
Capabilities and the insecurity of young Russians: Narrowing the capability gap and reducing inequalities

*A qualitative study on 15-18 year old young people from Saint Petersburg,
the Leningrad and the Novgorod regions*

Thesis for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Human Development in Social and Cultural Research
at the Research School “Education and Capabilities“,
Faculty of Educational Science, University of Bielefeld

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Bielefeld, November 2012

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This work is funded by International NRW Research School "Education and Capabilities", Bielefeld University.

Declaration of Originality

I hereby declare that the material in the thesis entitled “Capabilities and the insecurity of young Russians: Narrowing the capability gap and reducing inequalities. A qualitative study on 15-18 year old young people from Saint Petersburg, the Leningrad and the Novgorod regions” either in terms of this current version or another version has not been previously submitted to any other faculty.

I hereby certify that I am the sole author of this thesis and in the content of my work, I have used no other sources than those explicitly indicated and where due acknowledgement has been made.

Ksenia Kuzmina

Bielefeld, 11.2012

To my parents, Galina and Aleksei

*„Родительский дом, начало начал,
Ты в жизни моей надежный причал.“*

(М. Рябинин)

Acknowledgement

The writing of this thesis has made me strong, patient, hardworking, confident in own knowledge and strengths. It has been a wonderful time of learning, researching, debating, and developing of my ideas. But my thesis would not have been completed successfully without the help, advice, support, insistence, patience of the people, to whom I would like to express my sincere thanks.

First of all, I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to my supervisors *Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Hans-Uwe Otto* and *Prof. Dr. Holger Ziegler* for their patient guidance and support. They encouraged me to not only grow as a researcher of Russian youth, but also as a scholar of the capability approach and qualitative methods. They supported me in abstract and critical thinking, gave me a space for development, recognized my abilities and believed in me.

I would like to thank *the NRW Research School "Education and Capabilities"* for granting me with the scholarship and providing me all necessary facilities to research, study and engage into the scientific life. Many thanks also go to the International Office, Bielefeld University and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), for providing me with three months of scholarship extension in the framework of the STIBET-Förderung.

I express my appreciation to *Dr. Sabine Schäfer*, who has always expressed the willingness to help me with the data collection and analysis, made a review of my chapters and replied to all my questions up to date.

My special thanks go to *Prof. Dr. Nadia Kutscher*, who gave me new insights and perspectives which made me rethink and review some of my assumptions in the beginning of my work on the thesis.

I particularly appreciate the advices, support and encouragement that I always have received from *Prof. Dr. Olga Borodkina* and *Prof. Dr. Irina Grigorieva*. I would like to thank *Prof. Dr. Irina Grigorieva* for her helpful cooperation during my data collection and debates during my data analysis, and especially for her unwavering faith in me. I will never take for granted the encouragement given me by *Prof. Dr. Olga Borodkina*, who supported my communicative skills and competences in international cooperation.

I am indebted to *Dr. Michael Pätzold* for proofreading, who not only brilliantly corrected my Russian English, but was ready to sacrifice his private time for me.

I have had a tremendous support and encouragement from all my colleagues at *the Research School*. The colleagues have created the warm friendly atmosphere, and I felt the support from each and every member of the Research School. I would like particularly to thank my colleagues who became my close friends: *Antoanneta Potsi*, *Dr. Shiao En Chng* and *Dr. Sittipan Yotyodying* for their enormous support and encouragement personally and academically, unforgettable time we have spent together in different trips and at our 'home' Bielefeld; *Simone Gerwert* and *Johanna Gold* for their incredible patience whenever I have spoken German, support in writing requests and complains and academic and private debates; *Lakshmi Narayanan* for bombarding me with questions which made me reflect and think critically; *Antje Brock* and *Anika Duvenceck* for recharging me with the positive energy; *Natalia Karmaeva* for her comments and ideas that enriched my reflection on our beloved homeland Russia.

My warm hearted appreciation goes to *Yaarub Musa* who has supported me in all my ups and downs. I would like to thank him for carefully listening to my problems and never-ending stories, encouraging, giving me indispensable advices and the emotional support.

I will be forever grateful for all the support, love and encouragement that I have felt from *my beloved parents, Galina and Aleksei*, and *my sister Polina*. I would like to thank my sister for helping me with transcriptions, listening to me and supporting in all situations. My parents' support, unwavering love, patience and encouragement gave me energy to work hard and reach my goals.

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Introduction

This introduction starts with the background of this study, presents the problems that the thesis addresses and points out existing research gaps. The second section discusses general and specific research questions and research aims. In the third section are introduced the importance of the study, its originality and various other aspects of the contribution of this thesis to existing research. The final section briefly lists the content of the chapters that follow.

1. Background of this study

The questions on equality of social opportunities and social mobility are especially important for societies in transition (cf. Konstantinovskij 2003), i.e. for societies at the stage of transformation of their economic, social and political structures. Economic, political and social reforms of the last decades have largely changed Russian society where nowadays could be found old and new elements of social inequality (cf. Danilova, Savelieva, Safonova & Kochkin 2009). This transformation has fundamentally shaped the national economy, social security system and individual life courses of Russian citizens.

The transformation of economic structures involves social reforms, so that economic reforms should be evaluated not only by economic, but also social criteria (cf. Zaslavskaya 2003). Nevertheless, Zubarevich (2007) highlights that in Russia economic determinism is predominant in economics and state administration. She argues further that although predominant economic principles cannot explain many of the social changes, social development is still understood as a consequence of economic development and economic growth in Russia. That is why Russia can be grouped among the countries that assume “that increasing quality of life comes through economic growth” (Alkire & Deneulin 2009a: 9). But a focus only on the growth of GDP, incomes and changes in other economic indicators, which are largely used nowadays, does not cover such human dimensions as health, education, security, political and civil rights: “when countries are arranged according to the Human Development Index – a composite index which measures progress in economic conditions, life expectancy and literacy — the wealthier countries in terms of GDP per capita are not necessarily better off when human dimensions such as health and education are taken into account” (ibid.: 15). Alkire and Deneulin (2009a) take the example of Russia and its position in the Human Development Report 2007/2008 to illustrate the link between GDP and some dimensions of human flourishing such as

health, education and political freedom and show that although Russia has a GDP higher than some other countries, “its inhabitants live much shorter lives in a much more constrained political environment” (Alkire & Deneulin 2009a: 15). As Sen (1999a: 3; italics in original) highlights, “growth of GNP or of individual incomes can, of course, be very important as *means* to expanding the freedoms enjoyed by the members of the society”, but he continues, human flourishing and freedoms depend also on social and economic arrangements (health care system, educational system, security), political and civil rights. In other words, any institutional changes and economic growth attain real value only if they really influence the improvement of the quality life, increase of people’s well-being and extend people’s freedoms to choose what they value (cf. Zubarevich 2007).

This debate clarifies that the analysis of social inequalities, social changes and quality of life cannot be made only in terms of economic indicators, but should be conducted in close interconnection with an analysis of changes in education, social security, health, political and civil rights. The current study goes beyond economic indicators and income components. It evaluates socio-economical and political arrangements for their influence on people’s well-being and chances to live “a life of genuine choice” (Sen 1996:59) in Russian conditions.

The changes that have occurred in Russia gave rise to new demands from the entire population, but especially from young people. The young Russians nowadays enter a society which does not give the former guarantees of the traditional model (cf. Konstantinovskij 2003). The position of Russian youth could be described the way Bendit (2008) describes the general situation of youth nowadays: it has to constantly take individual decisions concerning their life while outcomes remain uncertain. Nevertheless, it is important to underline the particularities of the Russian situation: change in the status of some professions and higher education (cf. Cherednichenko 2001; Konstantinovskij 2003, 2010; Mogilchak 2009), competition in education and on the labour market (cf. Cherednichenko 2001; Konstantinovskij 2003; Konstantinovskij, Vahshtajn & Kurakin 2008), implementation of paid medical services (cf. Davidova, Manning, Palosuo & Koivusalo 2009), problems of accommodation (cf. The Strategy for state youth policy in the Russian Federation 2006), influence of destructive, harmful and unhealthy patterns of behaviour (cf. Currie et al. 2008) and changes in family formation (cf. Zakharov 2005). Although the first decade of the second millennium is characterized by socio-economic reforms and some improvement of the economic situation (cf. Davidova et al. 2009), Dafflon (2009) points out that the feeling of uncertainty and perplexity, especially about living conditions and the labour market, still exists among young Russians. These shifts cause young people, on the one hand, to

find an individual way to balance and to construct their life, but on the other hand, to feel insecure about the future.

At the same time, the state rhetoric as well as some researchers see in young people the future of the nation, whose potential should be used for an innovative development and interests of the country (cf. Lovyagin & Slutskij 2006; The Strategy for state youth policy in the Russian Federation 2006; Ivanenkov 2008; The Concept of Long-Term Socio-Economic Development ... 2008; Rozhnov 2011). Although the Russian state is interested in the qualitative potential of adolescents and young people (cf. Rozhnov 2011), the question is whether social arrangements existing in the society give equal access to states and activities that young people value and want to achieve (cf. Gasper 2007) and whether they make a fair contribution to young people's comprehensive development in the present.

That is why the purpose of the current study is to understand how social arrangements existing in the society influence young people's lives and to scrutinize inequalities created by social arrangements which influence life chances. In other words, the aim is to ascertain if young people really feel able to pursue their objectives, and to achieve what they value in different domains of their lives (for example, in education, health) in modern socio-economic and political conditions in Russia. The conceptual framework of the study shifts its focus from a description of social institutions and its task-oriented, instructive influence, which does not take into consideration new realities (cf. Ivanenkov 2008) to an analysis of social institutions and arrangements from the perspective of "the extent of freedom" (Alkire 2009: 32) that young people have in order to lead a good and successful life (cf. Ziegler 2010). Such a shift contributes to an enhanced focus on youth's role as actors and thus makes this study actor-centred.

The study uses the capability approach (Sen 1980, 1992, 1999a; Nussbaum 2000), a theoretical framework, which is new for research on quality of life, individual well-being and inequalities in Russia. The issues of justice and equality of real opportunities are very important for modern Russia, where different elements of inequality exist (cf. Danilova et al. 2009). The mere social arrangements and overall opportunities which exist in the society are especially crucial for young people who have to make decisions important for their life. While there are many studies of the changes in young people's values, behaviour; influence of family socio-economic background and territorial barriers to educational and professional strategies (in the human capital approach), and the well-being of families with children, there is a great lack of research on real freedoms young people have and see in their lives.

To start from the individual and his/her life (and not from income and resources) in order to assess social arrangements is in accordance with the perspective of the capability approach, and “this yields a particular way of viewing the assessment of equality and inequality” (Sen 1992: 5). A space to compare young people’s lives should be a space of capabilities (cf. Sen 1992), e.g. real freedoms to enjoy different states, activities, lifestyles. In this way, the focus is on young people and on their personal assessments of their own chances to lead the life they value under Russian socio-economic and political conditions. So, on the one hand, in the current study young people are taken as actors of their own lives and as active participants in their own destiny, but, on the other hand, the study takes into consideration that they are embedded in the Russian socio-economic and political context. In the framework of the capability approach the study scrutinizes how young people assess their individual freedoms to lead the life they have reason to value, and this perspective pioneers the capability approach in the Russian context.

The impact of the capability approach and the capability literature on the Russian scientific and political framework has so far been rather limited, and is if anything more reflected in philosophical works (cf. Podusov 2008; Kanarsh 2011). Russian researchers, such as Omelchenko (2004), highlight that the process of adaptation of western concepts, western cultural and scientific experience to the Russian context is very difficult. Any concept, she argues, should be carefully reconsidered and applied. But without the application of new internationally recognized concepts, some crucial points could be missed in the study on well-being and inequalities: „in order to study socio-economic inequalities in the modern Russia it is important to take into consideration both worldwide tendencies and particularities of the country connected with her belonging to the transforming societies, and its transition from the soviet societal system to the new state which is not yet formed” (Shkaratan 2009: 238; my translation). For example, an analytical study of regional development in Russia conducted by Zubarevich (2007) goes beyond economic determinism and applies concepts of human development and the quality of life elaborated by Sen. This study highlights the application of the human development concept but in light of best practice of Russian researches and with a certain adaptation to Russian conditions. It follows the idea of social development as expansion of capabilities, but in its analysis it focuses on social and regional arrangements and the basic components of development without a strong connection with individual lives.

The present study applies Russian particularities and results of scientific research, but goes beyond the rhetoric of state documents, income and human-capital oriented studies, and focuses on individual lives and real freedoms that young people

have in three Russian regions. The study also proceeds from the fact that the capability approach gives a new particular view on how young people, embedded in Russian socio-economic and political conditions, evaluate opportunities they have to pursue their goals and what kind of barriers and constraints they see in order to achieve valuable states and activities and to realize their own conception of a good life. The inter-individual comparisons used in this thesis lead to an assessment of the capability gap which exists among young people, and to an evaluation of inequalities which constrain young people's lives.

