

## LOCAL DIAGNOSIS: ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE'S OCCUPATIONAL SITUATION IN CIPOLLETTI CITY

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### Summary

Following paper intends to establish, by articulating theory with basis on stadistical local, national and regional data, a diagnosis that allows to base future actionsintended to improve young people's occupational situation in Cipolletti city.

Our focus in these developments propose a device to approach young people's social integration, conceived as specific actions for mental health promotion and prevention.

Problematic and economic impact will be characterized, considering the influence that work has on youth subjectivity's core and identity construction, as it enables psi-co-social integration and allows to counteract the negative effect that unemployment has on adulthood constitution.

### 1. Diagnosis

#### ***Present status of youth unemployment***

Despite unemployment, underemployment and informal jobs have increased considerably in the last decades for all populations in general, we can state that young people suffer it the most (Chart 1). Apart from unemployment, they are usually also exposed to more precarious and unstable jobs with high levels of informality, low salaries and almost no social protection.

Youth job placement and unemployment have turned to be complex problematics in Latin American as well as European countries. Young people constitute the group with higher levels of unemployment.

A recent report from the International Labor Organization (ILO) warns about deterioration of youth laboral insertion, being this the most affected group, not only by unemployment but also by informality and precariousness (ILO, 2007). This situation has brought up the need for national states to develop specific programs and policies, considering that the impossibility to access and belong to formal labor market expels these groups to a marginal situation.

**Chart 1: Estimated unemployment of Young people between 15 and 24 years Latin America (13 countries). Urban Áreas 90's decade**

**NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED (in thousands)**

	15 to 19 years		20 to 24 years		15 to 24 years	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Argentina (a)	168,6	307,8	141,6	401,0	10,1	708,9
Bolivia (b)	22,9	10,6	33,5	20,5	56,4	31,0
Brasil (b)	583,4	1281,2	455,7	954,8	1039,1	2236,1
Chile (b)	44,9	57,2	92,5	113,0	137,5	170,2
Colombia (b)	243,8	239,9	344,2	382,6	588,0	622,5
Costa Rica (b)	5,6	12,9	4,9	11,3	10,5	24,2
Ecuador (b)	26,5	80,8	47,3	127,0	73,7	207,8
Guatemala (b)	31,6	28,4	34,4	38,7	66,0	67,0
Honduras (b)	13,0	20,3	15,6	21,4	28,5	41,7
México (b)	243,0	426,8	256,3	466,7	499,4	893,5
Panamá (b)	17,8	16,5	30,7	34,7	48,5	51,2
Paraguay (b)	17,4	42,7	21,8	26,3	39,1	69,0
Uruguay (b)	33,7	34,7	28,0	38,5	61,7	73,2
Total studied:	1452,1	2559,8	1506,5	2636,5	2958,6	5196,3

*Notes:*

- (a) Grand Buenos Aires activity and unemployment rates are applied to all urban population.
- (b) Applies whole country urban rates.
- (c) Population projections by CELADE, 1999.
- (d) For year 2000 we used known rates from closer year to end of decade

Source: Diez de Medina; *Jóvenes y empleo en los noventa*. Serie Herramientas para la transformación, CINTERFOR/OIT, 2001

ILO investigation center revealed in a 2010<sup>17</sup> study that, amongst the 35 countries from which they have data, almost 40 % of people looking for a job have been unemployed for more than a year, which means that they were overexposed to demoralization, loss of self-esteem and mental health problems. It points out that young people suffer unemployment in a disproportionate way and that, when they get a job, it is usually precarious and considerably under their competencies.

The results and conclusions obtained in “Youth unemployment diagnose” based on the information from the “Encuesta Permanente de Hogares” (EPH) in third trimester of 2006<sup>18</sup> matches ILO report, while it states that young people are the age group

<sup>17</sup> OIT (2010) Instituto Internacional de estudios laborales. Informe sobre el Trabajo en el Mundo 2010: ¿De una crisis a la siguiente?, Ginebra, Suiza.

