

GOVERNMENTALITY OF YOUTH: EUROPEANISATION AND DISPOSITIF OF LEARNING

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"Europe's future depends on its youth. Yet, life chances of many young people are blighted" (COM, 2008, p. 7).

ABSTRACT

The aim of the paper is to describe the policy and practice of forming European space of governing youth by creating a need for transferring and exchanging data, information and knowledge about youth. I attempt to elaborate thesis, that supply and demand for data exchange indicate a system of governing installing less obvious relations of power. This demand for data, information and knowledge releases and implements characteristic technologies of government and the concepts of "truth" about the world. Drawing upon the analyses of governing youth, I suggest introducing the notion of a dispositif of learning as a category used to describe a particular type of power relations constituting the identity of contemporary youth in the European Union policy.

Key Words: Youth policy; governmentality; europeanisation; dispositif; learning.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of youth policy refers to legal acts and accompanying them practices of international and national institutions, and other agendas, whose actions are aimed at putting within their reach all important spheres of social functioning (education, the labour market, culture, social work, health, participating in political life, functioning within the legal system, etc.) (Sinczuch, 2009). The aim of this paper is to describe the policy and practice of forming European space of governing youth by creating a need for transferring and exchanging data, information and knowledge about youth. I attempt to elaborate Maarten Simon's (2007) thesis, who argues that supply and demand for data exchange indicate a new system of governing installing less obvious relations of power. This demand for data, information and knowledge releases and implements characteristic technologies of government and the concepts of "truth" about the world. Drawing upon the analyses of governing youth, I suggest introducing the notion of a dispositif of learning as a theoretical category used to describe and interpret a particular type of power relations constituting the identity of contemporary youth in the EU policy.

Both the meaning of the notion of dispositif and all reflections and analyses presented in the paper have been influenced by Michel Foucault's, Mitchell Dean's and other theoreticians' of government and governmentality concepts thought. I undertake an analysis of relations between power and knowledge, of the space which emerges between social practice and its representation. Such an analytics of government includes examining various ways of thinking of the character of power and knowledge about who and what is to be the subject of government, the analysis of constituted identities and techniques and strategies used to achieve certain goals (Dean, 2010).

These immanent interrelations of knowledge and identity constructs in power relations place these analyses within the area of studies of education policy, i.e. the policy oriented at creating conditions for human

development. The notion of development is not unequivocal: its definitions and the concepts of processes and activities facilitating human development have their world-view and philosophical bases.

From this perspective, an interesting question arises which concerns power relations within the area of European youth policy, including its implementation in Poland. Before presenting the results of my investigation, I will discuss some basic theoretical and methodological assumptions.

ASSUMPTIONS AND METHOD - ANALYTICS OF GOVERNMENTALITY

From Foucault's perspective, government means constructing a field of possible activity, the "conduct of conduct", i. e. working upon our areas of freedom according to what we believe to be true about who we are (Dean, 2010). Human activity is thought as something which can be regulated, shaped and directed towards particular goals according to a certain rationality¹. The aim of an analytics of governmentality is not to evaluate particular rationalities but to attempt to identify and describe these rationalities which support, reinforce or repeal certain concepts of the subject. What underlies the notion of governmentality is the fusion of socially constructed knowledge and power. In this context, I assume that young people govern themselves according to what they take to be true about their existence, and according to what and in what ways should be subjected to directing and operating. On the other hand, these ways of governing oneself and others construct certain "truths" about youth. Governing youth is unthinkable without a particular concept of youth which defines a discursive field for the rationalisation of exercising power.

An analytics of government examines the conditions of existence and the ways of operating of certain dispositifs (apparatuses) which can be understood as "regimes of government" (Dean, 2010), i.e. more or less organized at a particular time and place ways of producing knowledge, problematisation and practice. Regimes of practice are institutional practices and, at the same time, they include various ways of thinking about those institutional practices and turning them into objects of knowledge and subjecting problematisation.

An analytics of government attempts to show in what way a dispositif originates certain forms of knowledge and depends on them; it considers in what way this regime possesses a technical dimension and analyses characteristic techniques and mechanisms through which these practices operate, seek to realize their goals and achieve results. According to Dean (2010), this dependence of regimes of practices on forms of knowledge accounts for their relation with definite, explicit "programmes" exploiting certain types of knowledge to act upon the desires, aspirations and needs of agents existing within them. Such "programmes" will be discussed with reference to youth policy.

