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ITALIAN YOUTH STUDIES

Life conditions, participation and public space

Stefania Leone

ITALIAN YOUTH STUDIES

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This book is the result of a project which aims at presenting various empirical youth studies on Italian contexts. Together with the analysis and reflection on youth phenomena, the research referred to focuses on differences found in the particular general scenario of a European country and its specific areas, such as the Campania region in southern Italy. A related objective concerns the development of national and regional empirical sample bases and analyses in support of European youth studies with the contribution of multi-purpose surveys.

The topics selected reflect some of the main areas of study developed over the last few decades in research concerning young people. The work explores dimensions related to the *present condition*, considering experiences and goals achieved in the trajectories of one's life, orientations with respect to values and the moral and ethical spheres, the propensity of young people to plan their future, and also dimensions relating to *personal traits*, such as *self-representation* (the perception of one's abilities and self-confidence and in social relationships). Education and work are key dimensions in the life paths of young people. These topics are observed from the point of view of the perception of young people, exploring the value attributed by them to education and basic training, the acquisition of a professional status and their vision of work.

The two final thematic areas of interest are the commitment of the younger generations in real and digital public spaces. These themes raise interesting questions concerning the current phenomena of aggregation and participation on the part of young people, especially with regard to the potential of the media and practices in places where electronic and digital citizenship may be exercised.

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Stefania Leone

ITALIAN YOUTH STUDIES

*Life conditions, participation
and public space*



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INTRODUCTION

This work presents a series of studies on young people in the Italian context, focusing on classical and contemporary sociological dimensions. In the first part, moving from traditional models to the destandardization of life courses, the study of the transition to adulthood is analysed with respect to topics such as life goals and their attainment. A multidimensional analysis reveals a diverse combination of stances in life planning, orientations and self-representation; the spheres of values indicate traditional and innovative approaches; the perception and conception of education, training and work reveal conditions and perspectives for the future. In the second part, the book presents research projects in which there is a common emphasis on the manner in which young people act and live within public spaces. The latter subject is explored by observing various current forms of participation and the flow of information through social channels aimed at young people.

The work is the result of a study of research projects and reflections on young people which were collected and referred to by the author during the coordination of and/or participation in research activities conducted by the OCPG Youth Observatory of the University of Salerno.

The survey aims at presenting an overall picture of certain significant characteristics in the Italian scenario with regard to themes that distinguish *millennials* (between the ages of 18 and 35) and with respect to younger individuals of the post-millennial group, the so-called *Z generation* (18-24).

The cognitive aims of the work are pursued in a parallel manner at the theoretical and the analytical level in a search for analytical instruments and categories that may be useful for reflecting on the phenomena affecting the current younger generations and at the basic level of results collected through empirical investigations.

In the first part of the work the investigation upon which the contributions presented are based is enhanced by a comparison of data collected at the Italian national level and in the Campania region, a southern area of Italy hampered by the presence of particular socio-economic and cultural factors. The picture that emerges from a region such as this, with respect to Italian youth as a whole, draws attention to a series of crucial questions in the study of what unites and, on the other hand, what characterises and distinguishes segments of the younger generations often treated in a manner that is undifferentiated when referring to the common national framework.

Moreover, the two-level survey acquires a more general importance in the presence of phenomena common to 'southern' areas that are underdeveloped or which present social difficulties, both in Italy and elsewhere. In this regard, through the analysis that has been carried out and with a significant empirical basis the work provides a contribution to the growing debate enlivened by the so-called 'theories of the South'. This has rendered more evident the need to seek new empirical and theoretical contributions concerning the social realities of the 'Global South' comprising various voices within the sociological sphere, and this need has been perceived in several areas of this field of study.

The first part of the work presents areas of observation covered by the recent Italy-Campania sample survey (updated to 2017-2018).

Moreover, this occurred through the sharing of methodology and linking the national survey of the Youth Observatory of the Toniolo Institute (the results of which were acquired in the editions of the *Youth Report on the condition of young people in Italy* presented for the years 2018 and 2019) and the regional study conducted in the Campania region by the OCPG Youth Observatory of the University of Salerno. The latter study was conducted within the framework of a project shared with the Observatory for youth policies of the Campania region and published in the study entitled *I giovani delle differenze - La condizione giovanile in Campania* (Leone 2019b).

The comparison was made thanks to the availability of the same dataset used in the national sample and in the sample of the South. As in the case of the National sample identified for the Youth report in collaboration with Ipsos, also for the investigation carried out in Campania the unit of analysis

comprises young people between the ages of 20 and 35 years. In both cases the samples represent the relative populations¹: the Italian sample is composed of 3,034 units (out of 10,454.289 individuals in the 20 - 35 age range); the Campania sample presents 1,001 young people (out of 1,180,777 in the same 20-35 age range, indicated on the basis of gender, age², geographical area³ and weighed on the basis of their qualification⁴ and working condition⁵).

The temporal dimension of the relative phases of the survey is aligned: the general national survey was conducted in October 2017, and the investigation concerning young people in the Campania region was carried out in January 2018.

The study starts from the phases of transition to adulthood, focusing on education, work, home and the family (chapter 1). While considering the fundamental stages of the completion of education, work placement, independence from one's family of origin and the creation of one's own family, an overview following sequential phases was not produced in accordance with the now inadequate traditional models [Modell *et al.* 1976; Galland 1993, Ital. transl. 1996, 6] and the various goals attained during the course of the experiences lived by young people were observed.

The study of the transition to adulthood occurs through a typological instrument that is constructed assuming as discriminating dimensions an individual's independence at the personal level and with respect to one's family and economic autonomy with respect to one's family of origin. This instrument allows for an interpretation of the situation which is simplified and organised on a cluster basis, this being conducive to an understanding of the observed variation on the basis of criteria deemed to be significant. The different conditions that emerge, mainly related to structural factors that notoriously penalise the Southern regions, are reviewed adopting typological instruments that allow for a summary of the multiple spheres of life of young people in two general areas: the affective/family sphere and the educational and professional dimension.

1 ISTAT resident database as at 1 January 2017.

2 The age ranges considered to stratify the sample are the following: 20-22; 23-25; 26-28; 29-31; 32-25.

3 For the national sample the following areas of residence were established: North-West, North-East, the central regions, the southern area and Mediterranean islands and foreign countries; for the Campania sample, the 5 regional provinces were considered (Caserta; Benevento, Avellino, Salerno and Naples).

4 A classification at three levels was adopted: university degrees (levels I and II, and post-graduate studies), higher secondary school qualifications (4-5 yrs study) and other qualifications.

5 Approximately half of the young people interviewed are working and the other half unemployed (both categories include, in varying proportions, the condition of 'full-time studies').

In the second stage of the investigation (chapter 2) some of the main areas of studies that have focused on young people occurring in recent decades were selected for a multi-dimensional analysis including both the *present condition*, considering experiences and goals achieved in life trajectories, and also a *perspective* dimension, exploring the propensity of young people to plan their future, and also two dimensions indicating *personal traits*. Through the latter analysis, on the one hand an examination is carried out with respect to *life orientations* and, that is, behavioural styles understood as dominant traits which inspire the action of a subject (e.g., traditionalism, creativity, hedonism, etc.), and, on the other hand, *self-representation*, with respect to the perception of one's capacity and confidence in oneself and in social relations.

The examination of the sphere of values (chapter 3) focuses on thematic areas relating to the composition and comprehension of value principles and an individual's vision of life: satisfaction with one's present condition and visions of the future; one's relationship with religion, ethics and the sense of legality; gender issues and sexuality; one's attitude towards immigrants. The observation of these dimensions is also combined with life orientations relating to diversity, tradition and success emerging from the work referred to in the previous chapter.

Subsequently, in the path followed in this work (chapter 4) the vision that young people have of professional trajectories is considered in particular, and with a perspective aimed at highlighting their conception of or the significance they attribute to education and training and work.

The usefulness attributed by young people to investing time in educational activities, whether for cultural or for professional reasons, is analysed in relation to the characteristics and to the employment status of the respondents. Moreover, in order to explore current sensibility towards an increasingly pressing issue in studies on formal and non-formal education, they are also asked to provide a self-assessment of their 'soft skills'.

Again, at the level of subjective perception the study of the condition of young people with respect to professional activities focuses on their vision of work and on the significance attributed to it in the light of substantial transformations that have rendered precarious and unstable the living conditions of the younger generations.

The second part of the study presents paths of research that are independent from the investigation upon which the first part is based and these are developed within the framework of specific projects having distinct empirical bases.

Drawing on a multi-purpose survey that was also constructed and conducted by the OCPG Youth Observatory and completed in April 2016, the first observation of this section (chapter 5) contributes towards our understanding of youth participation. The study of youth activism focuses on certain channels of expression and protagonism in the younger generations within the sphere of public action, through forms of aggregation, participation and planning oriented towards collective interests, partly innovated by the exploitation of digital technology.

A second point of observation (chapter 6) is the digital public space, in which a flow of communication occurs regarding topics, opportunities and various types of news of interest to younger people. The analysis concentrates on public pages set up in Facebook and administered by leading actors/broadcasters in the national and international network of youth policies (ANG Italia, Eurodesk, the National Youth Forum, the Observatory for Communication and Participation of Youth Cultures of the University of Salerno, the Campania Youth Forum, 'Giovanisì Regione Toscana' and 'Giovani FVG' in the Friuli-Venezia Giulia Region). The objective is to investigate the characteristics of the flow of information and public communication for young people, analysing the actors, subjects, aims, sectors, the kind of news provided and, above all, what may be identified concerning the ability to listen, feedback and the civic engagement of 'networked citizens'.

All of the studies presented in the book and the overall project involving the collection of research carried out on young Italian people regarding key topics with respect to youth phenomena have a dual purpose. On the one hand the aim is to consider different contexts in cities and territorial areas presenting conditions distant from certain standards, as typically occurs in the southern regions, such as Campania, and on the other hand the purpose is to offer a contribution to empirical bases and analyses in support of the European youth studies.

LIVING CONDITIONS OF THE YOUNGER GENERATIONS: THE TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD IN THE ITALIAN MEDITERRANEAN MODEL

1. Introduction

For many years reports and indicators of the most important national and international bodies have highlighted the situation of weakness of the Italian youth condition, especially in the Southern regions. Political and media agendas consequently place increasing importance on young people, constantly referring to critical data and cases which exemplify current phenomena.

In the Italian scenario, the trait that indisputably denotes the Millennial generation (individuals who reached the age of 18 after the year 2000) and also the later Z generation (specifically those born between 1995 and 2000) is the problematical condition related to employment. This condition gives rise to broader instability with the postponement of all stages leading to adulthood and, on the psycho-social level, concurrent changes in orientations, values, attitudes, relational approaches and psychological traits, as will be noted and illustrated in the following sections and chapters.

The aim of this initial part of the work is to present the results of two comparative sample surveys carried out over the period 2017-2018 with a methodology shared by the two research groups involved. The first investigation is the national longitudinal survey conducted by the Youth Observatory of the Giuseppe Toniolo Institute, which since 2013 has curated the *Rapporto Giovani: la condizione giovanile in Italia*, [Youth Report: the youth condition in Italy]. The second investigation was carried out on a sample from the Campania region by the OCPG Youth Observatory of the Department of Political, Social and Communication Sciences of the University of Salerno, also within the framework of the Campania Region Observatory for Youth Policies. For both surveys activities relating to the sampling and data-collection phases were carried out in collaboration with Ipsos. The unit of analysis is formed by young people between the ages of 20 and 35 and both samples are representative of the relative populations, stratified by gender, age and geographical area and weighted according to the level of education and employment status.

1.1. The slow transition of young people to adulthood: the delay occurring in Italy and the critical condition of the South

Investigating the present-day living conditions of young people, international and national longitudinal investigations conducted in recent decades have presented a general picture of the period of youth with age-related thresholds being protracted as a result of the delay in the realisation of the traditional goals of life paths experienced by the new generations.

In Italy one may immediately comprehend the characteristics of this shift by consulting the national IARD reports on the condition of young people. The 15-24 age range referred to in research carried out in the 1980s was extended to the age of 29 in 1992 and to 34 years of age in the last report published in 2007. The most recent reports curated by the Toniolo Institute also modified the sample age range of 18-29 yrs used in the 2013 survey to 19-31 in 2014, to 18-33 in 2016 and 20-35 in 2019.

Relative literature and empirical research present a scenario in which a large number of young people living 'postponed lives' (Gallino 2014) find it difficult to reach a stage they may consider a definitive point of arrival in their education. These members of the younger generations, who often acquire a hybrid form of professional status, seek opportunities that will allow them to

become regularly employed or find a new job offering conditions that will at least let them acquire a position of autonomy with respect to accommodation and economic independence from their family of origin.

Such situations are linked to delays in the creation of a family and naturally induce a postponement of the decision to have child children (Buzzi 2002: 34-35), a stage of life which with increasing frequency is put off until one reaches and even moves beyond the biological limits of parenthood.

The idea that the points of arrival have become diversified and de-standardised with respect to the past has now become a central aspect in 'life-course' studies (Kohli 1986; Rindfuss *et al.* 1987; Brückner and Mayer 2005), and this is especially true for young people in the phase of transition to adulthood (Hogan and Astone 1986; Buchmann 1989; Shanahan 2000; Furstenberg 2005; Leccardi and Ruspini 2006).

Overall, the changes under way mainly concern an absence of sequentiality between phases, the disappearance of reference parameters for the relative age ranges and an increase in the phenomena of reversibility of the stages (Shanahan 2000; Egris 2001; Walther, Stauber *et al.* 2002, Côté 2002) and of suspended paths (Agnoli 2014; Rosina 2015).

As attested in a copious range of literary sources, in Italy the state of economic backwardness and, above all, persistent employment difficulties in the southern regions of the country are key elements in a well-known scenario in which the seriousness of the north/south divide is evident. Studies and empirical research on young people occurring through territorial focuses and the constant use of the geographical variable do not fail to review the characteristics of these differences (*cf.*, amongst others, Accornero, Carmignani 1986; Leccardi 1994; Fantozzi 2003; Abbruzzese 2005; De Luigi 2007; Leone 2016a and 2016b).

In this context, the results of the 2017-2018 survey conducted in Italy, which are compared with a study focussing on a southern area - the Campania region, which is a typical example of the major critical issues affecting the South in general and especially the youth segment, are presented below.

In accordance with the theoretical bases referred to, in considering the orthodox stages of periods of education and training and their completion, integration in the world of work, independence from one's family of origin and the creation of one's own family, an analysis based on sequential steps in accordance with traditional models will not be followed (Modell *et al.* 1976). Rather, the various goals that are reached during the course of the experiences of the young people forming the subject of the investigation will be observed

and studied. From this perspective, we find a change in the representation of life paths, no longer seen as unfolding through a succession of progressive stages characterised by interrelated preliminary conditions of an economic (e.g., work as a precondition for residential independence) or 'moral' (e.g., parenting following the creation of one's own family) or other nature. The transition proceeds in various directions with pieces being gradually added to an increasingly multifaceted mosaic.

The aspects identified are grouped together on a typological basis, allowing for a combination of states with regard to various goals and these are compared, assuming as underlying dimensions the educational and professional paths of individuals and their private family sphere. Considering the information presented below, the traits of the so-called Mediterranean model (Galland 1993) are fully confirmed and, through the focus on the Campania region this is seen as much more marked in the South (Leone 2019a).

1.2. Underlying dimensions: the path of training and professional development and the achievement of goals at the relational level and with respect to housing.

The samples studied reveal a distribution of professional status (*students, seeking work or professionally active*) which is already highly differentiated among young Italians and young people in the South. In Campania only 37.5% of the subjects interviewed feel that they have really entered the world of work, also considering the situations of those who have lived nothing more than unstable professional experiences, compared to 53.5% in the national sample.

To comprehend more clearly the educational and professional dimensions and the relationship between the same it is useful to consider the 'under-25' and 'over-25' age groups distinctly, this being a useful dividing point, at least to distinguish the status of students. According to general university standards, the younger individuals would naturally not form part of the second group. It should be further noted that the two groups reflect the distinction that has now become established in literature between the wide range of millennials (up to 35 years of age) and the new Z generation (18-24) forming part of the same (Bignardi, Marta and Alfieri 2018).

The first distinctive character of the Mediterranean model may be recognised in the extension of the educational/training phase, when it is observed

that 60% of trainees and students in Italy and 40% in Campania are over 25 years of age. The segment of students at varying levels of training/academic progress represents 35% of the interviewees in Campania (which, overall, has almost twice as many ‘under-25s’ in the sample) and 28% in Italy. As many as 27.7% of young people in the South are not undergoing training and are seeking employment: a value almost 10 percentage points higher than that established with respect to their fellow countrymen and women.

Generalised employment criticalities become more evident when millennials and the younger subjects forming part of the Z generation are compared and these issues are reflected in the low level of employment corresponding to approximately 3.4% of individuals under 25 years of age in the Italian sample and a similar value in the South (4.5%).

Table 1.1 Current employment situation * age <> 25.

Employment situation		Italy			Campania region		
		age <= 25			age > 25		
		<=25	>25	Total	<=25	>25	Total
Undergoing training	abs. val.	329	520	849	208	139	347
	% row	38.8	61.2	100	59.9	40.1	100
	% column	66.5	20.5	28	69.3	19.9	34.7
	% total	10.8	17.1	28	20.8	13.9	34.7
Seeking work	abs. val.	64	497	561	47	230	277
	% row	11.4	88.6	100	17	83	100
	% column	12.9	19.6	18.5	15.7	32.9	27.7
	% total	2.1	16.4	18.5	4.7	23.0	27.7
	abs. val.	102	1522	1624	45	330	375
Worker	% row	6.3	93.7	100	12	88	100
	% column	20.6	59.9	53.5	15	47.2	37.5
	% total	3.4	50.2	53.5	4.5	33.0	37.5
	abs. val.	495	2539	3034	300	699	999
Total	% row	16.3	83.7	100	30	70	100
	% column	100	100	100	100	100	100
	% total	16.3	83.7	100	30	70	100

Although it is now widely stated in literature that work, in its current forms of transformation, has lost its central role in defining life projects and the course of one’s existence (cf., amongst others, Leccardi 2006: 15; Meda, Vendramin 2013), difficulties in achieving professional goals appear to be far from lacking in significance in terms of their influence on the other stages of independence and autonomy. Within the framework of the Mediterranean model of transition to adulthood the latter stages are all significantly delayed.

Table 1.2 and Fig. 1.1 show the distribution of the Italian and the Campania sample, considering the educational-working dimension with respect

to the realisation of aims within the spheres of an individual’s relations and family life.

Table 1.2 Training/work status with respect to relational situations and accommodation

Relational situation/ Residence	Training/work status							
	Italy				Campania region			
	Undergoing training	Seeking work	Working	Total	Undergoing training	Seeking work	Working	Total
Single and living with parents	292 34.4%	181 32.3%	243 15%	716 23.6%	122 35.1%	123 44.4%	69 18.4%	314 31.4%
Stable relationship and living with parents	334 39.3%	136 24.2%	388 23.9%	858 28.3%	181 52%	62 22.4%	153 40.7%	396 39.6%
Single and residential autonomy	115 13.5%	58 10.3%	361 22.2%	534 17.6%	28 8%	19 6.9%	28 7.4%	75 7.5%
Stable relationship and residential autonomy	48 5.7%	14 2.5%	94 5.8%	156 5.1%	5 1.4%	1 0.4%	19 5.1%	25 2.5%
Stable relationship and their own family	60 7.1%	172 30.7%	538 33.1%	770 25.4%	12 3.4%	72 26%	107 28.5%	191 19.1%
Total	849 100%	561 100%	1624 100%	3034 100%	348 100%	277 100%	376 100%	1001 100%

In both samples there emerges, above all, a strong relationship between the young people interviewed and their family of origin. Observing the totals indicated in each row it is noted that the young people who live at home with their parents constitute over half of the total statistical population in Italy (23.6% of single persons and 28.3% of young people in a stable relationship) and exceed 70% in the Campania region (31.4% and 39.6%, respectively).

Those who have created a family of their own and live in accommodation separate from that of their original family amount to 25.4% of the total in Italy and barely reach 20% in Campania.

In a third category it is possible to include the remaining part and, that is, those who have taken the step of acquiring residential autonomy and live alone as single persons (17.6% in Italy and 7.5% in Campania) or in other forms of cohabitation without a partner (5.1% in Italy and 2.5% in Campania).

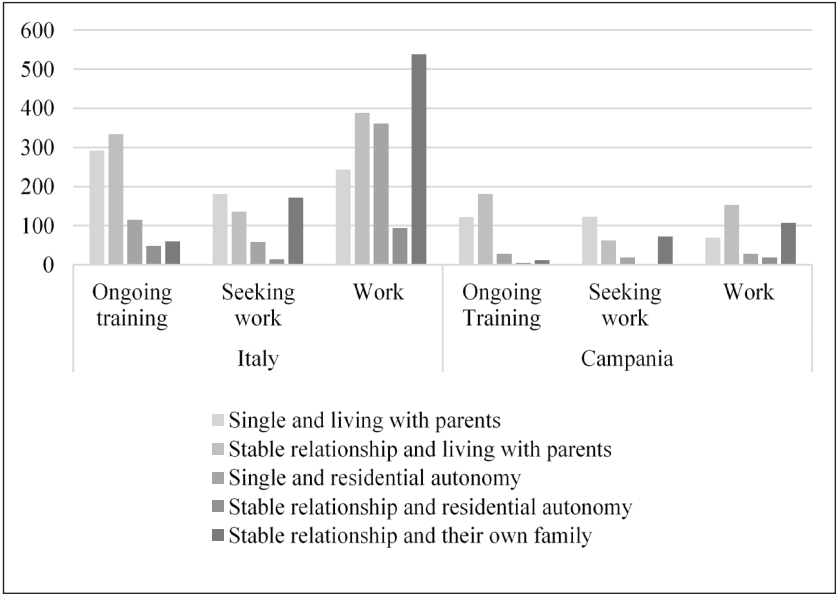
An analysis of the latter category reveals some interesting characteristics in a comparison between the national sample and that of the Campania region regarding the subject of an orientation towards the creation of a family of one’s own. Overall, the segment of single persons (residing either with

their family of origin or living independently) represents around 40% of the total in both samples. The employment difficulties which in particular penalise the sample from Campania appear to be associated with a condition of relational weakness if, for example, we consider the relatively larger proportion of young people of the South living with their parents (no longer students and as yet unemployed) and, who, despite being in the mature phase of youth (25-35 years) are not engaged in a stable relationship (39.2% of 31.4% in the case of those resident in Campania compared to 25.3% of 23.6% of Italians in general). Only at the national level does a higher percentage of single persons emerge (almost all of whom are mature) and these subjects are autonomous in terms of both housing and accommodation and also with respect to work (67.6% of 17.6% of the national total of independent single persons, compared to 37.3% of 7.5% of individuals in Campania). The number of people in this segment may be increased by the raising of the age at which important steps are taken in relationships and in the assumption of family responsibilities, comprising also parenthood, a condition which is probably not the least important with respect to stability of work and for economic reasons (cf., among many others, Buzzi 2002: 34-35).

Overall, these different statuses concerning the relational position and independence from one's family still present traits in line with the preparatory conditions of traditional phases. These traits include the priority given to completing one's studies before facing other choices leading to independence: the data clearly reflect the 'long delay' in paths of growth (Cavalli 1996: 41). In particular, about one third of the entire Campania sample are undergoing training and 87% of these subjects (a third of whom are over 25) live in their parents' home. At the national level the percentage of those undergoing training is 28% of the sample, 73.7% of whom live with their parents (and 40% of whom are over 25).

Independence in the sense of the acquisition of one's own living space, other than that occupied by one's parents', is a transition the achievement of which appears to take a very long time for everyone.

Fig. 1.1 Educational/work status with respect to relational conditions and residence



Such slow development is particularly manifest among the people of the Campania region, who often continue to live in their home of origin also when they are working and have a consolidated sentimental relationship (40.7% of cases, compared to 23.9% in Italy). This attitude is obviously reinforced in the segment of young people seeking work, who, in the South, to a large extent, in addition to continuing to live at home with their family, also remain single (44.4%, compared to 32.3% at the national level). On the other hand, while in Italy the choice of acquiring residential autonomy while one is single involves 22.2% of young people who are working, in Campania this condition remains restricted to 7.4% of all cases.

1.3 Typology of goals of independence: education, work, accommodation and family

Referring to the typology presented in a previous study (Leone 2019a: fig. 1.2 and table 1.3), constructed on the basis of the two dimensions explored in the previous section, the traits examined so far may be grouped into 4 types on the basis of achievement of the goals of independence with respect

to conditions of an economic (working/not working) and residential nature (living with one’s family of origin/living autonomously in a separate home, as a single person or with a newly-created family).

The results of this typology indicate that young people living with their parents (subjects dependent on their parents both economically and with respect to accommodation) represent 31% of the Italian sample and 49% of the Campania sample; *young workers living with their parents* (dependent from the point of view of accommodation) represent about 21% and 22%, respectively; *young people who have left home without having found work* (still economically dependent on their parents) represent approximately 15% and 14%, and, finally, *young independent people* (having their own home and working) represent 33% of the national sample and 15% of the Campania group.

Overall, the typology reveals more clearly full adherence to the Mediterranean model both nationally and with respect to the reality of young people in Campania while in this particular region the adherence is much more marked. The operation providing a concise reclassification facilitates the identification of other characteristics which are of interest in our attempt to understand the various aspects of the youth condition.

Fig. 1.2 Typology of the goals of independence

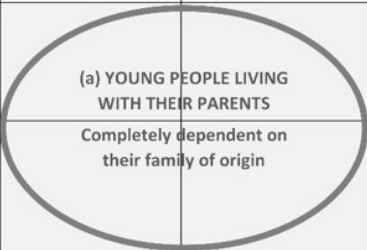
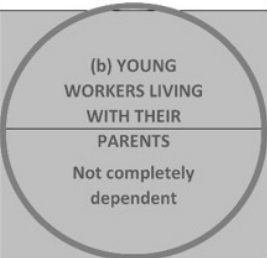
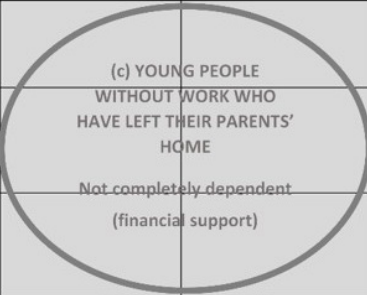
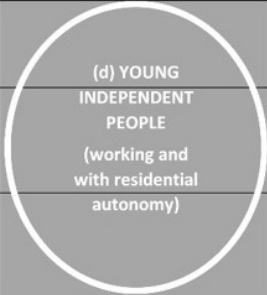
	Training/Working status		
Relational situation/ Residence	Undergoing training	Seeking work	Working
Single and living with parents	 <p>(a) YOUNG PEOPLE LIVING WITH THEIR PARENTS</p> <p>Completely dependent on their family of origin</p>		 <p>(b) YOUNG WORKERS LIVING WITH THEIR PARENTS</p> <p>Not completely dependent</p>
Stable relationship and living with parents			
Single and residential autonomy	 <p>(c) YOUNG PEOPLE WITHOUT WORK WHO HAVE LEFT THEIR PARENTS' HOME</p> <p>Not completely dependent (financial support)</p>		 <p>(d) YOUNG INDEPENDENT PEOPLE</p> <p>(working and with residential autonomy)</p>
Stable relationship and residential autonomy			
Stable relationship and their own family			
Fonte: Leone (2019a)			

Table 1.3 Types by age group (under/over 25 years of age)

Types		Italy			Campania region		
		≤25	>25	totale	≤25	>25	totale
Young people living with their parents	abs.val	341	602	943	233	254	487
	% row	36.2	63.8	100	47.8	52.2	100
	% column	68.9	23.7	31.1	77.4	36.3	48.7
Young workers living with their parents	abs.val	83	548	631	43	179	222
	% row	13.2	86.8	100	19.4	80.6	100
	% column	16.8	21.6	20.8	14.3	25.6	22.2
Young people without work who have left their parents' home	abs.val	52	415	467	22	115	137
	% row	11.1	88.9	100	16.1	83.9	100
	% column	10.5	16.3	15.4	7.3	16.5	13.7
Young independent people	abs.val	19	974	993	3	151	154
	% row	1.9	98.1	100	1.9	98.1	100
	% column	3.8	38.4	32.7	1	21.6	15.4
Total	abs.val	495	2539	3034	301	699	1000
	% row	16.3	83.7	100	30.1	69.9	100
	% column	100	100	100	100	100	100

Permanent cohabitation with one's family of origin brings together both young people living with their parents and young workers living with their parents in the so-called 'long family' phenomenon (Scabini, Donati 1988), which, as already pointed out, affects 71% of respondents in Campania and 52 % in Italy.

With regard to the number of employed or professionally active youths who continue to live with their parents - approximately 20% in both samples - it is possible to imagine that such a situation is in fact affected by difficulties arising from the economic crisis and the development of atypical and precarious forms of work that have been experienced especially in Campania (Leone 2016b), and also the incidence of cultural factors that distinguish the context in question (Ramella 1999; Barbagli, Castiglioni, Della Zuanna 2003).

With regard to contractual forms (table 1.4), in Italy and in the South 75% of the individuals in the sample are regularly employed and have found forms of work that are more stable than temporary, short-term types of occupation and project-based contracts. In any case, the various types of atypical work are formally less than 8% in the Campania region and less than 6% in the Italian sample. Young professionals correspond to almost 10% in the national sample and 6% in the South. On the contrary, self-employment involves 7% of subjects in Campania and only 3% of young people in the national sample.

With regard to the types of contract, a reflection on differences occurring between the South and Italy in general reveals a further interesting aspect. In Campania almost half of the workers who have apparently more regular forms of occupation (46.5%) and, that is, those who are regularly employed, continue to live at home with their parents, this percentage being higher than that corresponding to workers who achieve independence with respect to accommodation (28.9%). In the Italian sample the proportion is exactly inverted.

Looking closely at the current scenario, this uneven distribution between large numbers of regularly employed persons and low percentages of all other types of occupation does not seem to be directly associated with an improvement in the stability and duration of employment relationships but, rather, with the legislative constraints of reforms that have been introduced in recent years⁶. In fact, the contractual conditions of the respondents seem to reflect changes introduced by the labour reforms of the last few decades. Positions such as those of today's regularly employed workers should not be confused, for example, with those of members of the post-war generation who were granted permanent employment contracts. Nowadays the posts available in private contexts are very weak in terms of guarantees and labour rights.