<sup>18</sup> Ministerio de Trabajo, Empleo y Seguridad Social de la Nación (MTEySS), Subsecretaría Técnica y Estudios Laborales, 2006.

that unemployment affects the most. The larger portion of unemployed young people comes from low-income households. They are unemployed young people with family responsibilities and non-working adolescents, who are not looking for jobs or belong to the educative system.

These age groups suffer unemployment more drastically but, moreover, low levels of official education are added to this problematic. Therefore, transcendence of this phenomenon is even higher. It is estimated that in Latin America there are 22 million young people not studying, nor working. (Chart 2). For these countries, non-active periods imply very high costs individually and socially.

**Chart 2: Forms of social integration for youth population between 15 and 24 years**

Integration category	Values
Work in quality jobs and do not study	13.000.000
Work in quality jobs and study	4.000.000
Work in precarious jobs and do not study	22.000.000
Work in precarious jobs and study	9.000.000
Unemployed that study	4.000.000
Unemployed that do not study	6.000.000
Inactive that study	32.000.000
Don't work or study	16.000.000
<b>Total</b>	<b>106.000.000</b>

Source: Reelaboration based on ILO data – Encuestas de hogares comparadas (2006) Latin América and Caribbean

**National and Local Indicators**

Total population of Rio Negro province according to 2010 Census shows a total of 663.664 inhabitants.

Human Development Index (HDI) provincial 2004 (PENUD 2005) does not report data on Rio Negro, total country is 0,788. Population percentage according to NBI 2001 (INDEC 2003) is of 17.7 for total country and 17,9 for Rio Negro province.

According to INDEC 2002 data, 48,1% of Argentine population during year 2001 lacked of Social Security or medical plan and in Río Negro province, this percentage rose to a 49,9%.<sup>19</sup> Therefore the only way to receive medical assistance for this percentage of inhabitants is through Public health system, through Hospitals or Primary Attention Centers.

<sup>19</sup> Fuente: Indicadores Básicos Argentina 2009. Ministerio de Salud de la Nación y OPS, 2010.

According to EPH 2010 first trimester, considering main indicators per cluster, we read an activity rate, employment rate, unemployment rate, under-employment rate and unregistered employment of 46,2; 42,2; 8,3; 9,2 y 34,6 respectively for Argentina (total). For Rio Negro Province, Viedma- Carmen de Patagones, the values for same rates are: 44,9; 40,8; 9,0; 8,8 y 28,8. Accordingly, although unregistered employment rate is lower, the remaining rates are similar to national levels, whereas mild changes to be shown for this province, less activity, employment and under-employment levels. Whilst unemployment is higher, with 0,4%.<sup>20</sup> difference compared to national rate.

In Cipolletti City we do not have specific statistical data regarding unemployment rates or youth unemployment. According to 2010 Census data, population in this city ascends to approximately 80.000 inhabitants, of which 41% is estimated to be under 35.<sup>21</sup>

### **Local offer and demand analysis**

Regarding **analysis of the offer** it will be specified making axis in target population, on which we intend to intervene, young people of 18 to 25, not studying or looking for a job. Acknowledged information of this group was provided by local employment office.

According to data registered by Cipolletti's Employment office (which depends of Job, Employment and Social Security Ministry's employment offices network) 1561 people spontaneously came forward looking for a job. During years 2008 and 2009, 935 young persons between 18 and 24, unemployed or underemployed, with primary or incomplete secondary studies, took part of several workshops for job searching within "Jóvenes más y mejor Trabajo" national program.

During year 2010, employment office registered a total of 511 young people, amongst mentioned ages, looking for a job and requesting to be part of workshops intended for Orientation and Job searching support. Amidst these young people 60% had not finished their formal studies.<sup>22</sup>

**Chart 1: Young people 18 to 25 that requested a job at Employment Office during 2010**

Gender	Quantity	%
Women	319	63,0%
Men	192	37,0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>511</b>	<b>100,0%</b>

Source: Municipalidad de Cipolletti. Oficina de Empleo (2010)

<sup>20</sup> Source: MTEySS - Subsecretaría de Programación Técnica y Estudios Laborales - Dirección General de Estudios y Estadísticas Laborales, en base a EPH (INDEC). 2010

<sup>21</sup> Source: Municipalidad de Cipolletti, UDE, Oficina de Empleo. 2010.

