The Chancing Lifestyles and Values of the Young Persisting Temporary Unemployed in Different Labour Markets of Finland

Seminar on Youth Employment Support
Innovation and Creativity
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Salzburg
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Data from earlier studies

- The World View of Young People. A Longitudinal Study of Finnish Youth Living in a Suburb of Metropolitan Helsinki (Helve, 1993)
- Youth and Life Management. Research Perspectives (Helve & Bynner eds., 1996)
- Youth, Citizenship and Empowerment (Helve & Wallace, 2001)
- Arvot, muutos ja nuoret [Values, Change and Youth] (Helve, 2002)
- Contemporary Youth Research: Local Expressions and Global Connections (Helve & Holm eds., 2005)
- Youth and Social Capital (Helve & Bynner eds., 2007)

THE CHANGING LIFE-STYLES AND VALUES OF THE YOUNG PERSISTING TEMPORARY UNEMPLOYED IN THE DIFFERENT LABOUR MARKETS OF FINLAND WORK-Preca

WORK AND WELL-BEING 2008-2011
Academy of Finland

- Director: Helena Helve
- Researchers: Jaana Lähteenmaa (post doc)
- Marjaana Kojo and Anna Sell (doc. Students)

www.nuorisotutkimusseura.fi/workpreca
Focus on

- From school to work transitions (cf. Bynner and Roberts 1991)
- Impact of recessions in 1990s and 2009 (Helve 1993 and 2002; Finnish Youth barometers from 194 to 2009)
This research is concentrated on a short-term employment from the viewpoint of changing life-styles, values and future orientation of young adults.

The aim is to study the issues of short-term employment and transition periods of YP, which seems to be longer and more complicated than before.

The nature of this employment is not comparable to traditional part-time or temporary employment.
Key-words

- Young Adults (18-29-year olds)
- Values and life-styles
- World views
- Future expectations
- Well-being/life management
- Changing labour-markets
- Precariat (*la précarisation*)
Research Questions:

- How short-term employment and unemployment manifest themselves in young people’s lifestyles, values and world views?
- What is the spectrum of the life situations, lifestyles and values of the young people working in periodic employment relationships?
- Is the meaning of work getting new tones or loosing the traditional ones among the “new unemployed” (e.g. Helve 2002)?
Research methods

- Mixed methods (triangulation):
  - Interviews
  - Observations
  - Mediadiscourses
  - Statistics
  - Comparative methods
Sub-studies

- Sub-study 1. *Short-term unemployment*, lifestyles and the changing meaning of work (Anna Sell): *Well-Educated YP* in permanently short-term jobs and employment (artists, free-lancer journalists, researchers, electronic and new-media specialists, communications professionals etc.) Interviews in Helsinki; Public Discourse, Ethnographic material

- Sub-study 2. Future orientation and life-expectations of young *long time unemployed* (Marjaana Kojo): *low educated* groups and/or no vocational education; Interviews in South Finland

- Sub-study 3. Persisting *short-term unemployment* experienced by young people in different labour markets in Finland (Jaana Lähteenmaa and Helena Helve): *Vocational education, skilled workers* in tourism, Interviews in Lapland, Internet Discussion, On-line survey
Finland: Gross domestic product by quarter at reference year 2000 prices
GNP growth over 1999-2009
Distribution of the Finnish Gross National Product and youth unemployment rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>mill. euro/inhabitant</th>
<th>15-29 unempl (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>89,7</td>
<td>18 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>95,9</td>
<td>18 777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>107,6</td>
<td>20 929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>132,2</td>
<td>25 541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>157,1</td>
<td>29 946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>184,7</td>
<td>34 769</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Background information