6 The process of the deregulation of the labour market in Italy began in the 1980s, when the early reforms aimed at ensuring greater flexibility. With Law 56/1987 the rules restricting the use of fixed-term contracts were attenuated. Subsequently, Laws 451/1994, 698/1996 and 368/2001 accentuated this trend, rendering these contracts even more convenient for private companies. A systematic intervention occurred with Law 196/1997, known as the 'Treu' package, which introduced new forms of fixed-term contracts implying reduced costs for companies as in the case of temporary employment. With Law 30/2003, known as the 'Biagi law', new rigidly codified, flexible contractual models were proposed (involving intermittent or on-call work, with payment via vouchers for temporary occupation) and a legal form was given to coordinated and ongoing collaboration. The Fornero reform (Law 92/2012) has the aim of recognising permanent employment contracts as the predominant form of employment relationship and provides for restrictions to render more onerous flexible contracts of both the regular employment relationship type (general fixed-term employment contracts, fixed-term 'integration' contracts, apprenticeships, part-time contracts, on-call work contracts) and the 'non-subordinate' employment type (project-based contracts, temporary freelance-work collaboration, profit-sharing agreements, ancillary work, internships or periods of training). Law 183/2014, referred to as the 'Jobs Act' introduced the 'increasing-security contract', which became the new form of permanent employment relationship to which is applied a more agile regulation of dismissals and extends the scope of 'social-buffering' provisions, reinforcing social protection schemes in accordance with the *flexicurity* model. Moving in the wake of the Jobs Act, the current 'Dignity Decree', Law 96/2018, intervenes by introducing some limitations on the applicability of fixed-term contracts. From a general point of view, the stance most recently adopted in national policies is expressly aimed at discouraging short-term contracts to counter precarious working conditions. The reforms following the early phases of the introduction of labour flexibility appear to be characterised by the purpose of containing the effects of instability and the impossibility for young people to take steps that require responsibility and to establish long-term goals. However, it is not possible to rely on research that already surveys the medium and long-term effects of recent labour reforms.

Table 1.4 Contract types in the segments of young employed people

Types		“Previously you said that you work. WHAT KIND OF JOB DO YOU DO?”								
		Employed	Project-based collaboration	Employed – temporary contract	Independent entrepreneur	Independent professional	Self-employed	Collaboration in a family business	Member of a cooperative	Total
Italy	Young workers living with their parents	476	25	21	10	66	17	12	4	631
		29.3%	1.5%	1.3%	0.6%	4.1%	1%	0.7%	0.2%	38.8%
	Young independent people	780	33	17	27	90	32	10	4	993
		48%	2%	1%	1.7%	5.5%	2%	0.6%	0.2%	61.1%
	Total	1256	58	38	37	156	49	22	8	1624
Campania region	Young workers living with their parents	77.3%	3.6%	2.3%	2.3%	9.6%	3%	1.4%	0.5%	100%
		174	3	9	5	10	17	1	1	220
	Young independent people	46.5%	0.8%	2.4%	1.3%	2.7%	4.5%	0.3%	0.3%	58.8%
		108	15	3	5	12	9	2	0	154
	Total	28.9%	4%	0.8%	1.3%	3.2%	2.4%	0.5%	0	41.2%
		282	18	12	10	22	26	3	1	374
		75.4%	4.8%	3.2%	2.7%	5.9%	7%	0.8%	0.3%	100%

With the implementation of labour flexibility regimes in a variety of forms⁷ the stability of employment status has been, in fact, progressively undermined. This has occurred on account of the proliferation of precarious and temporary contracts and a less stringent protection of workers’ rights with respect to the possibility of dismissal. At least in some ways, it has occurred even because of recent formal restrictions on brief or medium term forms of collaboration (previously often repeated and prolonged by way of an alternative to the establishment of long-term contracts) without the presence of alternatives capable of activating processes resulting in a real re-establishment of access to work.

The scenario studied and depicted in a recent research project also carried out by the OCPG Youth Observatory in Campania (Leone 2016b: 62-75) highlighted various forms of work that have in common a condition of instability. In 2015, atypical work, comprising all workers hired periodically,

7 Replacing the concept of stable work the flexibility model embodies a transformation of post-Fordist employment regimes (Della Rocca and Fortunato 2006). It is a dynamic, complex and multidimensional concept that is expressed in a multitude of aspects that comprise ‘work content’, the production process, the organisation of work and relative methods for the establishment of contracts (cf. amongst others, Atkinson 1984; Toscano 2007), together with an increasingly extensive and articulated scenario of social consequences (cf. amongst others, Barbieri and Scherer 2006).

those employed on temporary-contract terms or on a project basis, auxiliary staff, workers hired according to the ‘coordinated and continuous collaboration’ formula and services rendered by operators with VAT registration and ‘participation-contract’ staff, was performed by 30% of all workers. A second significant component of the precarious employment division represented a further 20% of young people in ‘pre-work’ and the so-called ‘peripheral work’ categories (16.9% of whom were fixed-term trainees, persons undergoing practical training and award holders and, for the remaining part, apprentices). To these precarious positions were added a further 4.4% share of voluntary collaborators and, again, the segment of workers involved in activities without a contract, corresponding to 13.3% of the interviewees from the Campania region. Moreover, among the other particular indicators of the employment context presenting a variety of difficulties it was possible to identify a portion of 40% of young people who were carrying out various jobs simultaneously and the prevalence, for this group, of flexible contractual conditions lacking any regulation with respect to working hours.

The comparative 2017-2018 Italy-Campania survey indicates these phenomena, once again revealing in the contractual specifications multiple forms of deregulation, differentiation in the duration of employment agreements and flexibility in a transversal sense. About 40% of both the national and the Campania samples had a fixed-term contract. At the national level this segment was composed of one third, overall, of workers on ‘project-based’ contracts (17%) and temporary workers (15%), while 14% were fixed-term trainees, 12% were apprentices and the remaining part was composed of persons engaged in seasonal work, temporary replacements and trial-period work. In Campania project-based and temporary collaborations correspond to approximately 20% of all cases, while there are fewer apprentices (5.5%) and more fixed-term replacement workers (in schools, health-care services etc., amounting to around 18%); the others present a similar distribution across the other conditions, presenting values of about 10%⁸.

Albeit presenting lower values compared to the 2015 research data, the situation of being employed in two or more jobs is also present (12.2% in Italy and 10.5% in Campania), such conditions being related to dissatisfaction concerning above all remuneration and hours of work (see chapter 4).

8 Here, as elsewhere in this work, for the sake of brevity only some of the tabular or graphic representations are provided; those omitted are in any case available on request.

Rather marked differences are evident in the comparison between the Italian situation and that of the Campania region, also with regard to the professional impulse that motivated the two segments that left the family home. At the national level, mobility related to an individual's training or studies becomes a principal factor, while among subjects from the Campania region residential autonomy is achieved above all on account of situations relating to one's work. Among those interviewed in the South leaving home in order to satisfy a need to acquire independence per se was also quite frequent (18.7%) but less common in the country as a whole (12.4%).

Introducing the further possible goal in the paths of emotional self-realisation - the birth of a child - we observe, first of all, how the critical points highlighted by sources of the Italian National Statistics Institute (Istat) in relation to the lowering of fertility rates can be equally identified in the observed samples⁹: within the relational and family dimension self-realisation occurs at the level of parenthood only in about 18% of all cases in both samples (table. 1.6).

Table 1.6 Training/work status and residential independence with respect to parenthood

Types	Italy Parenthood			Campania region Parenthood		
	No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total
Young people living with their parents	935	8	943	482	6	488
	99.2%	0.8%	100%	98.8%	1.2%	100%
	37.6%	1.5%	31.1%	58.6%	3.4%	48.8%
Young people without work who left their parents' home	287	180	467	60	77	137
	61.5%	38.5%	100%	43.8%	56.2%	100%
	11.6%	32.7%	15.4%	7.3%	43.5%	13.7%
Young workers living with their parents	628	3	631	220	1	221
	99.5%	0.5%	100%	99.5%	0.5%	100%
	25.3%	0.5%	208%	267%	0.6%	221%
Young independent people	634	359	993	61	93	154
	63.8%	36.2%	100%	39.6%	60.4%	100%
	25.5%	65.3%	32.7%	7.4%	5.5%	15.4%
Total	2484	550	3034	823	177	1000
	81.9%	18.1%	100%	82.3%	17.7%	100%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

9 Procrastination regarding the stage of parenthood is identified by the National Statistics Institute with a variation in the average age at the time of childbirth. This is revealed by the difference between the ages of 23.8 years for women in 1950 and 29.8 for those born in 1970 (cf. Istat, Birth rate and fertility of the resident population, cited in Sironi and Rosina 2016). The average age of fatherhood in 2016 was 35.34 years at national level and 34.69 in the Campania region (source: Giovani.Stat, births recorded at local registry offices).

However, as pointed out in various economic studies on historical national series, the fertility rate is of course very sensitive to changes occurring in unemployment rates (Cazzola, Pasquini and Angeli 2016). This is confirmed by the differences found between the national level and that of the Campania region, the latter being burdened by youth inactivity and unemployment rates well above the national average¹⁰. At the national level, two thirds of those interviewed who have children are young people who are employed and live independently in a house other than that of their family of origin. The remaining 33% live independently but do not have a job and therefore find themselves in a condition of instability and are economically dependent. In this regard the relative critical issues are accentuated in Campania: about 53% of young parents who have jobs are counterpointed by 47% of those seeking employment or who are still involved in training activities.

Investigating the motivations of interviewees who have not had any children, it is found that the main obstacles to parenting are the critical issues that mainly affect the current young generations and, that is, limited economic resources and uncertain working conditions or an absence of employment opportunities, and this is true for more than half of both samples.

Reflecting the structural, economic and employment conditions that penalise Southern Italy, rather significant differences are confirmed to the extent that these limitations are experienced generally in Italy and more specifically in the Campania region. The economic hardship in the South constitutes an impediment to parenting for about 70% of the interviewees (compared to 60% in Italy) and similar percentages are also found with respect to underlying causes relating to employment difficulties (67.3% in Campania and 59.3% at national level). Regardless of the geographical area, these factors are naturally more frequently found in the segments of unemployed young people living with their parents or in independent accommodation, but a cause for reflection is engendered by the very high percentages recorded also in relation to *independent persons* and, that is, workers who live on their own (62.3% of those in Campania and 54.3% of Italian workers), who should be studied in relation to their employment situations, many of which are unstable or provide insufficient salaries.

Again, for half (or slightly less) of both samples significant obstacles impeding parenthood are those deriving from difficulties related to housing conditions (56.9% in Campania and 51.3% in Italy) and also the work of one's

10 For the year 2017 the National Statistics Institute indicates a youth employment rate in Campania of 23.8% (source: *Giovani.Stat* labour force survey) compared to the national rate of 37.2%.

partner (46.7% and 45.4%, respectively). The strong influence of these causes seems to explain the side-lining of other reasons, such as the lack of support in the care of children by public assistance services or by one's partner.

What appears from a general overview is primarily that poor opportunities and weak conditions of employment may be considered as capable of engendering the same degree of uncertainty in relation to all of the objectives that remain important for a young person's entry into the adult world. It is not only a question of transformations occurring in relations between the preparatory phases of the course of life, but also of a keying of one's existence from the point of view of flexibility. In this context the term indeed attains maximum expression of its polysemic facets, influencing all spheres of action and realisation and, even more essentially, the dimensions of one's relations and emotional life, the sense of security (Gallino 2014: 8) and the reflexivity of an individual.

LIFE PLANNING, ORIENTATIONS AND SELF-REPRESENTATION

2.1. Perspectives and personal traits: a multidimensional analysis

The work presented in the first chapter deals with dimensions related to the *present condition*, considering experiences and goals achieved in the trajectories of one's life. In this second chapter further paths of analysis are considered concerning both a *perspective dimension*, exploring the propensity of young people to plan their future, and also two dimensions relating to *personal traits*¹¹. Through the latter we note on the one hand, *life orientations* and, that is, styles of conduct seen as dominant traits that inspire the action of the subject (e.g., traditionalism, creativity, hedonism etc.) and, on the other hand, *self-representation* with respect to the perception of one's abilities and self-confidence and in social relationships.

The choice of these topics reflects some of the main areas of study regarding young people that have developed in recent decades.

With regard to future perspectives, starting from the studies undertaken by Cavalli (1985), it has been found that the conception of time of young people is a central axis in the exploration of the propensity to planning, the

11 The paths of analysis referred to in this chapter propose in part, and in a revised version, some research results published in the journal *Sociologia e Ricerca Sociale*, n. 118 (Leone 2019a).

temporal projection of life projects, the perception of elements of continuity between the past, present and future and aspects of self-representation.

Through the study of the timing of plans on a long, medium and short-term basis literature has focused on the expectations that stimulate young people with respect to the future and on attitudes of confidence with regard to opportunities for growth, both personal and social (Dal Lago, Molinari 2001; Crespi 2005; Leccardi, amongst others, 1999; 2006; 2012).

Many of the works devoted to temporal perspectives deal with the challenging of 'planning logic' linking the present, the past and the future, and its connections with the formation of an individual's identity (Berger, Luckmann 1966) and also with respect to the loss of the future dimension (Pomian 1981), exacerbated by contextual conditions of uncertainty and risk (Beck 1992).

On these bases the phenomenon of 'presentification' (amongst others, Rampazi 1985: 153; Cavalli 1997: 28; Leccardi 2006: 24-35) characterises the younger generations of recent decades and is manifest in the renunciation, by choice or on account of incapacity, to make long-term plans and to pursue the social acceleration that imposes demanding rhythms and flexibility. This occurs in a scenario in which there is a consistent presence of young people with weak motivations, low expectations and who have no capacity to plan ahead or whose planning ability is reduced to brief and, that is, 'short-term' projects that are deemed to be reversible or - in subjects that develop a positive approach to the complex and changeable nature of contexts - flexible and continually adapting (Pasqualini 2012; Leone, Delli Paoli 2012: 25-42 and 2016: 167-188). On the contrary, where a form of adaptation to the new stressful and accelerated circumstances of our modern life is lacking, there may eventually be an occurrence of the phenomenon defined as a 'dystrophic future', which manifests itself in a constant sensation of a lack of time and which goes so far as to paralyse the capacity to reflect (Pagano 2011: 13 and 343).

The second dimension focuses on characteristics which may inspire the life of the interviewees and are understood as general traits, also - but not only - based on values, and which underlie and permeate visions, attitudes and behaviour. Referring to traditional elements of sociological and psychosocial studies, some examples may coincide with an orientation towards tradition, norms, innovation, other people or oneself, hedonism, etc.

The third dimension observed in this work was chosen as an important axis for a reading of the youth condition in a variable relationship with structural factors, and corresponds to the propensity to assume an agentic position. The personal traits identified here are those resulting from the

interviewees' perception of their qualities (e.g., critical thinking, autonomy, resistance to stress, problem-solving, self-control, openness towards others) and with regard to respect, esteem and self-satisfaction.

These elements refer to a subject's capacity to define himself or herself in a positive and proactive way, thereby enabling him/her to set goals and to achieve them, directing his/her personal resources and controlling his/her own work (Bandura 1997). Having reference to individualistic approaches, some of the qualities taken into consideration concern the so-called 'identity capital' (Côté 1996; 2002) and, in particular, those intangible resources which - in perspectives focusing on subjects as agents capable of planning their possibilities - would allow young people to resist or react against social forces (Côté, Levine 2002: 145).

This dimension, which may be also construed as a belief in one's own abilities, through the relationship with the other areas of investigation, helps to reinterpret confidence over time in its connections with concrete conditions conducive to the realisation of a life project (Cavalli 1985: 191).

The research question that guides the analysis thus presents itself as a question concerning the current evolution of the phenomena which recent literature has highlighted relating to changes that have occurred in temporal perspectives, analysing, in parallel, what emerges currently from the study of young people with respect to personal dimensions of orientation, self-perception and self-esteem.

Adopting the typology of the condition of independence of young people presented in the previous chapter, this analysis attains a multidimensional reading of the youth segments of the typology with respect to the dimensions examined here regarding planning, orientations and self-representation.

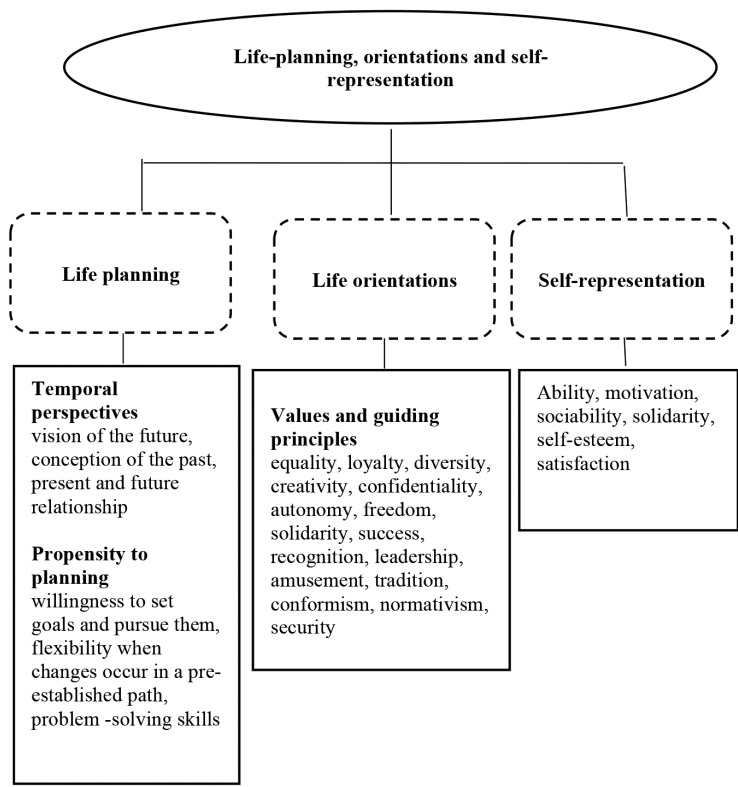
Finally, through comparative research conducted at the national level and in the Campania-region, an analysis is presented of the extent of the differences and particular aspects of territorial areas moving at different speeds.

2.2. Methodology and conceptual map

At the methodological level, within the general framework of the investigation that unites all of the studies referred to in the first part of this work, a conceptual map has been structured considering the following aspects (Fig. 2.1):

- *life planning* in relation to a certain time perspective, as a propensity to construct projects and pursue the objectives of growth and self-fulfilment;
- *life orientations* on the basis of essential characteristics and guiding principles (e.g., success, money, freedom, solidarity, morals, etc.);
- *self-representation*, as a perception that young people have of themselves both in terms of an assessment of their own abilities and a disposition to self-structuring and also as a condition of self-worth, satisfaction and motivation.

Fig. 2.1 Conceptual map



2.3. Factor analyses of the dimensions of planning, orientations and self-representation.

For the analysis of the multiple sets of information gathered regarding planning, life orientations and self representation, a summarising process was carried out with factor analysis techniques.

The first dimension - life planning - was analysed by examining items which might facilitate the emergence of the tendency to plan one's objectives in relation to a certain time perspective and be able to cope with intervening variables.

From the overall structure of the investigation a series of useful items was selected in this regard:

- seeing uncertainty in the future; focussing on the present rather than on the future; considering one's choices as reversible; having problem-solving skills; energetically pursuing one's goals; the ability to be flexible in the face of change; thinking of different ways to reach the important things in life; continuing to pursue one's plans without becoming discouraged in the face of a problem; considering past experiences in order to construct a future life.

In a distinct manner with respect to the two samples a factor analysis was carried out on the items listed - and also in the case of the two dimensions subsequently explored - using the main components as a method of extraction and a Varimax-type rotation.

As an initial result it emerges that the items of the *life planning* dimension are summarised in the same way by young people at the national level and in the Campania region and indicate two factors mainly composed of the same variables¹².

The first factor was called *strategic planning* and refers to the complex approach detected in recent studies on the younger generations, according to which, albeit in a situation where defined and long-term planning would be impossible due to current conditions of uncertainty and dynamism, young people maintain the commitment to think about their future. With respect to the 'blocked generation' it is possible to note a recovery of the more recent 'mobile generation', which opts for a form of planning strategically (re)defined *in itinere* (Pasqualini 2012: 58-60) and is flexible in the face of changes occurring in one's path, has the capacity and knows how to modify methods in order to reach goals that have been identified and may be reorientated towards alternative or new objectives (Leone 2016b: 104-106).

The variables that contribute to this initial factor in fact indicate, on the one hand, a determination to establish and pursue one's goals, the conviction

12 For the *life planning* dimension the explained variation is 48.4% in the national matrix and 56.6% on the Campania matrix, of which factor 1 explains 37.7% and 44%, respectively, and factor 2 the remaining 10.7% and 12.6%, respectively.

that there are links between past experiences and what one expects to achieve in the future - and, that is, a structured conception of biographical time (Cavalli 1985: 514-515) - and on the other hand, a disposition that tends to seek solutions to problems that social complexity continually presents and confidence in the fact that emerging problems will not hinder objectives considered as important.

Moreover, according to observations found in literature dedicated to the perception of time identified in young people, with social acceleration there has been a growing lack of confidence in time and often a reduction in the temporal horizons of medium and short-term life projects, allowing the phenomenon of 'presentification' to emerge (see § 1).

These aspects are reflected in the variables summarised in the second factor, referred to as *planning in the present* to indicate an absence of temporal connections between the past, the present and the future. This is a destructured dimension of biographical time (Cavalli 1985: *ibid.*), with a focus bearing solely on what arises day by day, without growing expectations and forgoing any planning for the future, nurturing the firm belief that the latter is a domain of risks and uncertainty and that no choices made can be guaranteed in terms of stability and durability.

The second dimension - *life orientations* - was determined taking into consideration the degree of concordance with a series of orientations concerning the priorities in a person's life. The selected items, all of which are measured using a scale of 1 to 6, are the following:

- creativity and originality; wealth; equal opportunities; personal recognition; personal and family security; diversity and innovation; respecting rules; autonomy; solidarity and care for others; success; risk; amusement and the pursuit of pleasure; decorum and composure; leadership; loyalty; tradition; humility and modesty.

For this dimension the three emerging factors do not present different semantic nuclei in the comparison made between the national level and the Campania level and the variables basically coincide¹³.

The first factor may be referred to as an *orientation towards others and towards diversity* and includes both the recognition of differences as equality in social relations and also a sensitivity towards caring for others, solidarity and

13 In the *life orientation* dimension the total values of the explained variance are 56.3% at the national level and 61.3% in the Campania region. Factor 1 explains 23.3% of the total variance in the national matrix and 25.4% in the Campania matrix, while factor 2 explains a further 18.9% in the national matrix and a further 22.1% in the Campania matrix and, finally, factor 3 explains 14.1% and 13.8%, respectively.

loyalty in friendships and the valorisation of diversity and freedom, which can be expressed through ideas and, thus, creativity, originality and innovation.

The second factor may be defined as an *orientation to success* as it is positively correlated with an ambition to become wealthy and gain social recognition (being successful, impressing others and being admired) and also with being dominant. To this is added the hedonistic note of the pursuit of amusement and pleasure and a propensity to taking risks.

The third factor may be summarised under the heading *orientation towards tradition and social norms* on account of the marked conformist and normativist element (observing rules, adopting appropriate behaviour and respecting established customs, the fear of social judgement and the search for security).

For the third dimension - the *representation of the self* - the broad set of variables examined concern the perception of one's own abilities, motivation and self-determination, self-esteem, feeling accepted and in a positive relationship with others or, on the contrary, being negatively conditioned by the social context. Again, the following items were chosen from the national questionnaire¹⁴:

- a positive idea concerning oneself; self control; a positive view of life; honesty and fairness; a sense of responsibility; critical thinking skills; the ability to make decisions; a desire to learn; motivation and enthusiasm; empathy; communication skills; openness to scrutiny by others; the ability to manage conflicts; the ability to work in a group; the ability to relate positively with others; leadership skills; the ability to pursue a goal until it is achieved; awareness of one's qualities; ambition; autonomy; adaptation to change; resistance to stress; a positive attitude towards oneself; self satisfaction; self-respect; sense of incompetence, a sense of uselessness; well-being; a perception of social appreciation; freedom of thought and opinion; social recognition; solitude; dependence on others; self-realisation; closure to the world; a sense of freedom.

Also in the case of the latter dimension, data processing did not reveal any differences in the results obtained from the national matrix and the Campania matrix, confirming for the three factors the presence - more or less - of the same variables¹⁵.

14 Also in the case of this dimension, as the items are measured using different scales (with 4, 5 and 7 positions) the standardisation procedure was applied.

15 For the *self-representation* dimension the values of the explained variance are 45.8% in the national matrix and 50% in that of the Campania region. Of these, factor 1 explains 21% and 25%, respectively, factor 2 explains 14% and 17% and factor 3 explains the remaining 10.8% and 8% of the total variance.

The first factor was referred to as *self-confidence and self-structuring* as an interpretation of the 'mix' of skills which the interviewees recognised as their own, together with agency in the structuring and determination of their own path and a positive motivational drive (Cavalli 1985: 514-515; Côté 1996; 2002; Côté, Levine 2002). A significant contribution is offered to the factor by a series of management qualities related to both interpersonal and group relationships (e.g., confrontation with others, understanding others, managing conflicts, working in groups, maintaining good relationships, knowing how to communicate) and also to one's individual determination at the emotional and rational level (e.g., withstanding stress, a desire to learn, enthusiasm and motivation when taking action, discipline and continuity in the achievement of goals, making decisions, a sense of responsibility, being a leader, having a dream to fulfil).

For the second factor the title *recognition and personal balance* was chosen to refer to the positive consideration of oneself which is perceived through social relations in the forms of recognition and the approval of others and which becomes a constitutional element of one's personal identity (Honneth 1993: 19). This interpretative key does not view recognition in an individualistic perspective and with respect to success as, more than being appreciated, variables that express reciprocity and emotional and affective involvement contribute to the factor (e.g., feeling that one is considered by others with respect to one's sentiments, receiving friendly attention and care, being in harmony with others, feeling that one can be oneself and express oneself freely). Moreover, the inter-subjective trait is linked to that of an intra-subjective balance as a sense of self-satisfaction and a positive attitude towards oneself.

The third and final factor has been defined as *mistrust in oneself and hetero-direction* as it focuses on the characteristics opposite to those grouped in the preceding factors: low self-esteem, a low level of confidence in one's own abilities, insecurity, a sense of uselessness, a perception of contempt on the part of others, a sense of constriction and subordination, maladjustment and relational isolation and demotivation.

2.4. The factors of planning, orientation and self-representation in relation to the present condition concerning life goals.

To analyse how the factors obtained are expressed in the two samples that were observed and in relation to the characteristics of the different

segments of young people, additive indices of the variables were constructed, which, in the factor analyses, were combined in the above factors. These indices were then standardised for greater explanatory and comparative clarity, as both the number of items for each factor and the scale used for the various items were different. These indices were then dichotomised into high (i.e., medium-high) and low (medium-low) values.

The intersection between the high/low score of the factor and the segments constructed through the typology on the goals of independence allows for an understanding of the greater or lesser importance of each factor in the comparison between young people in Italy and in Campania and also in the comparison between young people who find themselves in a variety of conditions with regard to having/not having achieved economic autonomy, their own affective dimension, an independent living space, etc.

The young people in the Campania region reveal, in a negative sense, a very particular character in the dimension of *life planning*, presenting a weak propensity for *strategic planning* (medium-low for 68% of the total), which is confirmed by the strength of *planning in the present* (medium-high for 80% of the total).

In figure 2.2, the alternation of colours coinciding with strategic planning highlights the difference between Italy and Campania in all segments and, that is, regardless of occupational and family objectives or aims concerning housing, etc. Also in this case the most severely penalised subjects are young people living with their parents (76% compared to 31% at national level), more than the others who are incapable of planning and achieving goals considered as important and are not used to looking forward to the future with a medium-long term perspective and following a path constructed over time and structured on links between past and future choices. If for this segment the greater presence of young people under the age of 25 may induce one to think of a low level of maturity recoverable over time, the same does not apply to young independent people who, although aged between 25 and 35 years and having acquired at least the essential basis of their independence, lack this vision for future goals.

On the contrary, all segments of the national sample broadly reveal a propensity to plan ahead for the future and this is particularly true for *independent people* (79%). Through a comparison of the two samples the variable that seems to make the difference is the level of education. In all segments of the Campania region presenting a low level of planning capacity there is a component of about 33% of young people with low educational qualifications

which is at least halved in the same segments at the national level (for example, for *independent persons* the Campania data present 36% of respondents having low strategic planning capacity and low educational qualifications compared to only 9% recorded in the Italian data).

The strength reflected by the variable relating to the level of education obscures any effects that may also contribute to understanding such a diverse picture, referring to the specific historical-cultural elements to which the value differences between the geographical areas of a variegated Italy are also linked (Caprara, Scabini and Barni 2011).

With respect to the dimension of *life orientations* the results indicate, first of all, a widespread presence of the values of openness to diversity, novelty, change and creativity and also, on a more solidarity-related and relational level, to comprehending, respecting and caring for others. For both samples more than 70% of young people present this component, with a peak of 75.4% of the total in the Italian sample. The absence of significant differences in the comparison of types confirms what was highlighted by the last Youth Report in Italy (Alfieri, Barni, Marta 2018: 22-23) concerning the primary role assumed by freedom, creativity and the focus on interpersonal relationships as guiding principles of the young people interviewed in 2017.

As it was not possible to present the contingency tables prepared for both samples owing to restrictions relating to space a summary (fig. 3) was prepared which presents the medium/high and medium/low levels of the factor (in grey and white, respectively), the relationships indicating greater strength as they record percentages higher than 75% in the corresponding segment (indicated with an asterisk), and a comparison of results between the national and the Campania data.

The findings relating to the first factor indicate aspects of tangency with what is observed when our attention focuses on the success-oriented sphere of values: wealth and power are not everything in life, at least for more than half of those interviewed (61% at the national level and 56% in the Campania region).

Young workers living at home with their family are the exception, but presenting a difference that does not subvert the overall trend. In the context of the Campania region 56% of this category is oriented towards success (41% in the same segment in Italy). For this segment, three quarters of which corresponds to males over the age of 25, some examinations of the meaning attributed to work underline in this dimension a search for self-realisation, prestige and remuneration. As they are young people who, although

mature, single and still living with their families, it is also observed that in most cases they do not view their dependence in terms of accommodation as a burden and, rather, 72% are quite satisfied or very satisfied with their living conditions and to a large extent (58%) are also satisfied with their financial situation. These elements seem to reinforce the value matrix at the base of the objectives pursued by this segment, this being in contrast with the others in the current youth scenario and closer to the individualistic models of careerism and a rise to power that originated in the *yuppy* generations of the 1980s. The aspiration to acquire money and success driven by a desire to turn one's life around or redeem oneself from an unsatisfactory condition would thus tend to be excluded.

Fig. 2.2 Relationships between the condition of young people with respect to goals of independence and factors concerning life orientations, planning and self-representation.

Index		Type of independence goals							
		Young people living with their parents		Young people without work who have left their parents' home		Young workers living with their parents		Young independent people	
		ITALY	CAMPANIA REGION	ITALY	CAMPANIA REGION	ITALY	CAMPANIA REGION	ITALY	CAMPANIA REGION
Life planning	strategic life planning		•					•	
	short-term planning	•	•		•		•		
Life orientation	towards 'others' / diversity	•		•	•	•	•		
	towards success								
	towards tradition / social standards								
Representation 'of the self'	self-esteem and self-structuring								
	recognition and personal balance	•		•	•	•	•	•	
	Lack of self-confidence and heterodirection								

Legend:
Grey areas: more than 50% of the segment cases express a medium-high level on the index
White area: more than 50% of the segment cases express a low-medium level on the index
• the percentage of cases in the segment is over 75%
/: the percentage of cases in the segment is 50%

The orientation to success comprises risk (§ 1). The lesser importance attributed in general by the interviewees to the factor also attenuates this trait, which is in fact often overestimated or instrumentally emphasised, especially

by the media, and generally considered very negatively. Attitudes connected to a variety of behaviours, ranging from facing danger to seeking adventure and pleasure, the irresponsible practice of experiencing limits and even subversive attitudes or violence, are comprised in the 'sense of risk'.