<sup>22</sup> Idem.

**Chart 2: Educational level acquired by 18 to 25 young people looking for a job in Cipolletti with CV amongst Job boards in Employment Office.**

Educational Level acquired	Quantity	%
Incomplete primary or secondary	227	44,5%
Complete secondary	170	33,4%
Incomplete tertiary	40	7,8%
Complete Tertiary	5	0,9%
Incomplete University	64	12,5%
Complete University	5	0,9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>511</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Municipalidad de Cipolletti. Oficina de Empleo (2010)

This target group is characterized by being a men and women collective with low formal educational levels and little, null or negative labor experience.

They are unemployed population or underemployed in informal jobs, performing service tasks, construction, harvesting tasks (economic activity with high local development by seasons), cleaning houses or taking care of children and elders at personal homes. These are, in general, low paid jobs regarding economy, and very low quality tasks and activities. In most of these jobs hiring is not registered in formal system. Therefore young people find themselves deprived of social benefits, access to social security, contribution to Pension and retirement system, life insurance and Work Risk Insurance system to cover accidents, sickness leaves and vacations, etc.

Young people belong to the more populated neighborhoods in Cipolletti. Some of them still live with their nuclear or origin families at their parents or extended family homes, sometimes overcrowded. In other cases the origin family and the nuclear family of several siblings live together in small apartments, with very few rooms. Other young people live with their couples and children in the new “tomas”<sup>23</sup> at the city, with high construction and infrastructure precariousness and low access to public services.

Most of them do not have Social Security or Medical Plan and use Public health system.

They do not have computer skills or foreign languages.

<sup>23</sup> Colloquial denomination used to refer to collective settlements of poor families that usurp lands and build huts on those lands. They do not have access to basic services: water, energy, sewers or natural gas. In general they have illegal energy connections. Given the area’s climate conditions, most households in the “tomas” are inappropriate to resist low temperatures during winter.

Regarding **demand analysis**, we will consider main conclusions obtained from the investigations held by Observatorio del Empleo y la Economía Local.<sup>24</sup>

During Operativo a Empresas, 211 companies were interviewed in our city. This sample included economic units from different activity sectors. Following this, simple distribution was:

With reference to the amount of companies according to Company size by activity sector, we can appreciate that 66% are micro companies, 17% small and only 1% are big companies. (Size was defined following Secretaría Pyme de la Nación in disposition SSEPYMEYDR N° 147/2006 y N° 22/2001).

From all companies interviewed 93% has central administration in Cipolletti city, thus it is here where Company decisions are made.

76% of the companies replied that they have only one business building in Cipolletti. By analyzing this variable by activity sector, we may appreciate that packing and services are the sectors which have the higher percentage of multi-localized companies.

Regarding seniority, companies have 21 years average, being the most antique the ones dedicated to fruit packaging. By looking at maximum seniority, commercial companies are the oldest.

Regarding staff search, among all companies inquired, 26% searched for staff between September 30th and December 31st 2008. Construction and services companies contributed in higher proportion to staff searching.

In average, packing and construction (to a lesser extent) are the sectors looking for more staff per company.

By studying staff searching by kind of occupation, we can see that all sectors, but commerce, look mainly for operative staff. Construction and packing are particular cases, where 72% and 90% of their staff searchers meant to operative staff, respectively. In packing, industry and services, second most wanted job is for technical personnel, being these searches 10%, 39% and 23% of each sector, respectively.

Commerce focuses their staff search in sellers (61%), followed by operative and administrative staff with 21% and 14%, respectively.

In terms of gender, in general, male gender prevails in staff searches to cover jobs. This situation is particularly visible in construction and industry, where 86% and 76% of searches, respectively, require male workers. In packaging industry gender is indistinctin 79%. In commerce proportion of male and female workers searched is the same.

In general companies looked for workers between the ages of 23 and 37. In the particular case of operatives, maximum average age extends till 39. In salesmen/women, a maximum age of 32 average is requested.

