1. The political participation of young people in times of crisis: a framework for analysis

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In academic and public debates, times of economic, social, and political crisis have been associated with a decline in political participation and civic engagement (della Porta, 2013; 2014; Kerbo, 1982). In addition to the long-term effects of the financial and economic crisis started in 2008, since 2020 the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted not only the economy but also all aspects of everyday life. At the same time, climate change and global warming have created unprecedented environmental threats. In a similar context, scholarly expectations would predict political participation to diminish sharply and an entire generation to disengage from politics. In a liquid society (Bauman, 1997), the erosion of collective identities and the challenges to solidarity processes, coupled with the perception of a closure of political opportunities and a decline in informal networks and resources available (money, power, and status), typical consequences of crises, are in fact usually interpreted as factors that jeopardise political participation. As all these conditions have severely affected young people, analyses have spread to point at a disenchanted, frustrated, apathetic young cohort (see Cammaerts et al., 2014; Earl et al., 2017).

Challenging these expectations, research on contemporary social movements has noted that young people are not apathetic, disengaged, anti-political, or detached from political participation (Amnå and Ekman, 2013; della Porta, 2019a; della Porta et al., 2022a). Although they are suffering high levels of unemployment, precarisation, cuts in social services, changes in consumption patterns, and a grim outlook for their future, as results of the intertwining between different types of crises; those material grievances are coupled with idealistic aspirations, fuelling mobilisation (della Porta et al., 2022a, Ch. 2 and 3; 2022b). From the Arab Spring to the Indignados movement, from the anti-austerity protests to the recent mobilisations for climate justice, gender equality, and labour rights, a new generation has engaged in contentious politics, advocating for a more just and inclusive society. Especially in those countries that have been hit hardest by the financial crisis, a substantial number of young citizens have reacted to adverse conditions with increased political and social mobilisation, choosing predominantly intermittent, non-institutionalised, horizontal forms of political participation, performed across hybrid public spaces, from the Web to the town squares as well as self-managed spaces (della Porta, 2014; Milan, 2019). In addition, especially some types of social movements and protest campaigns – such as the Global Justice Movement beginning in the 2000s, the anti-austerity protests, which followed the 2008 financial crisis, and recent anti-racist, environmentalist, and gender-based mobilisations – are over-proportionally populated by young people (Andretta and Sommier, 2009; Andretta and della Porta, 2015; della Porta, 2013; della Porta, 2019a; della Porta et al., 2022a, Ch. 3).

Furthermore, since the early 2020s, movements like Fridays For Future and Extinction Rebellion have mobilised a large number of young activists in protest against climate change (de Moor et al., 2020; Zamponi et al., 2022). Similarly, young cohorts have been found to

be the core groups in territorial struggles in Italy (della Porta and Piazza, 2007; Piazza and Frazzetta, 2018) and in Germany (Kaufer and Lein, 2018, p. 4; Ruser, 2020, p. 812). In the case of climate strikes launched in 2018 by the Swedish activist Greta Thunberg, high school students form the bulk of the protests (de Moor et al., 2020; Sommer et al., 2019; Wahlström et al., 2019). Grassroots environmental groups that were not initiated by young people, including the UK-founded Extinction Rebellion, have increasingly addressed and involved younger cohorts of activists (Richardson, 2020). According to Hagedorn and colleagues (2019, pp. 139–40), the massive grassroots mobilisation of the youth climate movement shows that young people feel an urgent need to protest in the defence of climate and other foundations of human well-being.

In the same years, in a context characterised by (right-wing) political backlash, a new wave of feminist and LGBTQI+ activism has brought to the streets both women and young people in the struggle for gender rights (Chironi, 2019; della Porta et al., 2022a, Ch. 3). Finally, young people have been found to be particularly sensitive to racial discrimination, with "Generation Z" becoming a significant presence in the Black Lives Matter movement both in the US and in Europe, especially since the police murder of George Floyd in 2020 (Milkman, 2017; Milman et al., 2021). Exploiting the potential represented by the internet and network communication technologies (Cohen et al., 2012; Loader et al., 2014; Sloam, 2014; Xenos at al., 2014), young people have often challenged mainstream perspectives and citizens' roles as defined by political and social elites. While not completely disengaging from institutional politics, young activists are developing alternative forms of political participation, which enhance their engagement in public life and form part of a strategy for social change. Far from being apathetic or passive, many young people appear to hold an interest in politics, even if they perceive the inadequacy of the existing institutions, as mainstream political parties and governments tend to overlook the issues deemed the most relevant for the current youth generation (della Porta et al., 2022a; Loader, 2007; Loader et al., 2014). Because of growing mistrust in traditional politics, a substantial proportion of young people seem to have increasingly distanced themselves from conventional forms of action and intermediary institutions, at the same time moving toward a wide variety of alternative participatory practices. These tend to embrace distinct forms of organisation, action, and framing focused on contrasting unpopular economic and labour policies, and promoting economic redistribution, enhanced social rights for disadvantaged social groups, and environmental protection.

