4.1 Up the Creek Without a Paddle? Exploring the Terrain for European Youth Research in Policy Context

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Introduction

Comparative research is nothing new, albeit an uncommon subspecies in youth studies. This is partly because, with some notable and historically specific exceptions, youth studies has not been a 'big time' specialism within individual national and linguistic academic communities. Classically, comparative research in education and social science is typically engaged in a translation exercise: trying to make sense of aspects of societies or cultures and to convey the essentials to outsider audiences in a conceptual and normative language with which they are familiar. Apart from simple curiosity, the reasons for doing comparative research have generally been to gain deeper understanding of one's own society and culture by accessing external points of reference; to improve the workings of one's own society and culture by learning or borrowing from others; and to position one's own society and culture against others in relation to dimensions of development and performance.

These reasons have their legitimate integrities, but their motivations are nevertheless primarily self-interested. Where research activities remain relatively divorced from policy and practice, such self-interested motivations might be criticised as either morally unsound (on the grounds of hegemonic ethnocentrism) or as prone to deliver interpretational inadequacy (on the grounds of misleading decontextualisation). Where research activities are more closely linked with (or arise directly from the concerns of) policy and practice, the difficulties to which these potential criticisms point take on a more urgent significance – all the more so, where the terrain of concern is transnational and intercultural, as in the case of European youth research and policy.

Youth studies is a specialism which, by and large, is relatively closely implicated in policy and practice concerns – not only through analytic critique of young people's positioning in polity, society and cultural practice, but equally as a consequence of funding exigencies in applied research fields generally. And paradoxically, whilst youth affairs is rarely a powerful and autonomous policy portfolio at any level of government, young people and their lives are regularly subject to bouts of intense policy interest and political territorial clashes. 'Youth' as a conceptual category patently acts as a symbolic

vessel for positive and – especially – negative projections that embody socially extant problems, conflicts and desires. These projections have little to do with young people's own genuine scope of action and influence, and much more to do with the objective uncertainties and subjective anxieties that accompany processes of social and economic change. In times of rapid changes and dislocations – which clearly characterise European cultures, economies and societies at the present time – youth affairs attract particular concern: young people's lives and values are perused as a potentially sensitive barometer of the directions and the consequences of change. Clearly, young people are crucial to any society's future, and social change hardly leaves young people untouched – quite the reverse: young people themselves are part of such processes. Policy perspectives on youth affairs are inclined, however, to regard young people as problematic objects of policy action; they are less likely to view young people as citizens whose legitimate interests and perspectives are typically frustrated rather than promoted and supported.

The 'European' theme has become an increasingly popular focus in social and educational research since the late 1980s; the reasons need little elucidation. Transnational policy interest and applied research activity have seen a considerable upswing as European integration processes have gained momentum, fuelled not only by the milestone of Maastricht but also by transformation and restructuring in post-Communist Europe. It must be admitted that the fuelling has been more pragmatic than idealistic: as funding sources and priorities shift, so do researchers' interests. Of itself, this by no means precludes the generation and pooling of interesting ideas and useful information. Youth studies is no exception; in fact, it is a field that has derived considerable impetus from these developments. Describing and interpreting the social construction of youth transitions became the subject of intense attention during the 1980s in Western Europe as the pace of social and economic change began to suggest not only the close of the 'post-war era' but also macro-level transition to post-Fordist economies, post-industrial societies and post-modern cultures. The sudden outbreak *and incursion* of social transformation processes in Central and Eastern Europe into an already highly complex tableau has directed still more attention towards describing and understanding contemporary social change processes.