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<sup>24</sup> Project that explores and investigates local economic reality. It constitutes an irreplaceable feeding supply for Servicio de Empleo y Emprendimientos Productivos, as this sector produces necessary information to determine training or educational needs; professional practices or internships; labor intermediation; as well as to detect entrepreneurship and employability opportunities.

The educational level requested by companies in staff searches varies considerably according to the kind of job. In general, for all searches, companies require in 19% of cases complete primary, in 37% secondary title, in 25% tertiary or university studies and in 18% they have no requirements in terms of educational level. In particular, search of technical staff is the one that requires higher educational level, as in 57% of the cases tertiary or university studies are requested. Referring to salesmen/women and administrative searches the request of secondary title prevails. Operative jobs do not require high educational levels because, in general, they demand labor knowledge more than an official title. Nonetheless, we could see how important it is for workers to have an official title themselves as, even in non qualified job searches, primary or secondary studies are requested.

When asked about working experience required by occupational type, 44% of the companies replied that no previous experience was needed. In particular, analyzing information by occupation type, administrative jobs are the one that demand higher experience. On the other side, salesman/women is the job that implies less experience, as in 58% of the cases they did not require experience at all and 42% left asked for one or two years only, as in many cases the companies themselves train their staff according to specifications in each business.

Another relevant points to be considered in staff searches are computer skills and foreign languages. Languages is an item only required in technical jobs. On the other hand, computer skills are very important for administrative jobs. It is part of the requirements in 79% of the searches for this type of occupation. It is less requested for technical and sales jobs

In all business sectors, usual staff searching methods in local companies are personal contacts, recommendations and classified ads.

In particular, in packaging industry 15% of the companies hire professional centers for staff recruiting. In construction, 10% of the companies searches in the company data base and 6% of industrial companies hire private Recruiting companies.

## 2. Fundaments

### *Thinking work*

Crisis in formal job system produces a massive phenomenon of unemployment and underemployment, which include important transformations: the rising of a new subjectivity and profound changes in social representations and values assigned to work.

Economiscist model generates through it's effective speech, an equation that equals job with employment, but in fact, work is a transformative activity, creative and cooperative, social and individual. (Zolkower, 2007) It is specifically human.

Work is a central phenomenon in people's life. Even Freud in Civilization and it's Discontents, describes work as a fundamental technique, a way of orientation in life, as no other attaches individuals so strongly to reality, to human community. To Freud

it is the way in which men blend into culture, outer reality and socially shared culture. (Freud, 1929).

Following Dejours (2014) work is the privileged mediator between the unconscious and the social field. Work, with its social nature, absorbs workers from the social environment, registering itself in the collective domain. Work creates social bond.

Therefore work enables a double development: individually and for the human society.

Authors as Schlemenson value work as an enhancer of human deployment. Opportunities to grow and progress by means of work are highly structuring of individual psychism, build personal integrity and mental health. (Shlemenson, 2002).

Investigations held with people committed in local institutions (jails, mental hospitals) show the importance of working for subjective implication. The possibility of exercising a role contributes to identity and enrollment. Also autonomy and self-esteem enhancing feelings.

At Centro de Estudios e Investigaciones Laborales- Programas de Investigaciones Económicas sobre Trabajo, Tecnología y Empleo (CEIL-PIETTE)/CONICET, investigators propose following thoughts regarding the idea of human work as a multi-dimensional category which involves, in its objective dimension:

- a socially needed and transcendent activity,
- aims to produce something external to the individual, as oriented towards others (social dimension),
- requires spending human energy,
- implies a particular way to relate with nature;

In its subjective dimension:

- a specifically human activity which is always related to suffering or pleasure,
- a direct and permanent link with worker's health and life,
- the possibility to contribute to personal fulfillment,
- build own identity and develop feelings related to self-confidence and enrollment,
- taking risks,
- set up interpersonal relationships and contribute to build a work collective.

After examining the most relevant issues regarding the category of work, it is necessary to consider, then, which are the meaningful consequences humanly and socially speaking, in psychological and mental health terms, involved in the massive unemployment and underemployment phenomenon.