These are attitudes that generate elements of rupture or issues concerning compatibility with the regularity of social order which become the subject of studies on young people in relation to social change. Moreover, as some scholars point out, they pose numerous questions. The adequacy of the key of analysis of abnormality would, for example, appear to be questionable because it confers the character of an emergency situation that does not favour the normal classification of the manifestation of certain behaviours in the respective contexts (Rauty 2008: 13-28). Moreover, the attribution of a positive meaning to 'risk' may also be considered in the youth phase as it would correspond to an 'initial moment' in the process of constructing and experiencing one's identity (Fabbrini, Melucci 1992; La Mendola 1999).

With the factor of *orientation towards tradition and social norms* the complementary value component - in relation to at least some aspects - may be traced back to what has just been observed: compliance with social rules and schemes. Since the very outset, literature on young people has alternately focused on phenomena that reflect strong change as expressed by the new generations and phenomena that indicate a reduced intensity of critical scrutiny or of the degree of rebellion occurring within a particular generation. Research results present a scenario that reflects this dual possibility. By way of an example we may note the segment of young people from Campania in a position of dependency in both residential and economic terms (*young people living with their parents*), with respect to whom there is a definite 50% subdivision of cases. Overall, an attitude of observance with respect to rules and social models and subjection to norms and public judgment is more widespread (53% of the Campania sample and 62% of the Italian national sample).

Also with regard to the dimension of *self-representation* one of the three factors, i.e. *recognition and personal balance* presents contradictory results in the Italy-Campania comparison, favourable in this case with respect to the specific regional character. All types relating to the national sample present a distribution higher than 75% of socio-psychological traits which indicate a lack of serenity in social relations combined with a desire for greater consideration, appreciation and also sentimental relations and, at the same time, a less stable balance in the positive attitude towards oneself. On the contrary, in the context of the Campania region in most cases this sphere presents a good

combination of all of the traits referred to, which can be largely summarised in the manifestations of personal, psychological and social well-being (Alfieri, Barni, Marta 2018).

This sharp difference between the personal and relational positive attitude found in the people of Campania and the more problematical psycho-social traits in the relationship with oneself and with others encountered at the national level apparently contrasts with the more unfavourable living conditions in the south, and particularly in Campania. Within this regional area the weight of the different types of failure to achieve self-fulfilment and a lower level of independence do not appear to result in a sense of frustration or conflicting attitudes towards the outside world: 79% of *young workers living with their parents* and 71% of *young people living with their parents* present a medium-high balance, these being percentages which are even exceeded by *young people without work who have left home*, who count for 80% of cases. Besides factors pertaining to the Neapolitan cultural tradition, the contribution of which is very probably present but which can not be analysed on account of the design of this research, an interpretative key to the differences that emerged with respect to the national scenario can be identified precisely in the 'contraindications' which can be generated by a better context in terms of occupational possibilities and, therefore, of structural conditions for self-realisation. A competitive spirit, the continuous drive to maintain a profile that can be successfully presented in the market and an adequate life status, the decrease in time and attention, consideration and care for others imposed by professional activities and rhythms, i.e., when work tends to maintain a central position and the current tendency to adhere to a more polycentric orientation to life is felt less strongly (Meda, Vendramin 2013) are factors that may reveal a setback and a negative influence of considerable importance with respect to one's personal equilibrium and the manner in which one lives interpersonal relationships.

The other two factors, which in many respects mirror each other, reveal consistent and similar results between the two samples and between the different segments.

Compared to the first factor, *self-confidence and self-structuring*, most of the respondents offered feedback that was generally positive with respect to the broad set of skills and qualities recognised as their own (66% for both samples). Among these, some highlight an active, motivated and autonomous profile in decision-making and in the construction of projects that require an individual to establish, pursue and achieve goals; in this regard, they

delineate a profile whereby subjects are aware of their abilities and present a self-determined personality.

On the other hand, again for both samples and with marginal differences between types, similar percentages are obtained in the corresponding negative aspect of the factor, which presents attitudes of *a lack of self-confidence and hetero-direction*. The low percentages related to states of dissatisfaction, demoralisation, low self-esteem and similar conditions complete the overall positive picture of self-representation as the main agent of one's life path.

2.5. Conclusions

The aim of the research paths presented in this work is to investigate the complex mix of orientations and socio-psychological elements which characterise the current younger generations and may be of use in our quest to comprehend certain biographical trajectories.

Recalling the investigation of the condition of young people, by relating the degree of personal independence and the realisation of life paths to the psycho-social dimensions that identify life planning, orientations and self-representation, we obtain transversal aspects indicative of the phenomena that characterise the current young generations and also some interesting and very clear distinctive features in the comparison between the national and the Campania samples.

In the first place, all young people primarily place importance on cultivating social relations, diversity and change. This orientation of openness is also expressed in the typically youthful search for novelty, creativity, freedom and autonomy, which currently restricts and curbs a large part of conformist and normativist stances.

The influence of consideration received from others is significant for young people but, far from ambitions relating to a recognition of status according to the traditional parameters of power and wealth, it exercises a greater influence on the representation they have of themselves. A sense of cohesion, feeling appreciated and well accepted are conditions that create a favourable relational environment, which, on the one hand, raises the quality of relationships and integration in social networks and on the other hand is reflected in the perception of one's abilities, satisfaction, well-being and a positive self-view.

It is with regard to this point that, as highlighted, the results of the Campania sample are considered differently with respect to the general character presented by young people in Italy. Despite penalising structural conditions, especially relating to critical issues concerning employment (but not only, as revealed by an analysis and empirical studies conducted from various points of view dedicated to Southern Italy), young people living in an area where it is more difficult to trace one's life path retain greater psycho-social balance.

Moreover, as in the case of other subjects, with their drive these individuals remain the central point of reference for all things moving within the social space they occupy and experience. Finally, with respect to self-determination, which everyone has in common, and an awareness and confidence in one's abilities, once again we note a strong difference between the two samples when these traits are considered from the perspective of planning. Uncertainty and a low predictability of future events combined with the greater instability of day-to-day life result in an orientation on the part of young people in Campania to face and cope with the present moment. It is thus predominantly within this reduced time frame that they make use of the qualities - at both the individual and relational level - and the 'human agency' they are capable of expressing. However, in the national scenario, together with attention paid to the present, a particular outlook emerges whereby flexible approaches to the future are strategically activated.

Chapter 3

VALUES AND LIFE ORIENTATIONS IN YOUNG ITALIANS

3.1. A mix of dimensions in the sphere of values: a general overview

Within the framework of the same research operation that fosters the points upon which we focus in this first part of our work, the following study analyses a large number of items related to the values and attitudes of young people in Italy and, through a comparison with the Campania region, in the southern area of the country.

Continuing the analysis presented in the previous chapter on life orientations, in this contribution a second step is taken in an examination of the sphere of values, addressing four thematic areas that contribute towards the composition and the comprehension of value principles and visions of life:

- life satisfaction and an inclination towards the future;
- religion, ethics and respect for the rule of law;
- gender and sexuality issues;
- attitude towards immigrants.

The first sphere concerns the relationship of young people with themselves and with life in general, considering the degree of personal happiness and satisfaction in their life and also, in a more universalistic perspective, their opinions on the youth condition, noting the interviewees' relationships with the present and the manner in which they look ahead to the future.

The second category focuses on the relationship between young people and religion, the safeguarding of morals and traditional values, and people's position with respect to ethical issues that divide public opinion and are also closely related to religious beliefs.

The third sphere comprises the position on issues that invest the roles of men and women within society and takes into consideration the relationship with sexuality.

The fourth dimension considers attitudes towards others, concentrating on the relationship with immigrants in the light of problems increasingly reported by the media concerning cases of intolerance and the growth of consent for closure policies.

The observation of these dimensions is combined with the previous results on life orientations (chapter 2) in an analysis that relates the two steps. In the following paragraph there is an initial reference to the basic traits of life orientations with a view to integrating them in the subsequent analysis.

3.2. Life orientations: otherness, success and tradition

For a detailed examination of the characteristics of the factors that emerged from the analysis of the dimension of life orientations, reference may be made to the previous chapter of this work and the activity dedicated to this path of study (Leone 2019c). An overview of the traits that characterise the factors is provided below.

The first factor, summarised as an *orientation towards others and diversity*, above all reveals a widespread presence of the values of openness to diversity, novelty, change and creativity and, on a more solidarity-based and relational level, openness to understanding, respecting and caring for others. This factor generally offers a view of ways of living interpersonal relationships and, more generally, social relations. In fact, it includes the aspects of caring for others, solidarity and loyalty in friendly relations and the recognition of differences, and also equality in social relations in terms of a valorisation of diversity and freedom expressed through ideas and, therefore, creativity, originality and innovation.

The second factor, defined as *orientation to success*, concerns the ambition to become wealthy and a desire to gain power and social recognition and is related to being dominant, impressing others and being admired. To this is added - on a more hedonistic note - the pursuit of amusement and pleasure and a propensity to take risks.

The third factor, referred to as the *orientation towards tradition and social norms*, deals with the conservative and normative aspect of social relations. There is in fact a marked conformist and normativist component that highlights compliance with rules, appropriate behaviour and customs, the fear of social judgment, a search for security, etc.

Starting from these three orientations considered as guidelines for the values of young people - the recognition that others are not far from ourselves, the tendency to reach goals and to be successful in the various areas of one's life and the assumption of traditional value models as points of reference - an observation was made of the manner in which these aspects, and the three factors extracted, occur at the national and local levels¹⁶.

In both samples there is an openness towards otherness, variety and novelty accompanied by an attention to social relations. Approximately three out of four young people are in fact characterised by what we have described above as an orientation towards others and diversity (75% in Italy and 72% in Campania). The importance attributed to this sphere of values builds on the content of the '2018 Report on Italian Youth', which highlights the central role of the sphere of freedom, creativity and interpersonal relations, seen as guiding principles in young people (Alfieri *et al.* 2018: 22-23).

Alongside this value model a widespread presence of respect for rules and traditions has been observed. In fact, more than a half of young people have a medium-high orientation towards traditional value models (62.4% in Italy and 53.3% in Campania). These traits converge in reinforcing the first of the two principal and opposing interpretations of the role of young people in the unfolding of social phenomena and in change: continuity versus change. A certain rooting in tradition and in the preservation of inherited social rules emerges in all the areas analysed in the 2017/2018 empirical basis, to the point of highlighting this character as typical of the observed cross-section of young people and particularly of those in the South.

On the other hand, success and wealth form part of a sphere of values found to be shared to a lesser extent among members of the younger generations;

16 At the operational level, the choice was made to construct additive indices of the variables, which, in the factor analyses, are aggregated in the above factors.

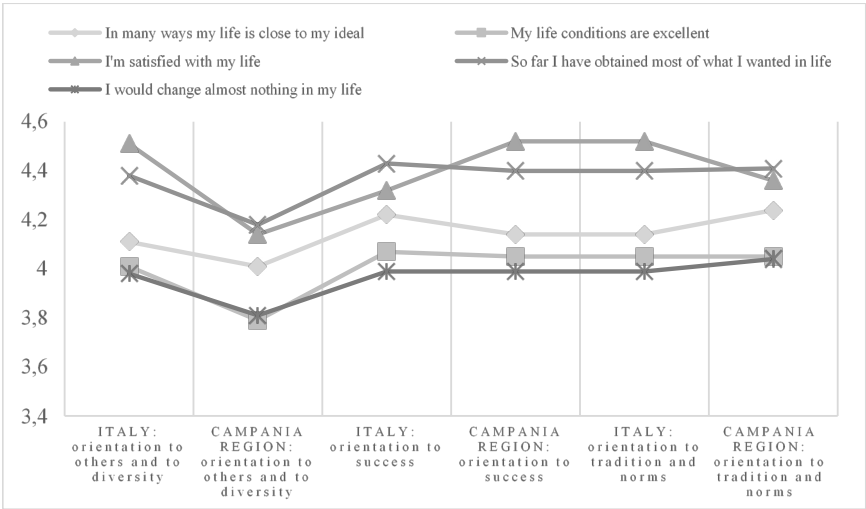
only less than half identify with a model based on having a career and being successful and on the exaltation of risk, in any form whatsoever (38.9% in Italy and 44.2% in Campania).

At this point, a comparison of the indices constructed on the basis of the extracted factors and the questions concerning the set of perceptions, opinions and attitudes towards issues relating to the individual and to society in general makes it possible to comprehend the position of young people in the light of dominant value orientations.

3.3. Life satisfaction and an inclination towards the future

Despite the fact that one interviewee out of four in Italy and only a few more in Campania do not feel very happy, in general young people say that they are quite happy (61.2% in the national sample and 55.5% in the Campania sample). This condition is accompanied by a medium or high level of satisfaction with respect to one's health (about 80% in both samples), but does not always coincide with satisfaction relating to various other aspects of life, where, on a scale of 1 to 7, the average scores are found to be set around an intermediate level (4 for in the national sample and at a slightly lower level in the Campania sample; fig. 3.1).

Fig. 3.1. Territorial comparison (Italy and Campania) between medium-high value orientations and life satisfaction (scores from 1 to 7)



The evaluation of the personal condition may also be interpreted in relation to the level of priority that young people attribute to values in their lives, also observing any differences at the territorial level.

Figure 3.1 presents the relationship between life satisfaction (scores from 1 to 7) and the segment of young people that identifies most strongly (medium-high level) with the three value orientations resulting from the factor analysis, and allows for a comparison on three levels: between trends of life satisfaction among young people in general, between the various value orientations identified, and between the two territorial levels taken into consideration.

As previously mentioned, young people generally have low to medium levels of life satisfaction. Observing the specific items relating to satisfaction, young people from the Campania region oriented towards success and also - to an equal extent and with opposing views - young Italians who present a conservative approach and those oriented towards diversity and change appear to be more satisfied with life in general and believe that until now they have received most of the things that they desired; this would confirm the dual soul of the younger generations, presenting a conservative stance and also a desire for change.

Moreover, the interviewees manifest a discrepancy between their current life and the model of an ideal life to which they aspire, this being a divergence confirmed by the fact they do not feel fully satisfied, their living conditions are not excellent and, if they could return to the past, they would probably change some aspects of their life.

We also observe the same trend at every level of life satisfaction. The young people of Campania identified as having an orientation towards others and diversity are the least satisfied among all subjects and with respect to all aspects, and are probably trapped within a context that suffocates creativity and opportunities to develop new ideas, and in which there is little opportunity for change.

A further interesting aspect is the relationship of young people with the temporal dimension. In the previous chapter, the 'planning for the future' dimension was explored and it was precisely with respect to the temporal perspective of life projects of young people that one of the clearest differences between the Italian and the Campania samples was found. In Campania, uncertainty, poor predictability of the future and greater instability in daily life force young people to concentrate on difficulties arising in the present. In the national-level scenario, together with attention paid to the present, on the

other hand there is the possibility of a perspective that strategically activates flexible approaches to the future.

Here, the analysis again proposes elements to support what has just been referred to. However young people reveal a tendency to emphasise the 'here-and-now' dimension, attributing greater importance to living experiences in the present rather than planning for the future (70.1% in Italy and 74% in Campania). The future is viewed as a source of concern, full of uncertainties and unknown issues, especially for those living in the most disadvantaged areas of the country (65.2% in Italy and 74% in Campania), even if half of those interviewed are convinced that there are no irreversible choices and thus perceive a possibility to make amends for past mistakes and wrong choices (63% in Italy and 65.8% in Campania).

The relationship with temporality assumes a different relevance, depending on basic value orientations. Young people for whom wealth, pleasure and success are fundamental aspects of their sphere of values tend to concentrate more on the present, a sign that they consider the attainment of these objectives and aspirations should not be postponed to a future time, especially in Campania where postponing choices can be more risky (73.9% in Italy and 81.4% in Campania).

Uncertainty about the future is a typical sign especially in the Campania sample and in particular in those subjects who present a value orientation linked to tradition and respect for rules (68.4% in Italy and 76.5% in Campania). The future is seen as fraught with risks probably due to the crisis situation and the gradual disappearance of traditional values, as well as greater insecurity. However, those who have greater confidence in others and assign a fundamental role in their lives to relationships with others, solidarity and the right to express oneself have a more optimistic vision of the future, believing that there are no choices that will remain valid forever but it is always possible to retrace one's steps (64.4% in Italy and 76.2% in Campania).

3.4. Religion, ethics and respect for the rule of law

In general, young people are sensitive to moral issues. In both samples, around half of those interviewed consider the protection of traditional moral and religious values to be important. It is a critical judgment expressed with respect to forms of self-determination and individual freedom which are today recognised as shared values in Italian secular society. However, the evaluation

of questions concerning the moral and ethical spheres is often linked to the conception - and, thus, to the sphere of reference values - of each individual.

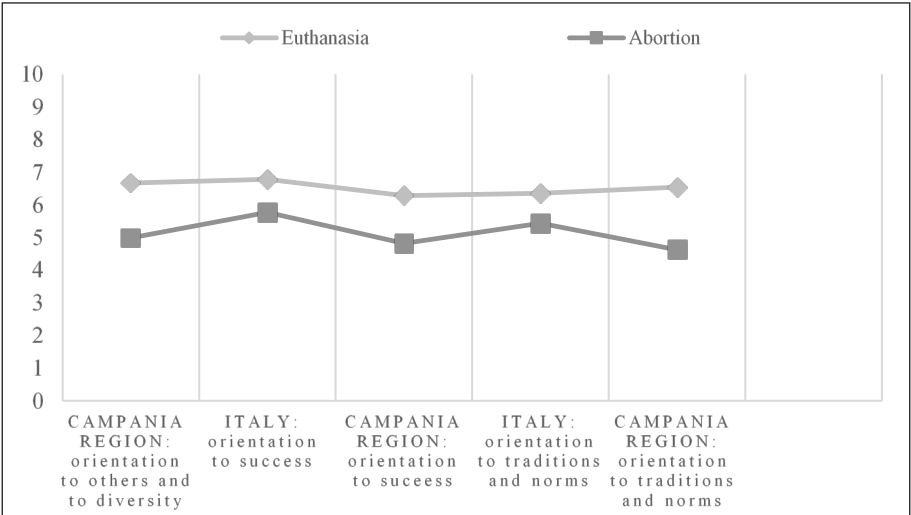
An initial aspect concerns the theme of religious feelings and beliefs among young people, presenting interesting aspects despite the progressive process of secularisation that would involve young people moving away from faith and religious practices. As might be expected, it is in the segment of young people with an orientation to values linked to tradition and customs, with a particular observance of the judgment of society, that we find the relationship with religion is stronger, together with a recognition of its importance (medium or high). This orientation is more widespread in Campania, a southern region with a stronger link to traditions and religious values (57.4% compared to 48% in the national sample). It is also worth considering that both samples are mostly composed of persons who faithfully adhere to a religion (69.6% in Italy and 77.3% in Campania), above all Catholics (54% in Italy and 61.1% in Campania), who moderately or strongly agree that an active and proactive role should be assigned to religion for the improvement of social life (56.3% in Italy and 61.1% in Campania).

Aspects that pose profound dilemmas also with respect to moral and religious values are undoubtedly some ethical questions which - also after the occurrence of various important stories recently appearing in the media - have found wide coverage in the public debate. Among these we note the topic of euthanasia. The number of those who deem it to be unjustified to end the life of an incurable patient is higher than in national reports (12% against 8.5% of the national sample), while 17.7% of interviewees in Campania and 18.2% in Italy consider euthanasia to be an option that is "always justified".

Abortion is another topic that appears to be rather controversial and involves bioethical reflection. The voluntary interruption of pregnancy is a practice not tolerated at all by 23% of the young people of Campania and by 14.7% of subjects at the Italian national level and, in general, it would appear that a low level of justification is conceded in both samples. With respect to euthanasia, the position on abortion appears to be more closely linked to the sensitivity of young people in terms of religious values. Young people who adhere to a religion and especially the Catholic faith consider this practice to be less acceptable. On a scale of 1 to 10 young Catholics in Campania assigned an average score of 4.1 compared to 4.7 in the case of their peers at the national level, these being values that are below general average opinions on the subject (4.8 and 5.6 respectively).

While the position on euthanasia does not appear to be related to a specific value orientation, the practice of abortion is constantly less justified by the segment of young people who in their lives assign greater importance to values linked to tradition. It is in fact among the young people of Campania, a region where values linked to tradition still partially survive and in which the principles of the Catholic faith are deeply rooted, that the voluntary interruption of pregnancy is seen as a socially unacceptable practice.

Fig. 3.2 Territorial comparison (Italy-Campania) of the justification of euthanasia and abortion (scores from 1 to 10) with medium-high value orientations

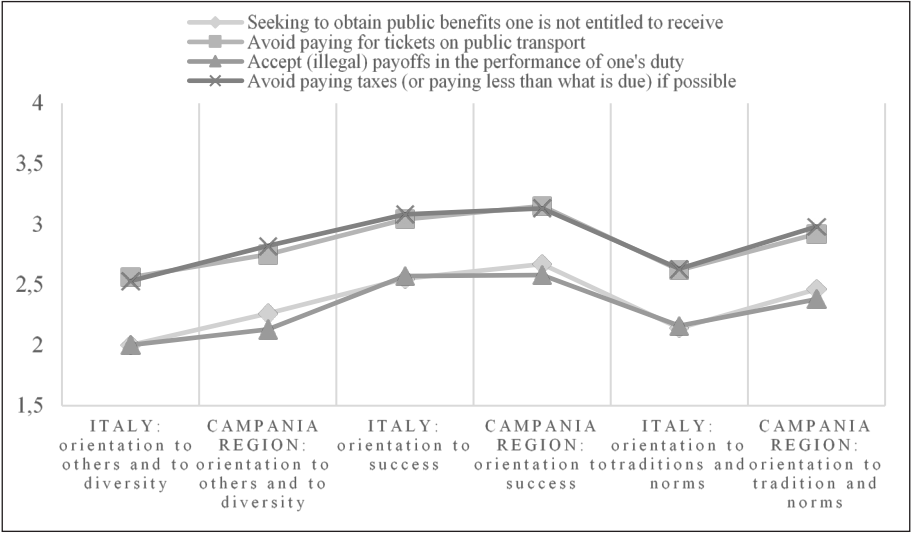


The theme of the rule of law sees young Italians as rather determined in their firm condemnation of certain illegal acts that damage the community, and especially disapprove of those persons, who, for example, receive money not due to them as a result of fulfilment of their duty. About 70% of the respondents of both samples consider this to be always unjustified.

However, young people show a more flexible attitude with regard to the subject of taxation. More than one in two young people feel that the act of avoiding the payment of taxes can not be justified while tax-evaders do in fact have the possibility to do so, however for 2% failure to fulfil this duty is always justified, a percentage which is twice as high in the Campania sample. Other aspects of social misconduct, sometimes considered to be less serious, also see young people oriented towards respecting regulations and the rule of law.

For example, one in two young persons reveal an open opposition to not purchasing tickets for public transport and 68.6% at the national level and 73.8% at the local level consider it unfair to try to obtain public subsidies one is not entitled to have. This is an attitude of respect for legality that seems to be a common trait among all young people regardless of the sphere of values referred to and the territorial context in which they live. However, tax evasion is condemned to a lesser extent - without prejudice to the widespread rejection of such behaviour - by those who make individual success a life goal. Not paying one's taxes may be partly viewed as a shortcut on the road followed to achieve one's goals and as a means of satisfying ambitions relating to personal wealth, and where the element of risk which may be associated with consequent penalties is not perceived in a fearful manner.

Fig. 3.3 Territorial comparison (Italy-Campania) of some aspects of legality (scores from 1 to 10) with medium-high value orientations



3.5. Gender issues and sexuality

Gender equality is a subject with respect to which young people take a stand in a compact manner and without territorial distinctions, especially if female skills and duties, the possibility of having access to the labour market and labour rights are called into question. With respect to these issues,

about 4 young people out of 5 are totally or almost fully opposed to gender differences. At the same time, with the possibility of an ambivalent interpretation, it is found that around 30% of young people are convinced that being a housewife allows women to achieve fulfilment just as they would if they were regularly employed.

Attention to gender discrimination is stronger in the segment of young people who see the recognition of differences as an element of equality in relationships. In fact, as may be noted in table 3.1, despite their general openness to such issues and, consequently, the defence of women's rights, young people with a value orientation based on personal success and those more tied to tradition seem to embrace the cause with less conviction, and especially in Campania.

On the one hand, it is possible to isolate a group that interprets the gender issue on the basis of its own value system, mainly linked to compliance with rules and respect for social opinions and customs. In this case women are probably seen first of all as mothers and subsequently as workers, to whom less important qualities of leadership are attributed. Furthermore, the basic idea is preserved according to which, in the occurrence of a labour shortage, women should rightfully be bound to let men have their jobs (29.8% in Campania and 18.5% in Italy).

On the other hand, these same aspects are found in young people bent on following a career and with a tendency to be dominant, probably adhering to a vision in which gender equality can be seen as an obstacle to achieving one's goals. Such a perspective prevails in Campania.

A final question in such a varied framework of attitudes and value orientations concerns the individual's relationship with sexuality and its diverse manifestations, today still partly linked to traditional models. In particular, homosexuality is still perceived as a taboo for some young people; in this regard it will suffice to observe the average scores on the scale from 1 to 10 remaining at low positions, especially in Campania (6.4 at the national level and 5.9 at the local level). However, this position must be interpreted taking into account the over-dimensioning in both samples of the share of believers in whom the sexual orientation clashes with the precepts of religions. The position on homosexuality changes radically if declared religious orientations are taken into consideration. A rift is moreover generated between those who identify with a religion that states it would scarcely approve of a sexual relationship between two persons of the same sex (average scores below 6 in both samples, with lower peaks - as might be expected - in Campania) and the

segment of young believers who do not identify with any religion and non-believers who accept and are in favour of sexual liberty in general, especially at the local level (average scores close to 8). The group of young people with an orientation towards others and openness to diversity is more sensitive to these issues, precisely on account of the importance assigned to differences and the valorisation of individual freedom and expression in its various forms.

Table 3.1 Territorial comparison (Italy-Campania) of some gender issues (moderately or strongly agree) and value orientations (medium-high). Val. %

	Orientation to others and to diversity		Orientation to success		Orientation to tradition and social norms	
	Campania	Italy	Campania	Italy	Campania	Italy
Being a housewife allows a woman to achieve fulfilment in the same way as having a paid job.	30.6	29.3	33.6	30.4	28.1	32
In general, men are better political leaders than women.	17.3	13	24.6	21.4	22.5	15.6
Having a university education is more important for a boy than for a girl.	14.2	12.1	17.6	20.4	17.8	15.3
Generally, men are better managers than women.	19.8	13.3	24.6	20.9	24.2	16
When a labour shortage occurs, men should be afforded a greater right to find work than women.	24.8	15.4	36	24	29.8	18.5

3.6. Attitude towards immigrants: critical issues and the values of equality, coexistence and multi-culturalism

With respect to the position of young people the results of research and a comparison of data acquired at the national Italian level and in the Campania region present a complex and multi-faceted reality in relation to the theme of immigration and the values that can be identified in this area.

Examining the relationship between adherence to certain ethical values and the positions assumed with respect to the phenomenon of migration, the fragmentation and value margins of Millennials that are not always consistent clearly emerge. As shown in previous research (Leone, Rubin 2019), 22.5% of young persons from Campania who support the importance of the value of equality are of the view that immigrants represent a threat to Italian society, while 16.3 %

do not identify with the value of equality. At the national level the share of those who do not identify with the concept of equality is higher (23.2%).

Among young men and women from Campania who declare they are adhere to the values of dialogue and respect for the ideas of others, 25% assume a position of closure with respect to the phenomenon of migration. A similar distribution is also found in the Italian sample.

In the same vein, in both samples, more than one in four young people among those who believe in the value of supporting others see immigrants as a social threat.

Analyzing the question of immigration in relation to the previously identified life orientations (table 3.2), the strength of the *orientation towards others and diversity* component is far from being unequivocally translatable into values of openness to foreigners, principles of equality and a propensity towards inclusion.

The first unexpected result in fact concerns the high sense of insecurity with respect to immigrants in young people who present greater openness towards 'others' and towards the traits of novelty, originality and diversity (76% in Italy and 69% in Campania). This is found with percentage values even higher than those recorded among young people characterised by a traditionalist and normativist orientation (69% among Italians and 59% among subjects from Campania). This inconsistency suggests that the 'others' who may be assisted by young people sensitive to this factor are probably persons actually close to them. In practical terms this reflects a desire to protect those reflecting a sense of protecting those who are indeed close to us rather than an idea of 'general brotherhood'.

Furthermore, an opinion shared both by those who are open to novelty and also change and those who are guided by traditional values is that foreigners are making Italy insecure. On the other hand, for these two opposing visions there is a great difference in the consideration of the cultural contribution of immigrants, deemed to be capable of enriching and improving Italy only by those who support the factor of diversity.

Having the opportunity to understand more clearly the scope of the above aspects by comparing what has emerged in a general way with reference to immigrants with the questions posed specifically with regard to immigrants with a residence permit, no substantial differences are found, except for a few percentage points corresponding to a greater approval of legal immigrants. This occurs especially with respect to the idea of a contribution in making Italy a better place and in enriching its cultural life. On the other

hand, the greater difference recorded in places that have become emblematic on account of a local concentration of immigration connected to criminal networks is not surprising. By way of an example we may note the data relating to the province of Caserta, where 56.8% of respondents perceive irregular migrants as dangerous, while the percentage decreases by more than twenty points (29.4%) with respect to regular migrants.

The various traits that emerge seem to confirm deep critical elements in the coexistence of Italians and immigrants, especially with regard to the perception of a weakening of security and the national economy in both the most conservative young people and in those with a more open vision to change. Among the various orientations considered it is that of young people who focus on success that reflects least of all both the problematical situations relating to immigrants and the cultural opportunities they may represent. Their focus on their own reality and on achieving their goals appears to limit the range of attention and interest of this segment to the point that these individuals attach no importance to what surrounds them or whoever may be near them.

Table 3.2 Perception of immigrants (moderately or strongly agree) and value orientations (medium-high). Val. %

	Orientation to others and to diversity		Orientation to success		Orientation to tradition and social norms	
	Campania	Italy	Campania	Italy	Campania	Italy
They make Italy an insecure place	69.3	75.7	49.3	44.4	58.8	69
They contribute to improving the cultural life of Italy	74.4	80.2	39.9	40.9	54	60.2
They are worsening the Italian economy	70.6	73.8	50	45.6	60.1	68
They are helping to make Italy a better place to live	71.8	74.8	37.2	42.3	51.4	58.8

Focusing on the South, even if the history of the presence in Campania of people with a background related to migration may be traced back over various decades (Orientale Caputo 2007), despite the fact that today Campania hosts 243,694 foreign residents (Nat. Inst. of Statistics, 2018) and regardless of a common experience of discrimination endured in relation to their condition of as immigrants with respect to work, means of subsistence, etc. there are no particular sensitivities capable of denoting a difference with respect to the national sample.