- After the great recession (in the 1990’s) the unemployment rates have stayed relatively high especially among youth
- Permanently short-term employment/project contracts
- YP outside unemployment compensation system - training places, educational programmes - hidden unemployment
- Changing meaning of employment/ unemployment
- Gender differences – women in temporarily based jobs
- Weakening of the employment situation affected young people with little education and work experience
- Unemployment and marginalisation are socially hereditary (cf. Carle and Julkunen 1997)
- Mostly young Finns under 25 in education
### Unemployment rates and labour force participation of 15 – 24-year-olds in European Union Countries in 1997 and 2009 (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of labour force</th>
<th>1997</th>
<th>2009 unemployed %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>8,1</td>
<td>27,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>8,4</td>
<td>28,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>8,8</td>
<td>22,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>9,1</td>
<td>31,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>9,2</td>
<td>21,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>10,4</td>
<td>33,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>10,8</td>
<td>9,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>11,0</td>
<td>9,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>12,4</td>
<td>41,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>12,8</td>
<td>16,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>14,7</td>
<td>6,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>14,9</td>
<td>15,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>15,3</td>
<td>11,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>17,1</td>
<td>10,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>17,2</td>
<td>18,2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Euro Statistics 2009; Helsingin Sanomat 19.3.1999, A 14.)
Problems in transitions to work

- Unemployment is inherited?
- Working temporarily
- Not flexible job markets
- Difficulty in getting the first job
- Risks and uncertainty
- Short-term employment

- Lack of resources
- Precarious jobs
- Lack of training opportunities
- Lack of decent work
- Social exclusion of NEETS
- Longer transition periods
Generation of Disappointment?

- In EU 96 milj. 15-24 year olds
- NEETS 1/3
- Not in
  - education
  - employment
  - training
Professional young people: lost of the perspective of life-course?

- Anna: I don’t know, I am quite satisfied here. I like this kind of seasonal (temporarily HH) jobs even if it is unsure if I get a job after this. I like to be in this Mountain (a skiing resort in Lapland HH). When the other ones are during summers in south, I like to be here. I haven’t done anything else than these mountain jobs (in Lapland HH). Here it is own magic. I am coming back here. ..I believe that I will find always some work even here it is lots of unemployed people... I think that they have not really tried to find work...also I know unemployed people who live with the unemployment money ... I don’t like that we pay our taxes for these people. I am annoyed about their attitudes ...I found this job myself from the website of an employment office
New Precarious Work-life

- non-standard
- part-time employment
- fixed-term work (projects)
- temporary work
- poorly paid
- insecure
- unprotected
- no standard employment relationship
- demands of flexibility
- gendered nature
Percentage of people aged 15-24 that have a temporary job because they could not find permanent job, 2007

Source: Eurostat – Labour Force Survey
Note: BE, BG, DE, EL, ES, LI, LU, NL, AT, UK: unreliable or uncertain data due to small sample size
Values... (Helve, 2002)

- Post-materialistic values
  - quality of life, health
  - friends, social relationships
  - work, interesting content, flexibility
  - education, improving the opportunities
  - leisure time, hobbies
World View: Changes

Affective dimension: extended present

Cognitive dimension: transformation of time and space

Social dimension: pluralisation of identities

Behavioral dimension: virtual life
“Being unemployed is not so bad if income is secured”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fully Agree</th>
<th>Agree to a large extent</th>
<th>Disagree to a large extent</th>
<th>Completely disagree</th>
<th>Cannot say</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nuorisobarometri 2007
Conclusions…

- Different living conditions of young people – different kind of YP
- Several kinds of transitions
- Temporary unemployed - not long term planning
- Leisure time activities very important
- Freedom to live in own way
- Weak signals: changing world views and values
- New lifestyles, relationships and ethics
- Dual connection to the world views: 1) Individual -past, present and future, cyclic time 2) Collective institutionalized linear time dimensions
- Future is unpredictable and flexible to change
- Flexible and temporary world views accept temporary jobs and lifestyles
- No rush to adulthood – prolonged youth
Discussion: What is needed?

- Public support
- Individualised and tailored career paths
- Voluntary work
- Rebuild employment structures
- Combine training and education
- Targeted and holistic forms of assistance
- Multi-professionalism
- Social guarantees
THANK YOU!

To get back to one's youth one has merely repeat one's follies

(Oscar Wilde)