Summing up this part of discussion, I want to emphasize the fact that youth policy involves not only power relations but the issues of oneself and identity. Power, knowledge and the subject determine three general axes of government which correspond with what Dean called the areas of *techné*, *epistémé* and *ethos* (Dean, 2010). An analytics of government involves examining:

- 1) fields of visibility, "areas of visibility", characteristic forms of imaging and representing youth,
- 2) rhetoric, characteristic vocabulary and procedures of producing knowledge,
- 3) ways of acting, intervening and directing,
- 4) characteristic ways of forming subjects, actors and agents (Dean, 2010).

Undertaking an attempt at an analytics of governing youth at the European level, I relied on the data and information obtained from documents and reports of the UE published on the European Commission website

¹ Rationality is understood here as a way of giving sense, i. e. as a form of thinking striving to be clear and systematic about the aspects of things existence, about what they are like and what they ought to be like (Dean, 2010).

as well as materials issued by the Foundation for the Development of the Education System² – a national agency which coordinates the realisation of the EU youth policy in Poland³.

RESULTS

The analysis of documents, reports and other publications of the EU and, on the national level, publications of the Foundation for the Development of Education System indicates specific logic of forming subjects and other agents. It is the logic of intervention into education policy and practice, which activates the need to provide feedback information. This “driving force” generates data and information by putting forward proposals based on “best practice” to be used in education policy.

The directives and assumptions at the level of particular mechanisms and techniques (the area of *techné*) are present in the policy and practice of creating common European space, a comprehensive map of youth policy – space for making comparisons, best practice models and competitiveness. The areas of visibility and their underlying indicators enable continuous comparison of results achieved by particular Member States. I discuss feedback system and evaluation techniques as specific “technologies of achieving results” (Walters, Haahr, 2011).

Creating the EU space of youth policy

The term “EU youth policy” refers to the growing number of the EU initiatives aimed at youth as an important subject of the UE politics. The UE programmes for youth have been implemented since 1988. The legal basis for the EU programmes within the “youth” area is provided by Article 149 of the Treaty of Amsterdam signed in 1997 (assumptions concerning youth policy are included in chapter 3 titled *Education, Vocational Training and Youth* (Wallace, Bendit, 2009)). Aside from apparent interest in formal education, the document introduced a programme for informal education named “Youth for Europe”. The aim of this programme was to organise culturally differentiated experiences enabling the development of cross-cultural competence (such as tolerance or language skills) which is considered as a necessary condition for European citizenship. Thus, activities within programmes for formal and informal education enabled exchanging information and experience in the area of youth between Member States (Wallace, Bendit, 2009). Today, the major documents determining youth policy of the EU are: “The White Paper. A New Impetus for European Youth” (2001), the “Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life” (2003), the “European Youth Pact” (2005) and “Youth Strategy” (2009). Various programmes aimed at youth and people working with young people are essential elements of this policy.

A renewed framework of European cooperation in the youth policy field for the years 2010-2018 has been defined by the EU Youth Strategy approved by the EU Council in 2009 (Council Resolution, 2009). The aims determined by the Strategy are being realised on the basis of the open method of coordination (OMC) employed in cooperation between the EU Member States. Although youth policy is implemented at the EU level, the Commission does not have authority to replace national policies. Nevertheless, a comprehensive map of the EU youth policy is being created, where particular practices and legal regulations of a country are put within visible space at the EU scale.

The practice called the Open Method of Coordination as a way of enforcing integration and effective realisation of common aims by all Member States was first approved at the European Council Summit in Lisbon in 2000 (Walters, Haahr, 2011). The major elements of OMC are included in four points:

- 1) central setting of strategic goals (at the meetings of European Councils and Councils of Ministers, preceded by preparatory works of the European Commission);
- 2) measurability (quantification of goals and results enabling their comparison, e.g. between Member States);

² Foundation for the Development of the Education System - the State Treasury Foundation which aim is coordinating of educational programmes of the European Union, among others.

³ See the list of the data base in *References*

- 3) decentralised implementation (at the Member State level and lower) without explicit tools for realisation strategic goals;
- 4) systematic monitoring, evaluation and reporting results of strategies implementation (through regular comparison and peer evaluation by Member States and the European Council) (Walters, Haahr, 2011).