The adolescents and young people are often the subject of analysis in different disciplines in Russia. Due to drastic changes in the lives of Russian citizens, emergence of different social and economic problems after the dissolution of USSR, research focused to a large extent on vulnerable social groups (the poor, alcohol and drug abusers, the disabled, delinquents), poverty and social inequalities. Child poverty became one of the central problems among Russian researchers (for example, Ovcharova & Popova 2005; Burdyak & Popova 2007; Ovcharova & Pishnnyak 2007). The situation of children in Russia also caused anxiety from the side of international researchers: "the impact on children of economic and social transition in the countries of Central and the former Soviet Union is a natural subject for anxiety" (Bradbury, Jenkins & Micklewright 2001: 7). Among children "rural children, children in lone-parent families and younger children are all found to have high flows into poverty" (Klugman & Kolev 2001: 254). The problem of poverty is still significant in Russia, and this research takes it into consideration, but by using the perspective of capability: "poverty as capability deprivation" (Sen 1999a: 87).

Furthermore, the studies scrutinize changes in young people's values; youth unemployment and social protection; problems of homeless, juvenile delinquents, young drug and alcohol abusers; deterioration of children's and young people's health; violence and mistreatment of children and youth. But the understanding of modern Russian adolescents and youth should not be constructed only on studies about problematic or juvenile youngsters. The focus of research should be also on the 'normal', 'ordinary' modern young people (cf. Omelchenko 2004) and their problems, life opportunities and freedoms to choose among different valuable opportunities. The present study concentrates on young people with different socio-economic backgrounds, including those who on the first view do not have any deprivations. This contributes, firstly, to a larger view of young people's lives, secondly, to a creation of positive view or 'positive well-being' (cf. Moore, Lippman & Brown 2004; Fattore, Mason & Watson 2009) constructed on the values and experiences of all young people.

The study focuses on young people at the age of 15-18 who come from better off and low-income families, living in small towns of the Northwest of Russia and in the big economically developed city of Saint Petersburg. The choice of such an age framework is conditioned, firstly, by the particularities of Russian educational system, secondly, by “own (although unaccomplished) social status of young people” (Semjonova 1998: 3; my translation) when they have to take decisions that are important for their lives, provide individual responsible decisions for their own education and career planning, acquire partial or complete independence from parents and deal with problems as responsible actors and members of society. In order to form their own real choices they should be informed about existing opportunities, because “access to information is a prerequisite for making informed choices and decisions in relation to education, health and protection” (Theis 2010: 345); possess resources and be taught to convert available resources in various combinations of valuable functionings (cf. Sadlowski 2011); “to make informed choices in order to achieve a life [they have] reason to value” (Unterhalter 2009: 217) and choose the most valued opportunity without being exposed to social conditioning (cf. Leßmann 2009).

But it is assumed that young people’s choices are strongly shaped by socio-economical and political conditions in Russia which might have distributed unequally young people’s chances to prosper and to have real opportunities in education, leisure activities, mobility, health care and so on. Moreover, high regional differentiation and regional disparities in Russia (cf. Mikhalev 1998; Ovcharova & Popova 2005; Burdyak & Popova 2007) lead to another assumption that individual capability sets could be distributed not fairly due to the asymmetry of opportunities in a regional aspect. In other words, there is an assumption that the extent of freedom young people have in different domains of life depends not only on general Russian economic, political and social arrangements, but also on the place of residence, or in other words on regional differences.

Thus, the discussion leads to the formulation of general and specific research questions and research aim.

2. Research questions

The general research question is:

What real opportunities do young Russians at the age of 15-18 have and see in their lives under the socio-economic and political conditions in the Russian Federation?

The specific research questions are:

Is there a difference in young people's capability sets between the small town (in the Leningrad and Novgorod region) and the big city (Saint-Petersburg) in Russia? And if so, how big a difference is it?

Is there a difference in young people's capability sets between low-income families and better-off families? And if so, how big a difference is it?

The aim of the study is to understand the extent of freedom young people have in order to achieve valued states and activities in the present socio-economic and political conditions in Russia. For this, it is necessary to deeply explore: 1) how young people assess social arrangements and whether social arrangements create a space of opportunities and freedoms for a prosperous and valuable life or a space of constraints and curtailed freedoms; 2) what combinations of opportunities do young people from different regions and settlements and with different socio-economic background have and why, and what opportunities are they free to choose; 3) under what conversion factors is a capability set formed and under what conversion factors do young people choose from a capability set.

3. Contributions of the study

The present study has several distinctive aspects, and it is expected that this study and its results can make a significant contribution in the following ways:

- The current study was conducted in the post-communist country and presents new challenges to the capability approach. The focus of the capability approach is extended to the post-communist countries, and especially to a former Soviet Union country – Russia, where the transformation of economic and social structures caused new social inequalities (cf. Danilova et al. 2009). At the same time the capability approach opens a new perspective on well-being and social inequalities in Russia, whereas research on young people's capabilities gives a new focus on social arrangements that frame young people's lives. The significant contribution of this thesis is its shift from a focus on young people as a means of economic growth and prosperity for the country to young people as active agents and goals of development.
- From the theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the discussion on capabilities and functionings of children and young people, which constantly take place in the capability perspective. Although there are

works on children's issues in the framework of the capability approach, Comim, Ballet, Biggeri and Iervese (2011) think that the capability approach has not yet adequately engaged with this perspective. The present analysis follows the proposition of Biggeri, Libanora, Mariani and Menchini (2006) that the relevance of a capability varies according to age, and reveals capabilities relevant to specific age-stages. The contribution is connected with the research on young people who have "own (although unaccomplished) social status" (Semjonova 1998: 3; my translation) but have to make different important decisions.

- The current study highlights young people's participation in the conceptualization of their well-being, freedoms and assessments of real choices. The young people are taken as actors with own experiences and opinions. This leads the study to a young people-centered analysis, which means the understanding of a good life, inequalities and capabilities is derived from the young people's perspective, e.g. from the actors' perspective. This emphasizes individual choices and agency. It corresponds to Sen's writing: "the people have to be seen, in this perspective, as being actively involved – given the opportunity – in shaping their own destiny, and not just as passive recipients of the fruits of cunning development programs" (Sen 1999a: 53).
- From the methodological perspective, the current study furthers the use of qualitative methods for data collection, the derivation and assessment of capabilities. It is conducted using qualitative methods because a qualitative inquiry can give a key to a better sociological understanding of notions like freedom and opportunities that are at the core of the capability approach (cf. Zimmermann 2006). Placing young people at the centre as research participants and respecting them as opinion-carriers or reflective subjects is fundamental to the methodological approach of the present project in which young people's views, opinions, and understandings of what life chances they have and what contributes to their well-being are explored through qualitative methods. This chance to speak about their lives is a recognition of young people as real agents of their lives. The study highlights that they should be partners in defining and influencing political actions.
- Finally, the results of the current study emphasize capability gaps and barriers that impede young people from making valuable choices and conducting a life they have reason to value in Russian social

arrangements. Such a new perspective on young people's lives, where young people are at the centre of development, should lead to political consequences. The execution of any reforms should proceed from the ensuring of equal access to valued functionings in core life domains for all young people regardless of their place of residence and the socio-economic background of their family, whereas evaluation of programs and changes should be based on how well young people realize their potentials in the Russian socio-economic and political conditions.

4. Structure of the thesis

A review of the literature on young people's studies is presented in Chapter I. The review starts with a discussion of the particularities of adolescence and youth periods, and especially of their age limits. It goes beyond the description of physical, emotional and cognitive changes peculiar to adolescence, and describes the impact of the social context on young people's lives in Russia. It is followed by a detailed analysis of youth studies conducted in Russia in the last decades. Whereas adolescents and young people are often studied from different perspectives in psychology, education, social work, sociology, the present review conceptualizes the most important aspects in order to study young Russians' lives and social inequalities. The review shows that young people's real freedoms are not properly studied in the Russian context. As the last part of this first chapter, well-being concepts in international and Russian perspectives are also mentioned so as to reflectively scrutinize the impact of different frameworks on children's and young people's development and well-being.

The capability approach was chosen as the theoretical framework for the study and is discussed in Chapter II. The first part of the chapter provides an analysis of the main categories (capabilities, functionings, freedom, well-being, agency), compares the capability with other approaches, and discusses missing features of the capability approach which keep it from becoming a theory of justice. The second part of the chapter focuses on challenges to operationalize the capability approach and to endorse capabilities in a list. Nussbaum's list of central human capabilities was chosen as a basis for guideline or as a starting point, and this choice is defended and clarified further. The last part of this chapter is devoted to debates on evaluative spaces in order to measure and assess children's well-being, namely capabilities and functionings. Moreover, the influence of parents, family, care givers on children's conversion and choice abilities is discussed in the last section.

In Chapter III, close attention is paid to instrumental freedoms and regional differentiation in Russia. The chapter starts with a brief review of the debate on transformational processes in Russian society and an outline of socio-political measures in the last two decades. The part on instrumental freedoms describes the educational system, health care, political freedoms, bureaucratization, and the social security system based on the analysis of Russian legislation and literature. The second part focuses on regional or territorial inequalities in Russia and their influence on individual capabilities. Moreover, a review of the socio-economic situation in the Northwest of Russia, namely St. Petersburg, the Leningrad region and the Novgorod region, is presented at the end of the chapter.

Chapter IV sums up previous reflections and frames the research concept of the study. Firstly, it explains the selection of 15-18 year old people with different socio-economic backgrounds from Saint Petersburg, the Leningrad and the Novgorod regions. Secondly, it justifies the choice of the capability approach for the assessment of inequalities, young people's lives and freedoms. Thirdly, it discusses Nussbaum's proposition of a threshold - a basic level of capabilities for functioning in the core life domains and proposes a new perspective on it. Fourthly, the debate continues with the degree of sensitivity of the capability approach, and particularly Nussbaum's list of capabilities to cultural variety and particularities, to different concepts of well-being and the good life among people. Finally, it presents a conceptual scheme and explains how, in the framework of qualitative study, ability to transfer resources into opportunities, capability set, and the opportunity and process aspects of freedom can be analyzed.

Chapter V explains research methods, in particular the method of data collection and data analysis, selection of young people and problems of data collection, and the steps of data analysis. Both data analysis and data collection are based on problem-centred interview (Witzel 1985, 1996, 2000), but steps of data analysis are intertwined with an application of the capability perspective.

Chapter VI presents the results of the study in a combination with their discussion. It focuses on derived capabilities: capability to be healthy and to be well-educated. The focus of analysis in the health domain is on the performance of the health care system, on inequalities that constrain young people's freedom to achieve the highest attainable grade of health. The findings highlight that '*being able to have good health*' (as introduced in Nussbaum's list of human central capabilities) should be supplemented by '*being able to receive treatment to the highest attainable grade of physical and mental healthy*'. The analysis of the set of educational opportunities is conducted in a consecutive order and discusses the freedom to be well-educated at

different educational stages, namely basic general education, complete general education, specialized education and higher education. Special attention is paid to the capability of *'being able to study and/or improve foreign language competences'* which was predominantly derived among young people from St. Petersburg. This capability is interconnected with ideas to emigrate among young people from St. Petersburg. Moreover, the analysis shows a particular role of *'mobility'* in life opportunities and life chances of young people. Finally, revealed in the data young people's inability to influence socio-political process and feeling of powerlessness are discussed in connection with unfreedom and constraints.

To conclude, in the study interviewees are taken as "experts of their orientations and actions" (Witzel 2000: 5). The analysis then focuses on what young Russians think constraints, limits or makes them to feel not free in order to achieve valued functionings. In other words, on the one hand such analysis evaluates if young people lead the life they value, a *'good life'* which is partly "a life of genuine choice, and not one in which the person is forced into a particular life" (Sen 1996: 59). On the other hand analysis discovers "socially relevant problems" (Witzel 2000: 2) in terms of problem-centred interview or focuses on social arrangements in terms of the capability approach which "should be evaluated according to the extent of freedom people have to promote or achieve functionings they value" (Alkire 2005: 122). The constraints that young people experience in order to be healthy and well-educated lead to the discussion of genuine goals of development of the country. This discussion brings the thesis to a conclusion by highlighting that the development of a country should not be understood only in economic terms, but rather in terms of a good, successful life of informed and genuine choice for each and every citizen.

Chapter I

Researching young people's lives: challenges and perspectives

The following chapter describes young people's studies in Russia. Firstly, it scrutinizes challenges and complexities that exist in order to comprehend particularities of adolescence and youth periods in Russia. Secondly, the analysis goes beyond description of physical, emotional and cognitive changes peculiar to adolescence and youth, and grasps an impact of socio-historical context on young people's lives. Thirdly, the review introduces main pathways of studies of young people in Russia and specifies gaps that can be studied in the context of this thesis. Finally, main tendencies in measurement and assessment of children's and young people's well-being are analyzed both in international and Russian perspectives. Such analysis contributes to a comprehensive view on children and young people.