If it remains difficult to understand to what extent these results may be associated, at the moment or in a future perspective, with changes that deeply

penetrate the cultural and value structure of young Italians, it may however be noted - without the fear of exaggerating - that the social climate between natives and non-natives has decidedly worsened in recent times. The mistrust of foreigners, when this does not lead to open hostility, seems to be the prevalent attitude of Italians towards migrants. At least, this is the perception of the young people who were asked to assess the attitude Italians have towards immigrants, and vice versa. On a national level, more than one in two of the young persons interviewed believes that Italians adopt a predominantly 'mistrustful' attitude towards immigrants. 22.1% believe that there is an 'openly hostile' attitude and 9% see it as 'indifference'. Only 12.5% observe a 'friendly' attitude towards immigrants. 'Mistrust' (45.3%) prevails also in the Campania sample, followed by an 'openly hostile' attitude (21.8%). On the other hand, 19.1% recognise a 'friendly' attitude towards immigrants, while 6.9% note a sense of 'indifference'. If the perception does not vary significantly in the different age groups considered, it is possible to find a difference based on gender, especially in the most highly polarised positions: 60% of women identify a general 'friendly' attitude, while six out of ten males consider it to be 'openly hostile'.

Asking young people how they interpret the immigrants' attitude towards Italians, we find in both cases very similar distributions. In the national sample 36.6% see distrust (40.3% in Campania), 21% feel there is indifference and 21.4% believe there is clear hostility (18.9% and 15.1% in Campania, respectively). Only 8.6% of Italians and 12.6% among the interviewees in Campania believe that a 'friendly' attitude is present.

THE PERCEPTION, CONCEPTION AND VISION OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND THE WORLD OF WORK

4.1. Educational institutions

The aims of this study dedicated to the perception that young people have of education and, subsequently, of work derive from the idea that what young people think about school, qualifications, the skills they acquire and so on may be highly revealing with respect to motivations underlying the scenario of the field of education. An investigation of this sphere of opinions may help us comprehend the reasons underlying certain choices concerning life paths and, consequently, some low indicators in Italy and some regional areas in particular with regard to education and training.

Suffice it to consider that the number of young people between 18 and 24 who have at most acquired a lower secondary education qualification and have left the education and training system - i.e., 'early leavers from education and training' (ELET), corresponded to 14% (580,000 young people), a value still above the 10% threshold established by the Europe 2020 Strategy relating to education in Europe (National Statistics Institute, 2018).

However, other European countries are ahead of Italy in challenging early school-leaving. In 2017, the United Kingdom (10.6%) and Germany (10.1%) had practically reached this threshold, while France had already surpassed it several years earlier (8.9%). Levels of performance in Italy are still below the EU average, presenting a differential which, albeit reduced over time, corresponded to -3.4 points in 2017. The gap is increasing at the local territorial level and shows no signs of improvement. Leaving school before completion of the upper secondary level or vocational training courses occurs more frequently in the South (18.5%) than in the North (11.3 %) and the central regions of the country (10.7%) (ISTAT 2018).

Issues relating to the interruption of studies and the drop-out phenomenon may be identified within the scholastic system where withdrawal occurs, but at the same time the external scenario presents a multiplicity of factors that require attention as they can contribute to increasing the distance between young people and educational institutions.

On the one hand, the perspectives that focus attention on structural factors extend the fields of investigation to the penalising socio-economic conditions of the relative contexts. Above all, the place where one grows up is a significant element. The South and, in particular, Sicily, Campania and Sardinia are above the national average with respect to indicators of failure within the educational sphere.

Recent studies have highlighted how access to the scholastic system and the schools attended by students remain related to one's social environment (Gasperoni 2005; Pitzalis 2012; AlmaDiploma 2016; Besozzi 2017; Mesa, Battilocchi, Triani 2019). In a negative sense, numerous indicators in this regard may be found in studies on the phenomenon of early school leaving and these are of particular interest also because they are critical issues among those currently seen as the most serious in educational institutions (Caputo 2006; Colombo 2015).

Finally, without denying the impact of unfavourable structural elements and thus also the territorial context itself, together with family situations or the socialisation factor, it would appear to be useful to investigate other dimensions that may help us understand the bases which underlie and influence the relationship between young people and the world of culture or which, in adverse conditions, may weaken the same. To this end, the following investigation emphasizes the analysis of the perception which the interviewees of the comparative Italy-Campania 2017-2018 survey have of scholastic courses and paths of training.

4.2. Satisfaction with scholastic experiences and confidence in educational institutions

In the vast literature pertaining to the sociology of education the perception of education and training systems and the value attributed to scholastic education by those who directly benefit from it and, that is, young people, do not appear to be a privileged subject of research, with the exception of multi-purpose analyses of the youth condition or studies with sporadic focuses (Buzzi 2005; Cavalli and Argentin 2007; Argentin 2007; Mesa and Triani 2016).

However, sources that contribute to our understanding of the perception of schools and training appear in research aimed at identifying satisfaction with current and past courses of study. Such studies investigate, on the one hand, the expectations and motivations that led young people to attend a secondary school or enrol in university courses and, on the other hand, focus on the degree of coherence between the choices made and pre-work and work experiences for those who have in fact entered or have completed the phase of entering the labour market (Barone 2005; Argentin 2006).

The areas of investigation explored in this work, such as detailed explorations of the manner in which young people consider education and training, start from satisfaction with the paths undertaken and focus on trust and the meanings attributed to knowledge and skills and the institutions that administer the relative courses.

If they are considered together these two factors can help us reconstruct the general attitude of young people towards educational institutions and, in analytical terms, also allowing for distinctions at several levels: i) between those who have confidence in educational institutions and those who have become discouraged in this regard, and ii) between the segment of young people who are satisfied and those who are dissatisfied with the educational path they have followed. A distinction may also be made iii) between those who express a 'universalist' opinion and, that is, linked to a general trust in scholastic institutions and not linked to the particular satisfaction of subjects who respond on the basis of their own educational experiences, whether positive or negative, and, on the other hand, iv) those who assume a 'particularistic' attitude, linked to personal satisfaction and thus related to and deriving from the opinion of the subjects in question with respect to their individual experience in periods of training.

Starting from this conceptual framework, a typological index has been constructed that indicates four different orientations with respect to the position of young people towards satisfaction and confidence in education and

training institutions (Table 4.1): a) ‘general optimism’, referring to those who retain high confidence in the educational and training institutions and also express a high level of satisfaction and adopt a general perspective which considers the result and the effects of these institutions in their capacity to improve society as a whole; b) ‘general pessimism’, characterised by low levels in both dimensions and by a lack of trust with respect to the transversal social function; c) ‘particular pessimism’, which denotes that segment of young people who declare that they have a high level of confidence but a low level of satisfaction in some way related to an unsatisfactory personal experience; and d) ‘particular optimism’, which refers to the situation of low confidence and high satisfaction, which, again, concerns direct or monitored experiences.

Table 4.1 Attitudes of young people towards education and training

	satisfaction	
confidence	High	Low
High	General optimism	Particular pessimism
Low	Particular optimism	General pessimism

The results of the typological index show that most of the young people in the sample are optimistic and, that is, they have confidence in educational and training institutions, and nurture this attitude in a general sense, recognising the benefit derived by the community. In greater detail, more than half are satisfied and, at the same time, have confidence in schools and other educational institutions (52% in both samples), while 33.7% in Italy and 29.1% in the South, in Campania, declare that they are satisfied, even though they do not have full confidence in the institutions, this being a judgement which is probably the result, above all, of educational experiences acquired individually. The young people of Campania are found to be more pessimistic than their peers at the national level, showing themselves to be more discouraged and dissatisfied with institutions of education and training (13.5% with respect to 9.4%) and only to a lesser extent do they express confidence in these institutions despite having had an unsatisfactory experience during the course of their studies (5.5% in Campania and 4.6% in Italy).

Observing in greater detail the dimension of satisfaction, young Italians say they are satisfied with the education they have received (in both samples

the average satisfaction score is around 7 on a decimal scale) regardless of choices that were made. Young people from the South indicate positions more polarised with regard to satisfaction levels: 3.2% are totally dissatisfied compared to 0.6% in the Italian sample, and 9.5% are totally satisfied compared to 7.1% at national level. Compared to the rest of Italy, where satisfaction with one's course of studies is generally high, the experiences in Campania thus appear clearly divided into very positive and very negative experiences.

Considering how satisfaction with one's course of studies changes on the basis of the qualification obtained, it is noted that, regardless of the type of degree awarded, university graduates are the subjects who are most satisfied. Evaluations of studies and training become less positive as we move down to the lower qualifications. This condition occurs to a lesser extent in Campania, where graduates and people with higher secondary-school qualifications present levels of satisfaction that are not very distant from each other (table 4.2).

A territorial difference is once again evident with regard to the graduates who express greater enthusiasm with respect to the university degree they were awarded. At the national level around 53% state that they are very satisfied with their education, while full satisfaction falls by 9% in the South, an area characterised by greater difficulties in terms of employment and where acquiring a degree would probably be a less effective means of ensuring one will be able to find a satisfactory solution in the professional sphere.

Table 4.2 Level of satisfaction with one's education by qualification

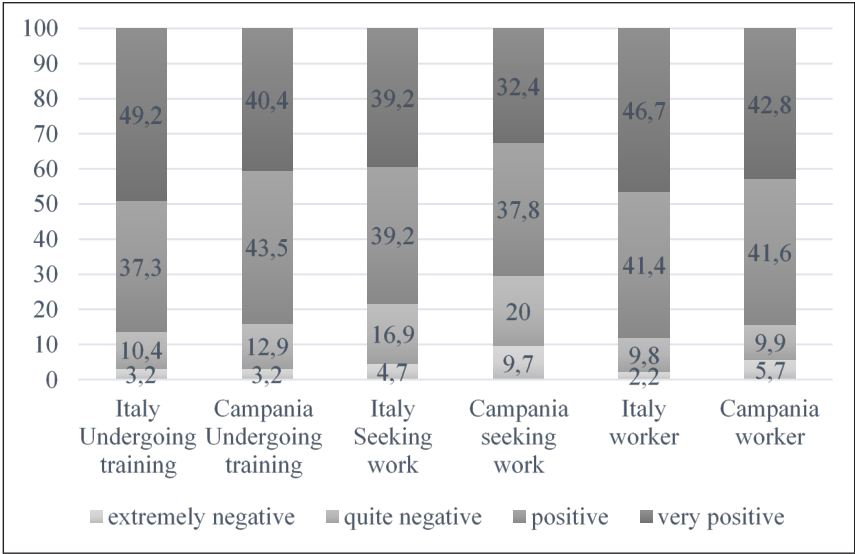
	Italy				Campania			
	Degree or Post-graduate	Secondary school qualification (4-5 yrs)	Secondary school qualification (≤ 3 yrs)	Total	Degree or Post-graduate	Secondary school qualification (4-5 yrs)	Secondary school qualification (≤ 3 yrs)	Total
Extremely negative	1.9%	3.8%	6.6%	2.9 % (85)	2.3%	3.2%	17.6%	5.7% (48)
Quite negative	7.2%	14.7%	26.4%	11.2% (327)	11.1%	12.3%	19.5%	13.4 % (112)
Positive	38.1%	42.3%	36.4%	39.8% (1166)	42.10 %	45.1%	28.9%	41.4 % (346)
Very positive	52.9%	39.1%	30.6%	46.1% (1350)	44.4%	39.5%	34%	39.5 % (330)
Total	100% (1560)	100% (1247)	100% (121)	100% (2928)	100% (171)	100% (506)	100% (159)	100% (836)

Analyzing the satisfaction of undergraduates and graduates in relation to fields of study at the national level, when we move from the technical-scientific area to the humanities a decrease of about 3 percentage points is observed, while in Campania the difference increases to 7%.

A second element examined in relation to satisfaction with one's studies and training - together with the level and the type of education - is the employment status of the respondents. In fact, the analyses indicate that the interviewees' position with respect to employment plays a significant role in the degree of satisfaction expressed and, that is, in the opinion concerning their studies and, as will be seen later, has an effect on the level of confidence regarding educational and training institutions.

Levels of satisfaction based on the current occupational position of the interviewees reveal that, at the national level, almost half of young people undergoing training or engaged in further/higher education studies and about 47% of those who are working are satisfied with their preparation and courses of study. However, it is noted that young people seeking employment are satisfied to a lesser extent (Fig. 4.1). These differences in satisfaction levels may be dictated by the actual response encountered by young people in the labour market. Those who are professionally active or employed state that they are more satisfied probably because they have discovered that their qualifications are indeed relevant, valuable and required in the labour market, as opposed to those who for various reasons have not been successful in their search for an occupation. It is also possible that through their professional and working experience they have already had the opportunity to test the usefulness of previously acquired skills. For young people engaged in further/higher education studies or undergoing training it may be assumed that the satisfaction expressed is connected to an attitude of confidence, as discussed in more detail below. There appear to be no great differences between the two samples in this regard.

Fig. 4.1 Level of satisfaction with one’s education/training with respect to current employment situations (Val. %).



A further aspect that may help us understand satisfaction with one’s educational background or training paths concerns coherence between one’s studies and the work one is currently engaged in.

Both at the national level and in Campania, as expected, those who have encountered consistency between their studies and the work they are involved in also convey a sense of greater satisfaction regarding their courses of study, and vice versa. Considering the area of studies undertaken, in Italy young people with a qualification in the technical-scientific area find greater coherence between their education/training and their work (60.7%) compared to young people in the area of the humanities and literary studies (39.3%). In the South the gap is about 5 percentage points higher.

Being engaged in work that does not allow one to put into practice what one has learned may seem frustrating for young people and, at the same time, discourage them on their path to professional fulfilment. Young people in Campania manifest the greatest disappointment in this regard, with 19.3% of the sample who in fact consider their work totally inconsistent with their courses of studies, compared to 14.1% in the Italian sample. This lack of satisfaction and discontent may be attributed to greater difficulties that young people in the south of Italy encounter in the search for employment in their area, and which often force them to accept lower earnings and more pre-

carious contractual conditions, sometimes quite distant from their personal aspirations. At the Campania level, more than four out of ten young people consider the work they are doing as consistent with their studies, while at the national level this proportion rises to 61.5%.

Overall, it is interesting to observe how these different assessments of previous studies and training are associated with confidence in educational, training and cultural institutions.

In both of the samples that were analysed the data confirm that the majority of those who have a very positive view of the education they received present a high degree of confidence in the scholastic or university-level institution which they attended (65.6% at the national level and 61.1% in Campania). Inversely, those who convey the most critical stance in their assessment of their studies or training also have the lowest levels of trust in these two types of institution.

Although the relationship is predictable, it is worth paying attention to this result as input for reflection on how personal experiences in higher and further-education institutions may affect a much broader and longer-lasting vision concerning the importance of culture and knowledge.

Furthermore, we observe that confidence in scholastic and university institutions at the national level tends to rise with an increase in the level of education considered. In fact, compared to 30% of interviewees with a low level of education and no confidence in the aforementioned institutions, those with an upper secondary education qualification (4-5 years of study following the lower secondary level in the Italian scholastic system) present a moderate degree of trust (with 28% referring to a low level and 34.8% a fairly high level of satisfaction), while the highest levels are found among subjects who have been awarded a degree or higher qualification (40.3% of whom are quite confident and 21.1% very confident).

In a manner similar to what emerges regarding satisfaction with the training received, also with respect to confidence in educational institutions the situation in the South appears to be different as it is not linked to the qualification that one has obtained. For example, we note that 18.8% of university graduates have no confidence in scholastic or university institutions, while 22.8% of persons who have acquired an upper secondary-education qualification are highly confident, and young people with a low educational qualification have a fair degree (28,5%) and a high degree (19.9%) of trust in scholastic institutions, these being percentages only a few points lower than those relating to subjects with a higher level of education.

Reflection on these results gives rise to various hypotheses, which, besides the differences related to personal beliefs and attitudes, may also refer to the influence of the general reputation of schools and universities in the various regions of Italy.

Table 4.3 Confidence in schools and universities

	Italy				Campania			
	None	Very low	Quite high	High	None	Very low	Quite high	High
Degree	15,8% (246)	22,9% (357)	40,3% (628)	21,1 % (329)	18,8% (32)	20% (34)	38,8% (66)	22,4% (38)
Higher secondary school qualification	19,3% (241)	28,8% (359)	34,8% (434)	17,1% (213)	15,2% (77)	28,1% (142)	33,9% (171)	22,8% (115)
Lower secondary school qualification	30,4% (69)	20,3 % (46)	36,1 % (82)	13,2 % (30)	17,5% (57)	34% (111)	28,5% (93)	19,9% (65)
Total	18,3 (556)	25,1% (762)	37,7 % (1144)	18,9% (572)	16,6% (166)	28,7% (287)	33% (330)	21,8% (218)

Finally, considering also in an examination of confidence levels the variable relating to employment, the same traits indicated above in the analysis of satisfaction with one's studies and training are found. It is the employed and professionally active persons and those still engaged in studies who place greater confidence in scholastic studies and further education, with very similar averages (just above 7 on a 10-point scale) occurring in Italy and in Campania. Although only slightly, the averages relating to those seeking employment are lower (6.9 and 6.3, respectively).

In summary, it is possible to conclude that satisfaction with one's education and training and trust in the scholastic and academic institutions reveal the same types of association with the level of education and one's employment status. In this regard, the latter condition has a decisive weight in an interpretation of the perception that young people have of education and training because positive/negative results encountered in the world of work and a lack of experience in this sense clearly distinguish the attitudes of the interviewees.

To conclude, the cross-section examined seems to suggest that although it may be considered important to recognise that the institutional, identity-based and autonomous aims of scholastic and further-education institutions focus on objectives relating to the transfer of knowledge, skills and culture, nowadays schools, universities and other educational institutions are observed and evaluated by young people in close connection with their own experience and any difficulties encountered in their search for employment.

In fact, while they are continuing their studies young people appear to maintain a high degree of satisfaction and confidence (and probably high expectations) with respect to these institutions. Such positive views are confirmed by the segment of employed persons thanks to a positive response from a labour market currently in a rather critical state. On the other hand, when they look for work but do not succeed in finding a job the labour market relevance of the qualification becomes the main parameter of judgement and this may be associated with poor levels of satisfaction and less confidence in scholastic and educational institutions.

4.3. The perception of education and training as a means of developing good reasoning skills and employment targets

In assessing the overall picture of the significance attributed by young people to education and training, first and foremost one will note recognition of the entitlement of organisations that provide education and training to teach people how to develop good reasoning skills. As is foreseeable and as we noted in our investigation of satisfaction and trust in educational institutions, the vision and motivations that young people have with respect to their investment in education and training reveal interests aimed at occupational integration. However, this instrumental orientation does not obscure a recognition of educational institutions with respect to growth on the cognitive, cultural and social levels, the latter being not the least important aspect in this sense.

While 54% of respondents believe that by studying they will be able to find a better job, only 39% believe that the main advantage of an educational/training course is that of being able to find work more easily. According to the interviewees schools mainly allow one to “develop good powers of reasoning” and “increase one’s personal knowledge and skills” (around 80%) and it is a system where one will acquire the capacity to interact socially and manage interpersonal relationships. The strength of these convictions is confirmed by the very similar results of the two samples.

The majority of those interviewed who establish these as principal functions coincides with those who express the utmost confidence in educational institutions, both nationally and in the South, with a percentage

ranging between 83% and 90%. Such a high sensitivity regarding these aspects confirms the pedagogical function of schools and their purposes of facilitating the growth and development of people and their social relations. On the other hand, it seems that this has no impact on the idea relating to the capacity educational institutions must have to prepare students for their working life and professional future. In other words, schools are not primarily seen as an educational route that one may follow in order to directly access the labour market but, rather, as a sort of ‘gymnasium’ where one can grow, acquiring, developing and practising one’s skills, also at the social and relational level. Such a view reflects a model according to which schools are places where students can develop at both the cultural and social level, as indicated in the latest report of the Toniolo Institute on the youth condition in Italy, this being observed as a common trait of young Europeans (Mesa and Triani 2018, pp. 52 -55).

However, with respect to the relationship between training and employment, in the past formal education represented the means that would enable one to aspire to social mobility (Di Pol 2016). Education plays a decisive role in the positioning of individuals within the social fabric and the higher one’s qualifications the greater one’s chances are to improve one’s socio-economic conditions and potential at the contractual level (Ballarino and Cobalti 2003).

The relationship between educational pathways and employment has often been observed in studies and empirical research that have focused on the training function of schools seen as the capacity to contribute effectively to the development of skills useful for young people in the world of work. At the national level, despite various policies, programmes and initiatives promoted over the years by the actors involved to try to connect the two worlds, also with respect to the orientation of choices made by young people, they are still perceived as very distant. As indicated in table 4.4, the results of the Italy-Campania survey show that only 29.8% of young people believe that schools are capable of helping them “understand how the labour market functions”. The figure increases in the southern area of the country, reaching 38.7%. Finally, one should not disregard the opinion of 10% of young Italians who consider a period of training as entirely useless, a position confirmed and slightly more widespread in Campania, where the value reaches 14.4%.

Table 4.4 Primary function of scholastic courses of study

	Italy				Campania			
	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Total	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Total
Finding work more easily	730 25%	1065 36,5%	1133 38,7%	2928 100%	215 25,8%	295 35,3%	324 38,8%	835 100%
Increase one's knowledge and personal skills	136 4,6%	466 15,9%	2336 79,5%	2928 100%	47 5,7%	127 15,2%	660 79,1%	835 100%
Find a better job	421 14,4%	928 31,7%	1579 54%	2928 100%	147 17,6	225 27%	462 55,3%	835 100%
Learning how to deal with life	315 10,8%	821 27,1%	1792 61,2%	2928 100%	94 11,2%	247 29,5%	495 59,3%	835 100%
Develop reasoning skills	139 4,8%	458 15,6%	2331 79,6%	2928 100%	64 7,7%	90 10,8%	680 81,4%	835 100%
Learn how to co-exist with others	159 5,5%	507 17,3%	2262 77,3%	2928 100%	46 5,5%	140 16,8%	649 77,6%	835 100%
Understanding how the world of work functions	1098 37,5%	958 32,7%	872 29,8%	2928 100%	286 34,3%	225 27%	321 38,7%	835 100%
Understanding what one's attitudes are	292 10%	799 27,3%	1837 62,7%	2928 100%	107 12,8%	187 22,3%	541 64,8%	835 100%
Forming citizens who are aware	358 12,2%	824 28,1%	1746 59,6%	2928 100%	118 14,1%	184 22%	533 63,9%	835 100%

4.4. Formal courses of study and soft skills

New competitive scenarios and changes occurring in the labour market also make it necessary for workers to acquire - in addition to technical skills required for particular tasks - new skills allowing them to make use of their own resources. Together with an ongoing tendency to engage in self-training and continuous education activities in order to remain updated the acquisition of solid professional training and a cultural background are key factors. In this perspective, an interesting analysis concerns the development of so-called 'soft skills' and, that is, transversal skills of a cognitive-relational and communicative nature relating to the ability to handle in a versatile and open way professional commitments in various contexts and various tasks.

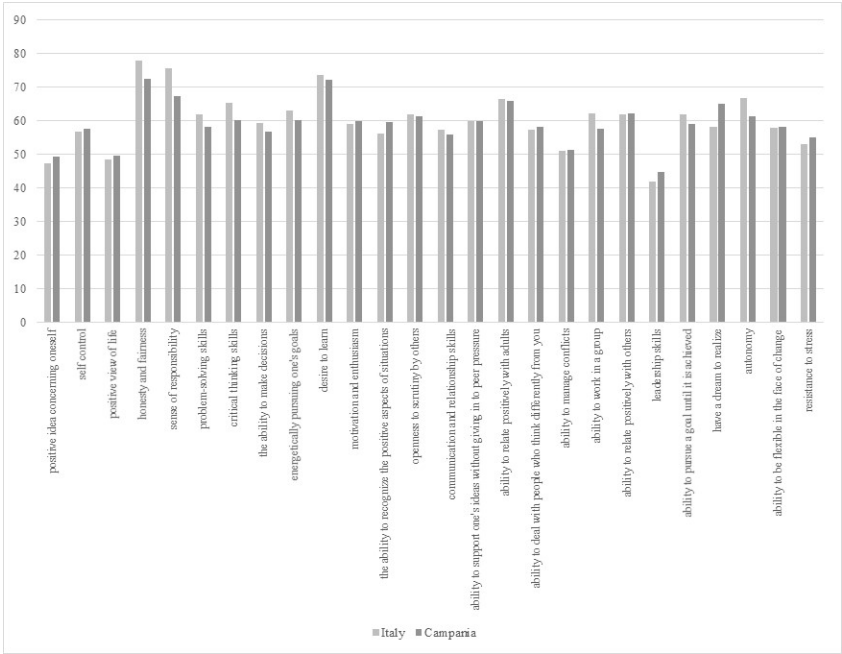
Transversal skills are generally identified in a double perspective: the first concerns interpersonal and relational abilities and the second pertains

to individual traits of the socio-emotional type (Carlotto 2017). Several empirical studies have related the possession of transversal skills with a positive effect with respect to professional growth (John 2009; Kautz et al. 2014) and salary levels (Fortin 2008; Hogan and Holland 2003; Nyhus and Pons 2005). Knowledge of the soft skills that they possess thus enables young people to examine their relationship with the sphere of education and current needs for education and training.

However, a particular premise should be made. According to young people, schooling and one’s education are only partially capable of forming and reinforcing soft skills in an adequate manner, while their absence makes them more fragile with respect to a world (and not only the professional dimension) which is rapidly changing.

Analyzing the qualities considered in the framework of the comparative investigation referred to, at the national level the results (fig. 4.2) show that the transversal skills that young people recognise to a lesser degree in themselves include the ‘ability to be a leader’, the ‘ability to manage conflicts’ and the capacity ‘to resist stressful situations’. On the other hand, young people recognise a strong ‘desire to learn’, a ‘sense of responsibility’ and above all they perceive themselves as ‘honest and fair’ 2.

Fig. 4.2 Transversal skills (soft skills) possessed by young people



No significant differences are noted between the transversal skills possessed by young Italians and those which young people from Campania believe they have, however the primary skills do not coincide. In fact there is a difference of almost 10% with respect to ethical attributes (fairness and honesty, a sense of responsibility) to the disadvantage of the region, in which the perception of aspects relating to legality is at least partially affected by a difficult cultural background.

On the other hand, with respect to the national context the 'desire to learn', the 'ability to recognize the positive aspects of situations', the ability to 'resist stressful situations' and 'self-control' appear more frequently. Capacities resulting in a positive drive to learn, an attitude that will facilitate the management of difficulties and stress or a tendency to see the positive side of situations appear to be compatible with a stronger perception - stronger in the disadvantaged areas - thanks to which subjects seek stimuli leveraging positive and proactive attitudes. In other words, although they may find themselves in a difficult cultural and/or working situation, young people from the South have developed greater resilience and, that is, a greater capacity to resist stressful situations and a greater ability to recognize the positive aspects of situations, accompanied by greater self-control with respect to the national average. Finally, considering attitudes towards the world of work, compared to Italians at the national level the young people of the Campania region seem to present inferior transversal skills as the number of those who declare they possess the ability to work in a group or autonomously as well as having discipline and constancy and a tendency to pay attention to details as they work towards their objectives, is lower when compared to the national averages. On the other hand, the situation that emerges regarding other skills is substantially similar to that of their peers in the other regions of Italy.

4.5. Transformations in the labour market and representations that young people have of the world of work

Also with regard to satisfaction with one's occupation and the different conceptions of work the most recent surveys highlight elements that deserve attention and reveal grey areas in which a widespread sense of precariousness and uncertainty regarding the future is generated. The various types of occupational conditions, together with experiences, goals that have been achieved

or one has failed to reach, life orientations and personality traits generate differentiated perspectives and levels of satisfaction in the sphere of work.

The profound transformations in the world of work that have occurred in recent decades are associated with social transformations that took place following structural changes in the production systems at world level (Accornero 2000; Reyneri 2010a). Flexibility, in all its forms, does not guarantee all workers will have the same opportunities and equal rights, creating a gap between those with a more stable relationship and those in precarious conditions (Sennet 2000; Della Rocca and Fortunato 2006; Baglioni 2003; Taliani et al. 2007; Barbieri 2009).

Analyzing working conditions more thoroughly, regardless of rules and contractual conditions that have changed with the various reforms, in statistical terms those who are employed/occupied are often people who have employment relationships that are precarious (atypical, flexible contracts, etc.) or, albeit stable with respect to contractual terms, are weak in terms of guarantees relating to the duration of the working relationship.

In recent years, in Italy the level of unemployment for young people has been among the highest in the Eurozone. It should be remembered that the unemployment rate is, moreover, a relative indicator as it does not take into account those who benefit from particular funds (lay-offs/redundancy, etc.) or those who are resigned to accepting irregular work who are statistically excluded. Observing employment on the other hand, the national statistics for 2018 show more critical situations precisely in regions such as Campania, at the bottom of the list with regard to the percentages of professionally active persons, with 10.5% for the 15-24 and 40.8% for the 25-34 age ranges. In comparison, the national employment rate is 17.7% for the 15-24 and 61.7% for the 25-34 age ranges, and overall 41% for the entire segment of the population between 15 and 34 years of age.

The data reveal the weakness of young people as this is a segment of the population more seriously affected by employment difficulties, occupational insecurity (Cortini, Tanucci and Morin 2011) and also discontinuous income (Ranci 2009) and therefore it becomes the category most vulnerable and exposed to financial difficulties (Albertini and Kohli 2013).

From various points of view, young people have thus become the social category most often labelled with nicknames relating to their working conditions.

Among subjects who may be defined as 'millennials' those who currently attract most attention are young people in the 'NEET' (Not in Education,

Employment or Training) category, which is a rather worrying concept for the future of a nation. The acronym 'NEET' identifies those who 'do not work' and 'do not study' and in Italy it is estimated that in 2018 young people (between 15 and 29 years of age) in this condition corresponded to 23.4% of the population (ISTAT 2019). This condition affects women to a greater extent (25.4% vs 21.5% of men) and is predominant in the South (33.8%), with a presence higher than that of the central regions (19.6%) and more than double that of the North (15.6%).

Other nicknames have stigmatised young people with respect to conditions of economic independence in relation to work. The '*one-thousand-euro generation*' (Incorvaia and Rimassa 2006) is a way of referring to hyper-educated, underpaid and precarious subjects; '*bamboccioni*' (Ital., 'big baby', 'mama's boy') are young people who are inactive and therefore economically dependent on their parents and lacking autonomy in a more general sense; the word '*choosy*' denotes the attitude of those young people who tend to be rather finicky and fussy in the assessment of job opportunities.

4.6. Job satisfaction and the idea of work

To comprehend what emerges below from the study of the perception of work for the samples investigated it is necessary to take into account the multiple critical aspects of current working conditions for young people, starting from structural transformations and moving on to organisational, spatial and temporal changes and those relating to the meaning of work.

In line with what has been observed concerning the attainment of goals of independence (ch. 1) a career, intended as a path to be followed, has been progressively replaced by a great variety of life trajectories or individual life stories which comprise occupations and experiences in a range of spatial and temporal contexts (Sennett 2000; Accornero 2000; La Rosa 2003). Changes are occurring in the places where work is performed and at the temporal level (Gallino 1998; Magatti and Fullin 2002; Semenza 2004). For example, in some sectors, such as that of the provision of services, work is more frequently carried on in 'virtual' spaces and assumes a 'mobile' character. With respect to temporal parameters, the boundary between one's working hours and free time is becoming increasingly blurred; time frames relating to the professional sphere and one's personal life are becoming less distinct due to the flexibility of working hours.