According to the above assumptions, the goals and fundamental priorities of the EU youth policy are agreed upon at the EU level by the representatives of the European Commission and the governments of Member States, and Member States are responsible for the ways of their realisation. In this mechanism, continuous evaluation of progress and peer comparison of achieved results play a significant role. Although the European Commission does not intervene into the methods of implementation of particular central directives, Member States are obliged to submit regular reports which provide a basis for the assessment of the extent of agreed goals realisation. The open method of coordination calls on Member States to undertake specific activities within “fields of action” and suggests a set o tools, which include, first of all, data based policy, learning from each other, regular reports on progress, disseminating results and monitoring, structural dialogue with young people and youth organisations (European Commission, 2012, p. 4).

Youth Strategy is represented as a tree rooted in a multi-sectoral approach which grows into eight branches (“fields of action”): Education and Training, Employment and Entrepreneurship, Social Inclusion, Health and Well-Being, Participation, Creativity and Culture, Voluntary Activities and Youth and the World (As seen in Figure 1).

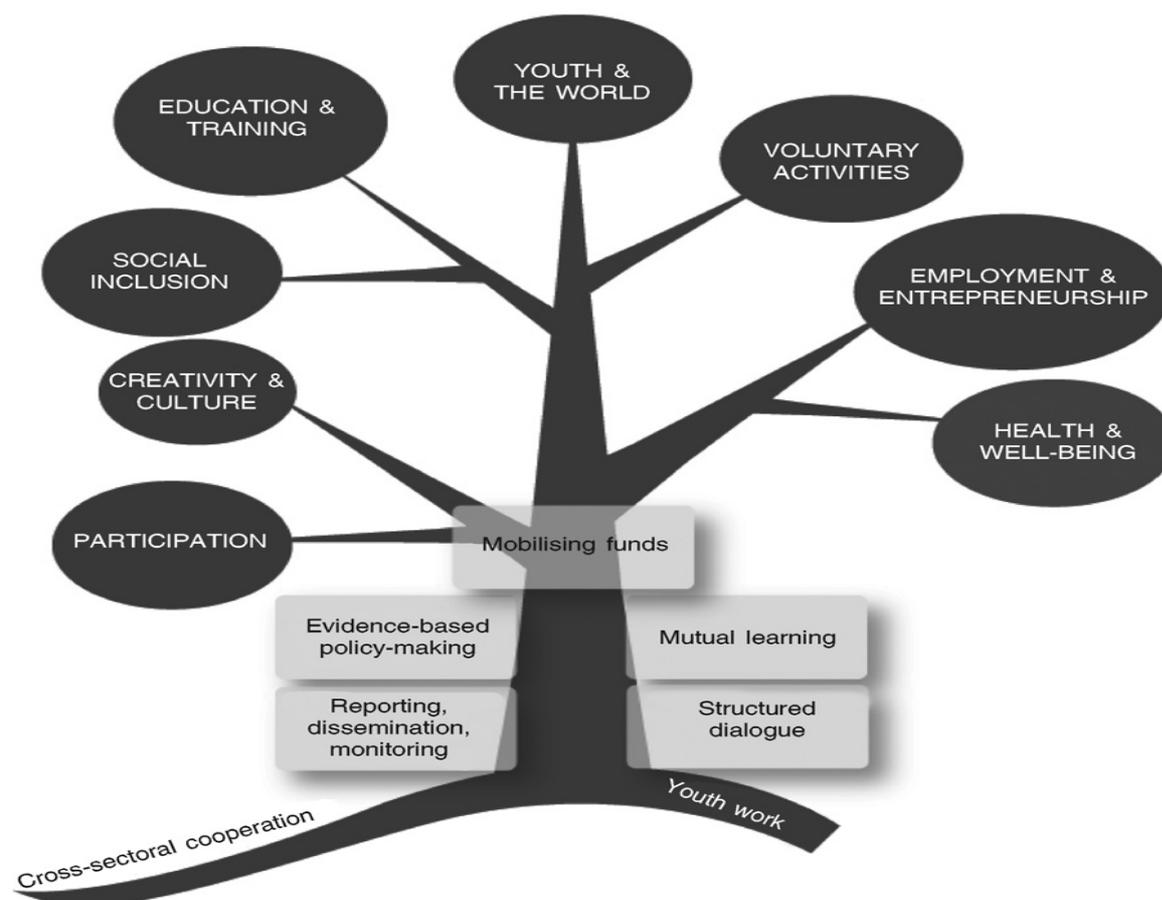


Figure 1: Youth Strategy as a tree rooted in a multi-sectoral approach with eight branches

Source: Joint Report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field, OJ C 394, 2012, p. 6.