Youth studies communities and discourses across Europe have taken up these debates with alacrity, notwithstanding significant divergencies of perspective and interpretation in relation to empirically observable changes in young people's lives and values – which also rest, of course, on widely differing profiles of life chances and risks as well as on varied national, regional and ethnic cultural traditions. For its part, the Commission of the European Communities has only very hesitantly begun to engage in social research as a distinct activity in its own right (although, with the introduction of a new generation of programmes from 1994/5 onwards, this is changing quite

quickly). Over the years, it has consistently invested in what today would be termed policy research into social and educational questions, including youth affairs (though almost exclusively into un/employment and training issues). Since youth affairs remains a policy brief for which the Commission has no explicit formal mandate as such, it has been difficult to generate an integrated policy research dynamic in this field that extends its brief beyond the direct and immediate concerns of education-employment transitions.

Community-focused social and educational policy discourse has itself benefited from the expertise and networking generated by other and longer established transnational agencies whose concerns are not (in contrast with those of the EU) dominated by economic policy-making. In the case of youth studies, the Council of Europe has been of particular significance (see contributions by B. Sellin and the interview with Peter Lauritzen in section 2, this volume). Nevertheless, the very existence of the European Community (and now the European Union) has undoubtedly contributed to providing a context in which communication and interchange between research-based discourses has accelerated more rapidly than it might otherwise have done; and the scale of resources at the disposal of the Commission means that its potential *de facto* role for European youth research and policy is important.

These issues are followed up here, firstly, by looking more closely at the social construction of youth affairs as a policy field in the European Community immediately prior to Maastricht. Secondly, the emerging terrain of European youth research is approached through a brief descriptive exploration of its structuring and thematic concerns to date. Finally, policy developments relevant to youth affairs in the post-Maastricht EU context are considered.[1] Each of these three foci highlight, in differing ways, the promises and the pitfalls of developing European youth research in policy context. Periods of intense and rapid social change make heavy demands on both research and policy, demands which are likely to make those involved feel as if they are, indeed, up the creek without a paddle – or, alternatively, with too many uncoordinated paddles. As a classic case of post-modern existence, the directions in which we do not wish to move are a good deal easier to identify than is recognising and negotiating productive consensus on the ways forward.

Youth Affairs as a Policy Field

From the nineteenth century onwards, policy interest in young people and their lives originates in the dual concerns of protection and prevention, both grounded in the idea of 'youth' as vulnerable, immature and unpredictable.[2] Young people are thus in particular need of care and protection (as much from themselves as from others), but also require firm control (to prevent unruly social disturbance and to guide them towards normatively acceptable ways of

adult life). Understandings of adolescence as a period of hormonally and psychically unsettling change contributes one legitimating axis to this kind of perspective on youth and young people. A second axis reflects adult fears of common revolt and social degeneracy: young working class male criminal riot has always been the dominant leitmotif of such fears, young working class female sexual promiscuity the subordinate motif.

Pearson's (1984) social history of hooliganism concludes that young people's lives are subject to more public regulation (which may be expressed differently according to context) than are those of other age groups. Further, political preoccupation with civic disorder and lawlessness always focuses on producing and reproducing consent and social discipline amongst socially subordinate groups, especially amongst the younger members of these groups. At the root of these concerns lies a perennial tension between the principles of democratic rule by consent and those of pre-democratic rule by might. It can be argued that this tension continues to be reflected in the formulation of youth policies, despite the evident fact that contemporary policy perspectives on youth affairs cannot be equated with those of a century ago.

This tension has accompanied the long-term emergence of childhood and, later, youth as distinct and socially constructed life phases in the form of citizenship concepts and practices. Buchmann's (1989) account of contemporary youth transitions in European context argues that children's and young people's membership rights in the wider society expanded significantly with the development of welfare state politics after 1945. Social welfare legislation and social policies began to address young people directly – and not indirectly via parents or public agencies – as holders of citizenship rights and as beneficiaries of welfare services and income transfers. This gradual change – by no means completed – implies that young people become more directly integrated into the commonwealth and are no longer solely regarded as family dependants with no independent rights to social and political participation.[3] In other words, young people become subjects with individual rights as citizens, perhaps more accurately as proto-citizens. These universalistic practices, however, exist alongside long-standing particularistic practices that define young people as in need of and subject to social control by their elders and betters.

