diffuse and global manner.

We need to question the role played by public policies in the face of these inequalities bearing in mind that, paradoxically, the most protective legislations - namely in terms of employment - tend to exacerbate social polarisation. The interest of international

comparisons, according to whether answers to the crisis tend to be protective or liberal, here takes on even greater meaning.

The 5th Young People & Societies conference therefore proposes for its next edition to describe in greater detail the situations of these ill-treated young people at the beginning of the 21st century. The objective is also to assess how different interpretations in terms of age groups may not be relevant when the economic situation puts in the fore a trend towards fragile paths and insecure trajectories, whose diversity may well not be explained through biographical age.

Furthermore, crisis situations regularly appear as occasions to experiment and encourage initiatives: young people are often seen as key players with regard to contemporary changes in society. More precisely, what social and cultural innovations do these age groups develop ? Which practices and discourse do they take part in and how do they encourage current avant-garde criticism and debate on the recomposition of capitalism? What do international comparisons tell us about young people in today's globalised societies?

Different disciplinary fields of social sciences (sociology, economics, history, demographics, ...) are used here to explore a non limited series of axes:

> School Trajectories and inequalities :

- dropping out : school failure revisited?
- vocational training, a way to relegate?
- should higher education be professionalised?
- positive discrimination : a solution?
- student mobility : a new source of inequality?
- ...

> From integration to work situations :

- Young people and unemployment
- atypical employment : young jobs?
- young people and job insecurity ...
- young employees, different employees?
- young people and careers
- ...

> Disparities and inequalities amongst young people :

- objective inequalities and inequalities experienced?
- gender based divisions : the situation today
- inequalities and equal opportunities?
- Discrimination : what's new? nothing new?
- access to autonomy : all equals?
- ...

> Young people in the face of crisis policy(ies) :

- ...

The 5th conference will be held:

- **in Montpellier**
- **on 28, 29 & 30 October 2010.**

To submit a paper... in English or French :

- visit the conference's website:
<http://jeunes-et-societes.cereq.fr/index.htm> ;
- under **News** click on "**Submit a paper**"
- fill in and submit the form
- deadline for proposals: **15 February 2010.**

We will confirm we have received your proposal by email.