1. Being a young person: challenges of Russian youth

Youth is a particular phase of the life course with "own (although unaccomplished) social status" (Semjonova 1998: 3). Youth is "understood as a universal experience that is seen as linear and transitional, moving young people from childhood to adulthood" (France 2007: 176), and is a stage of socialization when young people assimilate educational, professional, cultural and other social functions (cf. Lisovskij 1996). At the same time, changes in psychological, cultural and social borders of childhood and youth were observed over last decades in international and Russian contexts and in turn influenced borders of adulthood, e.g. becoming and being an adult¹ (cf. Omelchenko 2004). For example, the age of first marriage both for woman and man drastically increased in Russia; moreover, the family itself is in the process of modernization; her forms and structure have been changed, and it is neither a homogenous nor static institution (cf. Zakharov 2005)². Another example could be the changes in the value of education in Russia and its influence on young people's lives, especially the increased importance of higher education among young Russians

¹ Following the conception of transition (see Omelchenko 2004), measurable indicators of maturity are: 1) formal adult status in accordance with the legislation existing in the country, that allows to have basic civil rights of the society (age limit depends on a country and ranges between 14 and 21); 2) completion of professional education; 3) professional activity; 4) own family, own children; 5) property (real estate); 6) real status fixed in the social normativity of the society.

² Zakharov (2005) highlights decrease of birth rate, increase of cohabitations in contrast to reduction of registered marriages, increase of mother's birth age of first child, increase of number of divorces and children born out of wedlock.

(Konstantinovskij 2010). Besides, Boytsova (2008) states that young Russians start to work earlier, 80 % of them have earned their first money before they attained the age of 18 years. So, such changes led to the disjoint of life stages and problems of the acquisition of a formal adult status (cf. Omelchenko 2004). These changes consequently cause changes in the age framework of youth.

The age borders of youth have been constantly changing throughout the 20th century and depend to a large extent on socio-historical conditions and cultural traditions of the society and particularities of the process of socialization in the society (cf. Semjonova 1998). It is important to define the age framework of youth which is used in this thesis. Age is a parameter that international legal instruments generally use in order to define a child (cf. Detrick 1999). Article 1 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) states: "A child means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier". The particularity of international documents is that "children are no longer seen merely as recipients of services or beneficiaries of protective measures, but rather as subjects of rights and participants in actions affecting them" (Biggeri et al. 2006: 60). In Russia, the state Acts and political programs also use a parameter of age in order to frame their sphere of influence. The Federal Act "On the General Guarantees of children's rights in the Russian Federation" (Federal Act No. 124-FZ of July 24, 1998) defines a child as a person who is under the age of 18. The Strategy for state youth policy in the Russian Federation (Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation No.1760-r of December 18, 2006) is targeted at citizens of the Russian Federation between 14 and 30 years of age, as well as at young persons in a difficult life situation and young families³. The General Direction of the youth policy in the Russian Federation (Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation No.5090-1 of June 3, 1993) defines that the state youth policy is directed towards citizens of the Russian Federation between 14 and 30 years of age, foreign citizens and stateless citizens between 14 and 30 years of age, young families, and youth organizations. Thereby, the category 'child' overlaps partially with the category 'young citizens' (cf. Ponomarev & Osipchukova 2011), and to the group of citizens between 14 and 18 years of age simultaneously belong children (or older children) and young people.

Although in the Russian state documents and programs young people are partially located in one age period with children, more age-specific terms could be found in the literature: 'teenagers', 'adolescents', 'young adults'. France (2007:176) highlights that "in much of the academic literature youth is associated with the notion of

³ Throughout the text, this document uses the term of 'young people' to describe citizens between the age of 14 and 30 years.

adolescence and with stages of development linked to puberty". Russian researcher Semjonova (1998) refers to the age group from 17 to 28-30 years as youth. Basov (2008) defines the age borders of youth as an interval between 13-14 and 29-30. Some researchers propose to distinguish different age borders. For example, Slutskij (1999: 15) divides youth into two age periods: adolescents aged 14-17 years and youth or young people (in a true sense) aged 18-29 years. Cherednichenko (2001) in turn highlights two age periods: 15-18 year old people are in the period of definition of profession and type of education; 18-25 year old people are in the period of beginning of professional activity. The present study focuses on the group aged 15-18 years, which represents youth upon Russian tradition mentioned above. This choice is conditioned by the particularities of the educational system and educational paths that adolescents and young people follow⁴. Depending on the state document or researcher's view mentioned above, children, adolescents and young people get into the age-group chosen for the study, so it was taken a decision to refer to the object of the study as to 'young people', 'young persons', 'youth' and in some cases 'adolescents'⁵.

Socio-economic and political transformation that occurred in Russia (cf. Zaslavskaya 2003) gave rise to new demands from the entire population, but especially from young people. It is important for the analysis to grasp social, cultural and historical context of being young and particularities of historical period in the studied country (cf. France 2007). Konstantinovskij (2003) underlines that youth is the most sensitive part of the society, which subtly feels any social, political and economic changes, whereas Scherr (2009) points out that young people's living conditions change according to the societal development. Changes caused by the transformation of the Russian society have had an impact on young people's orientations, values, and professional and life plans (cf. Dafflon 2009) and led to the situation that the Russian youth enters the society which does not provide former guarantees of the traditional model (cf. Konstantinovskij 2003). Mentioned above alterations in the process of transition from childhood to adulthood intertwine with an impact of structural societal changes of last decades and together make the period, when young Russians should define their life plans and choose among different opportunities, complex and perplexed. This is especially obvious from the results of the nation-wide survey of young Russians' living conditions, values, future opportunities conducted by the Swiss Academy for

⁴ For a detailed description of the educational system in Russia see Chapter III and Chapter IV.

⁵ Moreover, many researchers use interchangeably terms 'young people', 'youth', 'young persons', 'adolescents' and 'children'. If studies mentioned in this thesis distinguish between younger and older children, then only those studies have been selected for the references that focus on older children.

Development, in close cooperation with the Moscow School of Social and Economic Sciences and the Levada Centre (see Dafflon 2009).

The survey showed that young Russians at the age of 15-29 feel rather insecure about the socio-political situation in the country, their educational and professional opportunities and their future (cf. Dafflon 2009). Despite the reforms and some improvements in the economic situation over last years, Dafflon (2009) states that the feelings of uncertainty and perplexity, especially towards living conditions and labour market, are widespread among young Russians. The example of their parents or adult generation comes into view: a high incidence of poverty among previously higher paid professionals who are currently low paid budgetary-sector workers, such as teachers or doctors (cf. Mikhalev 1998). The lack of job opportunities, leisure and youth structures in the provinces force young people to search for a better life in big cities, and such migration causes a growing imbalance between big developed cities as Moscow and St. Petersburg and the rest of the country (cf. Dafflon 2009). It seems that the existing reality for young people is to constantly take individual decisions concerning their life and future whereas outcomes remain uncertain (cf. Bendit 2008; Dafflon 2009). So, young people are demanded to make individual decisions and to be responsible for their education, career planning, lives, whereas they do not feel secure in the present socio-political conditions, despite the improvement of the economic situation over the last decade.

The state documents and programs focus on the Russian youth, and the goals and influence of such programs should be discussed in details. The state documents and programs indicates that among young people's problems that need to be systematically resolved are the deterioration of young people's health, increase of social apathy, disinterest in politics and social participation, decrease of economic activity, criminalization, social isolation of young people in a difficult life situation, lack of support of talented and initiative youth, lack of national and socio-cultural self-identity (see The Strategy for state youth policy in the Russian Federation 2006; The Concept of Federal Targeted Program "Youth of Russia" for the period of 2011-2015). In order to resolve such problems, several state documents and programs have been elaborated, among them: The Strategy for state youth policy in the Russian Federation (Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation No.1760-r of December 18, 2006), The Concept of Federal Targeted Program "Youth of Russia" for the period of 2011-2015, The Concept of Long-Term Socio-Economic Development of the Russian Federation for the period up to the year 2020 (Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation No. 1662-r of November 17, 2008), and The Principal Directions of Activities of the Government of the Russian Federation for the period till 2012

(Regulation of the Government of the Russian Federation No.1663-r of November 17, 2008).

These documents and programs are oriented on: 1) creation of conditions for youth's successful socialization and effective self-realization; 2) development of youth's potential for an innovative development and interests of the country; 3) youth's involvement in social participation; 4) integration and support of young people in a difficult life situation and their successful socialization; 5) support of talented and initiative youth. At the same time, it is clearly pointed out in the Concept of Federal Targeted Program "Youth of Russia" for the period of 2011-2015, that there is a *lack* of information about young people's *real opportunities* and *needs*, and such lack makes difficult the realization of necessary and important for young people state actions and decisions. It means that although the main goals have been formulated and main projects are settled⁶, the *lack* of information about young people's needs, values, and real choices might lead to low effects from the implementation of different projects and leave without necessary attention young people's real needs and valuable states and activities.

One of the goals of the state programs is to inform all young citizens about the opportunities of self-realization and development of own potential that they have in Russia. But results of the nation-wide survey of young Russians' living conditions (see Dafflon 2009) show that, young people feel sceptical about their professional opportunities and life plans and insecure in the present socio-political conditions.

So that is why, firstly, it is important to understand, what kind of real opportunities do young Russians have in the existing social, economic and political conditions so that they can realize own potential, as it is mentioned in the Strategy for state youth policy (2006); secondly, the question is whether social arrangements existing in the society provide equal access to states and activities that young people value and want to achieve (cf. Gasper 2007) and whether these arrangements could provide a fair contribution to young people's comprehensive development in the present.

In order to start the study on young people's real opportunities, valuable states and activities and their achievement in the existing social, economic and political conditions, it is important to analyze the studies that have been conducted about the Russian youth. The second section of this chapter presents youth's different aspects that are central themes for sociological and educational discussions. This section reflects on different findings and frames the research field for this study. The third

⁶ Russia', 'Career', 'Young family of Russia', 'Team', 'Success in your hands' (The Strategy for state youth policy in the Russian Federation 2006).

section discusses different ways of measurement and assessment of young people's living conditions and quality of life, both in the international and Russian perspectives.

2. Tackling diverse aspects of young people's studies in Russia

Young people are at the centre of the analysis in different disciplines (e.g. sociology, pedagogy, psychology). Scherr (2009) underlines that there is no youth's uniform and binding term, because every discipline focuses on youth's different aspects: for example, psychological theories put emphasis *inter alia* on emotional and cognitive particularities of youth period; pedagogy stresses *inter alia* educational process, achievements and school socialization; sociology of youth concentrates on influence of economic, social, political conditions on young people's lives and impact of family socio-economic and cultural background on individual life opportunities. As it was discussed in the previous section, there is a lack of knowledge about the real opportunities that young Russians see and have in their lives. Therefore, this section analyzes to what extent the real needs and values have been studied.

In the retrospective, the sociology of youth in Russia has passed a difficult way from the conception of social control⁷ and upbringing by the state institutions in the Soviet time to the conception of youth as a particular phase of life course with own interests⁸, needs and own (although unaccomplished) social status (cf. Semjonova 1998). In 1990s influenced by social, economic and political changes, the researchers focused to a large extent on the deprived, delinquent, homeless adolescents and young people as well as on problems of unemployment, poverty (cf. Semjonova 1998; Omelchenko 2004; Ovcharova & Popova 2005). The new forms of exclusion became important topics for the studies. Besides, the cultural perspective, e.g. subcultures, youth movements, remained at the centre of researchers' attention (cf. Lisovskij 2000).

Nowadays, the studies on youth movements, subcultures, specific groups (homeless, young mothers, drug and alcohol abusers) no doubts illuminate young people's social practices, but such problematization "*contributes to the fragmentation of youth subjectivity* and impedes the understanding of integral nature of youth" (Omelchenko 2004: 131; italics in original; my translation). Omelchenko (2004) highlights that despite new influences the most important for the young people still remain family, study, work routine. These results correspond to Semjonov's (2007) results: among central life values young people name family, friends, health, interesting

⁷ In the USSR the state paid an enormous attention to young people as builders of communism which is expressed in the control and development of youth infrastructure (cf. Omelchenko 2004).

⁸ Not only own needs and interests, but own 'ordinary' youth problems appropriate to young people become important to be discussed only after slackening of political control (cf. Omelchenko 2004).

work, money, justice and religious belief. Moreover, the importance of justice constantly increases. In general, young people's values and life orientations have been intensively researched since 1960s and became especially important for the analysis after the dissolution of the USSR. Although the central life values remain the same, nevertheless Lisovskij (1998, 2000) and Semjonov (2007) underline the transformation of values. Semjonov (2007) writes about the necessity of a comprehensive system of education and socialization based on principles of patriotism, civic consciousness, justice and morality. Lisovskij (1998, 2000) writes about the crisis of values in the Russian society and points out on the disruption of values' transmission among generations. He stresses that values of parents or older generation lost their practical sense in a new historical context, and young generation is in a difficult position of choice between different values. Changes in the system of values affected different life domains, but especially education that will be considered later.

