

I GJR 2/2009 approaches the young generation from two perspectives by exploring their lack of time and lack of money. This is an issue of intergenerational justice if the conditions for today's younger generation, say the cohorts born between 1970 and 1990, are worse than for the cohorts that were born, say, 1950-1969.

Even though life expectancy is continuously on the rise, many people are complaining that they have less time at hand. This is especially true for the 'rush hour of life', meaning the period of life between the mid-twenties and the late thirties in which persons of both genders usually start a job/career and a family at the same time. Concerning the financial situation there are several signs indicating that the young adult cohorts are relatively worse off in an indirect comparison with their predecessor generation. 1975, people in their thirties earned about 15 percent less than people in their fifties; today, they earn about 40 percent less. This in turn influences young adults' decisions on reproduction.

The first article by Harald Lothaller (University of Graz) defines the term 'rush hour of life'. It then introduces the concept of 'life-domains balance' and explains why the more commonly used term 'work/life balance' does not meet the topic adequately. According to Lothaller, keeping life domains in balance requires the absence of negative effects (i.e., 'conflicts') between life domains on the one hand, but also the presence of positive effects (i.e., 'facilitation') between the domains on the other hand.

The second article by Prof. Dr. Ute Klammer (University of Duisburg-Essen) starts with discussing relevant empirical data on the structure and change of life courses of both men and women on an international scale. Klammer demonstrates that the 'rush hour of life' for women does not have to be resolved by a withdrawal from the labour market. Also discussed in this article is that unlike in past decades, women are no longer at a general disadvantage just because of their sex. In fact the vast majority of labour market flexibility risks i.e. fixed-time contracts, temp work, unemployment etc, are taken by the young generation, the newcomers to the labour market, irrespective of their gender.

Klammer claims that what is needed is social

and political support of transitions in and out of the labour market, support of continuous employment, but also the 'straightening out' of life courses by providing new possibilities to adjust money and (work) time to different life stages with differing financial and time requirements.

Dr. Tomáš Sobotka's (Institute for Demography of the Austrian Academy of Sciences) article discusses different aspects of the shift towards later parenthood which has affected all industrialised countries. It outlines trends in delayed childbearing and points out the increase in childlessness and growing educational disparities in first birth timing, especially among women. It reviews consequences of delayed childbearing for individuals, couples, their children and society and discusses the limited role of assisted reproduction in offsetting the age-related rise in infertility. Sobotka's thesis is that the individual social and economic advantages of late parenthood may outweigh the biological advantage of early parenthood. The article outlines possible policy actions that may support childbearing decisions at both younger and older reproductive ages.

The fourth article by Prof. Dr. Louis Chauvel (Sciences Po, Paris) focuses on inter- and intra-cohort inequalities of living standards in a comparative perspective, underlining the diversity of national responses to the challenges of globalisation and economic slow down. These effects have had different implications on different age groups. Chauvel's aim is to make a connection between national welfare regimes and the emergence of specific cohort-based economic constraint patterns in different countries. The article highlights the emergence of 'scarring effects' which are the irreversible consequences of (short term) social fluctuations in the context of socialisation on the (long term) life chances of different birth cohorts.

The article by Prof. Dr. Martin Kohli (European University Institute Florence) claims that although the old 'social question' – the integration of the industrial workers – seems to have been resolved, new cleavages appear, for example between generations. These emerge from historical or macro-structural changes but also from economic cleavages between generations. According to Kohli the reason why age conflicts are not more pronounced is the me-

diating function of political parties, unions and families. Furthermore, Kohli criticises the statement that the welfare state is increasingly dominated by the elderly. According to his article, in terms of economic well-being, both the young and the old fare worse than the middle age group. He concludes that in terms of political decision-making, there is no evidence for an alleged movement towards gerontocracy.

Prof. Dr. Steffen Hillmert (University of Tübingen) analyses transition patterns from the education system to the labour market in his article. Successful transitions from school to work are decisive for later success in life. The situation of young people at this stage is therefore an important issue not only for scientific research, but also for public discussion. His paper asks whether and to what extent there has been a de-structuring of the transition to the labor market in Germany – and, linked with it, of the transition to adulthood – as it has been proposed by theories of individualization. The results indicate that significant changes in transition patterns can be related to the expansion of education and training since the 1950s. This is especially obvious in the case of young women. Both attaining a vocational or an academic degree and entering the labor market have become universal life events. One of the consequences is the prolongation of educational careers, which has led to later entries into employment.

In IGJR 2/2009, the FRFG addresses an issue that has so far been neglected in the discussion on intergenerational justice. From a moral point of view, the contract between the generations in businesses needs to be re-negotiated between old and young employees.

Please take a look at our calls for papers for the upcoming issues of the Intergenerational Justice Review at the end of this issue. The upcoming topics include 'Children's and young people's rights', 'Intergenerational Justice and the scourge of war' and 'Possibilities and limits of party cooperation in democracies'.

I hope you will enjoy the excellent articles in our current issue.

Yours,
Jörg Chet Tremmel
Editor-in-chief

