

BOOK REVIEW

FRANCESCO PASTORE
The Youth Experience Gap

Explaining National Differences in the School-to-work Transition

Francesco Pastore is qualified as full professor of Economic Policy. Currently, he is Assistant Professor of Economics at Seconda Università di Napoli. He is also secretary of the Italian Association of Labor Economics (AIEL) and a member of the executive board of the Italian Association of Comparative Economic Studies (AISSEC). His main research interests are in labor and education economics. He is also interested in development and transition economics. He has contributed extensively in several such fields as regional unemployment differentials, school-to-work transitions, labor market dynamics, gender discrimination, human capital investment, public employment services and passive as well as active labor market policy, labor market consequences of international trade and nonprofit organization.

The book entitled *The Youth Experience Gap. Explaining National Differences in the School-to-work Transition*, published in the year 2014, points the youth experience gap as a key concept that provides the basis for to explain the meager youth employment opportunities and earnings, but also national differences in youth labor market outcomes. Observers are divided as to optimal design of youth employment policy. Liberalist economists believe that the market itself should address the youth disadvantage having in view that more flexible labor markets should also guarantee greater labor turnover, including temporary work, so as to allow young people to move from one job to the next until they accumulate the work experience they need to become more employable and find the right career. In contrast, other economists criticize entry flexibility and temporary work, claiming that the former type helps only the most skilled and motivated target groups, while the latter only allows young people to gather generic, not job-specific work experience. To help young people fill in the gap and ease the school-to-work transition, every OECD country provides its own mix of policy instruments, including different degrees and types of labor market flexibility, of educational and training systems, of passive income support schemes, and fiscal incentives. Five different country groups are detected whose outcomes in terms of youth unemployment are dramatically different: (a) the North European; (b) the Continental European; (c) the Anglo-Saxon; (d) the South European; (e) the New Member States.

The book is divided into seven chapters that include: some stylized facts regarding youth experience gap, the youth experience gap, the mainstream approach to the causes of youth unemployment, weaknesses of the mainstream approach, the interventionist approach, the classification of school-to-work transition regimes, discussion and summary remarks.

The present book addresses to the segment of readers who includes students who are specialized in labor economics, political economy and business, graduates skilled in the art, and stakeholders and other specialists on the labor market.

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