Increasing flexibility also has an effect on the nature and the performance of professional activities (La Rosa 2003). The de-materialisation of work draws attention to the relationship between work and knowledge and a broadening of the skills workers should acquire. These become less standardised and increasingly of the relational, communicative and interpersonal type, and to such an extent that one may now refer to a 'feminisation' of the workplace (Gosetti 2012: 24), which often makes it difficult to distinguish between the professional skills and personal abilities one should rely on to carry out a specific task. In a context in which opportunities in the modern labour market include a proliferation of new careers and types of contract - often discontinuous, flexible and even reversible - an investigation of the manner in which young people view work and the meaning attributed to it becomes a fundamental quest.

Alongside those who support the 'end of work' hypothesis (Rifkin 1997; Beck 2000; Sennett 2000), which highlights a progressive crisis of the function of work in the construction of social identity, there are those who continue to support the central position of work as an important existential domain and a fundamental factor in social construction (Gallino, 1998; Accornero 2000; Donati 2001; Castel 2004). The process relating to the meaning of work becomes manifold with respect to the diversification of activities and content, together with the differences in the various general and specific socio-economic contexts (Lo Verde 2005). In fact, the study of perceptions and representations of work cannot be disengaged from the local context of the labour market in which they are generated and this renders more interesting the opportunity to compare - through the research presented in this first part of this work - the national situation and that of a southern region such as Campania, which presents certain critical issues in the labour sphere in particular.

With regard to these topics, focussing once again and following up on a previous multi-purpose survey on young people conducted by the OCPG Youth Observatory of the University of Salerno (Leone 2016b), in the following analyses we refer to the interpretive stance highlighted in the interpretation of factors emerging from the representations of work on the part of young people in the Campania region. In accordance with the dimensions and relative characteristics conceptualised in literature (Gosetti 2004: 2012) the main components resulting from research carried out in 2016 summarise 4 aspects of the representation of work (Leone 2016: 102-104): the 'instrumental-guaranty' aspect, connected to a vision of work as a means

of satisfying material needs (earning, having a stable job, receiving regular payments, etc.); the 'expressive-acquisitive' aspect, related to recognition of one's professional standing, one's career and satisfaction with one's job, etc.; 'spatio-temporal' aspects, concerning the conditions of working hours and schedules, workloads, distance from one's home, etc.; the 'negotiation-based-relational representation', concerning the working environment, relations with colleagues and contact with the public, together with the possibility of participating in decisions, etc.

In the investigation of the various dimensions allowing for an understanding of the representation young people have of work, the decision was made to observe the levels of professional satisfaction of the young professionally active respondents in the two samples.

In general, among Italian workers (62.3%) and those in the South (39.9%), three out of four young people consider themselves very or fairly satisfied with their work. Turning to the factors underlying job satisfaction (fig. 4.3), it is noted that it is above all the working environment itself that satisfies the respondents most of all (especially young people in the southern regions) and, in particular, relationships with colleagues (84, 3% in Italy and 89.2% in Campania) and one's superiors (76.5% and 82.6%, respectively).

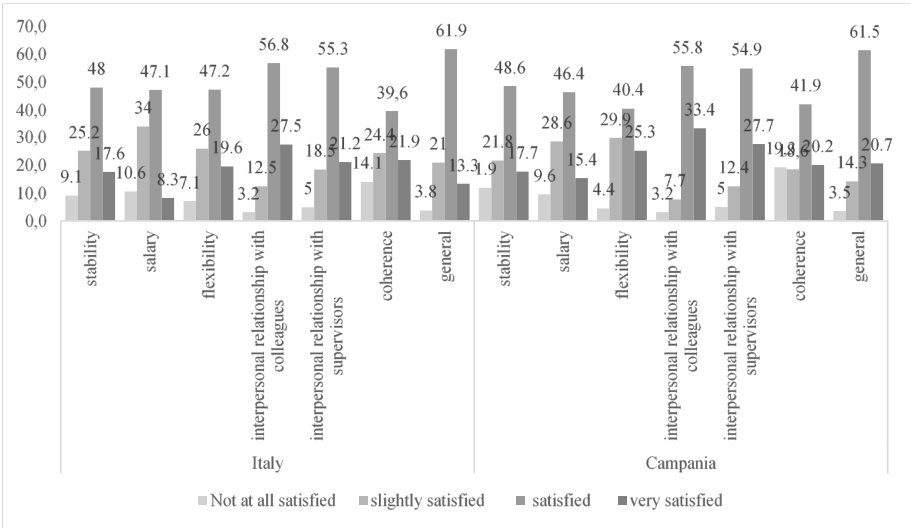
However, the young people in both samples say they are less satisfied with respect to the instrumental aspects of work and, that is, those important conditions which allow one to obtain means and resources one can exploit in one's life beyond the sphere of work. In this regard 34.4% of the Italian sample and 33.7% of the Campania sample state that they are not at all or not very satisfied with the stability of their current job and, above all, with the earnings received (44.6% and 38.2%, respectively).

With regard to the so-called 'spatio-temporal' component, 33.1% of the national sample and 34.3% of the Campania sample are poorly satisfied with conditions regarding the flexibility of working hours.

The aspects pertaining to an 'expressive-acquisitive' representation of work and, more specifically, coherence between work and one's educational background and training, constitute the source of greatest discontent among young people, to the extent that the highest numbers of young people who declare they are totally dissatisfied (14.1% and 19.3%, respectively) are recorded in both the Italian and the Campania samples. The situation concerning job satisfaction that emerges in the segment of employed persons, which *per se* represents a critical dimension on account of the reduced numbers with respect to young people in a position to work, appears to indicate that being

employed may sometimes only correspond to a practical need for survival, and may not necessarily reflect the desires or aspirations of the subjects concerned.

Fig. 4.3 Satisfaction with aspects of work in Italy and in Campania (Val. %)



If at the national level both men and women (young and not quite so young / educated and not very highly educated) are generally equally satisfied with their work, in the Campania region the levels of satisfaction with the aspects of work which we have taken into consideration seem to be influenced more by gender and by age than by an individual's qualifications. With respect to males of the same age, women in the South appear to assume positions that are more polarised. Among those interviewed some declare they are not at all satisfied (5.3% of women vs 2.6% of men) and others state they are very satisfied with their work (18.1% vs 24.6%, respectively).

A reading of the phenomenon by age group allows for an identification of further elements regarding the reasons behind the satisfaction experienced. At a general level, the groups of young people under the age of 26, to which are added also those of a higher age in the South, are fairly or very satisfied with their work: 83.8% and 81.9%, respectively. However, by looking more closely at the evaluation of individual aspects of working activity, a diversified satisfaction emerges between the group of the youngest individuals and that of people over the age of 26. Young adults show greater satisfaction with

aspects of work of a more purely instrumental nature, while those under 26 are more satisfied with aspects of the relational type. The youngest individuals, who are more likely to be living their first experiences in the labour market - a market also suffering from a low level of dynamism and a slower intake rate - are still looking for a job that will be fully consistent with their education and training and will offer them a higher level of stability in contractual terms and with respect to salaries. At the same time, these younger subjects do not yet show signs of rigidity with respect to the ability to adapt and flexibility in the workplace, revealing greater satisfaction in relationships with colleagues (95.6% of persons under the age of 26 and 87.9% of those over 25) and their superiors (95.6% and 80%). On the other hand, with respect to younger people, precisely because they have had more time at their disposal and probably more experience in the world of work, young adults show greater satisfaction with current stability at the contractual level (69.9% of young adults and 46.2% of younger individuals) and in terms of pay (62.2% and 37.3%), working conditions, and working hours in particular (67.4% and 57.4%). Finally, they also identify a certain coherence between their current employment and their aspirations and training (64.5% and 49.2%).

The type of contract will in some way affect the degree of job satisfaction. Young people with a permanent contract reveal a general degree of satisfaction for their work that is higher than that of their peers with a fixed-term contract. This trend is stronger in Campania than in Italy, and in fact among the young people who say they are very satisfied with their work 74.2% have a permanent contract, while in Italy this percentage drops by about 11 percentage points. In this perspective, acquiring a stable contract can be perceived as a more important goal among the young people of Campania if this is related to the instability and precariousness of the local labour market which young people have to cope with in order to become fully established in a stable manner in the world of work. In fact, in the Campania sample the number of young people whose employment contract is regulated by a verbal agreement and therefore does not constitute a formal agreement is almost four times higher than at the national level (18.5% vs 4.9%).

Satisfaction with one's work must therefore be considered also in accordance with the opportunities offered by a contract in terms of life planning. This satisfaction in fact decreases with the reduction of contractual guarantees. If that part of young people with a contract based on a verbal agreement is included, it is possible to observe a constant decrease in satisfaction with all aspects of working activity. Moreover, this phenomenon is more evident

in Italy. 41.6% of young Italians with non-formal contracts state that they are in no way or generally unsatisfied with their work, while in Campania, where this type of contract is more widespread and probably partly accepted by society, the percentage is only 28.8%. The differentiated satisfaction levels reflect the split in the labour market between a guaranteed sector - governed by typical contracts - and a sector with partial forms of protection - regulated by atypical contracts (Barbieri and Scherer 2009). Thus, there are differences in the levels of social protection (Baglioni 2003). There are increasing forms of precariousness, marked by periods of employment, unemployment and inactivity, generating a category of workers who are poorly protected and with fewer safeguards, the so-called 'working poor' who are granted only a partial form of 'social citizenship' (Lo Verde 2005; Taliani et al. 2007).

Where there is a low level of satisfaction with work one wonders what young people would be willing to do to change this condition. A possible solution might be to look for a new job. In this regard, the salary level above all and then coherence with one's studies and training appear to be the main factors that would convince young respondents - and mainly those from Campania (40.6% and 22.9%, respectively, against 38.6% and 22.1%) - to accept the offer of a new job. Those who are more dissatisfied are also more inclined to immediately accept an offer of work. Among young Italians who are totally dissatisfied with their current job 43% would be willing to accept an immediate offer of employment, especially in the case of better payment terms, while three out of four young people from Campania would change jobs only if they have better chances of reconciling work with family commitments. It is interesting to note that this portion of young people from Campania is exclusively composed of women, the category almost entirely encumbered with domestic and care work, especially in southern Italy (ISTAT 2015). Another condition that might help people improve their professional status would be to move to a place other than their place of origin. Also in this case, differences are found between the most dissatisfied persons at the Italian national level and in the Campania region. At the national level, although most of those who say they are not at all or not very satisfied with their work would be willing to move abroad permanently to improve their working position (34%), a significant number of people would only prefer to move to a place within the borders of their own region (23%), this being a sign of confidence in finding a job and, consequently, an improvement of their situation within their own territorial district. On the contrary, young people from Campania who are dissatisfied would be ready to move out of their territory of origin (29% to another place

in Italy and 42% also abroad), thus showing less confidence in the potential of the labour market in their area of origin.

Shifting our attention from job satisfaction (for the employed) to financial satisfaction (referred to in the two samples by all interviewees), few people - less than 5% - consider themselves very satisfied with their financial situation, while more than half of young people - 60% in Campania and 51% in Italy - say they are not very satisfied or not at all satisfied.

Observing the level of financial satisfaction only of those who are employed (table 4.5), on the one hand there are those who are very satisfied with their work and quite or very satisfied with their financial situation (81.5% in Italy and 85.4% in Campania). However, to a significantly lesser extent, there are young people who are totally dissatisfied with their work and, on the other hand, satisfied with their economic condition (21.8% and 9.1%, respectively, at the national and local levels). This result assumes greater relevance if it is considered in the light of the meaning and significance respondents attribute to work.

Table 4.5 Overall job satisfaction compared to satisfaction with one’s financial situation, in Italy and in the Campania region

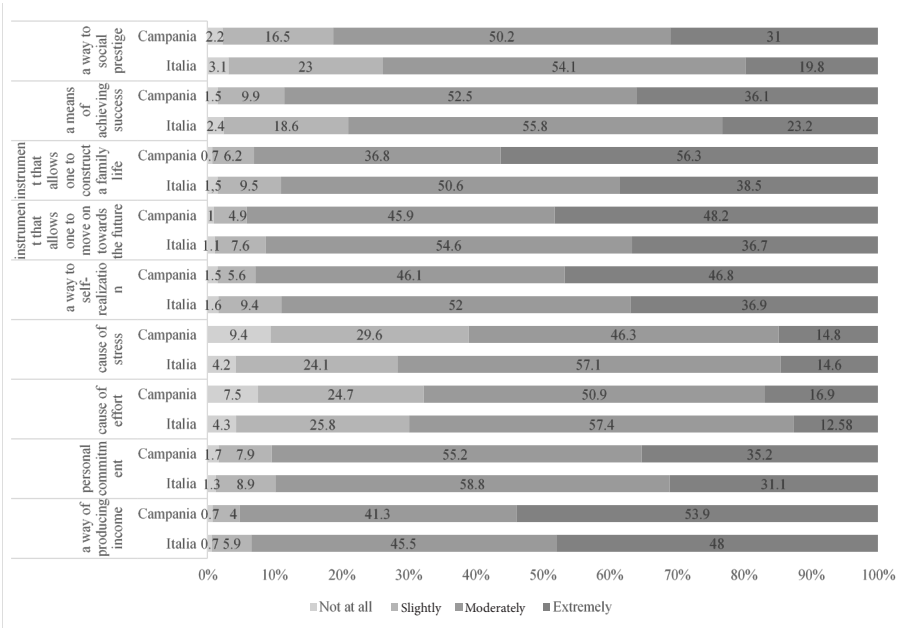
Considering all aspects, how satisfied are you with your work?	Generally, are you satisfied with your economical status?									
	Italy					Campania				
	Extremely	Moderately	Slightly	Not at all	Total	Extremely	Moderately	Slightly	Not at all	Total
Extremely	35.8% (44)	67.90% (220)	16.70% (54)	1.85 % (6)	100% (324)	27.1% (26)	58.3% (56)	14.6% (14)		100% (96)
Moderately	3.05% (34)	62.84% (700)	30.70% (342)	3.4% (38)	100% (1114)	7.5% (18)	53.9% (130)	36.1% (87)	2.5% (6)	100% (241)
Slightly	1.30% (5)	29.50% (113)	57.44% (220)	11.75% (45)	100% (383)	2.2% (2)	9.9% (9)	75.8% (69)	12.1% (11)	100% (91)
Not at all	2.90% (2)	18.84% (13)	39.13% (27)	39.13% (27)	100% (69)	9.1% (1)		54.5% (6)	36.4% (4)	100% (11)
Total	4.50% (85)	55.34% (1046)	34.02% (643)	6.13% (116)	100% (1890)	107% (47)	44.4% (195)	40.1% (176)	4.8% (21)	100% (439)

From an analysis of the data relating to the degree of importance that young people assign to the different aspects which may characterise the representation of work, a contrast emerges between two conceptions that appear to be polarised: a purely materialistic and a more ‘expressive’ vision of work.

On the basis of the data shown in fig. 4.4, on the one hand there is a dominant conception of work as a means to procuring an income: 48% of young Italians and approximately 54% of young people in Campania fully embrace

this perspective. Working so as to ‘have money coming in’ translates into an activity or, worse still, into an occupation - to use a more bureaucratic term that typically depersonalises the relationship between workers and the actual activities they perform - in which there is no space for either one’s vocation - or one’s *Beruf*, to adopt the Weberian term (Weber, 1905, Ital. translation 2002) - or any sense of dedication to a particular type of work (Sennett 2000).

Fig. 4.4 Young people’s representation of work in Italy and in Campania



The function of work thus intended reflects the change that has taken place in a society characterised by ‘flexibilisation’; it becomes a means of survival and therefore an adaptational response to a context which, as we have seen, makes it difficult to construct one’s career in a linear fashion. With the transition from modern to post-modern society, the meanings attributed to work are formed not only within the market as a regulatory institution, but also within society. This gives rise to the production of a social identity and work loses its ‘social’ connotation, becoming an ‘individual’ achievement (Castel 2004), the meanings of which are thus elaborated at the individual level.

On the other hand, this is in contrast with a more expressive representation of work, in which the meaning associated with it conveys the sense of a place where one can fulfil one’s ambitions. A third of young Italians and

almost half of young people from Campania declare that they fully agree with this definition. It is a vision that assigns a social function to work, in which through the performance of a particular professional task it is possible to become differentiated and thus one's social identity may be made evident to others (Lo Verde 2005).

However, along the continuum between these two opposing visions of work we find perceptions according to which work has a 'projective' function, whereby it may be seen as an instrument that allows one to move on towards the future (36.7% in Italy and 48.2% in the South) or construct a family life (38% in Italy and 56.3% in Campania). Thus, especially in areas where the employment situation is more critical, work is seen as a means whereby it is possible to plan one's life.

And not only. For about one third of the two samples work is also an element comprised among the values sustained by young people; it is not reduced to the state of an instrumental activity or seen as having an expressive nature, but it is seen as a personal commitment (31.1% in Italy and 35.2% in Campania).

Particularly in Campania, to a certain extent a part of the meaning of work is its identification as a means of achieving success (36.1% of young people in Campania and 23.2% of Italians) or social prestige (31% and 19.8%, respectively).

Finally, with respect to other aspects the traits that very clearly associate work with effort and strain, both physical (12.5% in Italy and 16.9% in Campania) and psychological, and, that is, identifying the same as a source of stress (14.6% and 14.8%, respectively), appear overall to be less relevant. Considering labour fatigue, although with respect to all other characteristics considered a lesser degree of importance is legitimate, it should be noted that adding to the percentages indicated also those relating to persons who have seen this difficult condition as quite a serious element, percentages of about 70% are reached both in Italy and in the South (in Campania, decreasing to 60% only for work as a source of stress).

Analysing the way in which work is conceived in relation to the degree of satisfaction with one's employment situation, it is found that those who view work as a way of producing income tend to be more dissatisfied with their current remuneration. On the other hand, young people, and especially those from Campania, who attribute a low level of importance or no importance at

all to a materialistic vision of work present the highest levels of satisfaction with their current earnings (63.6% compared to 56.6%).

Satisfaction with one's remuneration also seems to be connected to a vision of work that focuses on possibilities for fulfilment at the personal level and with respect to one's family. In particular, young people who see work as a commitment that will help them create a family life are found to be little or not at all satisfied with their earnings (55.9% in Campania and 57.4% in Italy), probably because they assign to the economic factor a crucial value for achievement of this goal. On the contrary, those who do not share this idea prove to be predominantly quite or very satisfied with their earnings (63.3% in Campania and 57.2% in Italy).

Similarly, also in the case of those who assign to work the function of self-fulfilment, subjects who attach greater importance to personal fulfilment tend to be less satisfied with their salaries. However, this situation can only be found in the national sample. On the other hand, the young people in Campania state that they are always dissatisfied and, thus, regardless of the vision attributed to their work. This suggests that, in a context in which youth unemployment and inactivity, along with the significant exclusion of women from the labour market, personal fulfilment can not be achieved merely by improving workers' salaries, but above all by ensuring better contractual and general working conditions. Among the young people in the national sample for whom work is a means of self-realisation about 60% declare they are not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with their work, while those who do not identify with this view are more satisfied with the remuneration they receive (57.4%). In fact, considering work as a means of achieving personal fulfilment may involve a different way of assigning value to the coherence between one's professional activity and one's previous studies and training. Thus, being aware one's job is not in line with one's studies or training can have a negative impact on hopes of eventually attaining fulfilment in this sense. Just over half of those who share this view declare that they feel not very or not at all satisfied with the degree of consistency between their work and their previous education and training (51.4% in Campania and 56.7% in Italy). Inversely, young people who do not identify at all with this concept of work or who might share it in a very limited manner are more satisfied with the coherence between their current job and their course of studies (63.3% in Campania and 64% in Italy).

4.7. Representation of work for young NEETs

It would be interesting to reflect on the perception and conceptions of work that emerge from young NEETs given the particular condition of this segment, portrayed in various sources as young people who are unemployed but do not even look for work, and in other sources seen primarily as reflecting the widespread condition of young people who have completed their studies and try to access the world of work but fail to do so.

With respect to the complexity and variegated internal composition of this category, international sociological literature on the subject has presented in-depth studies and research projects. These are useful to understand the diversity of situations and particular paths of development at the individual, family and social levels, emphasizing above all the risk of social exclusion (Williamson 2007; Eurofound 2012; Mascherini et al. 2012; Antonini 2014; Agnoli 2015; Eurofound 2016).

Transversely, remaining in this condition results in a substantial modification of the events that characterise the transition to adult life, such as leaving the family of origin and creating one's own family. Such a situation reflects and reinforces the phenomena definitely typical of the Italian situation. More generally, it confirms the Mediterranean model of 'prolonged delays' in the paths of growth (Cavalli 1996, 41) and what has been referred to as a 'delay syndrome' (Livi Bacci 2008), denoting the absence of the possibility of assuming new social responsibilities and roles (Cavalli 1980; Bettin Lattes 2001; Buzzi 2002; Schizzerotto 2002; Livi Bacci 2008), as extensively observed in chapter 1 of this first part of our work.

The initial indicator which helps to differentiate the relationship that NEETs have with work may be found in their reaction in a situation where they receive an offer of work with a request to provide immediate feedback. While the Italian sample is characterised by an attitude involving a disposition to evaluate carefully the various conditions before accepting a job, regardless of a current NEET status, the situation appears to differ in Campania.

Italian NEETs looking for their first job seem to be more demanding at the moment when they are expected to confirm their willingness to start work immediately regardless of the conditions proposed (63.6%). They pay more attention to remuneration (32.6%) and to relevance with respect to their courses of studies that were terminated shortly before starting the work they will be engaged in (30.4%). On the contrary, in Campania, the similar

percentage of 64.3% corresponds to unemployed persons who would immediately accept a job in order not to remain inactive. It is conceivable that this is a segment that has experienced the uncertainties and difficulties that unemployment entails, especially in an area that struggles to offer job opportunities. It is interesting to note the position of unemployed persons who are willing to start a new job provided they may assess the conditions (73.1% in Italy and 70% in Campania).

However, if a particular group of NEETs is willing to enter or re-enter the labour market, even though it may present differences in terms of acceptability of working conditions and the characteristics of the subjects themselves, not all NEETs manifest such a propensity. In this regard, it is of interest to determine the profile of those who are not engaged in a search for work and to understand their motivations and demands (table 4.6).

On the one hand, we find those who in some way are ready to re-enter an employment circuit or a training system and, in this specific case, those who declare that they are waiting to start a working relationship in the near future (1.8% in Italy and 3.6 % in Campania) or, at the time of the survey, that they were about to start as self-employed workers (only 9.5% in Italy). On the other hand, we find young people who are unable to work due to personal health problems (8.6% and 20%) or family commitments, such as caring for a child or a loved one (33.8% in Italy and 24, 5% in Campania).

However, alongside these, we also note other different forms of inactivity, such as that of NEETs who are demotivated and thus less willing to take action and are therefore more vulnerable. There are, in fact, those who feel the need to stop, take a pause for reflection and perhaps try other experiences (6.8% in Italy and 23.1% in Campania) or those who are discouraged by the current labour market (12.6% at the national level, compared to 16.2% in Campania), which offers only precarious and poorly paid employment opportunities (respectively 16.7% and 8.1%). With respect to the latter point, it is useful to bear in mind that among the disinterested people looking for a job there are also those who take on undeclared work and people engaged in informal care-giving activities often outside the labour market (Rosina 2015).

Table 4.6 Motivations underlying inactivity with respect to the search for work

	Italy	Campania
Because I want to take time off to reflect and acquire other experiences	6.8	23.1
Because in any case I would not find a job	12.6	16.2
Because only precarious and poorly-paid work is offered	16.7	8.1
For personal health issues	8.6	20
To take care of my family (looking after a child, a loved one, other)	33.8	24.5
Because I will become self-employed	9.5	0
I am waiting to begin a working relationship in the near future	1.8	3.6
Other (specify)	10.4	4.5
Total	100 (222)	100 (135)

Considering the NEET segment as a whole, faced with an offer of immediate employment only about 34% in Italy and 40.7% of individuals in the South would immediately declare they are available in order not to remain in a situation of inactivity, while more than half of young people in both samples would be available, but only after evaluating the pros and cons (56.3% and 53%, respectively). The attitude of the other subjects, who state they are not at all interested in starting a job immediately, raises the question as to what conditions are considered most important to be able to accept a job immediately. Young NEETs would actually be willing to accept an offer of immediate employment that would guarantee a better form of reconciliation between work and care-giving commitments (27.4% in Italy and 22.6% in Campania). However, young citizens resident in Campania believe that advantageous economic conditions represent the stimulus that can trigger such a decision (32.6%) and, only subsequently, the possibility of reconciling work and family duties (22.2%).

In both the national and local samples one notes different positions on the part of men and women with regard to the possibility of accepting a proposal of employment. In particular, men in the Italian sample might decide to immediately start a new working activity only if the remuneration levels are advantageous (37.7%) or if the work is consistent with their studies and training (24.6%). Confirming what has been previously stated, for a third of

women the determining factor is the possibility of finding a job with working hours suited to family commitments. However, the situation at the local level is different. It is the distance from home that men in Campania consider to be the most important condition when they have to decide whether they should start a new job (44.4%), probably because they are aware that most employment opportunities are situated outside the region or in other countries. An evaluation of remuneration would only be a secondary factor (27.8%). It often happens that young people in the South have to decide whether they should move to another location in order to access the labour market more easily or settle for precarious work and perhaps lower wages, remaining close to the city where they live. Women in Campania, on the other hand, place greater importance on how much they would earn (33.1%) and, again, the balance between care-giving and work (25.4%). In this case perhaps, from the economic point of view, only a job that ensures high earnings would justify an assignment of care-giving commitments to external service providers.

This variety of conditions and attitudes in the NEET relationship with the world of work helps us understand the differences in the way work is conceived. In fact, young NEETs are not characterised by a vision of work having a specific connotation; their vision of work is in fact in line with that of employed persons and students. This also applies to NEETs who state they are not actively seeking work.

At both the national and local level, the instrumental and expressive character of work is emphasized: 97.5% of NEETs from Campania and 90.1% of those in Italy consider work as a means of making money, while for more than four out of five young people work is seen as an opportunity for self-realisation (83% in Italy and 88% in Campania), the construction of their future (87.4% and 97.1%) and the creation of a family (86% and 94.6%). Their condition might induce one to think that work may be associated with stress and fatigue, but the data does not support this conclusion. There is thus no difference in the representation of work between those who are willing to immediately accept a job or do so under reserve and those who are not interested in working, nor can we identify the most important conditions that would lead to the immediate acceptance of a job on the basis of the different representations of work. The financial situation and the need to find a job that will also permit the worker to perform domestic duties and care-giving are the main factors that would induce people to accept a job regardless of their vision of work in general.

PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC LIFE

5. Introduction

This work presents a study of some spheres of the public life of young people with the aim of exploring phenomena that typically define them and their current status.

In particular, the area of the Western world that is observed is the Campania region in southern Italy, which, as seen in the first part of the work, is an area that also presents many of the main structural difficulties that affect the development of life paths of the younger generations.

The critical issues of the condition of young people in the context that is studied - especially the Mediterranean area and the southern regions of Italy - clearly emerge also from the principal areas of consideration in the analysis of the condition of the younger generations (first part). However, examining the points focused on, a sense of participation, initiative, cooperative capacity, the generative resources and a sense of social responsibility which young people are naturally endowed with, the youth potential does not seem to be completely dissipated. Young people are naturally delegated with the responsibility of guiding the processes of current and future development in society and in the communities where they live. The study of youth activism focuses on certain channels of expression and protagonism in the younger generations, within the sphere of public action, through forms of aggrega-

tion, participation and planning oriented towards collective interests, partly innovated and stimulated by the exploitation of digital technology.

Some of these elements are examined in theoretical and empirical terms in the following contribution, which presents results concerning the participatory forms identified and analysed in a multi-purpose research project conducted by the OCPG Youth Observatory of the University of Salerno (Leone 2016a). In particular, the investigation allows for a re-examination and reinterpretation of some forms of participation on the part of young people in digital spaces and environments from unconventional viewpoints and also with the prospect of developing the research.

At the methodological level the unit of analysis of the overall framework of the research is formed by a total of 1,066 young people living in Campania, in the 18-35 age range, identified with a proportional and stratified sampling of the non-probabilistic type and by gender, age and province of residence. The instrument used to collect the relative data is a semi-structured questionnaire administered both online and in face-to-face sessions (*ibid.*, pp. 9-31).

5.1. The theoretical framework of reference: from classical forms of political participation to civic engagement

The spaces and forms of youth participation nowadays indicate a scenario that is heterogeneous in terms of generational and inter-generational aspects. Members of the so-called X generation differ from the Millennials, and the latter are already different from the Z generation with respect to historical, geographical and cultural aspects, for reasons relating to their individual and social identity and their natural milieux, particularist and universalist interests and goals and their relative physical and virtual environments.

Literature and social research conducted in this field have focused for a long time on political participation on the part of young people. This sphere has been examined following the two main paths of study, as conceptualised by Barnes and Kaase (1979), of conventional forms and institutional schemes of voting and adherence to political parties, and the unconventional forms of protest and social mobilisation¹⁷.

17 In classical studies, among the first works, cf. Keniston (1968/1972); in the Italian context, cf. Alberoni (1970; 1977), Melucci (1982; 1984); on opposition and protest movements of the decades following the post-war period, see Parkin (1968); Tilly et al. (1975).

With reference to the differences between the young generations of the post-war period and the current younger generations scholars identify two main stages in the process of progressive change and a redefining of the concept of participation in public life.

The first phase, in the transition from the 1960s/1970s to the 1980s/1990s, is characterised by the expression of a lack of trust in public institutions and political parties. Many scholars point out that this does not seem to generate disengagement or a weakening of democratic values but rather a crisis of the forms of representation and a search for methods of direct participation (Dalton 2002; Innerarity 2008).

The second trend, which has been accentuated in recent decades, sees a progressive replacement of a distancing from political party commitments with the transformation of public practices in favour of the exercise of active citizenship, this being a sort of social or moral militancy through voluntary activities, civic commitment and diversified forms of protest.

Participation in the form of mobilisation in the peaceful demonstrations occurring after the 1960s and 1970s therefore also loses the function of a discriminating factor between conventional and non-conventional forms and is reinterpreted within the conventional limits (Tarrow 1998). In addition, also adopted by parties and public interest groups as well as by citizens, it sees participants gradually becoming normalised through the sharing of practices, both institutionalised and emergent, without distinction with respect to social roles (Van Aelst, Walgrave 2001).

In the last few years and, that is, with reference to the Z generation (born between 1995 and the early 2000s) further traces of change have been noted, with a move in the direction of digital spaces and social networks in particular. The use of the latter appears to have changed considerably with respect to a few years ago - at the time of the 'Arab Spring', for example - and especially for young people. The networks that brought together friends and followers of movements through Facebook and Twitter are today transformed by the practice of joining profile-based social networks and groups associated with particular dimensions, often founded on personal contacts deriving from relationships that began with at least one encounter (e.g., Whatsapp groups).

Considering the changes in political activism occurring at the end of the twentieth century, Norris (2002) uses the evolutionary metaphor of the phoenix to indicate a resurgence of democratic practices in new forms of expression that are poorly understood within the classical theoretical frameworks adopted to interpret participation. In this perspective, change

is investigated through a reconsideration of the actors, repertoires and segments involved.