The image of the branched tree shows connections between particular fields of action: “Health and Well-Being” grows from the branch “Employment and Entrepreneurship”, “Participation” from “Creativity and Culture”, “Social Inclusion” from “Education and Training”, and, at the top of the tree, there is a field called “Youth and the World”. The eight areas of multi-sectoral actions aimed at youth gather together differentiated and heterogeneous social practices and create their representations. Continuous evaluation of youth policy turns these multi-contextual social processes into comparable and measurable indicators, which make it possible to find places of “best practice” in a single view and create lists and comparisons. This characteristic normalisation included in the discourse of “best practice” operates relying on a set of 40 indicators of evaluation of the all eight “fields of action”. The set of indicators, developed by a “team of experts” in 2011, helps classify and assess youth characteristics and behaviours which have been made “visible”. For example, in the field of “Education and Training”, four basic indicators of goals realisation have been distinguished, which are presented in the documents of the UE in a table consisting of the following elements: indicator’s name, its definition, goal for the EU to be achieved by 2000 and institutions gathering and disseminating data and information (as seen in Table 1).

Table 1: Measurement indicators in the field of action “Education and Training”

Indicator		Definition and comment
(1) Early leavers from education and training		<u>Definition:</u> % of the population aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education and who is no longer in education or training. <u>EU target:</u> Less than 10 % by 2020. <u>Source:</u> Eurostat, EU LFS.
(2) Low achievers	Reading	<u>Definition:</u> Share of 15-year olds who get a score of 1 or below (on a scale from 1 to 5) in PISA tests. <u>EU target:</u> less than 15 % by 2020. <u>Source:</u> OECD – PISA
	Mathematics	
	Science	
(3) Tertiary education attainment		<u>Definition:</u> Share of population aged 30-34 with tertiary education attainment. <u>EU target:</u> By 2020, at least 40%. <u>Source:</u> Eurostat, EU LFS.
(4) Young people (20-24) having completed at least upper secondary education		<u>Definition:</u> Percentage of the population 20-24 having completed at least upper secondary education (ISCED level 3c long). <u>Source:</u> Eurostat, EU LFS.

Source: Commission Staff Working Document On EU indicators in the field of youth, SEC(2011) 401 final, p. 5.

Similarly, a few indicators, institutions responsible for their measurement and an expected goal to be achieved by 2000 were ascribed to each field of action. The technique which serves to create the EU space of youth policy is visualization of the field which is managed. A map, a graph and tables which combine distinct places, contexts and factors create common space for comparisons, references, and positioning according to particular indicators. In this context, the aspect of governing youth resting on a particular kind of information politics becomes distinctly evident. It is not only the problem of more and more advanced techniques of gathering data and information, but, first of all, of activating and reinforcing the need for feedback information on progress, results and ‘best practice’ in realisation of particular programmes and strategies, and disseminating them at the EU scale. The official bureau of statistics of the UE, Eurostat presents ranking the EU Member States on

their progress in achieving particular goals in the form of ratings and tables. A subsection concerning youth which shows the latest data about indicators has been created on the Eurostat website.

This practice of creating a comprehensive map involves a few elements: systematic evaluation of the distinguished “fields of action” relying on some chosen indicators, numerous expert reports on the situation of youth in Europe, reports on progress and results of youth policy realisation (at a national and the EU levels) and an expanded network of information, which enables efficient and effective flow of gathered data and information. The effectiveness of the open method of coordination is supported by an information network which offers current knowledge about education, Europe, trainings, work and youth activity to young people, their tutors and teachers. A great deal of complex tools serve these aims: information programmes and news portals⁴. This task is efficiently realized by Eurodesk network. Within the Eurodesk programme, the consultants from across Europe are in permanent touch with each other online and they create a database and gather information for youth concerning education, Europe, trainings, work and youth activity. Moreover, they inform about the most important youth events, cooperation opportunities and possibilities of applying for funding in Poland and Europe. They are also responsible for the content of the European Youth Portal (www.europa.eu.int/youth).