Building upon the most updated literature in the fields of social movement studies (e.g., della Porta, 2015; della Porta and Mattoni, 2014; della Porta et al., 2018; della Porta et al., 2022a; Romanos, 2013; 2014; 2016; Yoruk, 2014), this chapter provides an analytical framework for the analysis of young people's participation, which helps address several interrelated research questions:

- What leads a significant number of young people in times of crisis to engage in collective initiatives, rather than to remain passive?
- What are the forms of social commitment that critical young people choose to use, especially in a context of crisis? Which meanings are attached to these forms of social engagement?
- To what extent do age and generation influence the level of engagement of demonstrators in collective action? How do they shape the identity and views of protesters?

To address these questions, we provide a broad overview of current scientific knowledge, bridging youth studies and social movement studies. The chapter is organised as follows. We first look at explanations of youths' high propensity to participate in protests as effects of biographical availability, and we address explanations in terms of cohorts and generations. We then look at the political and social context for protests, looking at the organisational forms as well as at the repertoires of collective action. We conclude with a reflection upon the main implications of these developments for social movement scholarship and youth studies.

BIOGRAPHICAL AVAILABILITY AND THE MICRO-DYNAMICS OF YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

The participation of young people in contemporary progressive movements is a relevant phenomenon in both political and theoretical terms. Even though young people tend to be overrepresented in unconventional politics, social movement studies have rarely considered age and related issues as central analytical dimensions. Conversely, youth studies have mostly focused on institutional and conventional politics, only rarely addressing social movements' forms of engagement (see Collin and Hilder, 2022; Mayes and Hartup, 2021; Montero and Bessant, 2019; Pickard and Bessant, 2018). The few scientific exceptions are important sources of inspiration for the analysis of the specificities and characteristics of the participation of young people in social movements.

Research on political participation has addressed the role of the *youth*, considered in general to be less inclined to conventional action and more likely, instead, to use protest and other forms of unconventional action. The related social science literature has long suggested that political participation increases with social centrality as higher levels of participation are observed, *ceteris paribus*, for the better educated, middle class, men, middle-aged cohort, married people, city residents, ethnic majority, and citizens involved in voluntary associations (Milbrath and Goel, 1977). A higher social status implies in fact more material resources (but also free time) to invest in political participation, as well as a higher sense of personal achievement.

This understanding of politics as an activity for the elites, mostly seen in the analysis of conventional forms of participation, has been challenged by social movement studies, which have focused instead on protest as a resource of the powerless (Lipsky, 1965). Since the onset of this field of studies, scholars have noted that social movements are alternative means of political participation for sectors of the population, such as students, women, and ethnic minorities, that tend to be less involved in conventional forms of participation (della Porta and Diani, 2020, Ch. 2). In general, social movement studies have stressed that those who protest present some different characteristics than those who use conventional forms of political participation: if the middle classes do vote more, workers strike more often; and if those in middle age are more present in party-related activities, students often occupy their schools and universities, and protest in various forms (della Porta, 2015). Protesting also requires in fact some conditions of biographical availability that tend to be higher among young people (McAdam, 1986; 1989).

Time availability and limited family and work-related responsibilities are considered relevant resources for protest politics. Researchers noted that some conditions that affect biographical availability can have an impact on the steps that precede the actual choice to participate. In particular, positive motivations towards protest seem to decline for married people

and full-time or part-time employees (Beyerlein and Hipp, 2006). Given their high presence in different types of movements, the propensity of students to participate in unconventional forms has been particularly addressed in this perspective. Klemenčič (2014) noted that "'studentship,' i.e., the state of being a student, can be highly conducive to 'acting collectively in a public sphere' to express interests, ideas, make demands on some authority, or hold that authority accountable" (p. 399). The neoliberal reforms in tertiary education as well as condition of work precarity can undermine the participation potential by reducing the availability of time as well as the presence of spaces of aggregation (della Porta et al., 2020; della Porta et al., 2022b).

