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PH.D. THESIS

## YOUTH POLICY. PATHWAYS ANALYSIS FROM THE EUROPEAN TO THE LOCAL LEVEL

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## LE POLITICHE GIOVANILI SOVRANAZIONALI E LOCALI

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The dissertation examines the interconnection between the European, national, regional and local levels in the development and implementation of *youth policy*, with the aim of understanding the theoretical perspectives that underlie adopted models, content, tools, and organizational forms. Comparing regulations, documents and literature concerning youth and *youth policy*, the research aims to clarify the system of *youth policies* promoted by institutions and civil society organizations, which, with different skills, interests, responsibilities administrative interpretations and models of cooperation are located in European *governance*.

The analysis developed in the dissertation is organized in three (3) parts and eight (8) chapters analyzing *youth policy* as described below.

The First Part of the research analyses the youth field *framework*, moving European and national laws and regulations.

The aim of this first section of the research is to contribute to the development of a theoretical model describing and interpreting the scope of public policies supporting young people, by deepening the organization and functioning of administrative levels with specific competencies.

In particular, the first chapter dealt with the current debate on youth policies, with the aim of providing the subsequent analysis with a descriptive model that, depending on the context and the administrative level, systematize the organizational complexity of *youth policy*. The proposed model moves from the analysis of the concepts of *citizenship* (C. Beauvais et al., 2001) and *empowerment* (C. Wallace, 2001), reconsidered in the light of current transformations involving the national societies and their economic, political, cultural and social spheres. In particular, it use the metaphor of youth to assess the uncertainty of post-modern societies, in which opportunities are contiguous, mutual and extensive, as they involve all categories and social groups.

To reconsider the concepts of *citizenship* and *empowerment*, the Chapter presents, through the description of the *community welfare* (R. Bendit, C. Wallace, 2009; IARD 1999), the models in which the rights of young people are considered in European countries, emphasizing the static and dynamic function of the interpretative model presented.

In Chapter 2, with the help of researches conducted by the IARD Institute of Milan (1999) and the IPRASE Institute of Trento (2010), we complete the interpretive analysis of youth *citizenship*. These researches identify, for several countries, the functions assigned to the administrative areas for young people, the social definitions of youth, the philosophies of intervention, the extent of the age cohorts considered and levels of institutional cooperation of national and local governments.

The proposal thus elaborated, starting moving from the above mentioned variables, describe the European (Council of Europe, European Union and their Partnership) and Italian *policy-making* in the context of *youth policy*.

The third chapter focuses on the overall organization of *youth policy* in Campania. In particular, the administrations of the Campania Region and of the provinces of Avellino, Benevento and Salerno have been analyzed.

Part two of the dissertation wants to deepen the Italian and European *policy-making* using of the above proposed model, with the aim of describing the youth *citizenship* represented within the supranational and national levels.

Both chapters take up the levels of the youth *framework* through five (5) qualitative variables to identify the main characteristics relating to administrative areas within the field of *youth policy*. The categories are:

- The *organization* of the institutional sectors with expertise in youth;
- The *normative contents*;
- The documents produced within the supranational and national models applied in the conception and implementation of policies;
- The *function* assigned to research;
- The *definitions* of *youth policy* that emerges from institutional documents and/or from interviews conducted as part of this research.

Specifically, Chapter 4 examines the Council of Europe, the European Union and their Partnership with the aim of identifying the main regulatory and organizational *framework* of the European institution devoted to youth. Following this, Chapter 5 examines the impact of legislative and programmatic European level organization of the sectors of the national representation, with particular reference to the Italian Department of Youth, the National Association of Italian Municipalities (ANCI) and the Union of Italian Provinces (UPI).

The third Part of the dissertation has two aims. Firstly, it analyzes the national legal *framework* in which local self-government recognized the programs in the field of youth. On the other hand, describes the case of Campania, which, through the regional sector and the corresponding areas in the provinces of Avellino, Benevento and Salerno, promotes and organizes local supply in the field of *youth policy*.

With the help of descriptive variables, already selected to analyze the overall organization of youth policies, we have identified regulations, programmatic contents, institutional actors and processes. A substantial part of the work presented within these three chapters comes from the analysis of interviews with responsables of the administrative sectors and with representatives of youth organizations. From these interviews, the Third Part aims to reconstruct the representation of youth *citizenship* declined from the regional and provincial sector.

The Sixth Chapter, moving from the description of the *Accordo di Programma Quadro* (APQ), aims to assess if this institutional tool has been applied in many fields of social life (among others, remember, the health and social care sector regulated by Law 328/2000). In addition to the amendment of Title V of the Italian Constitution (LC 3/2001), the *Testo Unico sull'Ordinamento degli Enti locali* and their administrative simplification (L.59/1997 and L.267/2000).

In the context of *youth policy*, the *Accordi* between the central units (the Ministry of Youth and Sports Activities - POGAS) and peripheral (regions) of the country have been launched in 2008 in the *Conferenza Unificata* between State, Regions and local. At this stage of inter- institutional connection, the POGAS, in accordance with the guidelines of the European institutions, assessed the proposals regarding regional *youth policy*, accompanied by the objectives to be achieved during the six-year period 2007-2013 and the related requests of regional fundings.

Finally, the Chapter, synthesizing three (3) types of activities planned by the regions, compare, geographically (North, Central and Southern Italy), the representations of youth *citizenship* emerging from the contents included in regional proposals.

The Seventh Chapter focuses on the *Accordo di Programma Quadro* (APQ) between the POGAS and Campania Region, presented at the *Conferenza Unificata* between State, Regions and Local Authorities. They are also analyzed the *philosophy, organization, thematic content, the objectives, and the function* assigned to applied research and *economic resources* used for funding the regional program. Finally, the chapter explores the annual variations applied to the proposed regional fruition with the new *Accordo* signed in November 2011.

The Eighth Chapter, with the help of the previously mentioned variables useful for reconstructing the representation of local *youth policies*, analyzes the *overall organization* of the Regional and provincial (Avellino, Benevento and Salerno) sectors, with the aim of outlining the responsibilities, strategies and themes that characterize the policies offered in Campania. If the overall goal of the chapter is to describe the representation of youth *citizenship* of Campania (and to verify the results of regional planning on provincial areas), the specific goal is to identify:

- The functions of the Sector and Youth Forum;

- Policies proposed by the administrative areas of competence and the level of multi-level *governance* achieved to devise and implement policies;
- The function assigned to the research and definitions of *youth policies* proposed by regional leaders, and the provincial Youth Forum representatives.

In the Conclusions is presented a proposal inherent epistemological *youth policy*, based on the knowledge that the representation of youth *citizenship* is affected by changes in economic, cultural, political and social rights from which are articulated the offers policies at local, traditional services and prospects for recognition of the new territorial needs.

From the analysis of *youth policy* areas supported by the administrative level of the European institutions and national Italian region of Campania, it is clear that the implementation of certain addresses - such as *governance*, policy and institutional cooperation, the involvement of young people in the drafting of proposals programmatic and project implementation – emerges only at specific levels: these ones are especially evident in the European dimension and at the local level. In fact, the administrative areas examined in the provinces of Avellino, Benevento and Salerno are an example of convergence between the local *youth policies* and directions supranational.

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