A major technique serving realisation of this type of information politics is regular reporting progress, advancement and results of the national-level implementation of youth policy. Information concerning realisation of Youth Strategy in 2010-2012 was gathered by the European Commission from reports submitted by all member states by the end of 2012. The reports were prepared by providing answers to a comprehensive questionnaire concerning all aspects of the Youth Strategy⁵. All national youth reports are available on the European Commission website. It is worth pointing out that Norway, Switzerland, Montenegro and Croatia submitted these documents on a voluntary basis. The summary of the national reports was compiled “cumulatively”: the answers to various questions were summed up; the analysis of trends in separate “fields of action”, specific projects and initiatives, and the effectiveness of use of EU funds by each country were presented. The authors of the summary emphasized *learning from each other* as a key factor for the EU Youth Strategy implementation and therefore examples of good practices carried out by the Member States were highlighted (European Commission, 2012).

The “cumulative” report includes general overview of legislations, political strategies and inter-ministerial cooperation which shape youth policy in separate Member States and non-EU countries (31 states altogether were described). The report also shows the way these countries view the EU Youth Strategy impact for national and local youth policies and connections between the EU and national levels.

The report stresses the links between national youth policies and the UE Youth Strategy priorities, pointing out that a number of actions connected to the five “fields of action” were implemented in Member States even before the UE Youth Strategy came into force. According to the National Youth Reports, close relationships between the UE Youth Strategy and National Youth Strategies make the distinction artificial. These common priorities pointed out in the majority of reports are:

- “cross-sectoral and inter-ministerial cooperation;
- convincing local authorities to put ‘youth’ on the agenda;
- highlighting the added value of non-formal education and youth work for other policy areas;

⁴ For example: The European Youth Portal (www.europa.eu/youth), European Job Mobility Portal EURES (www.europa.eu.int/eures), Online European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy (www.youth-knowledge.net), portal for schools interested in cooperation with schools from other EU countries e-Twinning (www.etwinning.net).

⁵ National Youth Reports concern the period from the beginning of 2001 until the end of 2011 and mention activities planned for 2012.

- consequences of high youth unemployment and its social impact on young people” (European Commission, 2012, p. 17).

Submitting reports leads to collecting data and information which are then used for correcting programmes for youth and people working with youth and become fundamental tools for the realisation of the UE goals. Evaluation provides a basis for creating modified versions of programmes and constructing new ones. This is what happened, for example, in 2007, when the UE new generation programmes concerning informal education, which are to be realised until 2013, came into force (Youth policy, 2007). At the national level, data and information concerning the implementation of specific European programmes aimed at youth are collected by specially appointed national agencies. Each of the national agencies is responsible for organising national and international trainings and workshops for people interested in participating or already taking part in projects of the EU programmes. They also provide information and help for potential participants and beneficiaries of a programme during the preparation and realisation period of projects. The programmes implementing the EU youth policy in Poland are coordinated by the Foundation for the Development of the Education System. Entering the EU structures by Poland in 2004 decided on the youth policy orientation. “The State Strategy for Youth for 2003-2012” (2013) adopted by the Council of Ministers in 2003 includes a number of stipulations, strategic objectives and fields of action addressed to youth. The goals set out under the Strategy are realised through the Open Method of Coordination applied in the area of cooperation between the EU Member States.

Youth as an object of expertise

In the context of the above considerations, we can notice that the policy of management “through data” is not just limited to governing which relies on the results of current empirical studies, but it is realised due to the connection between aspirations and needs which justify the existence of the specific form of government. What I mean here is generating and fostering a specific need in society: on the one hand, a need “to be informed”, and on the other hand, a need to produce more and more “certain” and reliable knowledge. The point is to create a demand for currently valid and reliable knowledge. In this new type of power relation youth has become (once more) an extremely attractive object of expertise – the object of ongoing production of data, information and knowledge. This is what the authors of the Youth Strategy write about it:

“Better knowledge is a must for sound policy. Current tools (e.g. Eurostat data, national reports, European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy (EKCY), EU Research Framework Programme) are the first step, as well as the triennial report on Youth in Europe. There is *an equal need* (emphasis added) to share research results and for networking of researchers throughout Europe” (Commission of The European Communities, 2009, p. 13).

The concept of “evidence-based” youth policy combines the actions of the European Commission and the European Council, the result of which is a common initiative to set up the European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy. The centre does not only collect empirical data about youth, youth policy and youth studies in separate states, but also information concerning national and the UE experts in the field of this research.