The young people do not represent a homogenous group. The multiplicity of youth and its life strategies are conditioned by the expansion of real and symbolic space of youth (for example, increase of educational term) and early inclusion in youth structures (cf. Omelchenko 2004). This might cause additional challenges for researchers. The researchers should grasp the life of adolescents and young people and to take into consideration such particularities as: gender, studies (full-time tuition or tuition by correspondence, free/budgetary or paid form of education), geographical location (city, medium town, small town, village, or region), socio-economic background (poor, well off, middle class), ethnic group, religion, musical/any other differences (cf. Omelchenko 2011). Omelchenko (2011) notifies that in order to better understand the youth context, the researchers should move away from: 1) the problem approach, when young people are characterized by properties of transitional period with its conflicts and psycho-physiological crisis; and from 2) the didactic tone when young people are positioned as responsible towards future or as bearers of duties, and when young people are subordinated to adults (adult's power), who know better how young people should be socialized.

In western, particularly German context, there is a tendency to consider children and young people as competent actors and active participants. The focus on children's own perspectives (own experience, what they can do, what they like and do not like, in what they can participate), daily practices of children, interpretations of actions and practices made by children themselves are particular attributes of the German project "Precarious Childhood: How Children Experience Poverty" (Andresen, Bütow, Kloss & Korenke 2011). This project focuses on children's perspectives of what they like to do, what they wish for, and discusses what makes the daily life of socially disadvantaged

children in urban spaces particularly precarious. German researchers point out the lack of studies on personal perceptions and experiences by children of their precarious childhood and their daily experiences. Betz (2011) highlights that despite the changes in the attitude towards children (children are understood as competent actors, as persons with own rights, full members of society), there is still an evidence that data and profiles on children include mostly representations of vulnerable children, or children as future of society, and dangers they might have in growing up. She proposes to include alternative representations of children and childhood in the reports and documents. Ridge (2004) in turn highlights that lives of children in poverty are usually of critical concern and are about drugs, drinking, prostitution, school exclusions and so on, but normal everyday experiences, which children face, are obscured by negative stereotypes and media-provoked panics. The real face of children and young people can be opened when they share their perceptions of reality. This corresponds to the statement on the invisibility of young people's everyday life and everyday practices in the context of social studies made by Omelchenko (2004). The real image of everyday life narrated by young people can give a panorama on their actual problems and aspirations.

Biographical perspectives and individual life trajectories are at the centre of studies conducted by Semjonova (1998, 2004). She highlights that the research on individual life trajectories gives an opportunity to analyse mechanisms of the choice of educational and professional strategies. Moreover, she highlights the importance of intergenerational and generational perspectives for the youth agenda and especially for transformational societies to which Russia belongs⁹. She points that age is usually used as a given criteria for selection and division of groups for statistical purposes following primarily biological attributes. But it is important to take into consideration social opportunities and limitations that different age-groups have. It means that every age has own set of limitations/ shortcomings and opportunities/ chances created and imposed by social structures. Semjonova (2004) gives examples: opportunities prevail under limitations at young age, while older people have already realized most of their choices and used most of their chances such as educational and labour strategies or family formation. A life course, when every certain age has an appropriate set of opportunities and limitations, and people can in a consecutive order realize their life plans, is appropriate to people living in societies with stable economy, developed and well-functioning social security, health and education system. But Semjonova (2004) highlights that in a period of social transformation and social conflicts age-relevant issues become objects of great importance. In such period a collective normative life

⁹ See for detailed information on transformation in Russia Chapter IV.

course changes, some resources gained at previous stages of life course lose their meaning or yield to new resources¹⁰.

Following the generational perspective presented above by Semjonova (2004), young generation chosen for the study should have a large scope of opportunities, perspectives and individual choices. But apart from socially or culturally constructed limitations for this specific age, the choices are shaped in Russia by changes occurring in the society: for example, changes in educational system (introduction of Unified state exam, coexistence of free and paid education), implementation of paid services in different domains (sport, dancing, hobbies clubs), shadow practices (bribes) in education and health care.

Education and young people are two interconnected topics in the Russian sociological and educational context. The main subjects are: value and prestige of education, especially of higher education, attractiveness and choice of professions and universities (cf. Cherednichenko 2001; Konstantinovskij 2003, 2010; Mogilchak 2009); educational and professional trajectories of leavers of high schools, vocational education schools and secondary specialized educational institutions (cf. Cherednichenko 2001, 2010, 2011; Konstantinovskij 2003; Konstantinovskij, Voznesenskaja, Cherednichenko & Hohlushina 2011); inequality and barriers in education for young people from different regions (Cherednichenko 2001; Konstantinovskij 2003; Konstantinovskij et al. 2008), from different social groups or families with different socio-economic background (Cherednichenko 2001; Konstantinovskij 2003; Mogilchak 2009); criteria and accessibility of qualitative education (Cvetkova 2008; Konstantinovskij et al. 2008). It is important to discuss some studies and their results in more details, because they point out some particularities of Russian educational and social context.

The regional differentiation, local and national particularities have been largely researched and discussed in the Soviet and Russian studies in connection with the life course. The studies conducted in USSR, particularly by Titma (1992), found out significant regional particularities in the process of professional and life self-determination. Cherednichenko (2001) later on emphasizes on an important role of the

¹⁰ Semjonova (2004) represents the configuration of verbal images of people at the age 30-39 and 50-59 in Russia by using the analysis of themes and expressions. Despite the good financial situation among adult population, the generation at the age of 30-39 feels more disappointed towards life perspectives, they experienced the life and its complexities earlier than in a normal life course. Although following the normal life course they should still have large opportunities to choose and perspectives to realize, they expect less from the future than they should. At the same time the generation aged 40-49 has a high social potential (especially in education), often not recognized by the society, feels optimistic and is oriented to the future. So if social changes and transformations come into play, they might influence the life course, chances, opportunities and limitations at different age stages.

level of urbanization in the process of individual's socialization: school infrastructure; availability of vocational education schools, secondary specialized educational institutions and higher education institutions; labour market, opportunities for employment; access to different sources of information; availability of leisure activities (e.g. sport clubs, dancing clubs, art schools etc). She argues that the level of urbanization defines to a large extent educational and labour orientation, and influences the chances to realize life plans.

The study on accessibility of education conducted in 2004-2006 by the group of researchers from the Institute of Sociology, Russian Academy of Sciences (see Konstantinovskij et al. 2008) found out that more life chances (including educational chances, chances for self-development) have those pupils of general secondary education who are "not attached to home" and are ready and able "to travel for the quality" of education which means that parents are able and ready "to travel for quality" (Konstantinovskij et al. 2008: 151; my translation). In other words, being mobile or to have the potential for mobility (availability of transport and time resource) directly correlates with the quality of education and extremely important not only at the stage of the general secondary education, but also at the level of higher education (cf. Konstantinovskij et al. 2008).

The increased importance of higher education among young Russians is based in a belief that the university diploma leads to higher wage (statistically proved) and to lower probability to be unemployed (cf. Konstantinovskij 2010). The choice of prestigious professions is discussed, for example, in Mogilchak (2009), Konstantinovskij (2010). The higher educational institutions provide a large range of contract and free forms of education (full-time tuition, tuition by correspondence) and a variety of professions. But studies indicate that the main characteristic of youth's educational strategies today is to obtain the diploma of higher education (cf. Konstantinovskij 2010), but not the qualitative professional knowledge itself. Omelchenko (2004) also mentions that the importance of education (often higher education, than secondary specialized education) is determined not so much by professional training, rather by the feeling of stable and reliable situation of being a student. Additionally to this, Mogilchak (2009: 127; italics in original; my translation) notes that the higher education is understood more as "*general* education" which raises the cultural level of a person, but not as "*specialized* education", that is why for many people the second higher education or master program (with the choice of profession in demand) becomes a chance to smooth the consequences of first unsuccessful selection. She states, that by choosing the profession or specialization university entrants are poorly informed about the perspectives and opportunities of further

employment (partially by the remoteness of employment time), so the competition is not so much for the future economic position, but for the opportunities to be educated and to have a diploma of higher education.

The admission to university depends on organizational, financial opportunities of family/parents and the motivational and intellectual potential of a university entrant (cf. Mogilchak 2009). The parents' influence plays an enormous role for both: choice of further education/educational institution and support in preparations for chosen educational institution/for the entrance examinations. In general, parents try to mobilize all disposable resources, depending on financial circumstances and socio-cultural factors, so that a young person could be able to continue the education. Parents' educational level, socio-professional status, sector of employment and job position as well as family material conditions are indicators which form the socio-cultural family capital and might be conditions to get the education that will reproduce the social status of parents (cf. Cherednichenko 2001; Konstantinovskij et al. 2008). Following Mogilchak (2009), young people whose parents are business owners or directors of enterprises choose the higher education in the disciplines of law and economics. Moreover, she continues, parents' educational level influences the process of preparations to the entrance examinations to the university: higher is the educational level of parents, more often is the use of private courses for preparations.

Konstantinovskij et al. (2008) highlight that not only socio-cultural and economic factors influence the access to the general secondary education and especially higher education, but also institutional factors. It is important to take into consideration how the process of selection is organized, what are requests and competences that a person should possess in order to be admitted. At the same time they highlight that socio-cultural and economic factors and respective barriers are reproduced, institutional factors and respective barriers are created by the educational system.

The above mentioned studies show that the distribution of the opportunities for the high-quality and desirable education depends on socio-economic (family income and prosperity), socio-cultural factors (parents' intellectual level and their working position), territorial (level of urbanisation, type of the place of residence) as well as institutionalised educational system regulated by the state (educational standards, general rules of access) and by schools (rules and requests of access). As Konstantinovskij, Vahstajn and Kurakin (2007: 169; my translation) underline, "in the modern Russia, the inequality of educational opportunities becomes pervasive because it concerns people from urban and rural areas, with different levels of income, and from different socio-cultural strata".

Analysed studies bring to the conceptualization of research framework and its particularities:

- due to Russian geographical and socio-economic particularities the study should take into account external factors that influence young people's lives, especially regional disparities;
- the study should focus not only on vulnerable groups, but on all young people from different socio-cultural strata¹¹;
- parents' socio-cultural level and family socio-economic background are important to be included in the study;
- it is important to concentrate on young people from different educational institutions and not only on school leavers and university students;
- it is crucial to grasp the integral nature of youth;
- it is important to take into account that generational perspective frames age-related opportunities and constraints.

Nevertheless, it is important to mention that some studies on education and young people are conducted in the theoretical framework of human capital. Human capital theory is an important methodological instrument for the evaluation of educational and professional trajectories, analysis of educational resources accumulated and used by individuals in order to increase work productivity and wage; this theory makes an individual responsible for own success and failures (cf. Cherednichenko 2011). Therefore, the studies evaluate young people's educational and professional trajectories from the perspective of continuous education, accumulation of knowledge and skills for better wage and increase of productivity. Different starting positions for education, profession and qualification differentiate life promotion and formation of human capital (cf. Cherednichenko 2011, Konstantinovskij 2003). The inequalities in starting positions are seen merely as barriers for the educational and professional promotion which can impede the contribution to economic productivity.

But an individual is socially embedded and makes choices from a range of available opportunities he/she has. An individual is guided not only by own skills and capacities, but also by constraints and barriers as well as opportunities that exist in the society. Young people's everyday life and personal experiences in this socially constructed reality of opportunities and constraints is not so far under the scope of

¹¹ Konstantinovskij et al. (2008) point that the accessible education policy should be oriented not only on vulnerable groups (such as disabled children, representatives of smaller people), but also on children and youth from different regions and places of residence (cities, towns and rural area), and from families with different financial background.

researchers. There is a lack of understanding how young people see their real chances to have the life they want and what real opportunities they have in the Russian reality. Moreover, there is a need to evaluate not just young people's values, but to analyse if they can realize their valuable aspirations in the space of existing opportunities and if they are free to do it. It means that the research on young people's evaluation of social opportunities and barriers should be conducted in order to understand their real options and chances.

The next section scrutinizes the impact of international and Russian frameworks on children's and young people's development and well-being.

3. Concepts of Well-being

The measuring and monitoring of children's and youth's well-being is of growing importance for policymakers, practitioners, researchers and those who strive to improve the lives of children and youth everywhere (cf. Ben-Arieh & Frones 2009). This section analyzes main tendencies in measurement and assessment of children's and young people's well-being both in international and Russian perspectives.

3.1. International perspective

In order to monitor and assess children's and young people's development and well-being, child indicators were widely elaborated in the second half of the twentieth century, especially during the last two decades of the twentieth century by international organizations (for example, UNICEF), scholars and local initiatives (cf. Fattore et al. 2009; Ben-Arieh 2010). The indicators present a broad overview on the main spheres of children's and youth's lives: education, housing, relationships, health, safety. Among various child indicators and poverty measures, several could be distinguished: the Child Development Index (health, nutrition, education), the EU Child Well-being Index (the clusters: material situation, housing, health, subjective well-being, education, children's relationships, civic participation, risk and safety), and the US Child and Youth Well-being Index (material well-being, health, safety, productive activity, place in community, intimacy, emotional wellbeing) (cf. Biggeri, Trani & Mauro 2010).