Cohorts and Generations in Social Movements

Demographic analysis has pointed at the effect of the age distribution of the population on contentious politics with particular attention to the size of the youth *cohort*. As Goldstone (2015) summarised:

> An age cohort is simply a group of people of roughly the same age, who were born in a particular period. In the United States, it has become common to refer to those born between 1945 and 1960 as the "Baby Boomers;" those born from 1960 to 1980 as "Generation X;" and those born from 1980 to 1996 as "Millennials." (p. 148)

Those born from 1997 onwards are commonly referred to as "Generation Z". However, cohorts do not always form systematic groups. Their significance depends on whether a cohort experienced a major shift in its size, education, or experience relative to other cohorts. In fact, the socialisation of new generations is considered less challenging "when the numbers of people in society are stable or changing slowly enough for growth in the economy and institutions to accommodate the change" (Goldstone, 2015, p. 150). Even if the size of the young cohort might be relevant at times, protests are not always carried out by young activists. While the Arab Spring has developed in an environment characterised by a very large presence of young people, no particular increase in the percentage of young people was found in Southern Europe or in the US coeval mobilisations (Goldstone, 2015, p. 150). Nonetheless, scholars have pointed to the pivotal role played by young people in the waves of anti-austerity protests at the beginning of the 2010s. In Southern Europe, student movements and youth activism have been described as the "early risers" in the anti-austerity cycle of protest (Lima and Artiles, 2013; Zamponi and González, 2017). Looking at demographic characteristics of the protesters, therefore, it is important to consider some other sociographic dimensions, such as the percentage of unemployment (with, for example, more than 50 per cent unemployment among young people in Southern Europe) or ethnic distribution (with, for example, non-white proportion rapidly increasing in the young cohorts in the US). Furthermore, scholars pointed out that socio-demographic characteristics, such as age and gender, have an impact on participation in extra-institutional political activities as well as on the visions they express (della Porta et al., 2022a, Ch. 3).

As evidence going from the 1968 protests to contemporary environmental movements indicates, cohorts acquire more of a transformative impact on collective action when they experience one or more important events that influence the norms, values, and behaviours in their future lives. In Mannheim's (1952) conceptualisation, we are referring to a political *generation*, that is, "a particular kind of identity of location, embracing related 'age groups'

embedded in a historical-social process" (p. 292). Thus, beside the young age of their activists, youth movements reflect specific generational characteristics. The 1968ers were described as a generation that has come of age in a moment of affluence and reduction of inequalities, endowed with "post-materialist" values (Inglehardt, 1977) and broad political interests (Downton and Wehr, 1997), as the young activists criticised their parents for their unfulfilled promises (Giugni, 2004). Relevant to political participation in the 1960s was not only an increase in the number of young people, but also a growing self-definition as youth, visible in the consumption habit with a stress on generational diversity, with different language, values, spaces (Passerini, 1991, p. 120), as well as an orientation towards progressive politics.

Also, emotional characteristics usually connected to the youth have been mentioned as facilitating commitment for various causes. Specifically, young people have been presented as highly emotional, rebellious, devoted to an ethic of absolute ends, irreverent, and radical (Lipset, 1976). The generational character of the 1968ers has often been stressed (della Porta, 2018; Morin et al., 1968), as social movements of the 1960s have been described as a rebellion by the youth (de Luna, 2009). Analyses of the youth pointed then at a moral rebellion against the loss of credibility of the previous generations, expressed through demystification, irreverence, and transgression (Ortoleva, 1988).

Analysis of the political participation of the Millennials has indicated that common traits derive from the experience of living in times of multiple crises and emergencies, leading to a perception of "urgency". Some preliminary evidence indicates that young people belonging to both Millennials and "Generation Z" are particularly sensitive to issues that have become increasingly salient in recent years, including the conditions of women and migrants, as well as the state of the environment and climate change (Bertuzzi, 2019; Chironi, 2019; Portos, 2019). While in the post-2008 global economic downturn young people had prioritised economic concerns, employment opportunities, and access to education, in recent years there has been an increase in their awareness of the catastrophic consequences of climate change (Corner et al., 2015; McAdam, 2017). Scholars have linked the receptivity of young people to their specific vulnerability and exposure to the longer-term social and economic effects of environmental shocks and climate change, at both a global and a local level (O'Brien et al., 2018). What is more, young activists have framed climate change as a major problem of generational justice, which sees children bear the brunt of climate change and environmental pollution caused by older generations (UNICEF, 2010).

