

Intergenerational (Dis)advantages? The Factors Determining Youth Life Chances Differentiation in Lithuania

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to reveal the factors determining the life chances differentiation of Lithuanian youth (18-35 years old) from the intergenerational perspective. This study provides a holistic view of youth issues and inequalities from the perspective of life chances and life course and creates a coherent picture of youth life opportunities. Based on the results of the research, differentiation indices of youth life chances were constructed, which reveal the diversity and intersectionality of youth life chances and (age, gender, education, region, social origin of the family, and other aspects). An innovative multidimensional theoretical research perspective integrating ideas from sociology, economics, social policy, and psychology, reveals a complex picture of the differentiation of young people's life chances. The data allows us to consistently reveal the socio-economic factors of the differentiation of young people's life chances at the macro, meso, and micro levels. The study of socio-economic factors in the differentiation of young people's life chances is based on a multi-level theoretical research model that includes a complex analysis of structural, institutional, and cultural factors at the macro level and various economic and social indicators (GDP, unemployment, youth unemployment, etc.) during the last decade. Secondary data will be collected from Eurostat, OECD, Eurostat Youth, EU-SILC, Eurofound, etc. relevant databases. The use of international databases enables comparisons between countries and regions. The role of family and community is examined at the meso level (Elder et al, 2004; Arnett, 2000, etc.). At the micro level, the study focuses on the individual experiences and attitudes of young people. The theoretical construct at the micro-level is based on the life course theory (Brady 2018; Jones 2019, etc.), employment quality and security (Barbieri, 2009; Kalleberg, 2009), subjective well-being and health (Diener, 2009), economic independence, and autonomy (Baranowska-Rataj et al, 2015; Walther, 2006; Corijn and Klijzing, 2001, Shanahan 2000, etc.), socioeconomic situation (Nolan and Whelan, 1996), and intergenerational transmission of disadvantages (Black, Devereux, 2011; D'Addio, 2007; Björklund, Jäntti, Solon 2007, etc.). Empirical analyses are based on survey research of Lithuanian young people aged 18–35 years (N = 1 002). The survey instrument consists of the following dimensions: socio-demographic and household, family and parent's characteristics and status, the situation of the family and household when the respondent was around 14 years old, subjective evaluation of different life chances, labour market perspectives, financial, housing and consumption opportunities, subjective evaluation of health status, etc. The results of this study not only reveal the differentiation of young people's life chances but also contributes to the development of public policy recommendations and methodologies for stakeholders to enable more complex planning, addressing, and improvement of the situation of young people at the national and regional levels. This research is supported by the Lithuanian Science Council project “Socio-Economic Factors of Youth Life Chances Differentiation in Lithuania” (2022-2024).