The UNICEF Report "Child poverty in perspective: An overview of child well-being in rich countries" (2007) has introduced a comprehensive assessment of children's and young people's well-being among economically advanced countries which is nevertheless internationally known. The UNICEF Report includes the definition of well-being:

“The true measure of a nation’s standing is how well it attends to its children – their health and safety, their material security, their education and socialization, and their sense of being loved, valued, and included in the families and societies into which they are born.”
(UNICEF 2007: 1)

The report represents a comprehensive assessment of well-being under six different dimensions (UNICEF 2007):

1. Material well-being which means the material situation of a child and is represented by relative income poverty, unemployment of parent/parents and deprivation reported by children (reported low family affluence, lack of educational resources and quantity of books).

2. Health and safety are measured by infant mortality and birth weight, proportion of immunized children and proportion of children and young people (aged 0-19) injured or died due to the accidents.

3. Educational well-being is represented by school achievement at age 15, attendance of full or part time educational institutions and the process of transition from education to work.

4. Family and peer relationships are evaluated by the percentage of children living in single-parent families and in stepfamilies, the time spent by parents with their children (eating the main meal and talking) and the quality of the relationships with peers.

5. Behaviours and risks dimension includes health behaviours (such as eating habits, physical activities during week and percentage of overweight children), risk behaviours and the percentage of children who have an experience of violence.

6. Subjective well-being is children’s perceptions of their own well-being expressed in perceptions of the quality of their health, liking school and overall satisfaction with the life.

The report has presented the multidimensional approach to measure and to assess the objective and subjective well-being of children. Although some of the indicators could be insensitive, for example, the percentage of children living in single-parent families and in stepfamilies (cf. UNICEF 2007), the report reflects on some of main questions which should be answered about children’s prosperity: if a child has enough educational resources to achieve good results at school, if a child has formed eating habits and is not exposed to health problems in the adulthood, if a child is suffering from violence or any kind of abuse, if a child is satisfied with own life and him/herself.

If the UNICEF Report Card 7 (2007) presents a comprehensive overview and systematic analysis of child well-being across economically advanced countries and recognises that the well-being has different dimensions, the UNICEF Report Card 9 “The Children Left Behind” (2010) proposes an advanced methodology to measure inequality in child well-being across economically advanced countries based on nine indicators grouped in 3 dimensions: material well-being, health and education. The gap or the distance is measured not between the top and the bottom, but between the median (which could be considered as a standard of normal living) and the bottom (“how far behind are children being allowed to fall” in the specific country): “the median level of child well-being – whether in material goods, educational outcomes, or level of health – represents what is considered normal in a given society and falling behind that median by more than a certain degree carries a risk of social exclusion” (UNICEF 2010: 3). The idea of the report is to show that the countries that achieved the same level of economic development but having different indicators of child well-being, could improve their policies to “the extent to which ‘falling behind’ is policy-susceptible – the extent to which it is not unavoidable but unjust” (ibid.: 4).

These two reports give several hints to take into consideration in the current study: 1) the multidimensional assessment of well-being and the importance of subjective well-being, e.g. importance of meanings that young people attach to their lives; 2) the idea to concentrate on children and young people who fall behind by comparing them with those who are in the middle which is considered normal or standard of living in the studied country. It gives an opportunity to grasp this gap among young people which is not hypothetical, but real one (discussed further in Chapter IV).

Olk (2011) demonstrates that the studies on children’s well-being represent a variety of concepts of what is a good childhood, and the chosen concept of a ‘good childhood’ influences the choice of relevant indicators, dimensions of children’s well-being and further political recommendations. But what is important is that the ‘new’ sociology of childhood focuses “on children’s current (during childhood) life situation” (Ben-Arieh 2010: 141), on the immediate present well-being rather than on child well-being in terms of children’s future (cf. Ben-Arieh 2009).

Children’s rights movement introduced child rights perspective to researches on children’s and youth well-being: “from a child rights perspective well-being can be defined as the realization of children’s rights and the fulfillment of the opportunity for every child to be all she or he can be” (Bradshaw, Hoelscher & Richardson 2009: 327). In other words, the child rights framework establishes legal minimums and afterwards monitors if children’s well-being corresponds to them (cf. Ben-Arieh 2010). The United

Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) contains 54 articles that cover every aspect of a child's life, applying without exception or discrimination to all children under 18. Children are recognized "as active in the process of shaping their lives, learning and future" (Woodhead 2010: xx), rather than passive recipients of adults, "acting in what they judge to be child's interests" (ibid.: xx). There are four overarching principles: non-discrimination (article 2), best interests of the child (article 3), survival and development (article 6) and respect for the views of the child (article 12) (cf. Santos Pais 1999). The Article 12 gives children the right to be heard and to take part in decisions that affect them directly (cf. Aldgate 2010; Pugh 2010). This leads to a large extent to:

- a recognition that children and young people are able to reflect on own lives and living conditions, or in other words, they are "able to provide both a competent commentary on their own experiences and the lives of children in general" (Aldgate 2010: 28);

- a change in data on child well-being. Children and young people are taken as the unit of observation, it means that the indicators become child-centered and separate a child or a young person from his or her family at least for measurement purposes (cf. Ben-Arieh 2010).

Besides a strong impact of children's rights framework, there are several other changes and shifts which happened in last decades in child indicators movement and in research on children's and young people's development and well-being which influence the studies and particularly the current one.

- a shift from the analysis of survival and basic needs to development and well-being analysis (cf. Ben-Arieh 2010)¹²;

- a shift from well-becoming to well-being perspective (cf. Ben-Arieh 2010) which means that instead of constructing children and young people as future adults the analysis focuses on the present childhood;

- a shift from "a deficit model of children and young people with problems, to one of entitlement – what should we expect for all our children across all areas of their lives" (Pugh 2010: 12)¹³;

- a shift from a focus on negative outcomes to a focus on positive outcomes (cf. Ben-Arieh 2010). The positive youth development approach contributes to a large to this shift: "the positive youth development perspective emphasizes the manifest potentialities rather than the supposed incapacities of young people – including young

¹² Nevertheless, geographical difference plays still a significant role, and developing countries concentrate rather on survival, whereas developed countries go beyond survival (cf. Ben-Arieh 2009).

¹³ The importance to concentrate on all children and analyze different areas of their lives is further reflected in Chapter IV.

people from the most disadvantaged backgrounds and those with the most troubled histories” (Damon 2004: 15). It means that the research perspective moves away from a problem-centered vision of youth and behaviors to be prevented (learning disabilities, low motivation and achievement, school dropout, alcohol and drug use, antisocial conduct, homicide etc.) to the development of potentials of all young people to learn and to prosper (cf. Damon 2004; Moore et al. 2004). Thereby, whereas negative outcomes and problems are related to behaviors that adults want to prevent, positive outcomes rather inspire positive goals for children and youth (Moore et al. 2004);

- new domains of children and young people's well-being are introduced, for example, civic participation (cf. Ben-Arieh 2010).

The recognition of children and young people as competent and active contributors to the description of their lives and living conditions furthered the subjective measures of well-being in complementation to traditionally used objective measures (cf. McAuley, Morgan & Rose 2010). Some areas of life should be still measured by objective indicators, but the emergence of the subjective perspective is evident (cf. Ben-Arieh 2009, 2010). But it is important not to confuse “the ideas of subjective/ self expressed with subjective/ qualitative” (Bradshaw, Gwyther, Keung & Haridhan 2010: 186). The measurement of subjective or psychological well-being becomes an important component for the studies on children's and young people's well-being (for example, UNICEF 2007; Casas, Figuer, González & Malo 2009; Bradshaw et al. 2010). Whereas objective indicators measure external conditions, the subjective indicators provide the subjective evaluation of certain life domains and of life as a whole by people themselves by using such instruments as satisfaction scales (cf. Allardt 1993). The usefulness of both quantitative and qualitative studies, as well as multiple methods is also acknowledged (cf. Ben-Arieh 2009). For example, in the study conducted by Fattore et al., (2009), children were identified as knowledgeable actors and their understandings on what constitutes well-being and of what contributes to well-being were explored through qualitative methods.

The analysis of children's rights framework and child indicators movements gives important points for the current study, namely to focus on a child or a young person as a unit of observation, focus on the present states, concentrate on all young people and develop a positive perspective on children and young people.

3.1. Russian perspective

Such problems as low incomes, increasing inequalities, unemployment, and deterioration of health came to the forefront in the transitional period (cf. Zubarevich

2007). As it was mentioned in Introduction, poverty, and especially child poverty became one of the central problems for an analysis among Russian researchers (for example, Ovcharova & Popova 2005; Burdyak & Popova 2007; Ovcharova & Pishnyak 2007). Zubarevich (2007) introduced an index of quality of life with two aspects: the crisis index includes income, inequality, employment and health, whereas the complete index includes four stated above indicators in combination with education, basic services and security. Measurement of crisis elements has been observed in several studies on children and young people conducted in post-communist Russia.

The study on mobility and poverty dynamics among children in Russia by Klugman and Kolev (2001) was based on the Russian Longitudinal Monitoring Survey and focused on a two-year period (1994-1996) of children expenditure mobility. Among results the authors highlighted the children's vulnerability towards the risk of poverty, higher rates of poverty among children than working-age adults or pensioners, variations of the expenditure mobility across children (rural children experience more the movement down in the distribution).

The poverty of families with children is at the centre of the study conducted by Ovcharova and Popova (2005) and supported by UNICEF. The impossibility in childhood to live the full life and to use the opportunities due to the poverty can lead to irreversible changes in the future, but also influence the current life of children. The study focuses on several important aspects which influence the well-being of families with children. Firstly, the dynamics of poverty in Russia is precisely scrutinized; secondly, the reasons that led especially the families with children to be among poor with the high degree of poverty are described; thirdly, the study pays a particular attention to the accessibility of health care by poor and better off citizens and families; finally, the important aspect of regional disparities is considered in details. Families with children represent 50 % - 60 % of poor families following the results of the research, if poverty is measured by cash income and available resources (including non-monetary resources).

Ovcharova and Pishnyak (2007) use the data of the National survey of well-being and participation of population in social programs. Their well-being indicator was approximated to the real consumer opportunities of households. Following their assessment children had two times higher risk of poverty than all population at the end 2006 – beginning 2007. Among all children, the most vulnerable group were children at the age of 3-7 (24%) and under 1, 5 (22,5%). The poverty in the families with 15-18 year old children is caused by a low wage of employed family members or by unemployed family members.

The research conducted by Burdyak and Popova (2007) was oriented on a detailed analysis of poverty of families with children in the particular region, namely in the Leningrad region. The aim of the study was to understand the reasons of children's poverty and to orientate the regional policy on narrowing the poverty gap. The poverty was assessed in absolute, subjective and relative aspects whereas the well-being indicator included all monetary earnings and non-monetary supply of household¹⁴. The results show that the highest risk of absolute poverty¹⁵ have children at age of 0-3 and adolescents at the age of 15-18.

Three mentioned above studies provide a detailed analysis of poverty, standard of life and well-being of families with children in Russia. On the one hand, they give an overview of methodological instruments in order to measure poverty and material well-being in Russia, but on the other hand, they deeply discuss poverty dynamics in Russia among families and especially among families with children. The aspect of regional inequalities and disparities (regional differentiation, importance of place of residence) is penetrated in these studies. These studies used income- and resources-based indicators, such as the living-wage (by taken into consideration the regional differentiation), cash income, non-monetary resources, and social benefits (child allowances). Another important characteristic of these studies is a focus on families in order to understand the reasons of child poverty. The economic indicators are predominant measures of child poverty and child well-being, but such areas of child and youth life as mobility, educational opportunities, love and care, relationships in family and between relatives, time spent with the child by family members, feeling of safety, relationships with friends, leisure activities and the quality of the social environment should be deeper analyzed in the connection to the children's and youth's well-being.

Moreover, intra-household investigations do not show adequately how equal is sharing of the income and resources among household members, and whether their well-being assessment has been made correctly (cf. Sen 1999a; Robeyns 2003a; Klasen 2010). The aggregate indicators of living conditions and income do not tell anything about internal, intra-family disparities and intra-family distribution. The unidimensional nature of income is not appropriate and inadequate in capturing all the aspects of child well-being and all aspects in which a child might be deprived (Biggeri, Trani & Mauro 2010). For example, the capability approach avoids such problems by

¹⁴ The results of the study are discussed in Chapter III, section 2.2 "Socio-economic situation in the Leningrad region".

¹⁵ Necessary goods and services are approved by the government; their cost is a threshold or poverty line, and people who are below this poverty line are poor in term of 'absolute poverty' (cf. Burdyak & Popova 2007).

focusing on individuals' lives (cf. Robeyns 2003a). Such focus can enlarge the perspective on young people who can be assessed in the framework of family, but become independent in evaluations of own life from the household actors. Moreover, the capability approach is not limited only to the consumption and to the market, it includes nonmarket dimensions (cf. Robeyns 2003a), and assesses the well-being in multidimensional way.