At any one time, the balance held within the elements of this fundamental tension between social control and citizenship rights is by no means similar across polities. In reviewing European Community member states' approaches to youth policy at the beginning of the 1990s, it was no surprise to find that the balance is tilted towards citizenship rights in those countries where social democratic welfare state principles have found their most consistent development and expression in recent decades. This does not mean that (to be specific) young people in Denmark and the Netherlands are, in an absolute

sense, less subject to social control than are young people elsewhere in the Community. It simply means that the idea of citizenship rights for young people has gained more ground in these polities; and that the modes of social regulation to which young people are subject are differently constituted and expressed than is the case, for instance, in Greece or in Spain. Such differences can be observed, for example, in relation to cultural understandings and policy principles in relation to young people's rights to independent accommodation (Burton et al. (1989) and Kristensen (1994) offer comparative accounts). It should equally be clear that a polity's level of economic affluence is related to its ability to extend and expand citizenship rights.[4]

Policy perspectives on youth affairs in the (then twelve) EU member states combine four political orientations or axes. These are not mutually exclusive, but rather co-exist in varying patterns in a given polity. Their features can be summarised into sets of principles, strategies and objectives, as shown in Table 1.[5]

Table 1   Principles, Strategies and Objectives

Principles	Strategies	Objectives
Social progressivism	Progressive – participative	Mutual preparation for an equal, open, changing society
Solidarity and social justice	Redistributive – corrective	Countering persistent social inequalities
Active citizenship	Reform – modernisation	Facilitating social and economic development and progress
Social and economic integration	Integration – insertion	Optimising mechanisms and processes for transition to normative adulthood

Social progressivism is inspired by the principle of equal partnership between the generations. Young people, their organisations and their representatives are seen as co-actors within an integrated youth policy: *une politique horizontale, eine Querschnittspolitik.* Preparing young people for adult citizenship is important, but their distinct perspectives and life strategies are equally a positive resource in their own right. Young people are autonomous contributors to the shaping of the polity and its social practices, not only for youth affairs but generally. *Solidarity and social justice* emphasise the improvement of young people's social circumstances and their life chances, seeking to establish equality of opportunity and to assist the socially marginalised. The promotion of *active citizenship* comprises a third axis, in which social and political participation is fostered and practised, providing sites for self-socialisation into the contemporary demands and values of the

polity. Finally, concerns for *social integration* place 'the march of the generations' within a framework of stability and continuity. This principle appeals to the transmission of established values, to the effective 'absorption' of young adults into economic and social life, and to finding ways of reducing the incidence of problem behaviour and exposure to social risks.

It is the relational patterns between these dimensions in any one polity that characterise its approach to youth affairs in a given historical period. Contrasting and interpreting these relational patterns is the appropriate basis for developing genuinely transnational perspectives that move beyond the additive-descriptive perspectives typical of comparative studies (see contribution by Hübner-Funk/du Bois-Reymond, this volume). The balance between citizenship rights and social control can be adjudged, in the first instance, by the overall profile of the four dimensions as reflected in social policies relevant to youth affairs. Policy profiles that emphasise the axis of social integration potentially offer particularly broad scope for social control measures, because their main concern lies in securing continuity. In contrast, policy profiles that focus on social progressivism are especially amenable to the extension of citizenship rights, since they accord to young people an independent *raison d'être sociale.*

All EU member states in the early 1990s regarded themselves as having social policies for youth, but not all saw themselves officially as having a 'national youth policy' as a distinct field of action and not all maintain an autonomous ministerial responsibility for youth policy and youth affairs. (Italy and the United Kingdom are the best examples of those whose policy perspectives and practices are least well defined in these respects.) On the whole, however, the incorporation of youth affairs into a wider set of ministerial responsibilities is characteristic for Union countries: within ministries of education/training, cultural affairs, social affairs, public health, welfare, sport, other 'special interest' groups (women, children, senior citizens) and labour/employment. Not surprisingly, this produces a noticeable *fragmentation* of perspective and practice on youth affairs, one which has been carried over to Union level.