With regard to the actors, defined as 'collective organisations', public spaces open up to the new social movements and multi-actor - and also transnational - networks. These networks create points of access in the spaces of traditional interest groups that are structured, institutionalised and organised with hierarchical models, formal rules and local territorial roots.

The repertoires are also expanded, integrating the classic modes of political participation identified by Verba *et al* (1971; 1972; 1978; 1995) - voting, active participation in electoral campaigns for parties or candidates, activism and cooperation in one's community to address collective issues or interests and initiatives promoting communication between political and institutional interlocutors or contacts to resolve specific issues - with that variety of forms reborn in the final decades of the twentieth century from the ashes of the political protests of the 1970s. The latter have included new social movements for gender equality and the defence of the environment and those that oppose nuclear power but also boycotts, strikes, occupations, and unauthorised demonstrations and, finally, also the most violent forms of struggle of nationalist, ethnic or religious origin (Epstein 1991; Barnes, Kaase 1979; March 1977; Adrian, Apter 1995). Of course, such activities present substantial differences.

These changes are also reflected in what Norris (2002) defines as a target to which participants refer and, that is, in a widening of the range of interlocutors that participants try to influence. Alongside state-oriented activities directed towards political and institutional actors, in its non-state-oriented developments activism is also aimed at non-profit, public and private actors and networks through the use of instruments and channels of communication, especially of the digital type, which support and render political and public action and mobilisation pervasive and deterritorialised.

The redefinition of participatory paths in the light of such an opening of the theoretical guidelines underlines the inadequacy of the classic distinction between political activism and social action. With the different conceptualisations of participation in public life, expanded and partly transformed into civic engagement and the development of social capital, the study of the areas of activity, of relationships and practices that occur in common spaces identifies the processes of inclusion, representation, power and empowerment.

Furthermore, participation as an essential dimension of the growth process for the definition of one's identity, for the activation of individual resources and capacity and for the creation of relational networks and social

capital that structure both personal and collective paths has been examined from various sociological and psychological perspectives.

In these various fields, participation and civic engagement are examined also having reference to subjective, psychological and social well-being (Marta, Marzana 2014). In the assessment of living conditions and roles in society, studies on social well-being identify as the fundamental dimensions of analysis social integration, i.e., the quality of relations with society and with one's community, and social contribution, understood as the conviction of being able to make a contribution to the environment in which we live to attain the common good (Keyes, Shapiro 1998). Some recent developments of this approach have highlighted a strong relationship between the youth component and the dimension of social contributions, observed also in association with the raising of the level of education (Keyes, Shapiro 2004).

In the theoretical reflection on the variety of forms and processes expressed by new paths of activism on the part of young people further interpretative keys re-examine the effect traditionally attributed to socialisation and, in particular, to the intergenerational transmission of models, occurring initially within the family context and, subsequently, through scholastic and institutional experiences. The process of assimilation and internalisation of 'top-down' participatory models, in which young people are involved by previous generations, in the wake of family traditions of militancy or through one's studies and training, is flanked by new conceptualisations of socialisation that recognise the possibilities of a particular formation of one's identity. The latter is not defined through homogeneous consensus but develops as a result of the various visions of a complex and differentiated society and cognitive and practical processes undergoing innovation. In longitudinal and comparative research on countries with significant structural, historical, political, religious and cultural differences, studies highlight the various relationships between social contexts, motivations and manifestations of participation and the processes of socialisation and construction of one's identity that develop in parallel in the youth segments (Yates, Younis 1998¹⁸; Flanagan, Bowes, Jonsson, Cape, Sheblanova 1988).

18 In this perspective, the work cited presents a cross-section of youth participation in different social contexts at the end of the 1900s, highlighting the significant differences between countries where motivations mature in environments presenting a strong ideological tension and the sources of stimulation are political parties, as occurs, for example, in Israel, Palestine and Ireland. Such conditions are also present in countries, such as Italy, in which the weight of political corruption and the distrust of young people is noted, and in countries that stimulate young people to assume civic and voluntary commitments in the common interest through their family and schools but also via the media, peers, the community, churches and other social organisations, such as Canada, Ireland, Italy, Great Britain, USA, East Germany and Japan.

Of course, in these broad horizons the role of the family is not radically challenged, especially in the Italian context, in which it retains the central function noted in the Mediterranean model (ch.1). Numerous studies confirm its importance also as a context of political socialisation and pro-social activity, for example with respect to indicators that reveal the frequency of family discussions on these issues, the quality of family relationships and dialogue and, at a deeper level, the basic set of values assumed concerning solidarity, giving freely to others, sharing, the sense of a local community, etc (Marta, Scabini 2003; Zambianchi, Ricci Bitti 2008; Marzana 2011).

Regarding the autonomy and social responsibility of the new generations, a substantial part of the studies on young people and numerous institutional policy resources issued in recent decades attracts attention to a change of perspective that begins with the recognition of young people as a positive resource and as a potential for community development. These studies moreover reorientate policies in the direction of the promotion of active participation, which creates spaces for free initiative and youth leadership (cf. amongst others, Damon 2004).

In the early 2000s, at the level of the European institutions, these approaches are promoted by the *White Paper on Youth - A new impetus for European youth* (European Commission 2001), by the *European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life* (Congress of Local and Regional Authorities in Europe 2003), and by the *European Youth Pact and promoting active citizenship* (European Commission 2005), to mention only the main points of reference. Since 2009, in the condition aggravated by the global economic crisis, European strategies aimed at investing in young people and giving them greater responsibilities have been strengthened. The *EU strategy for youth* and the *Resolution on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018)* (Council of the European Union 2009) - in line with the general objectives of the *Renewed Social Agenda* (European Parliament 2009) - support the promotion of active citizenship, social inclusion and solidarity and underline the granting of autonomy and responsibility to young people (empowerment).

From 2010 to 2015 Recommendations of the European Commission and the Council of Europe Resolutions were issued, referring to principles, objectives and work plans aimed at social inclusion, equality, empowerment, active citizenship, a commitment to volunteering and the various forms of youth participation. The latter is referred to transversally and is also the subject of

dedicated documents, such as the *Resolution on encouraging new forms of participation in democratic life in Europe* (Council of the European Union 2011).

An overview of the scientific literature, empirical research and policy guidelines shows that the field is marked by guidelines and phenomena indicating opposing trends.

On the one hand, persistent critical readings outline elements of continuity between the X generation, including young people born in the period preceding the 1980s labelled as the ‘invisible’ generation and, that is, without a definite social identity, pessimistic and apathetic, and subsequent generations, from the Millennials (born from the 1980s to the present today) to the Z generation (from 1995 onwards, in particular). In this negative perspective, scholars have often considered the appeal for participation in relation to the readiness of young people to take on responsibilities, highlighting in alternate phases, particularly for some segments of the X generation but also of the Millennials, the perseverance of attitudes of disinterest or disgust, from which derive further labels, such as the ‘Peter Pan’ or ‘Q’ generations, indicating a ‘quiet generation’ described as having

“a passive, cynical and indifferent nature. This is a generation of individuals who consciously refuse to engage in any activities and prefer to spend their time in front of a monitor screen. It is a generation that does not participate in any way in traditional political and social debates and therefore has no influence whatsoever on public opinion, on the political agenda and on electoral behaviour” (Bernardini 2015).

On the other hand, in a contrary interpretation, which aims at detecting the potential and positive elements - in the wake, for example, of the *Positive Youth Development Approach* (Damon 2004) - a vision of young people emerges in which they are seen as active participants tending towards innovation. This relates to their stance regarding economic and social processes, with a greater commitment to volunteering, civic engagement, digital citizenship and social innovation, and in the civil economy. The position also concerns a moral order no longer recognised in traditional political actors and activity and repertoires and practices that establish close relationships in the social fabric, especially thanks to a permanent and pervasive connection permitted by communication networks and media systems (cf. among Italian research studies, Introini, Pasqualini 2018, 81-108).

5.2. Participation in the digital space

Technological development and the consequent multiplication of channels, instruments and digital spaces have not only freed the boundaries of participation from the classical trends and from the rituals of political militancy. These elements have also generated a parallel environment of infinitely wider - or, rather, unlimited - scope, which is structured and strengthened through open-access information flows and the relational dynamics that are produced in both virtual and real spaces where it is possible to meet others.

The number and variety of digital platforms that satisfy needs for information, listening, dialogue, relationships, services, social commitment and political, civic and social functions has grown enormously in just a few years and with a such rapid evolution as to render vain any attempts to monitor them. Following what was already underlined by Norris (2002) more than a decade ago, the repertoires of current democratic practices continue to reproduce and become innovated, generating multi-faceted participatory dimensions, in multi-actor environments populated by institutional interlocutors, political subjects and entrepreneurial entities, social organisations and citizens, connected for a variety of reasons and in accordance with various objectives. The networks present permanent and temporary configurations and the levels of interconnection involve diverse and convergent content, channels, technologies and media instruments (Jenkins 2006).

To mention only the most significant phenomena in the public sphere, starting with the first civic networks of the 1990s, various forums and communities and communication flows opened up for the generations of bloggers and citizen journalists, and now there is an explosion of opportunities concerning the possibility to engage in relationships through social networks (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, Google+, WhatsApp, Telegram, to provide just a few examples). The transformation of public space in the name of a philosophy of open government and civic access has recognised networked citizenship. It has freed access to information (*open data*), has removed borders established by rules of ownership in digital infrastructures (*open source*) and has modernised models of governance and institutional management models (*e-government*). It has also extended the involvement of social actors in decision-making processes (*e-governance*) and has established an environment that generates common resources that are shared and stimulated in the multiple networks of reference.

The cited phenomena represent only the principal expressions of a perspective of public space in which a key function is assumed by what in literature is variously referred to as e-participation, civic or citizens' engagement, e-governance or 'we'-governance, social governance and similar forms of control (cf. to mention just a few, Macintosh 2004; Dadashzadeh 2010; Linders 2012; Delli Paoli, Leone 2015).

Scientific reflection on these issues, which has proliferated over the space of just a few years, has seen the return of opposing groups of enthusiasts and sceptics which accompany profound changes in the history of the media¹⁹. Most studies that focus on the new generations in this regard support the rationale of a positive impact of Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) on the civic engagement of young people (Hall, Newbury 1999; Bentivegna 2002; Montgomery, Gottlieb-Robles, Larson 2004). This is primarily proposed on the basis of more favourable potential conditions thanks to familiarity with and the intense use of digital media that characterises the generations from the Millennials onwards.

Added to this are the favourable results of research conducted on the segments of active young people (Dahlgren 2003) and case studies of innovative projects carried on - especially in the field of social innovation (Consiglio, Riitano 2014; Fiorentini, Calò 2013) - precisely by groups of young people who have generated ideas for the improvement of social issues through the exploitation of the interactive, multimedia and publication potential typical of social networks and peer-to-peer communication flows.

On the part of those who present an apocalyptic stance, questions concerning the real extent of the change introduced by digital media for purposes of involvement in an exchange of views and making decisions of general interest have been answered by the uninspiring results highlighted by many studies carried out in the public sector on the actual use of social media and e-participation instruments by institutions and citizens in general²⁰. From investigations concerning public administration bodies it appears that with respect to the availability of highly-evolved media instruments there is rarely a corresponding actual use of such means in a manner that would valorise their technical characteristics, and research on active communication channels and practices often reveals a significant distance from the perspectives outlined by theoretical contributions. In other words, adherence to the mod-

19 Among the optimists, see Katz, Rice, Aden (2001); Wellman, Quan Haase, Witte, Hampton (2001).

20 Some examples indicated by research carried out in various countries: Waters, Williams (2011); Cho, Park (2012); Mundy, Umer (2012); Leone, Delli Paoli, Senatore (2015).

els of public governance on the part of institutions is often restricted to the level of a declaration of principles regarding co-administration, participatory democracy, sharing, co-decision and cooperation, without holding back on rhetoric. On the part of the public in general the availability of web 2.0 channels allowing for participatory processes does not easily translate into concrete collaborative action.

Also with respect to the younger population - at least following the results of research carried out on Millennials, who, on the basis of some studies as yet not highly consolidated, may nonetheless differ in particular with respect to this trait from the successors of the Z generation - many scholars do not support the optimistic relationship that directly associates recognition of the technological skills and competence of 'digital natives' with an interest in and activation of participatory practices of 'electronic citizenship'. From this point of view, a knowledge of available instruments is only a condition that renders one qualified to participate thanks to the possibility of having access to information ('e-enabling'). The transition to authentic involvement ('e-engagement') and - even more so - to activism, which involve a proactive spirit and responsibility ('e-empowerment'), may occur however only through incremental phases of participatory processes²¹.

Studies that focus on the various uses of the public space made available by the Internet for young people show the need to analyse and to distinguish the different levels of intensity of electronic participation, ranging from a search for information to the other purposes of the use of platforms, applications and channels of communication and sharing for social and political purposes and, in general, for objectives of common interest (Livingstone, Bober, Helsper 2005; Banaji 2008).

Research that indicates positive experiences resulting from specific cases or which has focused on segments already oriented to the exercise of active citizenship in fact raises questions regarding the representativeness of the observed situations with respect to the entire composition of the youth population (Delli Carpini 2000; Montgomery, Gottlieb-Robles, Larson 2004).

The possibilities offered by the Internet for the civic involvement of young people represent, according to many observers, a challenge to be seri-

21 E-enabling refers to the support offered by media technologies with regard to the improvement and enhancement of the aspects of accessibility and comprehensibility of information. E-engagement concerns the involvement of citizens on the part of institutions through consultation and requests for actual contributions to the political debate. E-empowerment (citizens) is active participation and a proposal of 'bottom-up' ideas that can influence the political agenda and recognises citizens as creators and only the recipients of policies; Macintosh (cit. p. 3).

ously taken up (to cite only some of the most recent reflections: Bentivegna, Boccia Artieri, 2019). This the case especially with respect to segments distant from the institutions and resistant to political activism and social commitment and with a view to understanding the mechanisms of influence (and changes in the transition from classical opinion leaders to digital influencers) and of adherence and sharing and, above all, the creation of contents that are developed in the current social circuits. It is thus necessary to acquire a deeper knowledge of the youth condition and to investigate in this regard both the contextual factors of political, civic and social responsibility and the modalities of approach and consumption of digital media, which, together with the technologies involved, can influence outcomes.

5.3. Youth participation in Southern Italy

On the basis of the theoretical lines examined and the thematic studies carried out also on young Italians (Ricolfi 1997, 2002; Bettin Lattes 2001; De Luca 2007; Bichi 2013) the research presented below on the young people of the Campania region was conducted with a view to exploring some dimensions essential for understanding participatory practices. The conceptual map outlines both the more traditional area of associationism and in terms of forms interpreted as expressions of a democratic renaissance occurring in recent decades.

5.3.1. Associational life

Referring to the definition of participation in public life comprising all spheres of relationality and social practices, the choice was made to investigate among the dimensions that go beyond political activism that of associationism, referring to the roots of the classical literature on social capital. According to the studies carried out by Putnam (1993: 169), whose research focused on the Italian regions, associationism networks contribute, together with trust and the rules of coexistence, to the formation of social capital, allowing for coordination between the actions of individuals and improving the efficiency of a society. Regardless of the assumptions and conclusions supported by Putnam regarding the relationship between associationism and good governance and the universalistic reading of associative participation as an indicator of the capacity to cooperate to attain objectives of collective interest - criticised

on the basis of various arguments proposed by other scholars (cf. amongst others, Boix, Posner 1996) - this sphere remains useful to delineate a part of the scenario of participation.

Associationism remains an important indicator of relational capital and of the areas of interest of social networks (e.g., religious, political, cultural and sports activities etc).

As Putnam himself already underlined in those years and according to the content of numerous studies and research referred to in the previous sections, in the younger generations a tendency is noted whereby political participation decreases with respect to that of past generations. Moreover, this is accompanied by a transformation of the areas of engagement in the public sphere and of participatory repertoires. On the one hand this has reinforced the need to investigate a more extensive field than that of the conventional forms of militancy and political protest. On the other hand the interest in detecting in the young generations the intensity of associative commitment, redefined also in the studies of Norris in the context of unconventional forms of democratic participation and, more specifically, in the sphere of civic activism and considered a useful indicator of current changes and the future of society (Galston 2001).

The sphere of associationism has been explored both in terms of the aims of the organisations referred to and, that is, on the basis of the areas of interest addressed by the activities, and also by investigating the intensity of the associative commitment through the multiplicity of associative networks to which the interviewees belong.

The results relating to the areas of interest of the organisations referred to in the Campania sample reveal (Table 5.1), among the prominent traits, that 18.5% of young people of all ages are linked to recreational associations and that cultural associations are frequented by 14.7% of the respondents (and in particular by 42.9% of 31-35 year-olds). Over 10% of young people have had experiences with associations of a humanitarian nature and this occurs above all in the segments of older individuals (31.8% of 26-30 year olds and 34.9% of 31-35 year olds). Participation in religious organisations and student and youth groups (the latter naturally being followed by those under the age of 26) presents an analogous situation.

Table 5.1 Spheres of associationism/age ranges

	Age ranges				
	18-21	22-25	26-30	31-35	% answers
Recreational associations (sport or hobby)	24.8 (108)	20.9 (91)	28.7 (125)	25.5 (111)	18.5% (435)
Religious associations (Catholic organisation)	22.6 (58)	24.5 (63)	30.4 (78)	22.6 (58)	10.9% (257)
Cultural associations (artistic or promotional organisation)	10.7 (37)	17.6 (61)	28.8 (100)	42.9 (149)	14.7% (347)
Environmental associations	11.6 (16)	18.1 (25)	26.8 (37)	43.5 (60)	5.9% (138)
Humanitarian association (e.g. Social Volunteering)	12.4 (32)	20.9 (54)	31.8 (82)	34.9 (90)	11% (258)
Social Promotion Associations	6.6 (9)	9.6 (13)	25.7 (35)	58.1 (79)	5.8% (136)
Territorial associations (e.g. district committee)	17.9 (15)	15.5 (13)	28.6 (24)	38.1 (32)	3.6% (84)
Political associations (e.g. parties, trade unions)	10.1 (16)	16.4 (26)	32.7 (52)	40.9 (65)	6.8% (159)
Professional associations	10.3 (9)	6.9 (6)	28.7 (25)	54 (47)	3.7% (87)
Students associations and youth groups	27.3 (70)	27 (69)	25.4 (65)	20.3 (52)	10.9% (256)
None	28.9 (57)	30.5 (60)	24.9 (49)	15.7 (31)	8.4% (197)
Total	18.1 (427)	20.4 (481)	28.5 (672)	32.9 (774)	100% (2354)
<i>The total refers to the number of answers recorded. Interviewees were asked to indicate the associations they are members of or they had actively participated in over the previous 2 years.</i>					

With the other types of associations levels of adherence of less than 7% of the sample are detected and in all cases there is a strong relationship with young people of the older age groups. This is particularly evident in the result of 58.1% of over-30s involved in active social-promotion networks (overall level of 5.8% of responses). Moreover, for the same age range the case of professional associations, which attract 54% of the participants, is quite clear. Evidently chosen for purposes relating to professional activities, these associations are among the networks of a smaller, niche-type segment (3.7%) characterised by the adherence of 82.7% of graduates, especially with level-II (37.9%) and post-graduate degrees (29.9%) (table 5.2). On the other hand, with the exception of organisations having professional purposes, the various areas of associationism as a whole do not present particular tendencies whereby significant relationships with levels of qualification may be identified.

Table 5.2 Spheres of associationism/level of education

Spheres	Educational level						% Answ.
	None/primary school	Secondary school qualification (≤ 3 yrs)	Secondary school qualification (5 yrs)	Bachelor degree	Master degree	Post-graduate	
Recreational associations (sports or hobbies)	.	4.8 (21)	45.7 (199)	19.1 (83)	22.1 (96)	8.3 (36)	18.5% (435)
Religious associations (Catholic organisation)	.	4.3 (11)	44.7 (115)	16.3 (42)	24.9 (64)	9.7 (25)	10.9% (257)
Cultural associations (artistic or promotional organisation)	.	1.2 (4)	38.9 (135)	16.4 (57)	28.2 (98)	15.3 (53)	14.7% (347)
Environmental associations	0.7 (1)	3.6 (5)	37.7 (52)	16.7 (23)	28.3 (39)	13 (18)	5.9% (138)
Humanitarian associations (e.g. social volunteering)	.	1.6 (4)	41.5 (107)	14.7 (38)	27.9 (72)	14.3 (37)	11% (258)
Social promotional associations	.	2.9 (4)	30.1 (41)	12.5 (17)	33.1 (45)	21.3 (29)	5.8% (136)
Territorial associations (e.g. district committee)	.	6 (5)	36.9 (31)	22.6 (19)	25 (21)	9.5 (8)	3.6% (84)
Political associations (e.g. parties, trade unions)	.	1.3 (2)	32.7 (52)	19.5 (31)	30.8 (49)	15.7 (25)	6.8% (159)
Professional associations	.	3.4 (3)	13.8 (12)	14.9 (13)	37.9 (33)	29.9 (26)	3.7% (87)
Students' associations and youth groups	.	3.5 (9)	50.4 (129)	17.6 (45)	20.3 (52)	8.2 (21)	10.9% (256)
None of the above	0.5 (1)	7.1 (14)	44.7 (88)	20.3 (40)	21.8 (43)	5.6 (11)	8.4% (197)
Total responses	0.1 (2)	3.5 (82)	40.8 (961)	17.3 (408)	23 (612)	12.3 (289)	100% (2354)
<i>The total refers to the number of answers recorded. Interviewees were asked to indicate the associations they belong to or in which they had participated over the previous 2 years.</i>							

It is always among 'young adults' that the most significant associative relations linked to commitments at the political, environmental and civic levels are found. A total of 6.8% of the responses refer to political associationism. In this context the segment of persons in the 26-30 age range participates with 32.7% of the respondents and over-30s with 40.9%. Activism in defence of the environment corresponds to 5.9% of the responses. Again, within the sphere of commitment relating to the context in which one lives, the organisations whose specific missions regard their local territory reach a lower level of 3.6%, with 28.6% of responses from 26-30 year olds and 38.2% from 31-35 year olds.

The fact that the under-25s reach more substantial levels only in relation to associations expressly dedicated to the interests of young people and students (around 27% in both the 18-21 and the 22-25 age groups) and, moreover, the fact that they constitute the highest percentages of young people who declare that they have not had any of these associative experiences (8.4% overall) amplifies the greater propensity to associationism among older youths.

To examine the intensity of associative commitment a synthetic variable was created capable of identifying involvement in one or more associations or the absence of associative experiences. The information on present or past membership of more than one association was obtained by adding together the answers given by the interviewees concerning their adherence to each type of association.

As shown in table 5.3, with respect to the variable of the intensity of associative commitment, more than half of the subjects in the Campania sample appear to present the condition of 'multi-affiliation'; that is, they are currently or in the past have been members of at least two associations (53%). There are also many people who present only a 'mono-affiliation', i.e., young people who belong to or were previously members of an association (27.3%), while the portion of 'isolated' subjects corresponds to less than 20%, i.e., those who during their life have never participated in any type of association.

From a comparison of this variable with educational qualifications, which is useful to observe the relationship between the membership of associations and cultural factors connected to the socialisation processes considered in the classical literature on participation, a significant difference is found regarding the number of associative experiences in young people especially with a very high level of education (post-graduate 71.4%; level-II degrees 56.6%). In these segments there is a clear difference between 'multi-affiliated' and 'isolated' subjects (the latter represent only 13.3% of the interviewees with a post-graduate qualification), which is almost non-existent at the level of young people who have moved beyond the stage of compulsory education. Of course, the comparison of the data confirms what may be expected considering the potentially better conditions and, that is, the stimulating effect that culture - as a reserve of knowledge and social capital - can have on interests, passions, sensitivity, attitudes, etc. In fact, the result obtained through a calculation of the number of young people with a university education among the isolated subjects would appear to require further study. Altogether, 50% of these young people, with degrees and post-graduate qualifications, have never been involved in associative experiences of any kind.

Table 5.3 Intensity of associative commitment/educational level

Intensity of the associative commitment None/primary school	Educational level						Total
	Secondary school qualification (≤ 3 yrs)	Secondary school qualification (5 yrs)	Bachelor Degree	Master degree	Post-graduate		
Isolation		34.7%	20,9%	20.2%	17.1%	13.3%	19.7%
Affiliation (to a single association)	100%	32.7%	27.6%	32.5%	26.4%	15.2%	27.3%
Multi-affiliation		32.7%	51.4%	47.3%	56.6%	71.4%	53%
Total	100% (1)	100% (49)	100% (449)	100% (203)	100% (258)	100% (105)	100% (1065)

A reading of the intensity of an associative commitment with respect to age ranges integrates the results that have emerged, showing stronger relationships among multi-affiliated persons and young people in the older groups.

Participation in at least two associations is found in 60.7% of young people between the ages of 31 and 35 and in 56.9% of the 26-30 age group. The result is also confirmed in the condition of isolation and, that is, where there is lack of experience of associationism, this being more widespread among the very young (26.5% in the 18-21 age range and 25.6% in the 22-25 range).

Table 5.4 Intensity of the associative commitment/age range

Intensity of the associative commitment	Age range				Total
	18-21	22-25	26-30	31-35	
Isolation	61 26.5%	61 25.6%	52 17.6%	37 12.2%	211 19.8%
Affiliation (single association)	70 30.4%	64 26.9%	75 25.4%	82 27.1%	291 27.3%
Multi-affiliation	99 43%	113 47.5%	168 56.9%	184 60.7%	564 52.9%
Total	230 100%	238 100%	295 100%	303 100%	1066 100%

5.3.2. Active participation in democratic practices relating to civic and social commitment

In a second area of investigation dedicated to participation in public life practices have been identified which form part of various types of activism. The selection was transversal with respect to the criterion of the nature of protests and mobilisation upon which was founded the distinction of unconventional forms with respect to conventional political forms, as proposed by Barnes, M. Kaase *et al.* (1979) and questioned by the recent transformations of repertoires and by the extension of protest-related activity in civic engagement and in forms of digital activism (Norris 2002).

Respondents were presented with items borrowed from various classifications developed in classical studies and in recent reflections.

Considering the forms of political participation identified by Verba *et al.* (see sect. 5.1) and some indicators used in recent surveys in the Italian context (Bichi, 2013: 165-168), account was taken of expressly political forms of activism, such as participation in electoral campaigns, and of civic commitment, represented above all by working with friends and/or acquaintances to solve problems in one's community of reference. Moreover, the initiative of establishing contact and communicating with political representatives and the reporting of inefficiency and proposals to improve public services, indicative of a form of dialogue and relationship between citizens and their representatives in and with respect to the institutions, were also noted.

As reported in tables 5.5, 5.6 and 5.7, the results referring to collaborative behaviour with friends and acquaintances aimed at solving problems in one's territorial area of reference indicate a percentage higher than 5% of the total of the indicated practices (6.1% of the responses). Commitment relating to one's territory concerns 30.7% of those who stated that they engage in at least one of the investigated forms of participation and 27.7% of the survey sample (see table 5.5, *% of respondent cases* and *% of sample cases*, respectively). In the form of a civic commitment that may develop through the consolidation of relationships and the maturing of a sense of belonging to the community this type of practice develops above all among young persons in a higher age range (28.5% of the 26-30 age group and 35.9% of 31-35 group, compared to values below 20% among the youngest, cf. table 3.7).

Among the forms of civic activism reports of inefficiency and/or proposals reach a value below 5% (table 5.5) of the responses and are presented only by one in five young persons in the sample and, again, mainly among 'young adults'.

Table 5.5 Practices of democratic, civic and social activism

	Responses		% Responding cases	% Sample cases
	Abs. val.	%		
Working with friends or acquaintances to solve a problem in your neighbourhood/village	295	6.1%	30.7%	27.7%
Report disservices and suggest how public services may be improved	225	4.7%	23.4%	21.1%
Participation in an electoral campaign	208	4.3%	21.6%	19.5%
Signing a public petition or referendum for a law deriving from a 'popular initiative'	529	11%	55%	49.6%
Participating in protest marches, demonstrations, strikes or not authorised assemblies	486	10.1%	50.6%	45.6%
Participating in protest marches, demonstrations, strikes or authorised assemblies	180	3.7%	18.7%	16.9%
Interrupting a public service in protest (e.g. occupying train tracks etc.) or occupying public spaces or factories etc.)	66	1.4%	6.9%	6.2%
Supporting forms of ethical funding/participation in fundraising for solidarity or charitable purposes	340	7.1%	35.4%	31.9%
Purchasing or refusing to purchase a particular product for political, ethical or environmental reasons (boycott)	259	5.4%	27%	24.3%
Following Twitter profiles, Facebook, political blogs and forums of Public Administration bodies or cultural associations and social networks	555	11.6%	57.8%	52.1%
Visiting institutional Public Administration websites	514	10.7%	53.5%	48.2%
Using e-mail to communicate with politicians or a P.A. body	148	3.1%	15.4%	13.9%
Using online services provided by Public Administration bodies for various purposes (e.g., online certification, download documents, payment of fines etc.)	322	7.7%	33.5%	30.2%
Voting in an online referendum or petition	481	10%	50.1%	45.1%
Sharing content in blogs or forums of a political, institutional, information or cultural nature	165	3.4%	17.2%	15.5%
Organising online protests: <i>mail-bombing, net-strikes</i> , etc.	32	0.7%	3.3%	3%
Total	4805	100% (4805)	500% (961)	450,8% (1066)
<i>* Respondents had to indicate all practices they had engaged in over the previous 2 years</i>				

A total of 19.5% of the sample has experience of electoral activism, with no particular age differences. Compared to other forms of engagement in public life this response, which identifies one of the conventional forms of behaviour of democratic participation, remains contained and corresponds to a percentage of 4.3%.

With respect to the activism contemplated by some scholars (including Barnes and Kaase) as a form of protest, data relating to some items identified in the *World Value Survey* research framework were referred to, as suggested also by Norris (2002: 6 -7).

These data show that participatory behaviour expressed through the signing of a public petition and/or participating in a referendum on laws promoted by a popular initiative is widespread (11% of the answers indicated

and 49.6% of the sample, confirmed also in online modes) as is participation in processions, demonstrations, strikes or authorised assemblies (10.1% of responses, relating to 45.6% of the sample). The most radical forms of participation in strikes, demonstrations, assemblies or unauthorised processions appear to present an overall reduction (3.7% of responses, given by 16.9% of the sample) and, even more so, the interruption of public services by way of protest (e.g., occupying train tracks, etc.) or the occupation of public spaces or factories (1.4% of the answers, corresponding to only 6.2% of the sample).

These forms of participation show significant differences in relation to the age groups and educational paths (table 5.6 and 5.7).

Personal exposure through adherence to a petition by subscribing and providing one's name and the responsibility of presenting one's personal details encounter a sense of awareness in the more mature 'young-adults' (with percentages of responses superior to 30% in the range 26-35, also for online participation, cf. table 5.6) and in subjects with higher educational qualifications. In fact, over 60% of the responses that provide information concerning petitions and referendums are provided by graduates and young people with post-graduate training (table 5.7).

