



ESA'24

PORTO

16th CONFERENCE

27-30 AUG 2024 PORTO-PORTUGAL

**TENSION, TRUST
AND TRANSFORMATION**



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RN13 – Sociology of Families and Intimate Lives

Coordinators:

RN30 | T07_01: Youth, social class and mobility

Spatial, Affective and Temporal Dimensions of Youths' Everyday Class Struggles

Maria Keil

University of Tuebingen, Germany

Today's youth is not only confronted with several societal crises but also with increasing social inequality. Trajectories into adulthood are not linear anymore and meritocratic promises are often enough shattered when entering the labour market. But how do young people perceive social inequality and how do they develop a sense of one's place? The paper presents results from a grounded theory study based on longitudinal ethnographic data and guided interviews following 19 adolescents during their transition from school to work in a German city. Using the relational framework of Bourdieu's praxeology and the concept of symbolic boundaries, the paper presents spatial, affective and temporal dimensions of social class in young people's everyday life.

Different mobility patterns can be identified between young Muslims in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and white middle-class adolescents. The appropriation of local space is not only formed through (anticipated) experiences of symbolic violence, but also shapes the (social) space of possibilities and the interaction with and trust in institutions, such as schools, universities, youth clubs, museums, etc. Spatial appropriation is also interwoven with affective dimensions of social class intersecting with gender, ethnicity and religion. Whereas some fear gender – and sexuality-based hatred in working-class areas of the city, others avoid white working – and middle-class districts anticipating racism. Finally, temporal dimensions of social class address the past, present and future within everyday practices and shape the sense of belonging in unsteady times.

Young People's Lay Perceptions of Material And Symbolic Inequalities

Sanna Aaltonen

University of Eastern Finland, Finland

In this presentation I focus on young people's lay perceptions of inequality and social class. Drawing upon thematic analysis of interview data produced among 17–19-year-old upper secondary students in four municipalities in Eastern Finland, I examine their subjective sense of inequality (Bottero 2020) and how they see themselves positioned in a stratified society (e.g. Irwin 2018; Snee & Devine 2018). From previous research we know that class identities are fundamentally ambivalent. Further, young people tend to see themselves as agents capable of controlling their own lives, and they have been accused of being blind to the

existence of structural constraints arising from gender, ethnic, or class divisions ('epistemological fallacy' by Furlong and Cartmel 2007).

Instead of adopting a restricted focus on how young people fail to grasp inequalities, my presentation deals with both identifying and downplaying of differences. The sense of inequalities is examined with a special reference on language, drawing upon the notion that linguistic practices are linked to the construction of inequalities, and the cultivation of moral distinctions (e.g. Bourdieu & Thompson 1991). Thus, the presentation contributes to the understanding on how both material and symbolic boundaries and hierarchies are articulated by young people and what consequences these hierarchies are seen to have in their lives.

The presentation is written as part of a cross-disciplinary research project 'LINSOC – Linguistic variation, social class and experiences on inequality in Eastern Finland'.

The Patterns of Youth Life Chances Differentiation in Lithuania: the role of education, employment, and family background

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Laima Okuneviciute-Neverauckiene, Justina
Krauledaite

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The paper examines the subjective attitudes towards life chances of the Lithuanian youth (aged 18-35). Based on the concept of life chances introduced by M. Weber (1920) (cited by Grusky 2001), the theoretical aspects of life chances are analyzed. The theoretical construct at the micro level is based on the following theoretical approaches: life course theory (Brady, 2018; Jones, 2019, etc.), employment quality and security (Braziene, 2020, 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 family socioeconomic background (Munro, 2019; Cho, Brand 2019; Bourdieu, 1984, Bourdieu, Passeron 1977). For the survey research, life chances dimensions were distinguished: individual socio-demographic characteristics; family/household characteristics; parents' family characteristics and status; work, employment, and career opportunities; income and material; learning, study, and training opportunities; subjective welfare and health; autonomy (housing, financial, decision making, etc.). The total number of primary indicators was 367. A differentiation of youth life chances indexes was constructed based on the representative survey research results in 2023 (N=1209). The indexes reveal the diversity and patterns of youth life chances (age, gender, education, employment status, family background, etc.). The results of this study demonstrate the differentiation of young people's life chances but also allow the development of public policy recommendations