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**JEUNESSE, POLITIQUES PUBLIQUES  
ET RELATIONS AVEC LES AUTRES AGES DE LA VIE**

**CNRS (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique)**

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<b>Research Organisation</b>	<p>Francis BAILLEAU (Sociologue, directeur du GRASS, laboratoire du CNRS). Il travaille depuis plusieurs années comme chercheur au CNRS dans le champ de l'intégration sociale des jeunes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Bailleau, F. (1996), <i>Les jeunes face à la Justice pénale. Analyse critique de l'application de l'ordonnance de 1945</i>, éditions Syros, Paris.</li><li>▪ Bailleau F. (1995), <i>Modèle de développement, modèle d'intégration. Vers un nouveau contrat social</i>, Assises régionales de l'emploi et du travail, Lille.</li><li>▪ Bailleau F. (1995), <i>Exclusion sociale et délinquance des jeunes</i>, Rapport pour le Conseil de l'Europe, Strasbourg</li><li>▪ Bailleau, F. (1993-94), <i>L'insertion sociale des jeunes</i>, Commissariat général du plan, Paris.</li></ul> <p>Francis BAILLEAU GRASS-IRESKO 59-61 rue Pouchet 75849-Paris Cedex 17 Email : bailleau@msh-paris.fr</p>
<b>Research partner</b>	<p>✓ Pays de Galles/Université de Glamorgan : <b>David DUNKERLEY</b> (Sociologue, enseignant et responsable du département de sociologie). Le professeur D. DUNKERLEY travaille sur le chômage des jeunes, la formation professionnelle et l'intégration au marché du travail.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Dunkerley, D. (1994), <i>The division of labour in farming families</i>, Sociological Review.</li><li>▪ Dunkerley, D. (1993), <i>Young people and employment in the South West</i>, Journal of Interdisciplinary Economics.</li><li>▪ Dunkerley, D. (1993), <i>The employment and training of young people in rural areas</i>, British Journal of</li></ul>

	<p>Education and Work.</p> <p>Professor David DUNKERLEY  School of Humanities and Social Sciences  University of Glamorgan  Pontypridd CF37 1DL  Grande-Bretagne  tel (44) 1443 482551  fax (44) 1443 482138  E'mail : <a href="mailto:dladams@glamorgan.ac.uk">dladams@glamorgan.ac.uk</a></p> <p>✓ Portugal/DINAMIA :<b>Maria da Paz VENTURA CAMPOS LIMA</b> (Sociologue, chercheuse au DINAMIA ). Maria da Paz VENTURA CAMPOS LIMA travaille sur les conséquences des restructurations industrielles liées aux transformations économiques dans le champ de l'emploi .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maria da Paz Ventura Campos Lima, (1995), <i>Social representations and trade unions practices in restructuring industrial sectors</i>, ISCTE, Lisboa.</li> <li>▪ Maria da Paz Ventura Campos Lima, co-authored, (1994), <i>Restructuring policies, employment and regional development</i>, IEFP, Lisboa.</li> <li>▪ Maria da Paz Ventura Campos Lima, (1992), <i>Entering the active life, youth employment and unemployment</i>, GETAP, Porto.</li> </ul> <p>Maria da Paz VENTURA CAMPOS LIMA  ISCTE-DINAMIA  Av. das Forças Armadas  1600 - Lisboa  Portugal  Email : <a href="mailto:paz@mail.telepac.pt">paz@mail.telepac.pt</a></p>
<p><b>Key words</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Social integration/insertion</li> <li>▪ Professional integration/insertion</li> <li>▪ Youth policies</li> <li>▪ Labour market</li> <li>▪ Passage to adulthood</li> <li>▪ Family relations</li> <li>▪ Relations between generation</li> <li>▪ Working conditions</li> <li>▪ Unemployment</li> <li>▪ Comparative approach</li> </ul>
<p><b>Research subject</b></p>	<p>This research aims to examine the issue of relations and solidarity between different generations in relation to the role, weight, and arrangements of public policies on social and professional integration.</p>

In particular, the project aims to measure the impact of public policies on young people and on the relations between different age groups through comparison of the conditions of social and professional integration of young people in industrial locations undergoing reconversion in three countries: Wales, the Rhondda Valleys (coal mining), France, Salin de Giraud (chemical industries) and Portugal, Lisbon (metallurgical industries). The project focuses on variations of the criteria used by public authorities to determine which young people can benefit from these programmes and measures.