### ***Unemployment and Job Insertion: Subjective Impact***

As previously stated, with crisis in employment system and transformations belonging to late capitalism, unemployment ceased to be temporary and implies the reproduction of a closed circuit that connects unemployment, poverty, marginality, leaving aside, and with no chance to get back into production circuit, consumption and social recognition. (Castel, 1995).

According to Castel, poverty lands in a detachment zone, because of the lack of alliance through work, as well as for the lack of inclusion in a proximal protection network.

In societies with structural unemployment problems we can see the immobilization of social statuses, which generates deciding consequences in the way to see life itself. The institutionalization of this situation as permanent promotes the compliance and acceptance of a not so auspicious reality. A gradual, thus persistent generalized condition of appeasement and passivity arouses, which turns into a constant to people.

Meanwhile, job insertion has both an individual and a social implication, being a poor or empowered young man does not only constitute a risk factor for unemployment or employment precariousness, with strong impact in subjectivity, but also has impact in discrimination and blackballing socio-institutional processes. (Salvia; Tuñón, 2005).

Even the World Health Organization (WHO) in its report on health indicators 1986, placed unemployment as one of the main catastrophes of modern society. It defines unemployment or threat to lose the job as a traumatic situation socially originated which affects family bonds, social enrollment, people's physical and mental health. Studies on loss or lack of a job reveal that there exists a strong empiric interrelation between the permanency of an unemployment situation and mental health deterioration.

Regarding local investigations about effects of unemployment and job loss, we can refer to the developments of the project TyO (Trabajo y Ocupación) within Centro de Estudios Avanzados de la Universidad de Buenos Aires. (Slapak, Fershtut, Cavo, Schlemenson). These studies held since 1995 allowed to verify and investigate thoroughly, by analyzing the lack of it, the structuring and vital value of work to mankind. Main conclusions (Schlemenson, 2002) can be summarized by saying that sudden loss of the job: refers to a deep personal crisis; promotes high levels of anxiety, caused by the uncertainty produced by the loss of a safe framework, unemployment breaches the enrollment bonds that work offers in society; it means a profound change in life, one of the most disturbing effects in life; and finally a very significant loss: the loss of a personal project, which sets the individual and his family in a sickness and exclusion situation. Following Jahoda (1987) the author acknowledges following psychological problems caused by unemployment: 1) loss of usual timing structure; 2) feeling of lack of projects and no participation in social goals; 3) restricted social interaction; 4) loss of identity and status; y 5) lack of regular activity.

Summarizing, it can be said that main effects of unemployment in people, in terms of suffering and mental health symptoms are: low self-esteem and personal satisfaction; depression and lonesome feelings; high levels of anxiety, exclusion and marginalization experiences.

Considering the particular idea that the reference collective are young people and adolescents in development process, decay and consequences in terms of health quality could be unpredictable.

Unemployment, in psycho-social terms operates as a barrier for young people's social insertion, considering that job insertion is an essential support to develop personal projects: professional training and qualification, economic independence, family emancipation, development of couple relationships, etc.

In terms of individual nature, youth unemployment turns to have devastating effects on subjective structuring. Most significant consequences, in psychological terms, reveal mainly depressive symptoms and anxiety, with harsh impact on self-esteem. Impossibility to get a job has, overall, a negative effect on self and socio-cultural identity constitution.

Previous guidelines lead us to think that we are facing an epidemiological problem with boundless relevance, being young people a vulnerable demographic group exposed to economical and social uncertainty and to adverse situations regarding access to education and a dignifying job. Moreover, summing up varied juvenile predicaments that reinforce vulnerability, such as inequality and poverty, addictions, matters concerning sexual and reproductive health, violence and problems with the law, risk of exclusion is even higher. Therefore risk includes, not only the impossibility to achieve a favorable insertion experience, but also the educational, social, cultural and familiar perspective.

Thinking about the problem of youth unemployment, being them adolescents and young people still in development process and growth, health problems among subjective and identity constitution and the repercussions on insertion processes and social exclusion, acquire characteristics of its own.