Youth questions inevitably cut across the competencies of other policy-making sectors and groups. There will always be a genuine need for consultation and co-ordination, which is precisely why interministerial co-ordinating committees for youth affairs are not at all uncommon. Nevertheless, youth affairs administrations everywhere are inclined to be subsidiary to 'big time' policy domains such as education, training, employment, health and welfare, justice and housing. These latter are 'vertical' sectoral policy domains that relate to spheres of economic and social life; youth affairs – like women's affairs, for example – is a 'horizontal', transversal domain that relates to a specified group of citizens across the span of their lives and life circumstances. The organisational principles of modern polities are based on

the step-for-step dissection of the social order, much less on holistic perspectives of citizens' lives and social life. The role of youth affairs administrations is, therefore, typically one of encouraging other policy administrations to take young people into account – but they cannot usually demand that something specific be done. Such demands are much more likely to emerge intermittently as moral panics in the wake either of youth unrest, or of youth social problems that attract media, public and political attention. They also emerge in times of economic difficulty, in which young people's chronic labour market vulnerability rapidly produces high rates of precarity and unemployment.

The subsidiary and partly submerged positioning of youth affairs in the polity is not, of course, unrelated to young people's own positioning in economic, political and social life. Fragmentation of political discourse and action might be interpreted as a powerful strategy for ensuring that young people 'grow up' on adults' terms rather than on their own terms. In formal political practice, the weakly-bounded field of youth affairs frequently offers a vulnerable space for in-fighting that has little to do with young people's needs and interests. At Union level, the lack of an explicit and specific mandate for youth affairs policy-making as such has meant that, once more, themes and activities relevant to young people have perforce had to find a niche under policy briefs for which Brussels does possess formal competence – in particular, under ESF and as part of vocational education and training. This does not mean that *de facto*, Union policy-making and Commission programmes offer little of significance and interest in relation to youth affairs. The resources that have been devoted to youth exchange and mobility programmes as well as to vocational training measures in the attempt to contain and reduce youth unemployment indicate quite the reverse. But it remains the case that the youth affairs domain at Union level faces considerable obstacles: progress is hampered not simply by the formal limits of the Commission's competence, but perhaps more crucially by a cumulation of the characteristic deficiencies of youth affairs policy-making in the member states themselves.

Just how, and to what extent, which young people (as well as young people generally) are included into and excluded from the polity and its concerns is a critical question for any society. Developing appropriate frameworks for understanding the complex relations within and between young people's lives in contemporary Europe is an equally critical issue for youth research communities that are concerned to move beyond the boundaries set by intellectual traditions and the languages and cultures in which these are embedded.

European Youth Studies as a Research Field

As noted in the introduction, changing social constructions of youth and youth transitions in contemporary Europe became a core focus for youth research, whether culturally or socio-economically oriented, during the course of the 1980s. In the first half of the decade, theoretical debates and empirical investigations remained, by and large, within their respective scientific communities. The ways in which social change processes were understood in these various and introspectively focused discourses could diverge quite significantly – as, for example, in contrasting British preferences for neo-Marxist social and cultural reproduction theories with the critical modernisation theories developed in Western Germany (Chisholm et al. 1990). The second half of the 1980s saw increasing communication and interchange between discourses as well as a rising number of comparative studies (usually bilateral) and, perhaps above all, the generation of a continuing series of international youth studies conferences (most recently: Chisholm et al. 1995). Now, in the mid-1990s, agendas have begun to coalesce more firmly into a project – still very much on the drawing board, but nevertheless palpably present.

