

## Youth around the Baltic Sea: Sharing Differences – Discovering Common Grounds?

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The political transformation in Eastern Europe after the end of the Cold War opened the way for new integrational processes in Europe. The Baltic Sea Area has been considered to be a 'model' for the new opportunities of political and economic cooperations. How did these new conditions influence the every day lives and attitudes of young people? Is Karl Mannheim right when he claims that common historical experiences lead to the formation of a generation, that will be able to transform these experiences into comprehensive political activities? These were the guiding questions we gave to the authors of the book.

The chapters of the book provide some interesting examples of young people's concerns and of their ways of expressing themselves. We wanted to present youth as a diversified phenomenon in the midst of the dynamics of history in order to open up the wide range of perspectives that the concept of generation provides. We did not give any theoretical or methodological guidelines to the authors. Quite the contrary, we looked for a variety of different approaches and subjects that could generate new perspectives and insights to the study of youth. It is therefore very likely that the reader will find contradictory assumptions, observations and even results in the individual contributions. Our intention has simply been to encourage critical discussion, for we think that the topic of young people and their political integration still offers many reservoirs for further research.

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