The first comprehensive study concerning youth in Europe is “The White Paper. A New Impetus for European Youth”, which followed long months of public consultations between politicians and young people, researchers, administrative staff, non-governmental organisations and institutions working with youth. This document determined the priorities and goals of Polish youth policy drawn up in the “State Strategy for Youth for 2003-2012” (2003).

A number of studies commissioned by national and supranational agendas are invested in youth nowadays. The report “Youth in Europe. A Statistical Portrait”, which presents youth situation in 27 Member States of the European Union, provides a good example. The publication includes statistic data and analyses which display similarities and differences between young people from various European countries in terms of demography, lifestyles, education, the labour market and active citizenship. In 2009, Youth Ministers adopted the renewed framework for cooperation, according to which a similar report will be published by the European Council every three years.

The European Commission has also published research concerning the use of the above mentioned indicators by Member States (ECORYS, 2011). In addition, the youth database has been recently expanded by the results of five socioeconomic research projects on youth (within the 7th European Framework Programme for Research), which focused on marginalised groups of young people (homeless, unemployed, youth from care centres and ethnical minorities) and their social inclusion. In 2011 the Commission also carried out a Eurobarometer survey on youth, which completed the set of the UE youth indicators and the Commission standards concerning mobility (European Commission, 2012).

Thus we proceed to the issue of forms of knowledge and rationalities arising from the activity of government and underpinning it, i. e. to the area of *episteme* of government (Dean 2010).

Producing “truth” about youth

The third dimension of the analysis of government practices involves forms of thought, knowledge and types of rationality which are constructed (created and transformed) in practices of government. Looking at the problem from the perspective of the concept of governmentality, I assume that governing youth demands certain form of thought as well as a concept of youth. Practices of government adopt and realise particular forms of knowledge about young man as an object of their activities. Understood this way, “truth” about youth seeks to make certain areas and problems governable. It is located at a specific time and place, taking a definite material form- of a text, a graph or a table (Dean, 2010).

This immanent connection of knowledge and power, concepts of youth and governing young people is visible in the analysed documents:

„Young people are not a burdensome responsibility but a critical resource to society which can be mobilised to achieve higher social goals” (Commission of the European Communities, 2009, 2).

“Young people should make the best of their potential. This vision is addressed to all, but actions should focus on those with fewer opportunities. It is based on a dual approach:

- *Investing in Youth*: putting in place greater resources to develop policy areas that affect young people in their daily life and improve their well being.
- *Empowering Youth*: promoting the potential of young people for the renewal of society and to contribute to EU values and goals” (Commission of The European Communities, 2009, p. 4)

The European Commission considers education and investing in human capital to be invariably crucial for participation in the labour market, social integration and for increasing competitiveness. The concept of youth as capital presupposes that young people have to be willing to learn throughout their lives and constantly develop their skills so that they are able to adjust to current and future needs in the labour market. (Commission of the European Communities, 2009).

The process of constructing „truth” about youth becomes visible in the “surfaces of emergent discourses” (Foucault, 1972) about youth. Following the authors of Youth Strategy, we will encounter “eight fields” constituting the fragmented world of youth: Education and Training, Employment and Entrepreneurship, Social Inclusion, Health and Well-being, Participation, Creativity and Culture, Voluntary Activities and Youth and the World. Each of the “fields of action” involves a definite form of knowledge about young man, supported by data from numerous expert reports. Regularity of Strategy discourse is disclosed in attributing special importance to youth participation and self-improvement.

The emphasis on the involvement and participation of young people is an inherent element of the UE youth policy. In the strategic documents, they constitute a condition for success in fundamental goals and tasks realisation.

Documents defining youth policy, e.g. “The Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life” (2003), provide for particular ways of “youth participation” and organizational structures. Mobilization techniques (Walters, Haahr, 2011) focus “agency” around a specific set of aims to

construct young people into an involved citizens, and as active members of youth communities and organizations. The discourse of active participation provides young people with opportunities for “taking part” in resolving specific and defined problems. Participation is to be a recipe for the improvement of the situation of “endangered” youth, i.e. endangered with social exclusion, unemployment, poverty, and substance abuse.

Youth participation and its equivalent – social inclusion – constitute a vital element in consultations with young people within so called structured dialogue. The main idea of the structured dialogue is a principle included in the UE Council resolution, which says “nothing about us without us”.