Measurement of poverty, material inequality and unemployment is important for understanding of socio-economic situation in Russia, but quality of life should go beyond the crisis aspect and include other dimensions. Although the term 'well-being' is used in the Russian social and economic studies, it is merely an aggregative term composed of different terms such as "level of life", "conditions of life", "way of life" and "quality of life" as it is defined by the group of researchers from the Institute of social and economic studies of population (Rimashevskaya 2001: 12). These terms are widely used in the Russian socio-economic literature and research (see Slutskij 1999; Lovyagin & Slutskij 2006; Zubarevich 2007) In order to understand the differences among these, terms their definitions are presented below:

- level of life is defined by the quantity and quality of goods and services that are consumed by a person (cf. Slutskij 1999) or by various needs that people have and how these needs are satisfied in the system of consumption (cf. Rimashevskaya 2001);
- conditions of life are determinants of the level of life; they are used as indicators along with indicators of consumption in order to measure the level of life in social and economic researches (cf. Rimashevskaya 2001; Zubarevich 2007)
- way of life is understood as person's social activities (cf. Slutskij 1999) or as a set of person's activities in all life domains (cf. Rimashevskaya 2001);
- quality of life¹⁶ is an objective characteristic of the population in combination with the resultant of way of life and level of life (cf. Rimashevskaya 2001)¹⁷.

The Institute of social and economic studies of population has developed not only definitions, but also the methodological concept in order to measure well-being (Zubarevich 2007: 23) which is presented in the Table 1.

¹⁶ The indicators of the quality of life are indicators of health, morbidity, disability; educational (average number of years spent for education) and cultural level of adult population; labour activity and efficiency of individual work; scope of free time for the development of personal capacities; stability of family structure; professional, territorial and social mobility; birth, fertility and marriage rates (cf. Rimashevskaya 2001).

¹⁷ To the mentioned above terms, another Russian researcher Slutskij (1999: 25) added "standard of life" and "style of life". Standard of life is a set of approved norms and rules, whereas style of life refers to a type of behaviour and consciousness.

Table 1. Structure of well-being following the methodological concept of the Institute of social and economic studies of population (Russian Academy of Sciences) (Zubarevich 2007: 23; my translation)

Conditions of life	Exterior conditions of well-being	Socio-demographic structure, particularities of employment, population settlement pattern, social infrastructure.
Level of life in combination with way of life	Way of distribution of consumer goods	Level, types and differentiation of remuneration; amount and structure of distribution of socially significant goods; holding of a private farm.
	Particularities of consumption and formation of needs	Level and structure of consumption; access to consumer goods; living conditions and properties; consumption orientations.
Quality of life	Resultant components	Potential of public and individual health, education and culture; migration; professional mobility.

The basis of the concept of well-being presented above is consumption of material goods and services¹⁸ and satisfaction of needs. The concept is considered in economic terms of labour productivity, increase of income and material goods, and possession of property. The quality of life results from level of life and way of life and represents the quality of population under certain conditions, way and level of life. In general, such concept is oriented on measurement of national well-being and is inclined to be connected with satisfaction of material and spiritual people's needs, resources for such satisfaction, accessibility of consumer goods and services (cf. Rimashevskaya 2001). Additionally Rimashevskaya (2001) highlights an important position of health in this concept. Zubarevich (2007) points out that the well-being is a complex concept in order to be used in applied comparative studies, so that the level of life (income level and consumption of material goods and services) is more used for comparisons in social and economic studies in Russia.

The limits of some concepts which are used in the socio-economic literature are scrutinized by some Russian researchers. Zubarevich (2007) compares the concept of well-being used in the Russian literature with the human development approach where individual development is connected with an expansion of her capabilities, and the

¹⁸ Such approach to evaluate well-being through consumption prevails in general in economics (cf. Zubarevich 2007).

economic growth is important only if it positively influences people's well-being and expansion of their capabilities. In her work, she uses Human Development Index in order to compare regional development. Taken into consideration the western concepts of human development and well-being, Zuberevich (2007), however, highlights that the use of different concepts (such as level, quality and way of life) depends also on socio-historical period discussed in research. If in the Soviet period differences were defined and assessed in terms of conditions of life, in the period of transformation of Russian economy, the level of life became priority-oriented (for example, low incomes, unemployment of population). Nevertheless in her work Zubarevich (2007) highlights that evaluation of social development should go beyond economic indicators.

Slutskij (1999), Lovyagin and Slutskij (2006) introduce terms of 'quality of population' and 'quality of young generation'. 'Quality of young generation' integrates different aspects of life such as way, style, conditions of life and state of youth (demographic parameters, physical and psychological health). This concept tries to elaborate a complex way of assessment of young people's lives. Lovyagin and Slutskij (2006) agree that improvement of quality of population and young generation is not only a condition for economic development, but also "an ultimate humanistic aim" (Lovyagin & Slutskij 2006: 48). Nevertheless, they see young people as resource for innovative country development or as potential with predefined attributes and qualifications. They argue further that quality of young people's life depends on state investments in human capital, whereas quality of young generation and population should reply to needs of modern type of economy. Moreover, the state documents and programs are interested in the qualitative potential of adolescents and young people for an innovative development of the country and an improvement of its competitiveness (The Strategy for state youth policy in the Russian Federation 2006; The Concept of Long-Term Socio-Economic Development of the Russian Federation... 2008; The Concept of Federal Targeted Program "Youth of Russia" for the period of 2011-2015). Such conceptualization of young people's lives, e.g. productivity on basis of professional qualification and predefined education (Lovyagin & Slutskij 2006) and increase of skilled workers in order to improve country's competitiveness (The Concept of Long-Term Socio-Economic Development of the Russian Federation... 2008), can meet several critical points. Robeyns (2006b: 72; italics in original) highlights that in human capital theory „human beings act for economic reasons *only*“, which means that other activities connected with non-economic reasons are not acknowledged. Moreover, human capital approach recognizes knowledge, skills and education, if they contribute to economic productivity (cf. Robeyns 2006b). Such orientation on economic productivity limits young people's lives to contribution to an economic development of

the country, whereas their activities are valued if they are significant for the economic productivity.

From the perspective of the current study, investments in health, education, culture, professional qualifications should be done, but the aim of such investments should be changed: any changes and investments can become valued only when they really influence the individual well-being and individual choices (cf. Zubarevich 2007).

Summary

As young people do not represent one unified socio-demographic group, it is important in studying them to take into consideration such particularities as gender, education, geographical location, socio-economic background, ethnic group, religion, and any other differences (cf. Omelchenko 2011). Additionally, it is important to grasp the social, cultural and historical context of being young and the particularities of the historical period in the country studied (cf. France 2007), in this case in Russia, where the socio-economic and political transformation has given rise to new demands from young people.

The analysis of the Russian state programs and of studies of young people conducted in this chapter has shown that the present thesis should focus on the following aspects:

- it is important to understand what real opportunities young Russians have and see in their lives. As is clearly pointed out in the Concept of Federal Targeted Program "Youth of Russia" for the period of 2011-2015, here is a *lack* of information about young people's *real opportunities* and *needs*, and such lack makes difficult the realization of state actions and decisions that are necessary and important for young people;

- in order to improve young people's quality of life and create favourable conditions for their successful socialization and effective self-realization, it is vital to proceed not just from the current economic, social, political, ethnical needs of the country, but to pursue an effective social, economic, educational and regional policy *from the perspective of young people*. This study is therefore focused on young people, the barriers that hinder young people from living the life they want as well as the opportunities that young people see in their lives. All this is viewed in this study from the perspective of Russian young people, e.g. from the actors' perspective. As Sen writes: "the people have to be seen, in this perspective, as being actively involved – given the opportunity – in shaping their own destiny, and not just as passive recipients of the fruits of cunning development programs" (Sen 1999a: 53);

- the individual (here: young person's) life should be the starting point as well as the final objective of policies. That is why it is important to shift the focus of programs and research from the development of young people's potential for economic productivity and the interests of the country to the *individual life* and policies that really influence individual well-being and choices;

- the study of young people's lives should have a multidimensional perspective. Although multidimensionality gives rise to the question of how to measure, assess and weight dimensions (cf. Alkire 2009), it nevertheless gives a multi-faceted view of human life.

To start from the individual and his/her life (and not from their income or resources) in order to assess social arrangements is in accordance with the perspective of the capability approach, and "this yields a particular way of viewing the assessment of equality and inequality" (Sen 1992: 5). The capability approach looks for an informational basis not in economic indicators, but in a person's capability to achieve valuable functionings and to pursue her objectives (Sen 1992). Ziegler (2010: 96) argues that a focus on capabilities is "a more appropriate way to assess the well-being and quality of life of young people than assessing their happiness or their material resources or a combination of both". The focus is accordingly shifted from investments in human capital, consumption, and economic prosperity to real opportunities that young people have in existing socio-economic and political conditions. The theoretical framework of the capability approach is discussed further in Chapter II.

Chapter II

Theoretical basis: the use of the capability approach for the analysis of individual well-being

The following chapter introduces the conceptual basis of the capability approach for the study of individual well-being, and particularly of young people's well-being. The chapter starts by describing the capability approach as an alternative concept of the assessment of individual well-being, then provides an analysis of the main categories of and debates within the capability approach, and discusses the criticism of the approach. Next follows a discussion of the debate on the operationalization of the capability approach, particularly by challenges on the selection of capabilities and defining a list of capabilities. A final section concentrates on children's and young people's capabilities and ends with a discussion of the informational basis for the assessment of young people's lives.

1. The capability approach as a theoretical framework for the analysis of individual well-being

The English economist and philosopher of Indian origin Amartya Sen, whose works are on poverty and famine, welfare economics, development economics, has pioneered the capability approach for the evaluation of the social arrangements and individual well-being. The first discussion of the conception of capabilities can be found in his talk "Equality of What?" (Sen 1980), given in the Tanner Lecture on Human Values where he introduced the notion of 'basic capabilities' and contrasted it with the notion of 'primary goods'. Although primary goods comprehend rights, opportunities, income, the social basis of self-respect, still they do not explain "what these good things *do* to human beings" (Sen 1980: 218; italics in original). With the notion of the 'capabilities', Sen proposed a new category instead of income and utility with which to evaluate and assess well-being. Capability can evaluate if "a person [is] being able to do certain basic things" (ibid.: 218), for example, whether a person is able to meet one's nutritional requirements, be clothed, sheltered or to have the power to participate in the social life of the community.

The capability approach has been developed by Amartya Sen himself (1980, 1985, 1987, 1992, 1999a, 2002a, 2009a, 2009b) and has been further elaborated by the American philosopher Martha Nussbaum (2000, 2006, 2011), also in joint collaborative projects (Nussbaum and Sen, eds. 1993). There is also an impressive

range of work by other researchers such as Alkire (2005, 2008b), Clark (2005a, b), Fleurbaey (2006), Deneulin and Shahani (eds. 2009), Gasper (1997, 2007), Robeyns (2003a, 2003b, 2005a, 2005b, 2006a, 2011a). The capability approach has been widely discussed in development economics, development ethics, social policy and political philosophy. Nowadays the capability approach is investigated in numerous theoretical and empirical works with the focus on different aspects of well-being and human development. The main directions of research may be summed up in the following way: foundational issues of the capability approach (for example, Gasper 1997, 2007; Nussbaum 2006, 2011; Robeyns 2011a; Sen 1985, 1992, 2009b); social justice (for example, Nussbaum 2000, 2006); poverty, capability deprivation (for example, Kuklys 2005); operationalization of the capability approach (for example, Burchardt & Vizard 2011); education (for example, Saito 2003; Walker 2003, 2010; Unterhalter 2003a, 2003b, 2009); children's and youth's capabilities (for example, Addabbo & Di Tommaso 2008; Biggeri et al. 2006; Ballet, Biggeri & Comim 2010; Biggeri, Ballet & Comim 2010; Biggeri, Trani & Mauro 2010; Di Tommaso 2007; Graf, Germes-Castro & Babic 2011; Klasen 2001, 2010; Saito 2003); sustainable human development (for example, Holland 2008); health (for example, Ruger 2010; Venkatapuram 2011); human rights (for example, Klasen 2001; Sen 2006); cultural values and ethics (for example, Binder 2009). Moreover, the capability approach is used for the evaluation of national governmental (for example, Alkire et al. 2009; Arndt & Volkert 2009; Arndt & Volkert 2011) and European programs (for example, Volkert 2006). Additionally, Germany has recently decided to adopt the capability approach for official poverty and social exclusion reports (see Volkert 2006).

Sen in economics has significantly contributed to "the comparative measurement of quality of life" (Nussbaum 2006: 70), showing that people's life should be assessed in terms of what they are able to do and be, whereas Nussbaum in philosophy has used "the approach to provide the philosophical underpinning for an account of core human entitlements that should be respected and implemented by the governments of all nations, as a bare minimum of what respect for human dignity requires" (ibid.: 70) and for the development of a partial theory of justice (cf. Robeyns 2005b). Sen focuses on the quality of life assessments using the dimensions of the capabilities. In contrast, Nussbaum's works are closer to the traditions in the humanities (cf. Robeyns 2005b) and she ponders the basic political principles.