### ***Adolescent problematic characterization: Youth unemployment***

As pointed out earlier, young people face higher unemployment levels, informality, precariousness and receive lower salaries. What turns out to be interesting it to remark the fact that young people are a population with increasing risk, not only because of the impossibility to achieve an favorable experience of labor insertion, but also because of the studied risk in terms of the educational, social, cultural and familiar perspective.

Jahoda (1987) points out following psycho-social consequences involved in youth unemployment: lack of ambitions, expectations, plans and hope towards the future; quiescence, apathy and boredom; loss of self-confidence; quit the job search and diffuse hostility towards community. There is a gradual loss of norms, aspirations and values acquired during social, scholar and familiar socialization.

These authors' conclusions clearly show the subjective problematic experienced by each youth, but at the same time reveals a social circumstance shared by the whole generational span.

### 3. Intervention proposal

#### ***Orientation workshops***

The initiative of this device is to enable labor insertion processes throughout spaces than enhance reflexive thinking and ideas discussion, and encourage human and personal development in each participant; activate support and holding networks, that make deployment of subjective potentialities possible and generates social insertion through work. These happen to be powerful strategies to intervene from Psychology's specific field, to face the adverse context which drives towards marginality and exclusion of most vulnerable sectors.

It intends to encourage mental health promotion and prevention activities, considering that youth unemployment should be a priority in communitary agenda and that interventions tending to orient and help labor insertion have a preventive value that involves young people's development and integral health.

#### ***Method***

Project's work proposal includes two methodological axis:

- Working team training, orientation and supervision: professionals, workshop staff, teachers, principals, etc.
- Implementation, follow up and evaluation of orientation workshops.

Target population: Young people between 18 and 25 in or out of the educational system, unemployed or underemployed from Cipolletti City.

Objective: Formulation of occupational life project. Supply tools for job searching.

Specific methodology:

- Workshops: Workshops last one month, with a twice a week frequency (2 hours each). Thematic contents worked on each meeting are different.
- Workshops will be held in Primary attention centers in the neighborhoods, schools, any space granted by municipal government, etc.
- Workshops will be coordinated by one professional and one workshop staff.
- The groups will be maximum 30 participants.
- Working methodology is team work. Workshops are intended to be participative and to enable reflexive thinking, to make it possible for young people to exchange.
- Techniques: Discussion groups, role playing, dramatization, Reading of classified ads, Resume and presentation letters writing, etc.

#### ***Evaluation***

In order to evaluate this device, we intend to realize a workshop evaluation: we hand out two evaluation questionnaires at the beginning and at the end of each workshop to survey and check possible changes occurred during our intervention.

Execution and evaluation of this device will enable to gather experience and data systematization which could allow to elaborate future investigations, programs and projects regarding this subject.

#### **4. Economic impact prevision**

The objective of this paragraph is to try to establish the impact this device's implementation in economical terms, considering it fulfills the goal of orienting job searching and facilitating latter labor insertion process within labor formal system, enhancing young people's employment levels. Impact could be measured by these items:

- Mental health and psychic welfare.
- Improvement of life conditions.
- Increase of Human Development Index (HDI).
- Lower Rate of unsatisfied basic needs (UBN).
- Lower inequity and social vulnerability.
- Lower public expenses: State would spend less in social compensations for unemployed people through benefits and pensions. This would also bring economic relief to the Public Health System, as more people will have access to Medical Insurance.
- Rise in purchasing power.
- Rise in private consumption.
- Rise in taxes income.
- Boost of growth and productivity.
- Enhance educational level and professional training in adults in terms of employability.

#### **Conclusion**

Implications of described phenomenon evidence that employment problems, labor insertion and young people's social exclusion are huge challenges to be faced through social commitment, both from national states themselves through public policies, as from specific actions from professionals, investigators and citizens as a whole.

Enhancing of prevention and mental health promotion activities understanding that youth unemployment should bear a priority space in community agenda and that interventions to orient and improve labor insertion have a preventive value which involves young people's integral health improvement.

As a conclusion to above mentioned analysis, we point out the value of thinking young people's labor insertion problematics using an approach that recognizes their rights and capacities, empowering and promoting collective and human development.