Summing up the above considerations, it is worth emphasizing once more that operating of the EU youth policy as governmentality is revealed in a few dimensions:

- 1) in characteristic forms of imaging, creating fields of visibility for the eight areas of action towards /of youth in European space; “fields of visibility” are created by using indicators, regular reporting, expertise, and then comparing results and best practices; through juxtaposing and comparing mutual connections between distant factors in common priorities of the UE Member States are shown;
- 2) in characteristic vocabulary, rhetoric of participation and self-improvement as well as in procedures of production “truth” about youth as social and individual capital;
- 3) in the ways of directing learning from each other, expanding information politics, acting upon the needs of “learning society” which needs current and reliable data, information and knowledge for development;
- 4) and finally, in some characteristic ways of shaping subjects who are learning, who are endowed with capital and potential of youth, in which social and economic forces should be invested.

The elements of youth governmentality have been distinguished at the analytical level, whereas in social (education) practice they constitute a network of factors immanently connected with one another, which I define as *dispositif* of learning.

CONCLUSIONS AND INTERPRETATION

Youth policy as *dispositif* of learning

An analysis of a *dispositif* includes examining a network of relations between the areas of *techne*, *episteme* and *ethos*. A *dispositif* is not limited to discourse but it involves some non-discursive elements (Dreyfus, Rabinow, 1982; Agamben, 2009). Relying of Foucault’s works (1995, 2000, 2010), I assumed that a *dispositif* is a network of relations consisting of institutions, organized and legally enforced actions and discourses, and various statements (e.g. scientific, philosophical, moral). Understood in this way, a *dispositif* does not mean an assemblage of autonomous elements but it refers to a composition of relations between them, which serves as a mechanism producing truth about the world, representations including some forms of rationalities which legitimise particular social practices.

I perceive governmentality of youth in European space as the realisation of a particular type of *dispositif*, which employs the ideas of active participation and self-improvement. According to the “logic of intervention”, self-improvement is aimed at achieving results and it assumes self-reflection and reporting on achieved results and best practices. The issue of education policy shaped by data is frequently brought up in the contemporary education discourse. Critical approaches point out that political decisions sanctioned by the results of large-scale studies (supranational and international) are disputable since they suggest their worldview (philosophical) neutrality and underestimate heterogeneous contextual conditions which cannot be reduced to statistical comparisons (Lawn, 2011, Saari, 2012). Youth policy evaluation turns these diversified, heterogeneous social processes into simple, comparable, measurable indicators, graphs, diagrams, which gather various social practices into a comprehensive representation (Saari, 2012).

The technologies of “optimisations of results” (Walters, Haahr, 2011), standardisation and comparability of results reflect connections between personal and institutional aspirations and needs for possessing current, valid and reliable knowledge. In the context of the manifestations of the particular demand for knowledge and “being informed” described above, this network of discursive and non-discursive relations appears as a

particular dispositif of learning. In schematic form the relations between the distinguished elements of governing youth understood as a dispositif of learning are shown in Figure 2.