The capability approach can be used to evaluate and to assess well-being of people, inequalities, poverty, deprivations and its focal point is on what people are able to do and to be, on their capabilities. The capability approach with its focus on human capabilities that people have reason to value is an alternative to approaches based on

resources, utility and income that measure and assess well-being and social inequalities.

This section presents the main criticisms that have been made of these approaches by the capability approach. One of the most famous approaches to resources is John Rawls' (1999) primary goods one. He proposed a diverse list of primary goods which includes liberties, rights, and income. Nevertheless, Sen's (1992) critique is aimed at the differences among individuals in their ability to convert resources into functionings. The approach assessing well-being in terms of utility is criticized: 1) for its exclusion of non-utility information from its considerations as well as for its neglect of rights, aspects of the quality of life, and individual freedoms which are "not adequately reflected in the statistics of pleasure" (Sen 1999a: 56); 2) for not paying attention to "the actual distribution of utilities, since the concentration is entirely on the *total* utility of everyone taken together" (*ibid.*: 57; italics in original); 3) for its inattention to the mental conditioning and adaptive expectations which could misrepresent the actual personal well-being (cf. Sen 1999a; Burchardt 2009). By assessing only the satisfaction of a person at a specific time, researchers might not pay attention to how a person has adapted to her life circumstances. If a person has become used to the life she leads and does not have an example of another life that she might lead, she will be satisfied with her situation.

The following section on the critique of the income-based approach relies heavily on Kuklys (2005). The income-based approach uses income and expenditure as indicators for the measurement of welfare. But the use of income, the "empirical welfare measure *par excellence* in economics" (Kuklys 2005: 4; italics in original), has also been criticized. Individuals might underreport their income, or, in case they report correctly, "current income might not reflect appropriately the long-run level of individual welfare" (*ibid.*: 4). To such problems, economists have already found a solution by using data on individual expenditure, but they are also aware of the critique: 1) that the measurement of the individual level of welfare based on income and expenditure measurement at household level does not take into account an unequal distribution of the resources within the household; and 2) that there are variations in the level of income that households of different size and composition need to achieve the same welfare. That is why economists propose equivalence scales for the latter problem and the application of theoretical bargaining models to the first (cf. Kuklys 2005).

These new measurement tools and applications still leave room for a critique of the income-based approach. It is often assumed that economic growth increases people's income and their quality of life. But "empirical evidence shows no *automatic* connection between a high GDP per capita and the ability of people to flourish" (Alkire

& Deneulin 2009a: 15; italics in original)¹⁹. The income-based measurement is not complete because it does not take into account non-market goods and services, and non-monetary constraints (such as, for example, disability) that influence decisions, while the capability approach investigates “non-market goods in an individual’s resource constraint and the effect that non-monetary constraints have on an individual’s consumer choices” (Kuklys 2005: 5). People differ from each other in their ability to convert their resources into capabilities. In Sen’s terminology, such differences or non-monetary constraints are personal heterogeneities, environmental diversities, institutional variations, differences in relational perspectives and distribution within the family (Sen 1999a: 70-72). Robeyns (2005b) introduces personal, social and environmental conversion factors which will be discussed later on in this chapter.

Nevertheless, Sen (1999a) takes into consideration that economic growth is necessary for human development, and that the lack of income can be a principal reason for impoverishment and capability deprivation, but he highlights the people’s ability to command resources or different sets of commodities (cf. Clark 2005a), and counts material goods as means and not as ends for the people’s well-being.

The essential role of human diversity makes significant “the informational departure in moving from the spaces of incomes, opportunities, happiness, primary goods, etc., to taking direct note of the achievement of functionings and the capability to achieve them” (Sen 1992: 9). So, functionings and capabilities have been chosen as relevant spaces for the assessment of well-being. Sen (1992) has argued that the improvement of people’s lives could be largely achieved by the expansion of their capabilities so that they could enjoy valuable beings and doings, and choose the life they have reason to value. He insists on the importance of “concentrating on the real freedoms actually enjoyed, taking note of *all* the barriers” (Sen 1992: 149; italics in original), and advocates the assessment of social arrangements with regard to the individual freedom. Sen argues that policies should concentrate on what people really are able to do and be, and on removing obstacles in their lives so that they have greater freedom to live the kind of life they have reason to value (cf. Robeyns 2005b). In summary, instead of measuring and assessing well-being in the terms of income, resources, or utility, the capability researchers propose to assess a person’s well-being in what people are actually capable of doing and being.

¹⁹ The results for Germany show that “studies focusing only on income miss substantial fractions of the population who suffer from non-financial impairments” (Arndt & Volkert 2007: 19).

1.1. The main concepts of the capability approach

Pioneered by the economist Amartya Sen, the capability approach has been further developed by economists, philosophers, psychologists and educationalists. The ends of well-being, justice and development, according to the capability approach, “should be conceptualized in terms of people’s capabilities to function; [...] to undertake the actions and activities that they want to engage in, and be whom they want to be” (Robeyns 2005b: 95). So, the basic concepts of the capability approach are functionings and capabilities; well-being and agency; freedom and its aspects, e.g., the opportunity and process aspects; conversion factors and adaptive preferences. These concepts will be introduced and discussed in what follows, and in case there is a difference among researchers in the interpretation of these basic concepts, such divergences will be carefully explained.

One of the noteworthy differences in the main concepts and their interpretations can be found in the term ‘capability approach’ itself. Nussbaum (2011: 18) uses the plural form ‘the capabilities approach’ and highlights the fact that “the most important elements of people’s quality of life are plural and qualitatively distinct: health, bodily integrity, education, and other aspects of individual lives [which] cannot be reduced to a single metric without distortion”. Although Sen (1992) underlines the idea of plurality, he uses the singular form ‘the capability approach’. While both terms are common in the literature and refer to the same concept, the present work will use the form ‘the capability approach’. Moreover, in the capability literature it is common to highlight the differences between two strands, i.e. Sen’s and Nussbaum’s work, although Robeyns (2011b) sees in Nussbaum’s work a particular way of specifying the capability approach, perhaps the most influential. The present work does not follow a particular version of the capability approach, but tries to consider the capability approach as a conceptual framework for the assessment of individual well-being, as well as to take into account the influential theoretical and empirical elaborations, and to frame the evaluative space for young people’s well-being.

The core differences that set the capability approach apart from other approaches which try to capture individual well-being are, firstly, the acknowledgement of human diversity, which means that people differ in the conversion of their resources and commodities into functionings; and secondly, the distinction between means and ends. A special attention to human diversity Sen pays in *Inequality Reexamined* (1992: xi): “human diversity is no secondary complication (to be ignored, or to be introduced ‘later on’); it is a fundamental aspect of our interest in equality“. Among these

differences are people's external and internal characteristics, e.g., different personal characteristics such as age, gender, and physical, psychological, mental particularities and abilities; character, talents and skills, and proneness to diseases; social and environmental contexts (natural environments, societies and states; families of different socio-economic background); inherited possessions, and liabilities (cf. Sen 1992). These differences are very important for the equality evaluation: "the heterogeneity of people leads to divergences in the assessment of equality in terms of different variables" (ibid.: 1). If all people were completely similar, then the equality in one respect, for example in incomes, would make people equal in other respects too, for example in health (cf. Sen 1992). But this is not the case: if equality among people has to be measured by only one variable, then the specific characteristics of people could not be evaluated. To illustrate this with an example: depending on the level of the disease, a person with asthma needs to buy monthly medication to maintain an adequate state of health, and spends money which is taken off from her monthly income while the person without any chronic disease does not need to spend this extra money and can spend it on something else (e.g., a leisure time activity) and enjoy this activity.

Extensive human diversity raises the problem of the choice of focal variables (cf. Sen 1992). This is precisely the point from which the capability approach started, i.e. from the question "equality of what?" (Sen 1980). Different scholars have argued about the definition of 'equality' (for example, equal liberty, equal distribution of the primary goods, equal citizens), and this shows clearly the importance of the choice of space in which to complete interpersonal comparisons. As Sen (1992: 20) writes, "the choice of the 'evaluative space' (that is, the selection of the relevant focal variables) is crucial to analyzing inequality". Two starting points, then, are crucial for the analysis of the theoretical basis of the capability approach: the notion of equality and the evaluative space. In *Inequality Reexamined*, Sen (1992) returns to this issue:

"A person's capability to achieve functionings that he or she has reason to value provides a general approach to the evaluation of social arrangements, and this yields a particular way of viewing the assessment of equality and inequality" (Sen 1992: 5).

Alkire (2009) asks the further question whether the capability scholars should promote "equality in the capability space" (ibid.: 33), as do other theories of justice when they "*advocate* equality in some space" (ibid.: 33; italics in original), which means that the capability approach advocates it "in the space of capabilities" (ibid.: 34), or whether the capability scholars should promote "expanding capability" (ibid.: 33) in

general²⁰ or till a threshold or bare minimum (cf. Alkire 2009; Nussbaum 2000). This discussion is left for Chapter IV.

Three main concepts, namely functionings, capabilities and commodities, being at the centre of the capability approach's conceptual scheme, throw light on an analytical distinction between means and ends. Functionings are defined as "the various things a person may value doing or being" (Sen 1999a: 75), or the "various 'doings' and 'beings' a person achieves" (Sen 1987: 29), or in the words of Alkire (2008a: 5) "beings and doings that people value and have reason to value". In other words, they are states and activities that people value and have reason to value. Functionings "can vary from most elementary ones, such as being well-nourished, avoiding escapable morbidity and premature mortality, etc. to quite complex and sophisticated achievements, such as having self-respect, being able to take part in the life of the community, and so on" (Sen 1992: 5). Taken together, elementary and complex functionings, being valuable activities and states, constitute a person's well-being and describe her life and achievements (cf. Alkire & Deneulin 2009b; Leßmann & Bonvin 2011): being in good health, moving about freely, being educated, having accommodation. But functionings are not limited to a certain number, on the contrary they relate to many different domains and dimensions of life, which is why the framework of the capability approach can be applied to both rich and poor countries and people (cf. Alkire & Deneulin 2009b).

In the definition of functionings the capability approach theorists use the expression 'value or have reason to value'. The value people give to their states and activities is an essential conceptual frame in the capability approach. It means that "an activity or situation 'counts' as a functioning for that person *only* if that person values it" (Alkire & Deneulin 2009b: 32; italics in original). But the value judgements that a person makes are on the individual level or are derived from an individual system of values. Some people, for example, "*do* value activities that are harmful, such as a psychopath who values the triumph of the kill as much as the victim would value not being killed" (ibid.: 32; italics in original). That is why the capability approach introduces value judgements explicitly and makes an addition to the states and activities that people value – 'that people have reason to value' (cf. Alkire & Deneulin 2009b). This element "just acknowledges that given our disagreements we do need to make some social choices" (ibid.: 32). So, people should not simply value something without giving it some thought (cf. Robeyns 2003a), they have to reflect on what they value, how values have been formed and whether their values contradict the social agreement.

²⁰ "Development can be seen, it is argued here, as a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy" (Sen 1999a: 3).

Nussbaum (2000) also stresses that the people's abilities should be assessed valued from an ethical viewpoint.

All activities and states, whether people are poor or rich, able or disabled, or live in different geographical zones, are valued if people attach to them a certain degree of value and recognize these doings and beings as important for their lives. Here it is important to take account of the people's adaptive preferences, i.e. when they adapt themselves to their life situation and to the values of their relatives, friends, and societal values as well as to their past experiences. Adaptation to different mental states is one of the criticisms of utilitarianism made by followers of the capability approach (Burchardt 2009; Sen 1999a). Utility cannot be an appropriate dimension to measure inequality because people can get used to and be satisfied with their lives however good or bad their lives are. Adaptation is "a beneficial and protective psychological strategy" in many circumstances (Burchardt 2009: 5), but such adaptation does not lead to changes in people's circumstances, states or activities. Rather, it furthers the process of getting accustomed to them, which does not allow the formulation of real aspirations (instead people simply formulate modest aspirations), nor does it enable researchers adequately to measure and assess inequalities or people's well-being and real substantive freedom.

In order to achieve functionings, a person should have commodities at her disposition and the ability to use these commodities appropriately, in other words to convert them into valuable functionings (cf. Leßmann 2009). So in this way, public and private goods, services, resources (for example, income or products) are means to achieve valuable ends. And "only the ends have intrinsic importance, whereas means are instrumental to reach the goal of increased well-being, justice and development" (Robeyns 2005b: 95)²¹. Goods, income and any other resources are no doubt important for people, but not because people have bought or consumed them. Rather, what is crucial is what people have been able to do with these goods and services in order to lead a life they can value. Additionally, goods and services are important "for the combination of characteristics or qualities which [they] provide" (Gasper 1997: 283). This means that it is not simply the number of available commodities that is important but their characteristics. The famous example here is that of a bicycle, which in itself is an object or mechanism made from different components, and people are interested in it because it can take them to different places, but only if a person is able to convert its characteristics into the ability to move.

