



Briefing paper n° 2

Generational approach to the social patterns of relation to work

N° 028408 (CIT5)

Context of the research

SPReW is a research project funded under the 6th framework programme of the European Union, within priority 7 (Citizens and governance in the knowledge-based society). It is a two years project started the 1st of June 2006.

The overall objective of this project is to examine the factors leading to solidarity or tensions in intergenerational relations, in the specific area of work and correlated fields. It intends to provide a better and updated understanding of the relation that diverse generations have with work, and to analyse the policy challenges and implications of these changes.

The project involves researchers from six countries (Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Portugal) and stakeholders (French Ministry of Labour; European Trade Union Confederation).

First report: state of the art

The first deliverable of the SPReW project consists of a state of the art of current research on the issue. It gathers the overviews of literature done by the each partner. The report gathers six national overviews and an introductory chapter that proposes a cross overview of all contributions. This introductory chapter points out the convergences and divergences in the social contexts. It looks at the continuity and changes in the orientations towards work and the intergenerational challenges it raises. It describes how changes in families and life styles are strongly intertwined with changes in work. Social cohesion and gender are key issues in all these analyses.

This overview of researches and debates in different European countries underlies the finalisation of the research questions and the selection of hypotheses that will be investigated in the empirical approach in the next steps of the project.

An electronic version is available on the website of the project (see below). It will be published by the Commission and available in March 2007.

Second report: hypotheses and research questions

The second report gathers and organises all the hypotheses that the researchers have pointed out through their survey of literature. A first chapter proposes a first synthesis of these hypotheses. This chapter describes the changes in the cultural model that shape the changes in work orientations. The second chapter consists in additional inputs from all partners that have been prepared for a consortium workshop dedicated to the design of the

qualitative empirical work. Finally, a last chapter proposes a structured synthesis that organises a selection of key hypotheses and questions. This synthesis underlies the elaboration of master guidelines for the narrative interviews.

The research hypotheses are organised under five headings that cover diverse specific questions and topics:

1. Relation to work

This dimension focuses on how do the individuals experience their professional situation, their status, their opportunities and wishes of self-development at work, the place of work in their existence. Which place does this activity take in the building of their identity? What are their expectations regarding work? How did this experience and expectations evolve in their personal trajectory? Do other social spheres balance the importance of work? Which ones? The key topics are:

- Expectations as regards work
- Balance between instrumental / expressive (social and symbolic) dimensions
- Subjectivisation of work
- Relativisation of the place of work / centrality of work
- Sense of belonging - Support of the identification (class, occupations, trade union...)
- Work and other areas (family...): conciliation / conflict
- Perception of insecurity
- Unemployment as a "way of living"
- Psychological contract - Loyalty
- Relation to the labour market
- Relation to diverse aspects of work: innovation, technologies, organisation

2. Generational and intergenerational issues

This dimension focuses on the perception of generations and intergenerational relations at work, the importance of solidarity / conflicts between generations at work and the paradox between intra familial solidarity and "tensions between generations" within organisations. The key topics are:

- Tensions/solidarity between and within generations
- Organisational regulation of diversity
- Experience of age diversity
- Perception of justice/ equity
- Age related stereotypes and reciprocal perceptions
- Disqualification of age categories (young, senior)
- Ambivalence (intra- and inter-)
- Perception of similarities and differences referring to generations

3. Individual trajectories

This set of questions concentrates on trajectories. In which kind of trajectory does this experience take place? Particularly, what are the "origins" (family, education) of the individuals? What are the significant events of their trajectories? How do they anticipate their professional future? The key topics are:

- Social/familial origins
- Education / schooling / cultural capital
- Job students
- Entry routes to work
- Experiences of work / unemployment

- Current situation
- End of career
- Vision of the future

4. Social and organisational environment

The key issues of this dimension are individual contextual factors. Which place take family strategies or support, the geographical origin, the territorial variables, the network of relationships and social capital in the understanding of the individuals' relation to work and to other generations? The key topics are:

- Perception of the working economic context
- Historical/political changes
- Significant social events
- Migrational background
- Location (cities / countryside / housing)

5. Societal dimensions

The last dimension focuses on societal factors. What is the relation between the experience of (intergenerational relation at) work and the perceptions of independence, integration in society, citizenship or on the choices about family founding/couple or life style? The key topics are:

- Prolongation of youth
- Yo-yo transitions between youth and adulthood
- Independence / autonomy
- Family building / couple / parenthood
- Citizenship
- Supporting / non supporting public policies

All these topics are translated into master guidelines for the narrative interviews that constitute the first step of the empirical work planned in the project.