'Europeanisation processes' as contemporary social change, together with their implications for the social construction of youth and the patterns of young people's lives, is the guiding problematic for European youth research, in which multi-dimensionality and interrelatedness structure analytic perspectives and which is committed to supporting an organic triangle between research, policy and practice. These definitional elements remain in many ways programmatic, i. e. imperfectly understood and hardly at all realised in research practice, but do represent a recognisable if provisional consensus on basic concerns. An intercultural and transnational youth research in Europe might set itself the following kinds of questions. Firstly, European cultures and societies are dynamic and open networks living in sensitive interdependence. How can we begin to make sense of the complexities and relate these to the social constructing of youth and young people's lives?

Secondly, mutual interrogation of insider and outsider perspectives is a prerequisite of interpretational adequacy in a field that is, by definition, intercultural. This is designed to take comparative research beyond the additive-descriptive display of a cultural artefacts model in which it can so easily become trapped. In communicatively fluid and rapidly changing societies, acquiring culturally interrogative skills which can cope positively with flexibility, ambiguity and uncertainty becomes more important for all citizens, not just for European youth researchers. At present, such skills are both under-developed and under-used. What are these skills, how are they acquired and used, and what are their implications *both* for self-identity and subjectivity

and for community life and peaceful co-existence in highly complex societies and cultures?

Thirdly, individual and group profiles of life chances and risks are no longer problems that can be analysed and understood country for country, whether in terms of macro-comparisons between nation-states or by meso-comparisons between regions within one set of national borders. How can complex empirical patterns of pluralisation and polarisation processes be described accurately and meaningfully, taking into account the simultaneous integrity and interrelatedness of macro, meso and micro levels of observation and analysis?

The agenda described here is both ambitious in scope and abstract in quality. The social and political challenges we face in shaping a new Europe are enormous in scale and unprecedented in their quality; our responses can hardly aim too low, although grand designs and uniform solutions are unlikely to be helpful strategies, in research as elsewhere. The abstract quality of the description, on the other hand, has to do with the empirical disparateness – and in part incoherence – of a poorly and patchily surveyed terrain. The thematic range of comparative youth research studies is broad. As might be expected, there is a clustering of work that looks, albeit quite narrowly, at schooling-employment transitions. Securing paid work and financial autonomy is, after all, of considerable moment to young people themselves as well as for economic and social well-being of the countries and regions in which they live. This kind of youth research enjoys the bulk of funding and political support at national and Union levels; it is institutionally well organised, often survey-based, and is a long-established specialism with close links into a number of disciplines.

A second cluster is closely related to professional practice in youth, social and community work and services, in that it focuses on social problems, risk and exclusion. The problems that attract particular attention at any one time vary with the economic, political and social climate (such as right-wing violence) as well as with the appearance of 'new' risks (such as AIDS or 'designer drugs'). These kinds of youth studies, highly applied and action-oriented, are manifold and often locally specific; they are typically eligible for Union programme funding, although they may have difficulty securing access and adequate support. On the whole, whatever their source of funding, such projects and initiatives are chronically under-resourced and understaffed.

Beyond these two thematic constants, there are, of course, interest clusters that are popular at the moment but may not prove ultimately long-lived. Youth research, as noted at the outset of this chapter, is generally rather closely related to policy and practice concerns, which inevitably change over time.

The shaping and sequencing of youth transitions themselves has become and remains a particular topic of interest (Heinz 1991; Cavalli/Galland 1993); the study of youth as cultural practice and the formation of subjectivity in contemporary society acts as an equally strong counterpoint focus

(McRobbie 1991; Willis 1990). Young people's social and political partici-
pation – or, rather, the decline of its established forms – is of some consid-
erable concern and interest at present (Vanadruel 1995); the question of
changing identities and values in a restructured and post-modern Europe ap-
pears across a range of recent publications and is profiled by several chapters
in this volume.