Generational dynamics of convergence, but also tensions, have been identified also in contemporary feminist and LGBTQI+ movements. Young environmental activists are found to be angrier than older activists, but also more enthusiastic about promoting radical changes (von Zabern and Tulloch, 2021). Similarly, LGBTQI+ movements witness the full involvement of male activists and transgender people, while young feminists show greater openness towards issues such as sex work and surrogate motherhood (Chironi, 2019).

THE CONTEXTUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS FOR THE MOBILISATION OF THE YOUTH

Cohorts and generations are important concepts for studying the participation of young people, especially with regard to non-conventional forms of action. Complementing these notions, social movement studies provide analytical tools for analysing the specific contex-

tual conditions that might affect their political participation and the characteristics that their mobilisations assume. Looking at the contextual conditions for protests, research has pointed at the relevance of the *political opportunity structure* approach, paying systematic attention to the existing political system, state practices towards opposition, elite alliances, and prevailing socio-economic conditions (della Porta and Diani, 2020, Ch. 8). Recent contributions have aimed to bring reflection on capitalist developments back into social movement studies (della Porta, 2015) by investigating the specific effects of economic and market policies on young people's visions and actions.

The contemporary crisis of neoliberalism, which is accompanied by a political crisis, has transformed the social settings to various degrees and in various ways, creating new grievances, reshaping opportunities and restraints on mobilisation, and triggering or exacerbating social and political conflicts. This pertains to policies associated with the economic crisis, such as austerity measures eroding social and political institutions or the breakdown of labour markets, particularly for young people, but also to less obvious outcomes, such as the redirection of flows of migration, shifting power balances among different social groups, as well as the conservative backlash that has undermined acquired social and civil rights and prevents new ones from being obtained (see della Porta et al., 2022a). Young people in particular have emerged as one of the groups most heavily affected by the 2008 global financial crisis (Grasso, 2016; Pickard and Bessant, 2018).

Both the economic and concurrent legitimacy crises have altered the political participation of young people. These crises created or exacerbated grievances among certain parts of the young population and reshaped political opportunities in various ways, including discouragement or repression of alternative forms of action seen as challenges by political authorities. Looking at their social characteristics, Millennials have been defined as a precarious generation, composed of people who, according to Standing (2011):

> have minimal trust relations with capitalism or the state, making it quite different from the salariat. And it has none of the social contract relationship of the proletariat, whereby labour securities were provided in exchange for subordination and contingent loyalty, the unwritten deal underpinning welfare state. (p. 9)

As Standing (2011) noted, the precariat is not limited to holding insecure employment, but it reflects in a status in which there are no career perspectives and few, if any, entitlements to state or enterprise benefits that usually are available to previous generations belonging to the salariat and to the industrial proletariat. The existential condition of the Millennials is in fact characterised by a sum of insecurity on the labour market, on the job (as regulations on hiring and dismissals give little protection to workers), in the work (with weak provisions for accident and illness as well as reduced unions' rights), in income (with very low pay), having effects in terms of accumulation of anger, anomie, anxiety, and alienation (Standing, 2011, pp. 10ff.). The uncertainties linked to climate change, the current energy crisis, and the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as the consequences of conservative policies linked to the political backlash, have further exacerbated young people's state of anxiety and political discontent (della Porta et al., 2022a; Zamponi et al., 2022).

Changes in the relations between the state and the market, operated through neoliberal policies, have clearly affected youth conditions. Neoliberal policies associated with the economic crisis have hit the most fragile social sectors of the European population, including the youth, particularly hard (Crouch, 2011; della Porta, 2016a; 2016b; Streeck, 2014; 2016). Students'

free and autonomous time is drastically reduced in neoliberal universities where space and opportunities for aggregation are reduced, while the student body becomes increasingly heterogeneous in terms of social background, age, country of origin, conditions as paying versus non-paying students, and full-time versus part-time students (della Porta et al., 2020; Smeltzer and Hearn, 2015, p. 353).