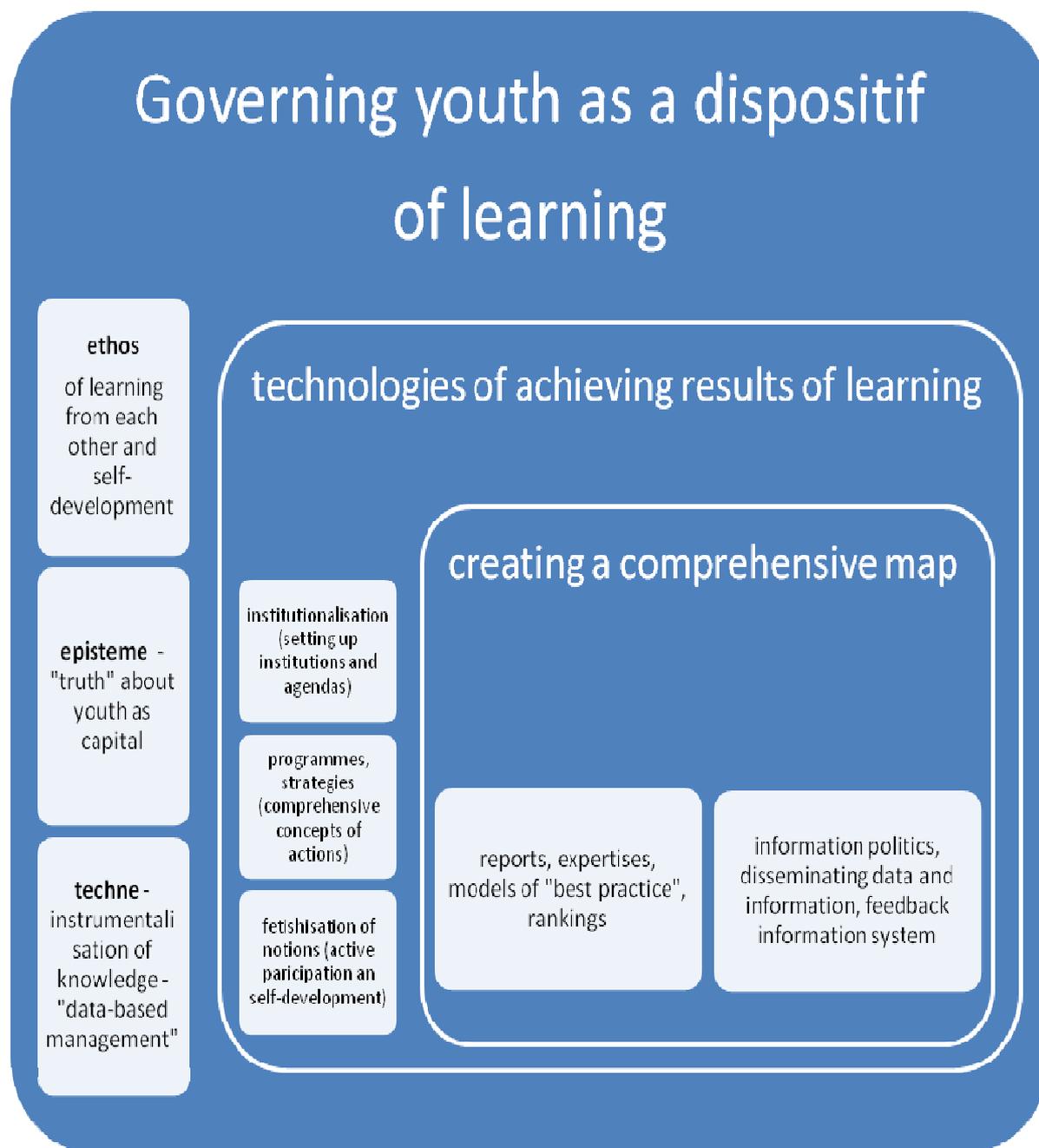


Figure 2: Governing Youth as a Dispositif of Learning
 Source: Own research.

The categorical notion of education originally included two processes: teaching and learning. Since 1980s' there has been an apparent change, determined as a paradigmatic change (Malewski, 2010), which is related to the replacement of the term "education" with the notion of "learning", aspiring to take a central position in

thinking about educational practice (Hejnicka-Bezwińska, 2008). This shift of the stress from education to learning underlines the role of the learning subject in the practice of “inclusion”, in designing own educational biography, results of learning and self-improvement. In this type of discourse the notion of learning has been referred to as some kind of capital, i.e. something which can be and should be governed, and which decides on employment (Simons, Masschelein, 2008).

Introducing the category of dispositif of learning, I emphasize the importance of learning discourse for governmentality of youth, underlying its *technical aspects*. Thus the rationality of governing youth is disclosed, the rationality which relies on the *realisation of the concept of the learning subject, on directing young people so that they wish “to learn” through active participation in suggested projects and also learn from others in continuous pursuit for self-improvement*.

In the EU youth policy, due to the references to the idea of “lifelong learning”, we do not only hear about the importance of formal education but also about the informal one. The dispositif of learning says that “things” (knowledge, skills, competences) “govern” the contemporary world, and this world is the best and only possible. In view of the huge importance which is nowadays assigned to the phenomenon of “learning”, youth is rationalised as a resource/capital. Talking about capital, I mean these ideas which attribute to youth certain potential and value, whose increase and development have social, economic and political significance. The rationality of governing, according to which youth is a resource, can be seen in assigning an exceptional role to qualifications and education of young people. A discursive basis for the concept of youth is provided by the language of human capital theory, which describes education of youth in economic categories as investment in oneself, and investment in knowledge, skills and competences as ideologically and theoretically justified. The Youth Strategy, youth mobility programmes and “lifelong learning” programmes as elements of the dispositif of learning are a form of investment in youth, where individual actions of youth and education practices are located within a visible field of social and political space of the European Union.

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