In conclusion, an underlying impulse for pursuing European youth research
has less to do with pure academic interest in gathering interesting and
challenging material or in pondering the course of social change per se, and
rather more to do with a commitment to democratic and humanitarian values
of a similar order to those supported by the majority of young Europeans
themselves. The passing of the nation state is, we are learning, a dangerous
moment for defensive regression into an aggressively racial form of national
identity. European youth researchers' particular interest in questions of identity
construction and education for cultural competence is directly linked to these
concerns. At the same time, a good deal of the youth research in European
policy context is much more prosaic than this: it appears as policy research
closely related to identified priority areas for action, and especially in the fields
of education and training.[6]

Current Developments

Social policy has never been the strong card of a European Community that
originated in trade agreements and economic co-operation; Jean Monnet's
conclusion that if he had to start the process of European integration over
again, he would begin with education and culture, has become the ultimate
critical commentary on the Community's role and image. Whilst vocational
training early found a niche under the umbrella of economic development
policies, member states have been adamant in their opposition to Community
level responsibility in both general education and in youth affairs. The
Maastricht Treaties continue in this tradition: youth affairs remains a policy
field for which the Commission has no explicit brief as such; paragraph 126
restricts Union involvement in education policy to that of encouraging co-
operation between member states and, if necessary, supporting and sup-
plementing their actions; paragraph 127 allows wider involvement in vocational
training policy, in which the Union is empowered to implement policies which
support and supplement the actions of the member states.

Practically speaking, however, the scale of Union investment and involve-
ment in education, training, and youth exchange and mobility programmes,
together with supporting infrastructures for information, dissemination and
exchange, language learning and curriculum development, has steadily
increased. Practitioners at local level throughout the Union would today find it
difficult to imagine life without the many action programmes, even if criticism

of obscure and long-winded procedures in meeting the criteria and securing adequate resources dominates immediate opinions. In some member states (such as Ireland, Greece and Portugal) nationally-formulated reforms in education and training would be non-implementable without the transfer of Union resources. For the period 1995 to 1999, the Commission proposes to devote ECU 1,005.6 million to *Socrates* (planned to cover all education initiatives), ECU 801.8 million to *Leonardo* (vocational training) and ECU 127 million to *Youth for Europe III* (promotion of active citizenship). These are significant resources to be distributed; they imply significant *de facto* involvement in the face of *de jure* restrictions. In other words, the policy climate in relation to youth affairs at Union level is not quite as insignificant as might be supposed (or wished).

Youth affairs cannot, of course, be equated with vocational education and training policies and concerns any more than can youth research be equated with the study of school to work transitions *per se.* The difficulty is, however, that where youth affairs remains a weak and subsidiary policy portfolio, young people's integration and participation will almost inevitably remain primarily defined in these terms. It is less the centrality of education-employment issues for the social construction of youth transitions that is at question, much more the isolation in which these are regarded. In other words, official policies and the realities of young people's lives exist at considerable distance from one another.

Reviewing Community level documents and reports produced across the 1980s underlines the marginality of youth affairs within Community concerns.[7] The overwhelming majority of items (most of which are official action programme and policy documents rather than studies as such) that focus specifically on young people are about youth training and un/employment, and the majority were written before 1986. Paradoxically, the production and collation of documents and reports that are explicitly about young people's lives faded after the International Year of Youth in 1985 and through to the close of the decade. In policy terms, the second half of the 1980s was increasingly dominated by the logic of the Single Market, i.e. the European Community as a field of economic co-operation and integration as opposed to the idea of a 'Citizen's Europe' in which social cohesion within a confederation of open and democratic polities plays a leading role. For youth affairs, this meant that Community involvement had come to be interpreted in terms of exchange programmes and mobility. In general, citizens became human resources, whose talents and energies would be crucial to the shaping of Europe into an economic force capable of competing successfully with the Pacific Rim economies and thus securing Europe's affluence in the coming decades.