Students tend to be less oriented to live in student residences and there is an increasing number of student workers. So, the diversities within the student body make it more difficult "to cultivate a collective student identity which helps student governments flourish and to uncover shared grievances and shared emotions which fuel student movements" (Klemenčič, 2014, p. 399). The very condition of precarity has been mentioned as further reducing the opportunities to express one's own voice.

As the extent of marketisation of higher education and the youth condition in general vary broadly across countries (della Porta et al., 2020), the specific conditions of the youth, their propensity for and forms of commitment might be expected to vary as well. A common trait has however been singled out: biographical difficulties do not automatically entail resignation; rather, dynamics linked to neoliberal capitalism have been regarded as pre-conditions for the formation of materialist grievances. These have acted as triggers of youth participation in the Occupy Wall Street movement in the US, in the Arab Spring in Northern Africa, in the anti-austerity protests/Indignados in Europe, and in recent mobilisations in several African and Middle East countries (della Porta et al., 2019b; 2022a, Ch. 2; Honwana, 2019; Kiwan, 2020). According to some interpretations, contemporary anti-racist and pro-gender rights protests are to be understood within the dynamics of neoliberal capitalism, more precisely in the context of a renewed "primitive accumulation" of resources and living labour. From this point of view, movements such as Black Lives Matter can be regarded as "a site of struggle against racialized and gendered dispossession of basic resources, education, health care, housing, economic justice, and violence" and have "a powerful potential to develop into an anti-capitalist struggle" (Mullings, 2020, p. 250).

THE ACTION REPERTOIRES IN THE ACTIVISM OF THE YOUTH

To have an impact on mobilisation, opportunities and resources must be assessed through cognitive, but also emotional, mechanisms. Largely focused on the intersection between the meso- and micro-level, *framing* theory shifted attention towards the cognitive appreciation of how opportunities, identities, and action repertoires are framed. According to this approach, framing helps individuals to interpret the world based on their social position and their previous experiences. Movement scholars have also stressed the importance of collective identity, including the means for its expression in terms of cultural practices, rituals, symbols, and emotions (Goodwin et al., 2001; Melucci, 1996). These are important to understand young people's preferences for those forms of action that provide room for self-expression, spontaneity, creativity, and sometimes joy and even madness.

As periods of crisis are often associated with the closing down of opportunities – which may motivate young people to seek non-conventional channels to re-address their aims and goals – we can expect young people to privilege prefigurative forms of politics (della Porta, 2015). Moreover, the cultural capacities for collective mobilisation are affected by the impact of social media on young people's modes of feeling, judging, and thinking. According to

empirical studies, social media have in fact become "emotional conduits for reconstructing a sense of togetherness among a spatially dispersed constituency, so as to facilitate its physical coming together in public space" (Gerbaudo, 2012, p. 159). Virtual collective identification fostered online may be partial and ambiguous, but also easier, since the anonymity associated with social media minimises the impact of differences with others. At the same time, new media lower the transaction costs of mobilisation, and as a result, the role played by formal organisations and professional activists in strategic framing diminishes (Polletta et al., 2013).

Considering young people not as a mere subset of the general population but rather as a specific group with its own particular life-worlds and concerns, and its own definitions of politics and "the Political", we can also expect specific forms of political engagement. Successive generations face new challenges that previous generations have not experienced (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997). Thus, as O'Toole et al. (2003) argue, "the political issues and arenas familiar to other, older, generations as foci and sites of political activity may well have little relevance to young people" (p. 48). In fact, while "around the turn of the century, a range of scholars began to worry that youth political engagement was at an unhealthy low," others noted that "youth engagement was not declining, just changing form" (Earl et al., 2017, p. 1). An observation that also seems applicable outside of the US is that "it is not that youth are disengaged, but rather that they do not engage in the same way that 'dutiful' generations have" (Earl et al., 2017, p. 1; see also Sander and Putnam, 2010; Shea and Harris, 2006; Zukin et al., 2006).