An electronic version of the second report (deliverable 2) is available on the website of the project (see below).

Launching of narrative interviews

The empirical tasks start with narrative interviews in the six countries engaged in the consortium: round 25 interviews in each country. A total number of 150 interviews will be realised for the whole project.

The interviews will be conducted in 3 age groups: below 30 years old; between 30 and 50 years old; above 50 years old. A breakdown between three education levels is planned. The breakdown of interviews is also based on two other key criteria: gender and family status. Migrational background and precariousness will be additional criteria.

The first interviews started in December 2006.

Narrative interviews are part of a whole qualitative approach (workpackage 3) that also includes group interviews. The group interviews will start in Spring 2007.

Further information

Generational approach to the social patterns of relation to work (SPReW)

Briefing papers with interim results and final results	June 2006; November 2006; May 2007; November 2007; May 2008
Conclusions and recommendations	April 2008
Final synthesis report	May 2008
Press release	May 2008

Other reports concerning different stages of the research (state of the art and hypothesis, quantitative approach, qualitative approach, policy analysis...) will be available during the life cycle of the project.

Updated information about the project will be available at the following web address:

<http://www.ftu-namur.org/SPREW/>

Research institutions and contact persons

Coordinator

1. **Fondation Travail-Université (FTU),
Work & technology research centre – Namur, Belgium**
Rue de l’Arsenal, 5 – B-5000 Namur, phone +32-81-725122, fax +32-81-725128
Contact person: Patricia Vendramin (pvendramin@ftu-namur.org)

Partners

2. **Centro de Investigação e de Intervenção Social (CIS), ISCTE – Lisbon, Portugal**
Avenida das Forças Armadas – P-1649 Lisboa 026, phone +351-21-7903079
Scientific contact: Paula Castro (paula.castro@iscte.pt)
3. **Fondazione Regionale Pietro Seveso (FRPS) – Milan, Italy**
Viale Fulvio Testi, 42 – I-20099 Sesto San Giovanni (Mi), phone +39-02-24426251
Scientific contact: Anna Ponzellini (ponzmi@tin.it)
4. **University of Bremen - Bremen, Germany**
Institut Arbeit und Wirtschaft (IAW),
Parkhallee, 39 – D-28209 Bremen, phone +49-421-2183472
Scientific contact: Götz Richter (grichter@zeitpraxis.de - grichter@uni-bremen.de)
5. **Institute for Political Science of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA PTI) –
Budapest, Hungary**
PF 694/115 Budapest H-1399, Országház u. 30, 1014 Budapest, Hungary, phone +36-1-2246728
Scientific contact: Julia Vajda (h13073vaj@ella.hu)
6. **Social Development Agency (SDA),
Agency of the European Trade Union Confederation – Brussels, Belgium**
Boulevard du Roi Albert II, 5 – B- 1210 Brussels, phone +32-2-2240462
Scientific contact: Claudio Stanzani (cstanzani@etuc.org)
7. **Direction de l’Animation de la Recherche, des Etudes et des Statistiques (DARES),
Ministère de l’emploi, du travail et de la cohésion sociale – Paris, France**
Quai André Citroën, 39-43 – F-75015 Paris, phone +33-1-44382254
Scientific contact: Hélène Garner (helene.garner@dares.travail.gouv.fr)
8. **Centre d’Etude de l’Emploi – Paris, France**
Le Descartes 1, 29, promenade Michel Simon, F-93166 Noisy le Grand Cedex, phone +33-1-45926888
Scientific contact: Dominique Méda (Dominique.meda@mail.enpc.fr)