By the close of the 1980s, then, renewed interest in youth affairs was prompted by the adjudged need to upgrade and extend labour force skills and

qualifications, including encouraging the willingness and competence to be mobile in a Community-wide labour market after 1992. This axis of policy concern remains strong, although initially over-simplistic perspectives on mobility and European identity have, by the mid-1990s, receded in the light of considerable debate and redefinition.[8] The first half of the 1990s, however, has seen a rebalancing of priorities, in which social policy concerns have been drawn in from the margins. The reasons for this shift are evident: transformation processes in Central and Eastern Europe and their consequences for the whole of Europe; the continuing turbulence surrounding the ratification of Maastricht and the accession of new member states; rising social and political disturbance based in renewed nationalism, intolerance and right-wing violence – including amongst young people; economic recession and restructuring together with persistent structural unemployment across the Community. In brief, political and public discourse about Europe and European integration has lurched into a language of crisis and pessimism. In tow, young people's values and behaviour – and not only their chances of finding paid work or their qualification levels – have found their way back onto the agenda. This is reflected in the upsurge of research interest in identities and values and noted above, but at present is not matched by the allocation of resources for relevant policy research at Union level.

1993/4 has seen, however, the publication of numerous policy documents which place equal priority on social and economic cohesion and which emphasise the personally and socially damaging effects of marginalisation and exclusion, exacerbated by regional inequalities across the Community.[9] At the same time, the prime solution strategy is seen to lie in raising education, training and qualification levels – for all citizens, but especially for young people as a means of *preventing* economic and social marginalisation and exclusion. It would be difficult to deny that, whatever the precise mechanisms and processes involved in producing marginalisation, education and training access, participation and success are pivotal factors. Education and training are pivotal because they are, in system and process, providers and arbiters of the credentials that open and close occupational, employment and career opportunities in contemporary societies.

But they are pivotal in a second, and equally important way. Education and training practices can both foster self-confidence and self-esteem by providing affirming experiences for individuals and groups – or they can, and frequently do, achieve precisely the reverse. Processes of exclusion and low self-esteem all too readily produce a vicious circle.

In principle, the *Youth for Europe* programme, which is consciously detached from formal education and training contexts and which emphasises creativity, self-initiative, openness and intercultural tolerance within the framework of the promotion of active citizenship, could be a valuable means to combat personal and social negative spirals. In practice, the resources

planned for the coming years fall far behind those allocated to education and vocational training – although, for the first time, some of those resources will be specifically earmarked for policy-relevant youth research on themes other than education/training/employment transitions.

In sum, the slowly rising priority attached to youth affairs at Union level remains primarily informed by education and training policy concerns that are too narrowly formulated in terms of purely macro-economic considerations.[10] Perhaps this is inevitable; perhaps it is understandable – after all, educational underachievement, precarious transitions and youth unemployment remain chronic *social* problems across the Union.

Nevertheless, at present, many young people are growing up in societies and economies that appear intent on making it as difficult as possible for them to achieve social and economic integration and citizenship. There are also many indications that for significant numbers of young people, the prospects of being integrated into European societies and economies do not look especially attractive.

How can we find ways to value our young people, and how can young people be re-integrated into the polity on reasonable terms? This question does not suppose education and training policy to be unimportant, but it does imply that this alone cannot suffice as a basis for developing integrated policy perspectives on youth affairs. As long as this escapes concentrated attention, we shall all remain very much up the creek without a paddle.

Notes

1   The first and last sections on youth affairs as a policy field draw on Chisholm/Bergeret (1991) (reported also in Chisholm 1993) and Chisholm 1995a; the discussion on European youth studies as a research field is based on Chisholm 1995b.

2   Social historical analyses of 'youth' and the development of youth policies that support this account abound. For summaries in English, see Cohen (1986), Gillis (1974), Griffin (1993).