On the other hand, participation in strikes and political demonstrations is more frequent among the very young, both in cases of authorised events (the most common practice in the 18-21 range, with 29% of the responses in this segment, cf. table 5.6) and in forms of unauthorised protest (35.6% of responses in the same segment, regarding a practice seen to be not very widespread overall). This concentration of street activism in the younger age group appears to be more closely related to medium-level qualifications (51.9% of young people with a level of education up to higher secondary school in the case of authorised protests and 57.2% in the case of those not authorised, in table 5.7) and thus seems to be related to student-type protests.

The traits of young people who participate in extreme forms of expression of dissent appear to differ. At the minimum level of 6.2% of the sample, with experiences of occupation of public places and the interruption of services (e.g., train tracks, highways, cf. table 5.5) this type of action is above all undertaken by those over 30, among whom 37.9% reported that they had participated in such practices (table 5.6); in relation to paths of education less adherence is evident on the part of the young people who have the highest qualifications.

Table 5.6 Practices of democratic, civic and social activism/age range

	Age range				Total
	18-21	22-25	26-30	31-35	% Responding cases
Working with friends or acquaintances to solve a problem in your neighbourhood/village	16.3 (48)	19.3 (57)	28.5 (84)	35.9 (106)	30.7% (295)
Report disservices and suggest how public services may be improved	8.4 (19)	19.1 (43)	37.3 (84)	35.1 (79)	23.4% (225)
Participation in an electoral campaign	14.9 (31)	24.5 (51)	29.3 (61)	31.3 (65)	21.6% (208)
Signing a public petition or referendum for a law deriving from a 'popular initiative'	12.9 (68)	23.1 (122)	33.3 (176)	30.8 (163)	55% (529)
Participating in protest marches, demonstrations, strikes or not authorised assemblies	29 (141)	20.4 (99)	24.7 (120)	25.9 (126)	50.6 (486)
Participating in protest marches, demonstrations, strikes or authorised assemblies	35.6 (64)	13.9 (25)	21.7 (39.)	28.9 (52)	18.7% (180)
Interrupting a public service in protest (e.g. occupying train tracks etc.) or occupying public spaces or factories etc.)	27.3 (18)	10.6 (7)	24.2 (16)	37.9 (25)	6.9% (66)
Supporting forms of ethical funding/participation in fundraising for solidarity or charitable purposes	14.1 (48)	19.4 (66)	30 (102)	36.5 (124)	35.4% (340)
Purchasing or refusing to purchase a particular product for political, ethical or environmental reasons (boycott)	11.6 (30)	2.6 (56)	29.3 (76)	37.5 (97)	27% (259)
Following Twitter profiles, Facebook, political blogs and forums of Public Administration bodies or cultural associations and social networks	12.3 (63)	22.2 (114)	30.9 (159)	34.6 (178)	57.8% (514)
Visiting institutional Public Administration websites	16.9 (94)	22.9 (127)	32.4 (180)	27.7 (154)	53.5% (555)
Using e-mail to communicate with politicians or a P.A. body	5.4 (8.)	15.5 (23)	37.8 (56)	41.2 (61)	15.4% (148)
Using online services provided by Public Administration bodies for various purposes (e.g., online certification, download documents, payment of fines etc.)	12.4 (40)	19.6 (63)	31.1 (100)	37 (119)	33.5% (322)
Voting in an online referendum or petition	12.3 (59)	22.7 (109)	33.5 (161)	31.6 (152)	50.1% (481)
Sharing content in blogs or forums of a political, institutional, information or cultural nature	7.3 (12)	16.4 (27)	34.5 (57)	41.8 (69)	17.2% (165)
Organising online protests: <i>mail-bombing, net-strikes</i> , etc.	15.6 (5)	21.9 (7)	15.6 (5)	46.9 (15)	3.3% (32)
Total	21 (202)	215 (207)	28 (269)	29.4 (283)	100% (961)

* Respondents had to indicate all practices they had engaged in over the previous 2 years. The % values are calculated on the total number of cases that responded with respect to each practice. The total % of respondents is calculated on the total of interviewees who answered this set of questions (961 cases, corresponding to 90,1% of the sample).

Table 5.7 Practices of democratic, civic and social activism compared to educational level

	Educational level					total
	None/primary school	Secondary school qualification (≤ 3 yrs)	Secondary school qualification (5 yrs)	Bachelor degree	Master degree	% of answers
Working with friends or acquaintances to solve a problem in your neighbourhood/village	3.4 (10)	39.3 (116)	18 (53)	25.8 (76)	13.6 (40)	6.1% (295)
Report disservices and suggest how public services may be improved	2.2 (5)	33.8 (76)	16 (36)	29.3 (66)	18.7 (42)	4.7% (225)
Participation in an electoral campaign	1.9 (4)	36.5 (76)	21.6 (45)	28.4 (59)	11.5 (24)	4.3% (208)
Signing a public petition or referendum for a law deriving from a 'popular initiative'	1.3 (7)	38.2 (202)	19.8 (105)	27.6 (146)	13 (69)	11% (529)
Participating in protest marches, demonstrations, strikes or authorised assemblies	6.6 (32)	45.3 (220)	16 (78)	21.2 (103)	10.9 (53)	10.1 (486)
Participating in protest marches, demonstrations, strikes or not authorised assemblies	6.1 (11)	51.1 (92)	18.9 (34)	15.6 (28)	8.3 (15)	3.7% (180)
Interrupting a public service in protest (e.g. occupying train tracks etc.) or occupying public spaces or factories etc.)	4.5 (3)	56.1 (37)	16.7 (11)	15.2 (10)	7.6 (5)	1.4% (66)
Supporting forms of ethical funding/participation in fundraising for solidarity or charitable purposes	2.1 (7)	40.9 (139)	15 (51)	26.8 (91)	15.3 (52)	7.1% (340)
Purchasing or refusing to purchase a particular product for political, ethical or environmental reasons (boycott)	1.2 (3)	37.8 (98)	17.4 (45)	29.3 (76)	14.3 (37)	5.4% (259)
Following Twitter profiles, Facebook, political blogs and forums of Public Administration bodies or cultural associations and social networks	3.2 (18)	40.2 (223)	17.7 (98)	26.8 (149)	12.1 (67)	11.6% (555)
Visiting institutional Public Administration websites	2.7 (14)	31.9 (164)	22.4 (115)	29.6 (152)	13.4 (69)	10.7% (514)
Using e-mail to communicate with politicians or a P.A. body	0.7 (1)	25.7 (38)	18.2 (27)	31.1 (46)	24.3 (36)	3.1% (148)
Using online services provided by Public Administration bodies for various purposes (e.g., online certification, download documents, payment of fines etc.)	1.2 (4)	35.1 (113)	16.8 (54)	28 (90)	18.9 (61)	6.7% (322)
Voting in an online referendum or petition	1 (5)	38.9 (187)	18.5 (89)	28.7 (138)	12.9 (62)	50.1% (481)
Sharing content in blogs or forums of a political, institutional, information or cultural nature	0.6 (1)	29.1 (48)	17 (28)	34.5 (57)	18.8 (31)	17.2% (165)
Organising online protests: <i>mail-bombing</i> , <i>net-strikes</i> , etc.	-	46.9 (15)	15.6 (5)	25 (8)	12.5 (4)	3.3% (32)
Total	2.6 (125)	38.4 (1844)	18.2 (874)	27 (1295)	13.9 (667)	100% (4805)

* Respondents had to indicate all practices carried out over the previous 2 years. The % values are calculated on the total number of responses given for each practice (N = 4805).

About one third of the sample (31.9%, cf. table 5.5) adhere to fund-raising to express their solidarity or for charity purposes and other forms of ethical financing; this behaviour corresponds to 7.1% of the responses and presents percentages higher than 30% in people over the age of 26. This result appears to be important if one considers the limited availability of money for a segment of subjects who for the most part are not economically independent and, thus for whom even a minimal commitment in terms of donations may have quite a different significance compared to that of the financially independent population.

Adherence to boycotts, as in the practice of purchasing or refusing to buy a particular product for political, ethical or environmental reasons, is less frequent. This behaviour, albeit slightly, exceeds the 5% threshold among the various types of civic engagement and involves one out of four young people, who are mainly 'young adults' and counted among the most highly educated groups.

Electronic citizenship has been investigated through multiple indicators, which are necessary to explore the various ways of frequenting the digital public space according to the purpose in question, the degree of personal exposure, the employment of time and the individual contribution made to the digital and – consequently – to the real-life community.

At the level that identifies a mainly informative use of internet-based channels, which Macintosh (2004: 3, see sect. 5.3) also indicates as preliminary to a possible involvement that is more active (e-engagement) or perhaps proactive (e-empowerment), about half of the sample habitually follows social profiles of Public Administration bodies, politicians and other institutional, cultural and media actors (11.5% of responses) and consults the institutional websites of Public Administration bodies (10.7%). These ways of seeking information are more common among young people over 25 and those who have at least a degree, as shown in table 5.7.

Moving from information to communication via e-mail with political and institutional representatives, a low level of interaction emerges. Only 3.1% of responses indicate an experience of contact via e-mail with respect to 13.9% of the sample (table 5.5). Approximately 80% of cases are over the age of 26 (table 5.6).

On the other hand, use of the digital modality in order to adhere to petitions, surveys and online subscriptions is more widespread (45.1% of the sample and 10% of responses). As mentioned, for this practice almost no differences are found with respect to the same form of participation through

traditional activities, such as street banquets or being physically present at points where signatures are collected.

The young people who frequent the digital spaces of public administration bodies to make use of online services (e.g., online certification, payments, consultation of documents, etc.) represent around 30% of the sample. This practice corresponds to 6.7% of the responses. Although this concerns the area of relations between citizens and institutions, these are actions that respond primarily to particular needs to satisfy individual requirements, and in this sense are marginal with respect to aims of general interest in the perspective of investigation in the research relating to the Campania region.

Digital activism requiring greater commitment - whether in terms of initiative and a pro-active attitude or in terms of time dedicated to activities - is the area in which a certain laziness is encountered, especially on the part of very young people. Only 15.5% of the sample are dedicated to providing written contributions, embracing the logic of co-production in online information resources typical of the 'Web 2.0' world and the Millennial generation (e.g., writing articles on blogs, contributing to content appearing in groups and forums, etc.). This activity corresponds to 3.4% of responses and is much more frequently practised among 'young adults', especially among those over the age of 30 (41.8% compared to 7.3% in the 18-21 age group).

The organisation of online protests (e.g., 'mail-bombing', 'net strikes') involves only 3% of the sample and obtains the lowest values among all participatory practices, and not only the digital type, with 0.6% of the responses. Moreover, the few individuals who practice this type of e-participation, occasionally reaching the limits of what is legally acceptable, tend to form part of the more mature segment.

5.4. A typology of activism in participation in public life

For a concise reading of the activism present among the young people of Campania, the dimensions analysed may be considered in an aggregate form through an index constructed by the combination of the intensity of associative and participatory commitments.

To this end, an initial index of the intensity of participatory commitment was constructed on the basis of the various democratic practices and civic and social commitment analysed in sect. 5.3.2. With respect to the variety

of items presented to interviewees a selection was made that favoured the most active and, that is, proactive and demanding forms of participation. The criteria considered were personal exposure (signing petitions, referendums, etc.), mobilisation, also through one's physical presence (participation in processions, demonstrations, supporting boycotts, occupation and interruption of public services), commitment to organisational and creative work and the time one has available to dedicate to such activities (publishing online content, participating in electoral campaigns, solving local problems, reporting inefficient services and elaborating proposals for improvement, organising online protests) and financial contributions (fund raising and ethical financing). Practices that require membership or passive usage, as in the case of activities with the aim of providing information and services (visiting websites and institutional social profiles, sending e-mail messages to politicians or administrators and using online services) were not taken into account.

With respect to the limited set of participatory items three levels of intensity of participatory commitment were identified according to the number of activities performed by the interviewees:

- low intensity: 0-2 types of activities;
- medium intensity: 3-5 types of activities;
- high intensity: 6-12 types of activities.

The intensity of commitment to an association was thus used as a second dimension on the basis of the modalities of the variable created and analysed in sect. 5.3.1: isolation, mono-affiliation and multi-affiliation.

The index was then constructed through the combination of the three synthetic modalities of each dimension, identifying the five levels of activism - absent, low, medium-low, medium-high and high - indicated in the relative cells in table 5.8.

On the basis of the values identified in the sample (table 5.9) the reading of the index of activism in young people in Campania reveals a category that includes 14.7% of the cases in which there is no form of activism, either associative or otherwise (*absence of activism*). For the most numerous segment of young people in the Campania, corresponding to 29.5% of the sample, participatory activities remain at a level of low activism, defined by affiliation to a single association and a medium level of participatory commitment, i.e., limited to less than half of the practices under investigation. A further 18.5% of young people presenting a medium-low level of activism are oriented exclusively towards one of the two dimensions of the index, showing no interest

in the other. Above all, they are cases identified entirely with the associative spheres they belong to and not engaging in any other civic behaviour among those considered (17.7%). To these are added the few subjects who prefer to act autonomously in favour of the collective interest and are not linked to associative networks (0.8%).

Table 5.8 Index of activism

		Intensity of the associative commitment		
		Isolation	Mono-affiliation	Multi-affiliation
Intensity of participatory commitment	Low	Absent activism	Low activism	Medium-low activism
	Medium	Low activism	Low activism	Medium-high activism
	High	Medium-low activism	High activism	High activism

Table 5.9 Index of activism: outcomes

Intensity of the associative commitment / intensity of the associative commitment					
		Intensity of the associative commitment			Total
		Isolation	Mono-affiliation	Multi-affiliation	
Intensity of the participatory commitment	Low	157 14.7%	179 16.8%	189 17.7%	525 49.2%
	Medium	46 4.3%	90 8.4%	224 21%	360 33.8%
	High	8 0.8%	22 2.1%	151 14.2%	181 17%
Total		211 19.8%	291 27.3%	564 52.9%	1066 100%

Absent activism: 14.7%
Low activism: 29.5%
Medium-low activism: 18.5%
Medium-high activism: 21%
High activism: 16.3%

At an initial level the groups showing the highest level of participation are composed of young people who present a discreet commitment at both the associative level and in different practices of public commitment (medium-high activism, corresponding to 21% of the sample). Finally, there is a section - very interesting in terms of the collaborative quality of social, participatory

and associative capital - which comprises young active citizens engaged on many fronts and also active in multiple social networks. This segment, which presents a high level of activism, does not appear to be negligible - also at the quantitative level - as it is formed by 16.3% of the young people in Campania.

The analysis of the activism index by educational level does not reveal any particularly significant forms of association.

5.5. Final considerations

The participation scenario highlighted by the research conducted on young people in Southern Italy contributes to reflection on the phenomena of youth activism, first of all favouring the spheres that appear to be more in line with the initiatives and social contribution of the new generations in an age of disenchantment and disgust with respect to politics (Bichi 2013: 161).

The less pessimistic view of the social commitment of the younger generations is reflected in Campania in the variety of areas studied by means of which it was possible to comprehend their intervention in public spaces. Albeit to a different extent, the results have indicated distributions not highly unbalanced among the types of participatory action observed, accounting for the actual presence of a plurality of new forms.

In the more traditional sphere of associationism (having various purposes) on the whole a degree of involvement has been identified that is anything but negligible, with a minority - reduced to less than 20% of young people - who have never had experiences of this type (a segment referred to as of 'isolated' persons) and with half of the sample belonging to more than one non-profit organisation.

On the one hand a lower propensity to associative life among the youngest subjects (those under the age of 26) draws attention to a need for greater investment in action and policies that may act as stimuli for this segment on the part of the various social and political-institutional actors and those representing the world of education. On the other hand we may interpret in a positive manner - in terms of a more conscious choice - the intensity of commitment in social networks detected in subjects in the more mature age groups (over 26), well over half of whom are also active in different areas of association (multi-affiliation).

In the extended scenario of democratic, civic and social participation the reality of the Campania region has confirmed the diversification occurring in

the way of exercising citizenship, the reorientation of a part of common interests towards more tangible aims of civic engagement with respect to classical political militancy and the spread of the new digital environments as meeting places - albeit still mainly for purposes relating to the dissemination of information - for young people and public actors.

On the other hand, the results emerging from the practices related to these new forms of interaction and activity attract the attention of observers of participatory phenomena with regard to the need for careful reflection and further studies. In particular the investigations could study the development of analysis frameworks, which will make it possible to distinguish and understand the different aims and the different commitment required by the types of behaviour detected. For example, as we have seen, the analysis of online participatory practices reveals a widespread diffusion of the use of web-based and social channels among Millennials. However this has to be related to the less challenging level of involvement in public life as it introduces a social contribution evidently less intense with respect to the pro-active forms of production of online content or mobilisations and protests²². These analytical distinctions become necessary for a correct interpretation of the new participatory phenomena, often emphasized by theoretical perspectives more sensitive to the potential of new digital platforms, perspectives of democracy and electronic citizenship and the generative power of social innovation than to the study of their actual manifestation.

A final point of consideration in the direction of further interpretative paths which would allow for a more effective investigation of the participatory habits and practices of younger subjects (of the Z generation, for example) concerns the need for a more profound examination of the less structured forms of participation that are taking shape in the less exposed digital areas. Instead of personal message boards in social networks open to the general public, as we have become used to seeing them in Facebook, current spaces of interest where young people may express their views appear to be the result of additions to groups that often also have a base of personal connections and relations in real life. These become spaces where one can access information and communicate with others and they are ideal for reflection and the realisation of shared action in the publicly accessible digital sphere. With the consolidation of the network society and after many years of overuse of terms

22 This point of weakness is also shown by the results of a previous focus on the Neapolitan area, carried out in the context of this investigation, which highlights precisely the low dissemination of more demanding practices that require an active contribution - at the personal level - in 'e-participation' activities; Leone, Delli Paoli (2016).

and rhetoric pertaining to the semantic field of electronic communication, a renewed concept of groups integrated in a digital space not defined by its in/out boundaries but by the bonds and the reasons that unite subscribed members is now arising. Digital groups thus construed, not necessarily lasting beyond a period of time determined by the purpose of the existence of the group itself or subject to transformations (also quite frequent, and often reflected also in the naming and renaming of the group), seem to be characterised by a transformative character. When they are not abandoned by the majority of members they may consolidate and find continuity in adaptation and in their updating to accommodate continuously new input, becoming spaces and channels for communication and even alternative types of information, as well as the organisation and creation of common objectives and content. All of these properties may be investigated in the future through studies of the use of these instruments by young people in particular.

PUBLIC COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SPACES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

6.1. Youth and information in the space of flows

Digital communication in the public space develops through multi-actor networks that connect administrations and other social actors (Leone, Delli Paoli 2016a) and create direct interaction with connected citizens (Lovari 2013).

The plurality of subjects and instances and the complexity of this new arena (Innerarity 2008) enter a communicative dimension characterised by a continuously and rapidly changing technological scenario. These conditions render obsolete theoretical systems and technical approaches conceived for communication in the age of mass media and the first generation of the web. They require a redefinition of the categories of analysis and re-launch reflection on emerging issues and current challenges (Bentivegna, Boccia Artieri 2019).

On the theoretical level, media studies view the networks as communicative structures that are characterised by their capacity to connect people

and their pervasiveness by virtue of a greater openness, interconnection and flexibility with respect to the rigid communication models of linear and hierarchical systems. According to Castells (1996), the information society is a move beyond an industrial society, and brings with it a change in logic in terms of the production and circulation of information, scientific research and the production of knowledge (Touraine 1969; Bell 1973).

Communication takes on multi-directional orientations that lead to the possibility of creating and distributing information between a variety of nodes, in every direction, and in a continuous and reciprocal manner. Users may not only access the information present on the network but can participate as 'prosumers'. They are thus consumers of news but also become actors through the direct production of information, to the point of contributing also at the most complex level that sees machines intervening as intelligent producers through computational processes that process new information through 'smart' algorithms (Ritzer, Jurgenson 2010; Ritzer 2014). At the basic level there are user-generated processes (Tufekci 2014), and data generated by users through social platforms - comments on a blog or a status on Facebook or a post on Twitter - whereby information becomes 'latent' and thus traces of subjects remain on the web.

The network logic becomes the core element of a paradigm whereby a 'network society' is created, forming a vast community characterised by a network-based organisation in all spheres of life (economic, political, military, social, communicative, etc.). This society is facilitated by the fundamental role of Internet and Communication Technologies (ICT) which render more efficient the coordination and decentralisation of activities and the various processes that control it (Castells 1996). With the development of ICT, the networks allow for multichannel and multimedia articulation, sharing and interdependence, which, in turn, generate forms of interconnection characterised by permanent and temporary configurations that involve various types of transmedia and convergent media content, technologies and channels. In this perspective, the networks convey upon communication and, in a broader sense, upon digital cultures the distinctive character of convergence, or a "coexistence of multiple media systems, in which the flow of content is fluid" (Jenkins 2006: 345).

The configuration of the networks produces a new digital public space where one can engage in participation. An opportunity in this sense is provided especially for young people, the segment of the population more distant from traditional forms of participation with respect to public and political

issues, especially when these assume institutional forms (Beck 2000; Zani, Cicognani, Albanesi 2011).

Young people become the protagonists of a process of 'deinstitutionalisation' and 'desocialisation' which redefines the forms of and links with the institutions of society (Touraine 1998). Digital and social public communication can lead to a process whereby participation on the part of citizens is stimulated, this being a proactive response of the new generations to the general context of distance from the public sphere (Ricolfi 2002), especially if it aims at achieving the empowerment of the new generations.

In this way, the involvement of young people shifts towards non-hierarchical and informal spaces and networks, which become the sites of new public socialisation repertoires. The study of these networks is based on the assumption that information policies have a function of emancipation and development with respect to the younger generations. For this reason, they are perceived as fundamental requirements for self-orientation, growth and finding a place in a society which nowadays is configured with information networks and entrusts its destiny to the acquisition of knowledge and innovation. However, it is worth noting that knowledge of digital instruments on the part of young people constitutes merely a condition of potential emancipation and participation thanks to e-enabling, an involvement that can certainly be strengthened through the development of e-empowering and, that is, active digital participation in support of 'bottom-up' ideas which in some way can influence the political agenda, recognising citizens as capable of presenting petitions or requests and not as passive recipients of policies (Macintosh 2004).

Also isolating for analytical purposes solely the information level, the potential expressed by the opening up of social networks to co-production draws attention to the role that young people themselves play in the new digital space. Institutional actors receive explicit input regarding the information needs of young people precisely from the output of 'neo-journalists'. The neologism is taken from a study of the crisis of traditional journalism (Morcellini 2011) and adopted (Leone 2012) with the double sense of 'young' and 'new' journalists. With respect to the professional sector, neo-journalism comprises several features of current forms of communication, including participatory journalism, which is a relevant point of interest in this work. The latter is in turn explored in two ways. Although both are obviously based on the Web 2.0 'many-to-many' model, associated with the underlying dimension of the community or of the social network referred to, the first method concerns a

more individualised practice of journalism. This is seen as a growing phenomenon of active participation on the part of those who receive news directly and pass it on over the Internet and also on the part of those who follow and reinforce its presence, commenting on the same, with particular reference to the dissemination of these practices through micro-blogging, e.g., Twitter (Polo in Morcellini 2011). The second method highlights the further potential of participatory journalism in its capacity to give voice to various forms of associationism. Some examples are NGOs, cooperatives, volunteering, etc. that can lead to a media activism structured on the basis of autonomous means, if raised to professional levels, also capable of affecting the agenda-setting of the traditional media (Carotenuto in Morcellini 2011: 202-204).

From these perspectives, young people thus assume multiple roles as media actors, as public recipients of information and self-producers of social communication.

With regard to the first two roles it is moreover opportune to reflect on the fact that these subjects are privileged witnesses of the point of view of young people. This aspect is in fact highlighted in particular in the European Youth Information Charter (ERYICA 2004), which sees young people as truly aware of their own needs, adding that they are at the same time repositories of tacit and linguistic knowledge suitable for dealing with their peers.

Of course, in this exchange of information, production through participation can not be considered uncritically. It poses a fundamental issue regarding the reliability of the information produced due to the absence of guarantees with respect to what in classical journalism is defined as authoritativeness or credibility of the source (Papuzi 2010: 30), as confirmed by many comments that have been raised against the myth of free online information (Metitieri 2009).

In the production of online information and the presentation of knowledge it is particularly difficult to check accuracy, correctness and compliance with laws precisely because of the volume of flows and their dynamics, as shown by the enormous attention currently paid to fake news. In this regard, when they are conceived as open channels the public information networks are required to carry out particularly careful assessments with respect to these issues. The various forms of participatory information require the development of systems capable of ensuring the accreditation of sources, compliance with information law (protection of privacy, etc.), the exercise of the right of reply, the control of deviant information, etc. In other words, there is the need for a constant effort to seek points of convergence between aspects of

responsibility on the part of the institutions, on the one hand with respect to the right of citizens to be informed (among others, Faccioli 1994: 5-33; Mancini 1996; Rolando 2011) and receive reliable information and, on the other hand, with respect to rights to participate in the exercise of active citizenship.

Examining the overall configuration of the youth information network, also focusing solely on the closest nodes, it thus presents a multiplicity of producers and flows. A minimal classification based on the actors distinguishes the following entities:

a) political and institutional actors directly involved in youth policies (e.g., political subjects, European, national, regional, provincial and local institutions and bodies, youth agencies, support units, such as observatories, study centres, etc.);

b) other public institutions working with young people (schools, universities, social and cultural institutions, such as libraries, museums, etc.)

c) youth forums, youth associations and young people (e.g., groups that are more and less institutionalised and formalised, informal groups, committees, movements, individuals, etc.);

d) organisations, bodies and private individuals operating in the youth world with a view to achieving goals of public utility (e.g., associations, cooperatives, non-profit organisations, etc.);

e) media (e.g., newspapers, freelancers, bloggers, communities, etc.).

In this perspective, the paths of investigation discussed below favour the analysis of flows of active communication carried out by some of the actors-broadcasters who relate to the world of youth and have structured an information service on topics and opportunities of interest for the youth segments. In particular, there are political-institutional actors (regional PA bodies), national government (ANG) and associative (Eurodesk) bodies, youth participation subjects (Youth Forums), and other institutions (university and regional observatory).

The aim is to investigate the particular characteristics of these places in which information is circulated and exchanged and, at least potentially according to the theoretical coordinates referred to, which provide opportunities for meeting, sharing, involvement and public participation.

Taking up a proposal (Leone, Delli Paoli 2016b) for a re-elaboration of the well-known taxonomy proposed by Mancini (1996) relating to public communication, the results of the analysis of the content of information disseminated by some of the main actors of the Italian network of youth policies are presented through public pages on the Facebook social network.

6.2. Research on Italian youth information networks

The subject of analysis is the content of posts published on Facebook pages by various youth information channels within the public or semi-public sphere in the period between March 2016 and March 2018. The extracted empirical base²³ is composed of a total of 6,989 posts.

The decision to conduct the survey on Facebook, with respect to other social media, was made on the basis of the fact that the use of the other social networks by institutions and organisations that feed the communication channels observed is still not fully developed. Of course this is not only due to a delay on the part of operators with regard to the media-usage trends of young people, who are currently particularly attracted to Instagram more than Facebook itself (Censis 2018). The situation is also caused by the difficulties that dedicated editors have in the management (implementation and, above all, control) of greater flows of communication. Furthermore, at the time of the investigation, Facebook retains the advantage of a substantial number of users and potential interactivity among the communicating parties with the possibility for users to react with written comments, tags, emojis, etc. However, the interaction that occurs in the typically ‘visual’ social media, such as Instagram, is different and less text-oriented but in any case this may be very interesting for other paths of study, especially concerning young people.

Table 6.1 shows the public Facebook pages in relation to the actors observed and the respective numbers of posts analysed in each case.

Table 6.1 Actors, Facebook pages and number of posts extracted.

Actors	Facebook page	% post	posts (abs. v.)
National Youth Agency (ANG)	agenziagiovani	16.6	1,158
Observatory of Youth Culture (OCPG), University of Salerno - Public Research Body	Observatory of Youth Culture (OCPG)	20	1,396
Eurodesk Italy	Eurodesk.Italy	9	626
National Youth Forum	National Youth Forum	11	771
Campania Regional Youth Forum	frgcampania	8.7	607
Regional Platform of Youth Policies, Tuscany Region	Giovanisi	17.4	1,215
Regional Platform of Youth Policies, Friuli-Venezia-Giulia Region	giovanifvg.it	17.4	1,214
Total posts (1.3.2016 - 31.3.2018)		100	6,987

23 The posts were extracted using the Fanpage Karma tool.

Although starting from different perspectives, in relation to the different nature and the particular institutional aims, the identified actors are united by the public target towards which the flow of communication is directed, i.e., young people.

The National Youth Agency (ANG) is a public body supervised by the Italian Government and the European Commission. The Agency was created by the Italian Parliament in the implementation of Decision No 1719/2006/CE of the European Parliament and of the Council, which established the Community Youth in Action programme for the period 2007-2013. In its mission the organisation pursues various objectives aimed at promoting active citizenship on the part of young Europeans, supporting and developing new activities.

The OCPG Observatory for Communication and Participation of Youth Cultures of the University of Salerno is a research centre for the study of contemporary youth phenomena, operating as a body providing contact between the world of research and stakeholders (public and private) that cater for the interests of young people. Beyond the specific field of scientific research and support for regional policies, the observatory develops activities and programmes in collaboration with the various actors in the area. Since 2010 it has had an editorial body dedicated to the transmission of information for young people through a multi-channel web and Internet-based system with daily updates (www.giovani.unisa.it).

Eurodesk Italy is the official network of the European Union Erasmus+ programme which facilitates the dissemination of information on programmes and initiatives promoted by the EU institutions in favour of young people. It was created with the support of the European Commission - DG EAC (Education and Culture) - and the National Youth Agency, and operates to help young people make use of the opportunities offered by European programmes in various sectors. It has been active since 1990 with the aim of reducing distances between the world of youth and institutions and between the central and peripheral areas of the European Union.

The National Youth Forum is a national platform which unites over 75 Italian youth organisations. It was officially founded in 2004 with the aim of giving a voice to the younger generations, creating a body that would reinforce the dialogue and the relationship between youth associations and the various actors of civil society and institutions, promoting the interests of young people at Government level, in Parliament and in the social and economic institutions of civil society.

The Campania Regional Youth Forum is an independent body for participation and consultation regarding youth policies established with Regional Law 14/89 by the Regional Council of Campania. The organisation has the task of representing the interests and aspirations of young people through a dialogue with the institutions and active participation of young people in social and political life. Its aim is to be a vehicle for the dissemination of stimuli from the Municipal and Provincial Forums.

‘Giovanisi’ is a project of the Region of Tuscany which promotes youth autonomy. The system offers opportunities divided into seven macro-areas of interest: Internships, Accommodation, Civil Service, Business, Study and Training, Work and a variety of other projects presented under the general heading of Giovanisi+. It is included among the 24 strategic projects of the 2016-2020 Regional Development Program, through which the Tuscany Region intends to achieve the Europe 2020 objectives.

‘Giovani Friuli Venezia Giulia’ is the project of the Autonomous Region of Friuli-Venezia-Giulia which promotes youth autonomy and the involvement of young people in local activities. The digital platform is divided into six areas of interest: Work, Training, Mobility Abroad, Associations and Participation, Home and Personal Services, Events and Leisure-time activities.