The central hypothesis of this research is that the implementation of these measures for social and professional integration of young people has led to significant transformations:

Inter-generation and inter-sex relationship in the labour market have changed;

The conditions and processes of entrance into adulthood have been modified, in particular by a rearticulation of family and state solidarity.

A comparison of France, Great Britain and Portugal in terms of the social impact of these insertion measures is of special interest in that we are dealing with highly different national contexts. These differences lie in the following areas:

The role of the State and the family (opposition between public space/private space);

The impact of the school system on modes of socialisation and classification of people.

These differences led to implementation of:

- Different social, political and economic strategies against the decline of paid employment;
- Specific measures of social and professional integration directed at unemployed young people, underlined by societal logics of intervention by the public power (State and/or local organisms).

The object of this research is thus twofold:

- To see the different approaches adopted in these three European countries to deal with the crisis of paid-work which affected youth (first research phase, 1997-1998).
- To study the impact of these public policies on the status and definition of young people, on the inter-

	<p>generation and inter-sex relationship (second research phase, 1998-2000).</p>
<p><b>Methodology / Methods</b></p>	<p>The research is based on a comparative approach at European level. The value of carrying out such a project at European level lies in the possibility offered by comparative research to play with various variables and control some of the effects in order to further examine the conditions of reinforcement or attenuation of relations and solidarity between young people and adults.</p> <p>The three European countries in question pertain to different cultural universes and historically were marked by different types and degrees of social and economic development. Nonetheless, with the influence of European construction, these differences are tending to decline.</p> <p>The point of convergence for the comparative research is the choice of the specific locations: three industrial sites undergoing restructuring. From the basis of a comparable socio-economic setting, i.e., the deconstruction of social structure based on paid industrial work, this choice was designed to enable study of the relationship between various ages groups, the transformation of this relationship and the weight of public policies in this transformation.</p> <p>The points of divergence are the different cultural settings of the three countries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A country in northern Europe, characterised by a tradition of industrial development and the Protestant religion;</li> <li>▪ A country in southern Europe, characterised by the Catholic religion, more recent industrial development and an important traditional agricultural sector;</li> <li>▪ A country of central Europe, located at the intersection of these force lines.</li> </ul> <p>The project is developed in three stages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Description of the evolution of the place of young people in each country's labour market.</li> <li>▪ Description of the policies implemented to improve the transition of young people from school to work.</li> <li>▪ Analysis of the consequences of this situation and these policies on the relations between age groups, sexes, etc.</li> </ul> <p>The first and second stages comprised gathering of common and comparable statistical and secondary data in each country. The data collected concerns (i) the labour</p>

	<p>market, (ii) the transition phase between the end of schooling and entry to the labour market and (iii) the characteristics and impact of social and professional integration policies implemented by public authorities for young people.</p> <p>The third phase of the research comprised a qualitative approach based on analysis of interviews carried out among young people and adults in these three European regions.</p> <p>In coordination with the various agencies that had implemented these programmes, 100 young people and adults were selected among the young people who had benefited from the measures. The interviews with these adults, "ex-young beneficiaries" and their parents had two main aims:</p> <p>To determine the specific social modes of passage to a status recognised as being that of adult (exit from family residence, first employment, cohabitation or marriage, birth of first child, etc.), in terms of the conditions set by the institutions (as regards age, training levels, duration of unemployment, etc.).</p> <p>To study – during the transition phase to adulthood – the relations of young people with their parents, their extended family and their relations of proximity, and the transformation of these relations with their parents, extended family and partners. Analysis of this information from the insertion phase allows us to determine the evolution of the relations between young people and adults.</p> <p>Although this research is concerned with the relation between public policies and modifications of the relationship between different age groups, rather than assembly of the opinions of youth;, nevertheless these interviews will enable us to analyse the opinions of young people on the procedures from which they benefited and on their relationships with the preceding generation.</p>
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## **Abstract**

This research aims to examine the issue of relations and solidarity between different generations in relation to the role, weight, and arrangements of public policies on social and professional integration.