3   The idea that citizenship extends to young people remains underdeveloped. A recent and valuable discussion on the gendered character of citizenship concludes: "Today, citizenship means universalistic democratic rights of social and political participation. In popular political discourse it entails the full integration of *all adults* regardless of 'race', ethnicity, sex, or creed. ... Nevertheless, [this modernist and universalistic] meaning of the term citizenship ... [in distinction from] the limited notion utilised in ancient Greek city-states from which women and slaves and aliens were excluded, is useful for social science. Access to citizenship is a highly gendered and ethnically structured process. Yet the concept is potentially suited to the conceptualisation, investigation and theorisation of the varying degrees of social integration and participation in contemporary society" (Walby 1994: 391; my emphasis). How very true: in this account, the age structuring of access to and levels of citizenship is not considered (and see here: Jones/Wallace 1992). Interestingly, there is some analytic mileage in viewing young people as foreigners in their own lands: foreigners are not citizens, and are hence excluded from the community of those who are eligible for rule by consent. On the

contrary, foreigners are ruled by might, as legislation in European nation states will readily reveal. The European Union's legal provisions for establishing the free movement of citizens between its member states continue to be heavily impeded by obstructive practices at national level.

[4]   Readers may find the sparsity of identifiable and concrete examples of the patterns and trends discussed at a more abstract and theoretical level in this chapter questionable. Greater detail can be found in Chisholm/Bergeret (1991). However, there are other considerations, well summarised by Lauritzen in describing and analysing youth policy structures in Europe: "... even when only attempting a sketchy presentation of some of the key problems, I come up against the following classical diplomatic difficulty: In order to report on what kind, and for what reason, a certain structure exists in a particular country you need to define categories, which will necessarily represent an opinion, and might not include some very important historical or cultural fact specific to that country – whatever approach you take will be considered biased. Therefore, you should aim never to create the impression that certain aspects of youth policy may be better organised in one country rather than in another. For this reason I will refrain from putting names to countries in such an introduction, that should be reserved for a more complete and careful approach. Instead I will talk of *some regions in Europe*, of *certain countries*, or of *one country*, etc., and you can make up your own minds" (Lauritzen 1993: 36).

[5]   In former Soviet bloc Central and Eastern European countries, youth policies were clearly dominated by particularistic social control perspectives under political gerontocracy. Kovatcheva/Wallace (1994) discuss the tensions and problems of political transformation processes in precisely this respect.

[6]   With the current emphasis on the development of human resources in EU economic and social policy, vocational counselling has been identified as a key strategy (see: TFHR 1993) and this has prompted policy research projects on the topic, including in relation to young people (see: Chisholm 1994).

[7]   This review formed part of a 1992 feasibility report (for internal consumption) on developing policy-related research on the impact of the introduction of the Single Market from 1993 upon young people to the Task Force Human Resources, Education, Training and Youth; it took up the issues raised in Chisholm/Bergeret (1991).

[8]   Key documents here are the Commission Memorandum *Young People in the European Community* (COM 90/0469, Brussels, 1990) and, most recently, the 1993 Commission White Paper *Growth, Competitiveness and Employment. The Challenges and Ways forward into the 21st Century*. Similar arguments are to be found in the Proposal for a Council Decision on adoption of the *Leonardo* action programme (COM(93) 686, Brussels, 1993). See also Chisholm (1994) for a discussion of different perspectives on youth mobility in relation to vocational guidance and counselling policies, programmes and practices.

[9]   A key document here is the 1993 Commission Green Paper *European Social Policy. Options for the Union.*

[10] The Youth Section within the Task Force has recently been restructured; its existence and current activities constitute a concerted attempt to raise the profile of youth affairs at Community level and to widen the spectrum of policy perspectives and concerns towards the more holistic and transversal approaches and themes argued for in this chapter. The Task Force itself has recently (early 1995) become Directorate-General XII: Education, Training and Youth. (The term 'Human Resources' has thus now been dropped from the formal title.) Its internal structure is also now under review.

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