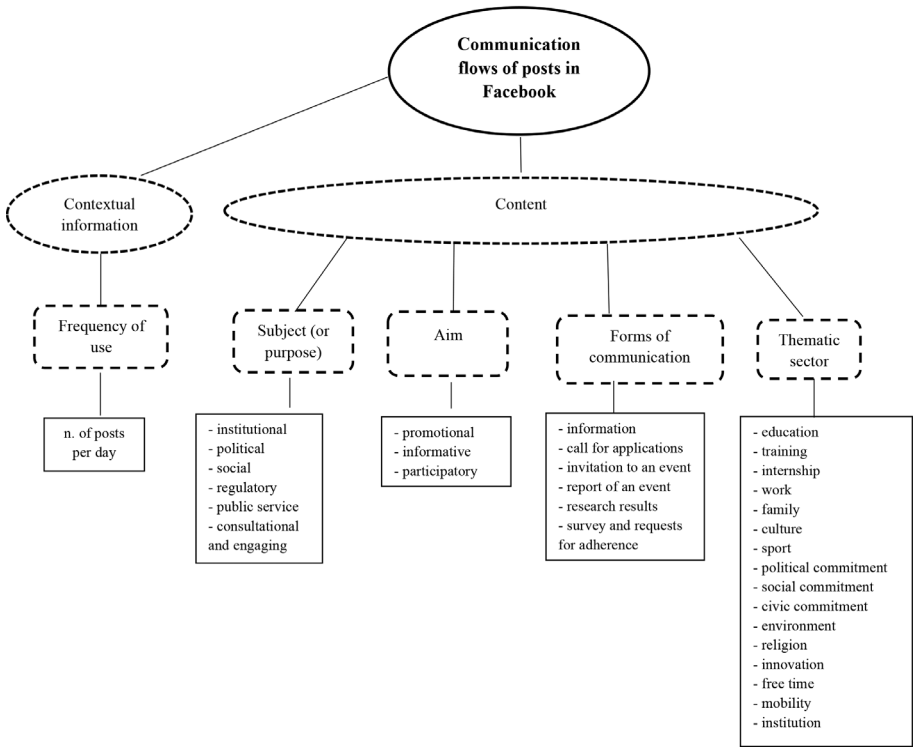
The selection of the channels presented was based on an online screening of public information pages dedicated to young people and relative subjects of interest with a certain movement and ongoing implementation (albeit with a diversified frequency among the various accounts) and an overall total of not less than 500 posts for the period considered.

The unit of analysis corresponds to the posts published on the public Facebook pages of the selected channels.

The posts were subjected to a classification operation through an analysis of content carried out identifying significant elements within the posts (single words, sentences, entire texts, etc.) most pertinent with respect to the research objective (Amaturo, Punziano 2013). The selected approach was adopted through an examination of the messages with the help of a questionnaire compiled in a specific manner (Rositi 1988: 73; Losito 1996: 75) implementing a content analysis as an inquiry (Rositi 1970) in order to record the states of certain properties of the selected units of analysis.

The various dimensions studied are presented in the conceptual map in Fig. 6.1.

Fig. 6.1 Conceptual map



In this regard, a grid for the breakdown of the body of the text (de Lillo 2010) was developed: a form containing questions that reflect the dimensions represented in the conceptual map. As in the map, the analytical categories are divided into topics, objectives and thematic areas or sectors to which the news refers (education, family, culture, etc.), the type of news (information, public calls for applications, events, etc.) and, finally, the frequency of posting.

The mapping of the categories considered for the analysis of the textual content of the posts reflects a typology of flows of communication that re-elaborates certain taxonomies appearing in the literature of public communication and which summarises the relationships between the topics, objectives and thematic sectors, identifying the possible types of communication.

Starting with the taxonomy of subjects defined by Mancini (1996: 95-104) and some readjustments (Leone, Delli Paoli 2016b: 402), the topics were divided into 6 classes:

- *institutional, the communication of the Institution itself (its goals, values, and activities)*. This is a type of communication aimed at constructing the image of the institution and strengthening its reputation. It serves to communicate the mission and vision of the institution to allow for the construction of its identity:

- *political*: any content that contains statements made by political or government representatives, information regarding government and institutional programmes that present a political orientation relating to visions, programmes, themes, action and political declarations;

- *regulatory*: including all contents that communicate rules, regulations, laws and administrative acts of the same or of different bodies. This communication is aimed at transparency and informing citizens about new national, EU and international regulations.

- *social*: contents which refer to initiatives and information that affect social well-being or the inclusion of vulnerable sections of society, events that aim at improving the quality of life of citizens and which refer to the construction of an inclusive civil society;

- *service-oriented*: including the contents that refer to public services and related information (information on the services offered by the body; data, documents, and guidelines; information having public resonance of various kinds, including general information, new knowledge or results of surveys on young people;

- *consultational and engaging*: the creation of spaces allowing the public to consult opinions and for initiatives presented by citizens. This is a type of communication which, at a basic level, allows for an assessment of the views, interests and opinions of the public in general or of particular groups through direct consultations or fact-finding surveys; at a secondary level it induces active participation with messages attempting to engage citizens in policy and decision-making.

For the classification of posts on the basis of communicational objectives, reference was made to the same typological proposal followed at the previous level (Leone, Delli Paoli, *ibid.*) in which three types of objectives are distinguished:

- *promotional*: aiming at the valorisation of an identity, image and for propaganda purposes, when a particular image, the dissemination of an identity and legitimization represent the main goal;
- *information*: a focus on the circulation and dissemination of news and documents on activities, initiatives or services, when the access and transparency information are the ultimate goal;

- *participatory*: aimed at stimulating active participation on the part of citizens, when shared governance is the main goal.

In addition to the topics and objectives, the posts were classified on the basis of what we may define as ‘communication formats’ or, in the case of a public call for applications, an invitation to an event, a report, etc.; the categories found are the following:

- information;
- calls for applications/competitions;
- surveys and membership requests
- invitation to an event;
- report of an event;
- research report.

The coding operations involved several analysts and a pre-test was carried out on 300 posts which allowed for an assessment of reliability (Marradi 1990) and, that is, congruence between the interpretations of the various analysts (Diana, Montesperelli 2005). Specifically, two reliability checks were carried out (Krippendorff 1980): a ‘test-test’, in which several analysts collected information on the same case (the same post on the same Facebook page) using the same form and a ‘test-retest’, where the same analyst carried out tests repeated over time on a specific case using the same form. This operation made it possible to verify the semantic relevance of the response categories of the variables considered, intervening in this way on the operational definitions of the individual dimensions of the communication flows of posts on Facebook.

6.3. Subjects, objectives, forms of communication and themes of information flows for young people: analysis and results

The analysis of the content of posts occurs on two assessment levels: the first uses a typology of public communication flows to explore topics and objectives of messages presented through information channels for young people. Secondly, the social channels are analysed with a focus on detecting both the most frequent news formats and, that is, determining whether it is information concerning competitions, research reports, invitations to events, etc., and also the thematic area and, that is, the sector to which the information flow refers (e.g., training, religion, sport, politics, etc.).

The final aim of the analysis is to trace the characteristics of the information flows aimed at the under-40 segments and, to this end, to reflect on possibilities of synthesis and the relative methodological instruments to understand topics, areas and purposes of the information generated in the public space and aimed at young people.

6.3.1. Topics covered in information networks for young people

An examination of the topics covered by the observed flows reveals that the youth information channels prefer a type of communication aimed mainly at involvement through invitations to events and action to stimulate participation, such as contests, and the interaction of young visitors (43.8%).

Following this there are institutional posts (28.6%) and public service posts (22.5%) which indicate both an interest in increasing the visibility of activities, aims and areas of competence of the issuing organisation and also the commitment to dissemination of useful information, also relating to documents, official forms, contests, etc.

However, analyzing the data of the individual profiles more marked differences are noted (table 6.2). Some institutions present a profile prevalently oriented towards a certain topic: the OCPG Youth Observatory and 'Giovanisi' are distinguished with respect to the others by communication aimed at involving young people through posts that require adherence to proposals, the expression of opinions, participation in contests and similar matters (in the two channels, respectively, these constitute 65.5% and 65.2% of the flows). The posts published by the Regional Youth Forum of Campania and by the National Youth Forum on the other hand mainly publish institutional content (about 62% for both) or inform young users with whom they are in contact about the initiatives that they promote. This trait may be appreciated and understood if traced back to the positions of the actors in question. As they are subjects of an associative nature, also of a political nature and with a governing body in elected office (meta-associations of representatives of the young members of parties and other associations) institutional information is united with the search for the legitimation of individuals and organisations present in the background by highlighting what has been achieved.

Table 6.2 Topics of public communication in the social media channels examined

Information channels Facebook		Topics of public communication						
		Institutional	Political	Social	Regulatory	Service	Consultation and engagement	Total
National Youth Agency	abs.val.	530	6	15	3	358	246	1158
	%	45.8	0.5	1.3	0.3	30.9	21.2	100
OCPG Observatory	abs.val.	168	0	67	0	247	916	1398
	%	12	0	4.8	0	17.7	65.5	100
Eurodesk	abs.val.	193	6	15	2	159	250	625
	%	30.9	1	2.4	0.3	25.4	40	100
National Youth Forum	abs.val.	477	3	27	2	42	220	771
	%	61.9	0.4	3.5	0.3	5.4	28.5	100
Regionale Youth Forum – Campania	abs.val.	371	17	103	14	3	99	607
	%	61.1	2.8	17	2.3	0.5	16.3	100
GiovaniSi	abs.val.	127	12	14	0	189	640	982
	%	12.9	1.2	1.4	0	19.2	65.2	100
GiovaniFVG	abs.val.	63	3	30	3	523	590	1212
	%	5.2	0.2	2.5	0.2	43.2	48.7	100
Total	abs.val.	1929	47	271	24	1521	2961	6753
	%	28.6	0.7	4	0.4	22.5	43.8	100

By publishing posts concerning different subjects in a manner more evenly distributed, the other channels have a hybrid profile. On the Eurodesk platform, communication flows are divided in the following manner: content of the *institutional* type (31%), concerning information on Eurodesk and the European networks, on initiatives promoted at Eurodesk points in Italy and on conference events or regarding the dissemination of youth issues Eurodesk is involved in, etc.; *public service* content (25%) for flows of information that communicate opportunities to young people, often relating to mobility periods; the *engagement* of young people (40%). With regard to this composition, the page will have the function of a news bulletin service and/or an international bulletin that divulges news concerning European youth policies.

The National Youth Agency shows an orientation articulated on the double track of institutional communication, providing an account of the Agency’s work, of activities and events that are about to begin or have been completed, and service information, in particular on European opportunities and resources.

GiovaniFVG prefers communication focusing on involvement and services, thus combining the two categories that express a stronger orientation towards users and sacrificing the visibility of the structure itself.

In relation to the variety of topics covered by the various social network profiles, reading the format of the published news makes it possible to examine and delineate in a more precise manner the flows of communication (table 6.3).

Table 6.3 Format of communication in the social pages examined

Facebook information channels		Forms of communications						
		Information	Call/ Competition	Invitation to an event	Report of an event	Research results	Survey And requests For adherence	Total
National Youth Agency	abs. val.	578	79	175	233	11	82	1158
	%	49.9	6.8	15.1	20.1	0.9	7.1	100
OCPG Observatory	abs. val.	464	582	104	132	89	11	1398
	%	33.2	41.6	7.4	9.4	6.4	0.8	100
Eurodesk	abs. val.	185	158	80	105	50	46	624
	%	29.6	25.3	12.8	16.8	8	7.4	100
Nastional Youth Forum	abs. val.	297	114	108	193	17	42	771
	%	38.5	14.8	14	25	2.2	5.4	100
Regional Youth Forum - Campania	abs. val.	159	69	141	222	0	16	607
	%	26.2	11.4	23.2	36.6	0	2.6	100
GiovaniSi	abs. val.	302	295	229	143	10	3	982
	%	30.8	30	23.3	14.6	1	0.3	100
GiovaniFVG	abs. val.	548	295	227	74	11	57	1212
	%	45.2	24.3	18.7	6.1	0.9	4.7	100
Total	abs. val.	2533	1584	1073	1101	188	273	6752
	%	37.5	23.5	15.9	16.3	2.8	4	100

The National Youth Agency, which, as noted, is distinguished by a communication flow oriented towards diversified objectives, dedicates half of its commitment in Facebook activities to messages that provide information (49.9%). The other half of the flows is divided between reports of events that have been carried out (20%) and were organised by ANG or in which ANG has participated, and invitations to adhere to initiatives (15%). The predominant number of posts providing information seems to reflect the need to account for the variety of institutional purposes for which the ANG was founded: the promotion of active citizenship, the creation of social cohesion and cultural integration between European countries, the construction of systems supporting youth activities and the development of the organisational capacity of society and cooperation in the youth sector at the local, national and European level. In the use of its social channels the OCPG Youth Observatory favours a perspective focusing on providing a service to young users with information flows largely related to public calls for applications and competitions and the promotion of opportunities for young people (42%) to-

gether with general information flows (33%). Albeit with a reduced intensity on Facebook (and often with referrals to the web and scientific and conference-related publishing channels), this is the only source that also provides the results of self-produced scientific surveys and, together with Eurodesk, it is among the rare sources of dissemination of research on issues concerning young people.

In the same way the posts published by GiovaniSì have the main objective of stimulating a reaction in young people and an active attitude in society, directing young people towards new opportunities (30% relating to the publication of invitations to present applications and competitions) or engaging in awareness-raising and inviting them to take part in dedicated events and initiatives (invitations and reports of events attain, respectively, levels of 23.3% and 14.6%). To this is added a third of messages dedicated to general information on public services (30.8%). GiovaniSì was in fact founded as a regional body aimed at supporting youth autonomy, distinguishing itself with respect to its purpose of incentivizing participation already at the outset.

The news posted on the pages of the two (regional and national) Forums, already prepared in terms of the identities of the two groups and, quite frequently, according to the single components within them, is confirmed as having the intention of informing participants about the action of the Forums and above all about events that are being organised and/or in which they have participated. This highlights the perspective of identity accreditation and legitimacy of the role.

As far as the Regional Forum is concerned, rather than having the function of providing intermediation between young people and local institutions social flows are particularly active as bodies providing links and coordination between the Forum and institutions dedicated to youth policies. Looking at the combination between the net prevalence of institutional communication and the format of news items that refer to reports of organised events (36.6%), information on the work of the Forum (26.2%) and invitations to events and meetings (23, 2%), there is a predominance of self-centred flows of information. The orientation towards generating interest in the Forum and its activities is strengthened by the visual level of communication (images and videos). Very frequently images are presented in which members of the group appear. On the other hand, it should also be noted that the initiatives that are promoted and organised and in which people participate are numerous considering the high quantity of post-event reports, this being higher than in almost all the other profiles.

In the texts - as in the images - presidents of municipal forums are often referred to and this co-presence on the one hand indicates a search for connections with the local territory in order to recover a relationship that is historically weak on account of its having been constitutionally neglected at both the national and regional level and by regulatory systems in the Campania region. On the other hand, the co-presence of members of municipal forums in posts at the regional level also suggests a possible search for a two-stream form of communication and, that is, the Lazarsfeld model based on the involvement of leading subjects aimed at greater possibilities of dissemination at a second level extending to the local bases of association. In this way communication through social networks becomes a way of reaching all nodes of the network of forums, but building a communication strategy presenting an internal rather than an external focus.

Also in the case of the National Forum, the predominantly institutional communication flow seems to highlight the function of mediation between young people and institutions that are involved in youth policies so as to consider particular cases and guide the construction of policies. Again, the use of social media appears to have the function of circulating information, especially among the nodes of the national network of youth policies, with Regional Forums or online consultation boards (active only in a few regions of Italy) and local levels. Emphasis is placed on an institutional form of communication centred on the group's activities and aimed at involving young people in events, conferences and debates. Posts serve to provide information in general about activities (38.9%) and organised events (38.7% both in terms of invitation and reporting).

The presence of subjects of various types already noted in the case of Eurodesk Italy, the National Youth Agency and the regional *Giovani Friuli Venezia Giulia* account is also reflected in the intersection with the formats.

Eurodesk Italy, as the official network of the European Erasmus+ programme for facilitating the communication of information on plans and initiatives promoted by the EU institutions in favour of young people, emphasises communication on information concerning initiatives and new projects (29.6%), calls for applications and competitions (25.3%) and invitations to events and reports on topics that mainly concern Europe (29.6%). The channel also covers various aspects, ranging from the presentation of its activities and services offered to the creation of spaces for initiatives, thus encouraging the active participation of its young Facebook friends.

Giovani Friuli-Venezia-Giulia provides a service similar to that offered by the Tuscan Giovanisì project, however it seems less focused on engagement than the Tuscan social profile. In addition to creating spaces for participation the channel directs communication above all towards its own local target of young people, paying greater attention to opportunities. It favours communication comprising general information (45.2%), calls for the presentation of applications and competitions (24.3%) and, moreover, promotes participation through invitations to events (18.7%) in order to disseminate initiatives and programmes also through meetings and debates with the youth segment to which reference is made.

6.3.2. The aims and formats of communication

The profiles considered present specific features also in relation to the aims assigned to the content of messages (table 6.4).

Table 6.4 Profiles for aims of communication

Profili		Aims			
		Promotional	Informative	Participatory	Total
National Youth Agency	abs. val.	210	840	108	1158
	%	18.1	72.5	9.3	100
OCPG Observatory	abs. val.	124	1193	81	1398
	%	8.9	85.3	5.8	100
Eurodesk	abs. val.	159	332	133	624
	%	25.5	53.2	21.3	100
National Youth Forum	abs. val.	20	694	57	771
	%	2.6	90	7.4	100
Regional Youth Forum - Campania	abs. val.	512	60	35	607
	%	84.3	9.9	5.8	100
GiovaniSi	abs. val.	10	429	543	982
	%	1.0	43.7	55.3	100
GiovaniFVG	abs. val.	21	900	291	1212
	%	1.7	74.3	24	100
Totale	abs. val.	1056	4448	1248	6752
	%	15.6	65.9	18.5	100

In the overall communication flows dedicated to young people the goals that prevail over all others are those relating to the dissemination of information (66%) and, only to a lesser extent, news and messages that aim at involving young people, inducing them to adopt an active attitude with respect to some type of activity (18.5%) and, even less frequently, those having explicitly promotional purposes (15.6%). The National Youth Forum (90%) and the OCPG Observatory (85.3%) above all and, subsequently, Giovani FVG (74.3%) and ANG (72.5%) are the digital spaces with the strongest vocation for the communication of information, and where information is not closely related to the activities directly carried out by the relative organisations.

If, on the one hand, the aim of providing information is common to all profiles, some present particular features. The communication approach adopted by Giovani^{isì} focuses on posts involving participation (55.3%) and the dissemination of information aimed at stimulating a response on the part of young people and creating opportunities by encouraging training and becoming integrated in the world of work. The high percentage of promotional-type posts in the case of the Youth Forum of the Campania Region (84.3%), as already noted, reflects the desire of the group to communicate its identity with a view to constructing a particular image and to consolidate its reputation. It probably also depends on a reaction and on a desire for recovery with respect to previous periods of inactivity when the site was not updated.

An integrated examination of the distribution of post formats with respect to the topics communicated confirms - in a transversal manner with respect to the profiles - the preponderance of posts for information purposes. This indicates, above all, a consistent presence of top-down flows of communication - from the administrators to followers. If, on the one hand, this can be read positively in the perspective of offering a service aimed at satisfying the need for information expressed by young people, on the other hand there appears to be a considerable reduction of space available for co-production on social networks with the activation of mechanisms of 'user-generated content' (Linders 2012).

Furthermore, also informing users about upcoming events (15.9%, adding up the flows of all profiles, table 6.3), especially in cases where the initiatives are not even open to the public, rather than stimulating participation it would appear to have as its primary purpose an increase of visibility and a use of the network aimed at amplifying the media impact, which is often reinforced by the use of non-textual content, such as photos and videos.

The fact that posts relating to information and reports of events are characterised by a 'self-centred' nature and the aim of drawing attention to one's work for the purpose of legitimisation and consent may find another element of confirmation in the difference that can be found between 'social' communication, where both formats remain under lower percentage levels, and the categories of institutional and political communication. In the two latter forms, posts made for the purpose of offering information exceed 40% (as high as 49% in the case of political news) and post-event reports exceed 36%.

Conversely, and confirming the primary objective of strengthening the institutional reputation, the news formats with lower percentages are the posts that invite people to respond to surveys or adhere to proposals, calls, symbolic action, etc (3.1%) and the relative dissemination of research results (0.8%), without distinction with respect to the different types of topic.

On the other hand, the category of consultative communication and active involvement - integrated in the typology of Mancini (1996) with the aim of detecting the interaction potential expressed by digital and social media (Leone, Delli Paoli 2016b: 400) - has its hard core elsewhere and, that is, in the information flows relating to calls for application, access and the downloading of forms, etc. (44.5%). All profiles, in fact, disseminate opportunities which young people may adhere to both directly and indirectly, both online and offline.

With less than 1% of the total number of posts the category of political communication may be seen as entirely residual when compared to the others. This value, although significant precisely because of its very small size, shows a certain coherence with the current weak relationship between young people and politics, whatever the orientation may be.

Rather than impartiality with respect to a political position, considering that among the various profiles some also reflect political elements (as previously mentioned, the Regional and National Forums have a part of their constitutional bases in political parties), we may hypothesize that the political reading of posts present on the channels of the forums, as in the case of regional bodies or government agencies in a certain relationship with political actors at government level, is not easily perceivable for a reader of the Facebook page nor in a textual analysis of contents concerning initiatives, information for young people, etc. A study at this level - where the number of posts highlights its relevance - would require an in-depth study of the relationships between initiatives, topics addressed, bodies presenting proposals, sponsors, opponents, changes of office and revocation, alliances, and so on.

When this plan remains an underlying and unexplored element, what appears is defined as a post providing information, generally in the institutional category that communicates the unitary identity and image of the channel.

Content of the regulatory type is disseminated by the actors who, managing the planning of particular national and European programmes, have the objective of circulating regulations and rules to inform the public about the modalities of participation and the related European and national laws and provisions. The subjects who emphasize this type of content are mediators between public institutions and the younger members of the population. The highest percentages are found with respect to the Youth Forums, the National Youth Agency and Eurodesk, all of these being bodies seeking a dialogue between young people and national, regional or European institutions.

In the category of public service posts there are messages concerning public services and related information (61.7%). In this case the flow is mainly oriented towards the communication of information.

6.3.3. Information coverage in sectors regarding particular themes

Examining the favoured thematic areas in the information flows of the social networks examined, as expected, almost one fifth of the news provided is dedicated to work (18.4%). The editorial commitment is largely aimed at trying to respond to the essential need of many young people to find opportunities for employment, and also pre-work experience which may augment their level of employability, and especially internships (7.4% out of 18.4%). Together with the Unisa OCPG Youth Observatory (30%) the two regional portals ('Giovani FVG' for the Friuli-Venezia-Giulia region with 28% and GiovaniSi in the Tuscany region with 22.6%) are particularly active with respect to this topic.

The sector in second place in terms of the quantity of information, over a broad variety of thematic categories that have emerged, also concerns one of the primary spheres of life for young people and, that is, education and training. A total of 13.7% of the considered accounts relate to news concerning the spheres of education or training. The two regional-level institutional portals in particular - Tuscany (24.4%) and the FVG youth platform (21.6%) - deal with this requirement for information.

Table 6.5 Thematic areas

Profiles		Education and training	Work (and internships)	Family	Creativity	Sport	Political commitment	Social commitment	Civic commitment	Environment	Religion	Science and technology	Free time	Mobility	Institutional image	Total
National Youth Agency	abs. val.	57	39	2	96	36	58	153	35	12	1	85	5	270	309	1158
	%	4.9	3.4	0.2	8.3	3.1	5	13.2	3	1	0.1	7.3	0.4	23.3	26.7	100
OCPG Observatory	abs. val.	192	424	0	347	2	13	98	30	9	0	87	6	66	122	1396
	%	13.8	30.3	0	24.9	0.1	0.9	7	2.1	0.6	0	6.2	0.4	4.7	8.7	100
Eurodesk	abs. val.	69	69	0	76	3	77	52	14	10	0	59	5	82	110	626
	%	11	11	0	12.1	0.5	12.3	8.3	2.2	1.6	0	9.4	0.8	13.1	17.6	100
National Youth Forum	abs. val.	63	107	2	63	9	75	248	15	9	2	16	2	27	133	771
	%	8.2	13.9	0.3	8.2	1.2	9.7	32.2	1.9	1.2	0.3	2.1	0.3	3.5	17.3	100
Regional Forum - Campania	abs. val.	21	28	1	24	9	25	90	4	6	0	8	7	6	378	607
	%	3.4	4.7	0.2	4	1.5	4.1	14.8	0.7	1	0	1.3	1.2	1	62.3	100
GiovaniSi	abs. val.	296	274	16	112	7	43	26	11	5	0	154	3	24	244	1215
	%	24.4	22.6	1.3	9.2	0.6	3.5	2.1	0.9	0.4	0	12.7	0.2	2	20.1	100
Giovani FVG	abs. val.	262	340	7	217	8	38	101	25	13	2	107	21	51	22	1214
	%	21.6	28	0.6	17.9	0.7	3.1	8.3	2.1	1.1	0.2	8.8	1.7	4.2	1.8	100
Total	abs. val.	960	1281	28	935	74	329	768	134	64	5	516	49	526	1318	6987
	%	13.7	18.4	0.4	13.4	1.1	4.7	11	1.9	0.9	0.1	7.4	0.7	7.5	18.9	100

Besides the standard and also mandatory areas of training and work, among the topics most frequently addressed in the information for young people a commitment in the social (11%), political (4.7%) and civil (1.9%) fields reaches an overall total of 17.6% of the messages analysed. The interest of young people in these areas was considered in the chapter dedicated to participation (chapter 5). Confirming a strong distancing of young people from political militancy, what the analysis of social channels highlights is an ever-present, albeit limited, attention to social commitment, accompanied - to an extent that is still rather limited - by the information that would correspond to a renewed interest in civic engagement on the part of young people. It is mainly the Forums and thus channels managed by young people that feed the respective channels with this type of news (32.2% at national level and 14.8% in Campania), together with the ANG (13.2%), which dedicates particular attention to information on the European Solidarity Corps and the relative articulations of volunteering and solidarity projects.

A theme that achieves a fair level of attention in the information landscape for young people is creativity (13.4%). In the information flows of the

University Youth Observatory this predilection (24.9% of information flows) reflects an original vocation subsequently developed over time regarding projects dedicated to traditional and innovative forms of expression and emerging forms of art among young people²⁴. In any case, the transversal nature of this sector is also testified by the interest it receives from social media channels with very different characteristics, such as the regional portal of Friuli (17.9%) and Eurodesk (12.1%).

On the other hand, the latter is distinguished, in a predictable manner, by the greater attraction towards news concerning mobility (13.1% in an overall flow of all accounts, reaching 7.5%).

The thoroughly modern and strong drive stimulated by young people to address issues relating to climate change finds not even the slightest signs of anticipation in the media flows analysed (0.9% environment). It is surprising to note a lack of news dedicated to sport, which, in addition to confirming a certain indifference to issues that have an impact on well-being and health, more generally does not cover an important dimension for leisure time and the socialisation of young people.

6.4. Final considerations and possible perspectives for information in youth networks and for the active engagement of young people

The analysis of flows carried out in social media dedicated to providing information to young people shows, overall, a digital space that is certainly still subject to partial use with respect to its enormous potential for interaction. If we observe many cases of digital environments in which, for example, social innovation sees a full deployment of the generative phenomena of involvement, co-production and joint creation, we understand how these developments in the observed channels are still substantially at a minimal level. If, on the one hand, data relating to the prevalence of flows of information on training and matters relating to work issued by the institutional regional

24 The permanent 'Call for Arts' project - to cite an example - gives young artists the opportunity to be included in the dynamic archive of art forms of Campania and to exhibit their works through the online virtual gallery on the institutional portal www.chiamatalllearti.com. The portal hosts the web gallery with the virtual show of works and submission of artists' profiles, open to free navigation for anyone who wants to dive into a fascinating virtual tour of creative writing (poetry, fiction, script, etc.), music and traditional visual arts (painting, sculpture, photography, cartoons, 'shorts', etc.) and digital arts (graphic design, digital art, video poetry, video theatre, video, dance, performing arts, etc.).

and university portals reflect the strong priority of professional and occupational requirements, on the other hand they currently indicate an approach to digital media still very close to the static and unidirectional use of traditional information channels.

In this regard, what has been highlighted in the focus on formats with regard to the preponderance of posts concerning involvement relating to participation in contests and calls for applications seems to show a tendency in young people to take action restricted to opportunities that are manifest and also managed by others and, that is, occasions organised and proposed by actors (public or private) interested in focusing on the potential of young people. The driving force that activates a certain response in young people, in this reading, would thus appear to be found in a logic of interest that is primarily individualistic or, at most, relates to the group to which they belong (e.g., contests for informal groups, calls for applications for projects and the like), which is often combined - in the case of contests from the corporate world - with the legitimate interest of entrepreneurial talent scouts.

If this naturally represents an important area of opportunity, especially in the presence of the employment difficulties characterising the current youth condition, it is necessary at the same time to continually pay attention to the indicators that reveal a consideration of young people in a receptive rather than an active position. How many of the opportunities relating to competitions, public calls for applications or projects communicated through these channels concern horizontal initiatives on an equal basis and, that is, conceived or promoted by young people themselves? With regard to this point, the result of the self-centred nature of the Facebook pages managed by the forums may offer a partial degree of consolation. Attention paid to self-produced initiatives, on account of their having been promoted and implemented by groups of young people - and not by institutional organisations, as in all other cases observed - highlights an important aspect relating to the importance of youth leadership, which is often rhetorically referred to but then occupies only a limited space.

In this sense information appears to underlie and reflect a representation of young people as subjects to a large extent subordinate to input created for them by others, with the risk that this will further weaken their autonomy and a certain universalistic spirit. On the other hand, this can also be seen in the lower intensity of flows concerning appeals for participation in proposals for collaboration in initiatives or surveys.

The fact that topics of general interest and having a universalistic nature emerge with a level of difficulty to be taken into account is clearly observed in the low concentration of posts on social subjects and in the substantial absence of political communication flows. On such a basis, the analysis seems to pose interesting questions about the scenario of public communication open to young people, in particular with regard to the possible stimuli useful for the recovery of social and political issues capable of attracting attention and stimulating an exchange between the new generations. The development of information and communication networks – along these lines and through ‘new generation’ approaches – could contribute both to returning to the community the political and civic commitment of young people and to overcoming the ‘networked citizenship’ understood as the exploitation of web-based services, recognising the sense of the exercise of citizenship in the public digital space as important for Millennials and even more so for the Z generation.

It is precisely on this ground that the most topical events on the subject of youth, sensitivity and commitment in public life, such as ‘Fridays for Future’, allow us to imagine future changes both in the priorities of the media agendas of social networks addressing the needs of young people and in the media scenario itself. In particular, especially with a definition of the identity of the Z generation, phenomena of reconfiguration of the networks are conceivable with a reversal of perspective that will achieve youth involvement in the co-creation of contents and communication aims and, finally, social objectives.

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