In particular, the project aims to measure the impact of public policies on young people and on the relations between different age groups through comparison of the conditions of social and professional integration of young people in industrial locations undergoing reconversion in three countries: France, Wales and Portugal. Quantitative and qualitative methodologies are used (270 interviews).

One of the conclusions is that there is a strong perception of the changes that have affected and continue to affect the labour market. In addition, the conditions of entry for the new generations is reflected in certain reactions

## **Research Objectives**

### *General Objective*

The general objective of this research is, firstly, to continue the comparative work already in progress by carrying out empirical research specifically centred on young people and, secondly, to explore common problems at European level with the aim of stimulating innovative policies directed at youth weakened by socio-economic change.

### *Specific Objectives*

To update the logics underlying the measures undertaken – at local, national and European level – to support social and professional integration of young people living in industrial areas undergoing reconversion.

To study the impact of variation of the criteria for selecting the beneficiaries of these public policies on the definition and social position of young people in comparison with the definition and social attributes of adults.

To further explore these transformations and their effects on inter-generation relationships and solidarity.

## **Changes in the research objectives**

There have been no changes in the research objectives

## **Main Research Results**

In spite of the modifications in living conditions caused by changes in the labour market or by public policies implemented to reduce the consequences of these changes, relationships between young people and their parents and family have mainly remained stable. Although the conditions of entry to the labour market have changed, the role of the family has been reinforced. Exchanges between members of the family and between different generations, whether monetary, practical, emotional or symbolic, seem to have experienced little change.

There is a reduction of the age of accession to adult status and a modification of the criteria allowing one to consider oneself an adult. While for older people, marriage continues to mark the threshold of entry to adulthood, for the younger generations, it is leaving the family home, whether married, unmarried, employed or unemployed, that marks the onset of adulthood.

This view of the autonomy of young people is strongly correlated with a more or less intuitive perception of the transformation of the labour market. More than a perception, it seems to be a question of experimentation. Young people know the fragility of employee status, they have to live with it. The majority have experienced periods of unemployment and employment, when obtained, is often precarious. In most cases, the first job obtained was a temporary job, whereas for adults it was a permanent job.

This transformation of the conditions of entry to the labour market explains the changes in attitudes towards school. Whereas adults establish a strong connection between the end of schooling and the first job, young people today see a legal criterion as equally important – the age until which they must remain in compulsory education. Boredom and uselessness are much more frequently cited as reasons for giving up school.

Due to this perception of change in the labour market, adults are much more pessimistic than young people. One finds in young people a certain fatalism in relation to the labour market, they seem to have accepted the negative situation as an insuperable fact.

This transformation of the relations with work and employment is particularly noticeable in the attitudes towards periods of unemployment. For the majority of adults (61%), unemployment is seen in exclusively negative terms, whereas for young people the proportion is markedly lower (47%). Furthermore, for the latter boredom is the main feature of unemployment whereas adults continue to link unemployment with reduced income.

By contrast, in terms of values, young people continue to strongly invest in work. Sixty-one percent prefer to continue to obtain some earnings through work whereas among adults a strong disenchantment dominates. The majority of the young (68%) are prepared to give up work in exchange for allowance payments. In Wales, one notes a contrast with the situation in Portugal and France: 51% of adults would prefer a job, whereas a higher proportion of the Welsh young opt for allowances.

Whether adult or young, this disenchantment is more acute among men than among women, who invest more in work, both younger generations and older.

### **Conclusions from the main research results**

The few results extracted from the analysis of materials gathered for this research illustrate a transitory situation.

A strong perception of the changes that have affected and continue to affect the labour market and the conditions of entry for the new generations is reflected in certain reactions. However, it appears to be the case that this perception has not yet modified certain behaviours – in particular in relation to the family – which are maintained even if the foundations on which they are based no longer exist or have changed beyond recognition.

In this way, new behaviours are developing among the younger generations, but they have not yet managed to clearly modify the perception and exhibition of certain values, whereas facts and certain attitudes illustrate the change.

### **Main contribution to the objectives of the YFE Programme**

There is no direct contribution to the objectives of the YFE Program, although the research explores common problems with a view to stimulating the production of innovative policies at European level aimed at youth weakened by socio-economic transformations.