Research on political participation has not only proven that it is inaccurate to describe young people as apathetic, but also highlighted that they adopt a variety of forms of action that go well beyond street protest, innovating on the previous repertoire of action. As democracies are faced with a crisis of political representation (Mair, 2013), opportunities for young people to influence institutional politics by enrolling in traditional representative organisations are limited. What is more, their social world is characterised by great uncertainty, acceleration, and fragmentation (Furlong and Cartmel, 2007; Leccardi, 2005). In this context, both direct social actions and lifestyle choices provide an alternative means to engage in politics (Bosi and Zamponi, 2020; Micheletti and Stolle, 2010). According to de Moor (2017), the term "lifestyle politics" refers to "the politicisation of everyday life choices, including ethically, morally or politically inspired decisions about, for example, consumption, transportation or modes of living" (p. 181). Politicisation derives from the realisation that one's everyday behaviour has global implications and political considerations should therefore affect one's lifestyle. This encompasses a wide range of activities: some are individually performed, such as adopting a vegetarian or a vegan diet; others are part of a collective strategy, such as joining a campaign to boycott specific products or becoming members of alternative food networks (Pickard, 2019). In particular, lifestyle politics have been analysed as being especially relevant in the context of environmentalism (Henn et al., 2018; Schlosberg and Coles, 2016) and increasingly important among younger cohorts (Alteri et al., 2017; Micheletti and McFarland, 2012; Stolle et al., 2005).

Research has addressed the Millennials as a generation that faces a very different type of life expectations and/or conditions than previous generations, and it is more seriously threatened by the current crises and emergencies (see Dalton, 2017, Ch. 5). As recalled above, the main features of the "Millennials generation" are being precarious at the social level, lonely at the cultural level, threatened in its interactions with the state, and betrayed by the institutional Left (della Porta, 2019b). These feelings of alienation, atomisation, and resignation are mirrored to some extent by the level and type of political engagement evident in this cohort. Young

people often participate as individuals, consuming in a politically-conscious fashion (Bertuzzi, 2019; Morelli and Vitale, 2020), engaging in actions and practices that promote an alternative economy (Forno and Graziano, 2014; Monticelli and Bassoli, 2017), or getting involved in solidarity actions and self-managed practices (Bosi and Zamponi, 2019), and in protest activities. While mostly deserting political parties, they can sometimes contact institutions or politicians (Down and Wilson, 2017; Keating, 2014), and look more favourably to NGOs, especially if they are youth-based, such as the Youth Climate Movement NGO, which has branches in Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom (Zamponi et al., 2022). In Italy, for instance, distrust in institutional politics seems to be particularly widespread among women and younger cohorts who engaged in extra-institutional politics in the period 2017–2018 as compared with men and older cohorts (Chironi, 2020; della Porta et al., 2022a, Ch. 3). At the political level, over the past decade no political party has appeared to give a voice to youth discontent.

Other scholars have pointed to youth engagement in alternative forms of resilience that have spread throughout Southern Europe, inspired by mutual aid and cooperative values (Kousis, 2017). Aside from attempting to directly cover the basic needs related to everyday life, such as food, shelter, and health, young people active in the aftermath of the Great Recession have increasingly engaged in the re-appropriation of free time and of spaces devoted to socialisation and recreational activities (Bosi and Zamponi, 2019; Milan, 2019; Milan and Milan, 2021), which are ever more threatened by commodification.

CONCLUSIONS

Discussions about young people's supposed passivity have treated passivity as a unidimensional phenomenon and young people as a homogeneous group. In this chapter we have shown instead that youth engagement with politics is multi-faceted and nuanced, and that there is no single uniform path to political participation. Social movement studies largely disconfirm the paradigm of the "disaffected citizens" that depicted younger generations as being mostly apolitical, indifferent, and apathetic towards politics. This pessimistic vision is in fact mainly based on studies of party politics and electoral turnout and is contrasted instead by research on alternative forms of political participation reviewed in this chapter. Specifically, we have pointed at age as a factor influencing forms and content expressed in contentious politics. Furthermore, we have distinguished between cohorts and generations, stressing how the latter are embedded in an historical-social process. In fact, we have shown that the ways in which youth participate politically are linked to their backgrounds and life circumstances, as well as to socio-economic and educational factors. Then, we have focused on the biographical and contextual conditions that explain the high propensity of young people to participate in protests, such as time availability, limited family and work-related responsibilities, as well as political opportunities and constraints. Finally, we have delved into the characteristics that their mobilisation takes, pointing at the different ways in which the youth have engaged in political activities, adopting forms of action that go well beyond street protest, such as direct social action and lifestyle choices.

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