²¹ Furthermore, it will be explained that some ends might be means for other ends, for example, education, health.

The ability to convert the available commodities into valuable states and activities is influenced by personal characteristics and social and environmental factors: the personal characteristics, or personal conversion factors, are internal factors (sex, age, physical abilities, intelligence, educational level, skills), whereas social (public policies, institutions, social norms, power relations, gender roles) and environmental (climate, geographical location) conversion factors are external factors (cf. Robeyns 2003b, 2005b).

Functionings could be potentially achievable and achieved. While “a person’s *achieved functionings* at any given time are the particular functionings he/she has successfully pursued and realized” (Alkire 2005: 120; italics in original), a set of potentially achievable functionings constitutes an individual’s capability (cf. Kuklys 2005). Gasper (2007) stresses that a person’s capability can be defined in two ways: 1) the generally used definition that it is a set of various alternative combinations of functionings, or the alternative ways of life and the extent of her positive freedom; cf. Sen’s definition “the various combinations of functionings that the person can achieve” (Sen 1992: 40) or Kuklys’ definition of capability - “a derived notion [which] reflects the various functionings he or she can *potentially* achieve, and involves the person’s freedom to choose between different ways of living” (Kuklys 2005: 10; italics in original); 2) the value-guided character of capability; see for example, “capability refers to a person or group’s freedom to promote or achieve valuable functionings” (Alkire 2005: 121)²² or “*capabilities* are the freedom to enjoy valuable functionings” (Alkire & Deneulin 2009b: 32; italics in original). Robeyns goes one step further and writes that once a person has valuable opportunities at her disposal, she can chose the options that she values most (Robeyns 2005b: 95). The present work takes into account both aspects, the alternative ways of life that a person can attain and the valuation of the achievable functionings. In other words, a capability is “what people are actually able to do and to be“(Nussbaum 2000: 5)

Here it is important to take a closer look at the terms ‘capability’, ‘capabilities’ and ‘capability set’. In his early work, Sen referred to capability as a person’s capability set which consisted of different sets of potential functionings (cf. Robeyns 2005b; Hart 2009). This means that a person has one capability composed of the potentially achievable functionings to lead a life this person values. Later on the scholars of the capability approach and particularly Nussbaum²³ talked about the capabilities²⁴ as a set

²² Although Gasper (2007) writes further that Alkire also uses Sen’s definition of “the various combinations of functionings that the person can achieve” (Sen 1992: 40).

²³ “For Sen, capabilities are real opportunities, but for Nussbaum they also include talents, internal powers, and abilities” (Robeyns 2003a: 75) so Nussbaum pays “more attention to people’s skills and

consisting of a range of capabilities, with each individual capability containing various combinations of functionings. In Sen's later writings, he uses the terms interchangeably (cf. Robeyns 2005b). The scholars of the capability approach define the capability set as a "set of all feasible options" (Leßmann & Bonvin 2011: 86) or as potential achievements (cf. Bonvin & Farvaque 2003), or the alternatives a person has (real opportunities) (cf. Sen 1999a). From the variety of combinations a person can choose a vector of functionings, i.e. one specific combination. Any combination of functionings represents a way of life, and the various combinations of functionings can be different ways of life (cf. Leßmann & Bonvin 2011). Depending on what is valuable for a person, she chooses from the various functionings that combination which reflects the way of life she wants to pursue. Although Sen "in particular presumes every person to be able to choose without any discussion of how this ability develops" (Leßmann 2009: 453), he is more interested in people's ability to assess the situation adequately and correctly in order to choose an adequate bundle of functionings and not to be exposed to the impact of social conditioning (cf. Leßmann 2009).

So, the term 'capability' directs attention to the analysis of two concepts, functionings and freedom (cf. Alkire & Deneulin 2009b). Capability is strongly connected to the notion of freedom, in as much as "capability is, thus, a set of vectors of functionings, reflecting the person's freedom to lead one type of life or another [...] to choose from possible livings" (Sen 1992: 40). Sen defines freedom as "the real opportunity that we have to accomplish what we value" (ibid.: 31). Although freedom to achieve a valuable life is central to the capability approach, at the same time Sen (2006) warns that some freedoms depend on the assistance and help of others, on the social arrangements in society. He gives the example of the freedom not to be exposed to malaria, which depends not only on the person's choice not to be ill, but also on medical and epidemiological public policies.

According to Alkire (2005: 121), the notion of capability was introduced by Sen to show "the intrinsic and foundational importance of freedom". A person could be nourished, have shelter, be healthy as well as be educated or secure. This can be assessed positively, but if the person does not have real opportunities to achieve what she values, then this person's choices are not free despite the fact that they led to a certain level of provision, in other words "choice is seen as an important ingredient of

personality traits as aspects of capabilities" (Robeyns 2005b: 104), although among Nussbaum's capabilities there are real opportunities (cf. Robeyns 2003a).

²⁴ Nussbaum (2000: 84-85) has also introduced the three types of capabilities 'basic', 'internal' and 'combined'.

freedom and therefore the person is always seen as an agent and not as a patient” (Leßmann & Bonvin 2011: 86).

Another important issue in choice is that the increase in the number of choices or opportunities does not lead to real opportunities if people do not value these choices, or if the choices are imposed. Sen introduces the opportunity aspect of freedom by giving a person freedom of choice through an opportunity set (the capability set) (cf. Leßmann & Bonvin 2011). Besides the opportunity aspect, Sen also introduces the process aspect of freedom which is connected to the exercise of actions in order to achieve valuable functionings. So, the notion of freedom is presented by two aspects: one stresses the “opportunity aspect of freedom” (as capability) and the other the “process aspect of freedom” (or agency) (Alkire & Deneulin 2009b: 37). The opportunity aspect of freedom is concerned with the ability to achieve what a person has reason to value, the ability to decide to live the way a person wants and values; the process aspect of freedom is concerned with the ability to take decisions for himself or herself freely, without being forced by other people or by constraints that other people impose (cf. Sen 2009b). In other words, the opportunity aspect is about the achievable life opportunities that a person has, while the process aspect of freedom refers to the decision-making of a person and her role as well as that of others in this process. The process aspect of freedom attaches importance to the process “through which that achievement comes about” (Sen 2009b: 228). But Sen further specifies the opportunity aspect of freedom by saying that opportunity means not just ending up with what we have chosen, but it is about “the opportunity *to choose freely*” (ibid.: 230; original in italics):

“Can we judge opportunities we have only by whether or not we end up in the state that we would choose to be in, irrespective of whether or not there are other significant alternatives that we could have chosen if we wanted?” (Sen 2009b: 230).

In other words, when a person chooses from all the valuable opportunities presented (and the existence of other options is important) the things she values and wants to advance in her life, and they are exactly what she wants, then her action is related to the opportunity aspect of freedom; on the other hand, when a person chooses to do something and carries this action to the end anyway, without being forced by other people, then her action is related to the process aspect of freedom. The capability approach, then, emphasizes the intrinsic and the instrumental value of freedom: intrinsic freedom is linked to autonomy whereas the instrumental freedom is linked to being able to achieve one’s goals (cf. Leßmann & Bonvin 2011).

The actual achievements of a person are constituents of her personal well-being (cf. Leßmann & Bonvin 2011), or of a worthwhile life (cf. Bonvin & Farvaque 2003). In assessing well-being, if the researchers take account only of achieved functionings, they will miss both how the process of choice comes about, in other words “the freedom to decide which path to take” (Alkire 2005: 120), and also how the process of achievement occurs, or the range of exercises to achieve valuable functionings - in other words “the freedom to bring about achievements one considers to be valuable” (ibid.: 120).

Next will be discussed the distinction between agency and well-being²⁵, and agency goals and well-being goals. While well-being goals aim at an improvement of the life situation (cf. Leßmann & Bonvin 2011), agency goals are person-specific and depend “on the objectives the person sets himself or herself” (Burchardt 2009: 6). People might value their actions and ends more than their own well-being which could be distorted due to the range of actions exercised. Agency is “a person’s ability to pursue and realize goals that she values and has reason to value” (Alkire & Deneulin 2009b: 31), and agency is connected to the commitments to certain goals and morals that people have (cf. Leßmann & Bonvin 2011). Moreover, for Sen (1999a: 19) an agent is not someone who acts on behalf of someone else, but is a person who acts following her own values and objectives, and “whose achievements can be judged in terms of her own values and objectives”. But actions of those who harm or humiliate others cannot be counted as agency, because actions should be in some way reasonable (cf. Alkire & Deneulin 2009b).

Sen (1985) distinguishes not only agency from well-being, but presents a classification composed of four elements: 1) agency freedom; 2) agency achievement; 3) well-being freedom; and 4) well-being achievement.

“A person’s ‘agency freedom’ refers to what the person is free to do and achieve in pursuit of whatever goals or values he or she regards as important” (Sen 1985: 203). Agency freedom includes a person’s different aims and objectives, and the person is represented as a doer, a responsible agent who decides what he or she should achieve (cf. Sen 1985). The valued goal which has been achieved or accomplished leads to agency achievement, to the exercised agency of a person.

A person’s well-being, according to Sen, is in her freedom to choose from different possible functionings, different beings and doings, or different ways of life (cf. Sen 1985). Choosing a combination of functionings, a person reaches her well-being

²⁵ The distinction between agency and well-being together with the distinction between freedom and achievements is absent in Nussbaum’s (2000) work, because the distinction between capability and functioning can, in her opinion, capture all important aspects.

achievement; having all feasible options at the disposal before the choice means to have well-being freedom (cf. Leßmann & Bonvin 2011). Achieved well-being represents a chosen set of functionings that has become a person's states and activities while well-being freedom refers to the person's capability set with alternative combinations of functionings. The idea behind the notion of well-being freedom is that a person possesses "the range of options [...] in deciding what kind of life to lead" (Drèze & Sen 2002: 36). Despite such distinctions, Sen (1985: 187) underscores that the agency and the well-being are interrelated: "for an integrated person it is likely – possibly even inevitable – that the person's well-being will be influenced by his or her agency role".

The life in poverty is the life without the set of alternative combinations of valuable functionings, it suffers from a lack of feasible options in order to have a kind of life which people value:

"Thus, the notion of capability is essentially one of freedom — the range of options a person has in deciding what kind of life to lead. Poverty of a life, in this view, lies not merely in the impoverished state in which the person actually lives, but also in the lack of real opportunity — given by social constraints as well as personal circumstances — to choose other types of living" (Drèze & Sen 2002: 36).

Wolff and De-Shalit (2010) go further in their analysis of well-being in two respects. Firstly, they mention that "the idea that what matters for an individual is not only the level of functionings he or she enjoys at any particular time, but also their prospects for sustaining that level" (Wolff & De-Shalit 2010: 9). In this connection they speak about risks and vulnerable situations that people might go through: a casual worker who at a particular moment (for example, of data collection for research) is working in a valuable job may find herself out of work at any moment and become disadvantaged, i.e. unemployed. Secondly, they focus on the least advantaged, and claim that governments should urgently consider their problems first, although this does not mean that governments should ignore those of others. Disadvantage is defined as "a lack of genuine opportunity for secure functioning" (ibid.: 9), and being disadvantaged means "not being able to achieve the functioning" (ibid.: 38) and "an individual's functionings are or become insecure involuntarily and in a manner which other people do not have to experience" (ibid.: 14). Although it is important to enjoy states and activities that a person values at any particular moment, the sustainable achievement of valuable functionings leads to a sustainable and secure life course. This means that social arrangements make a person's life secure not only at particular moment, but her whole life including secure life transitions.

Now the discussion turns to social and political goals of the capability approach. The scholars of the capability approach choose capabilities to be social and political goals, put them at the centre to measure inequalities and for social policy purposes:

“When assessing the well-being or agency of a person, capabilities should be the focal point: indeed the same functioning (e.g. not eating) may be the result of constraint (starving) or of choice (fasting) and focusing on functionings does not allow to capture this crucial difference” (Bonvin & Farvaque 2006: 123).

“... capability, and not achieved functioning, should be the appropriate political goal” (Robeyns 2005b: 101-102).

“Where adult citizens are concerned, *capability, not functioning, is the appropriate political goal*” (Nussbaum 2000: 87; italics in original)

In other words, “the capability approach respects people’s different ideas of the good life” (Robeyns 2005b: 101). But Robeyns (2005b) warns that ideas of the good life might be influenced by family, community, religion and cultural values. So, if policy makers focus only on actual functionings, formulate or define valuable functionings that people should achieve and make them into a political goal, then policy makers can impose on people their way of thinking about human flourishing and do not respect people’s choices. By imposing on people such a set of valuable functionings, policy makers do not give people “latitude for choice” (Nussbaum 2000: 88). The focus on capabilities gives “a central role to citizen’s powers of choice and to traditional political and civil liberties” (ibid.: 105). The capabilities promoted by governments give people the freedom to choose the life and activities/states they value, to be diverse, to have different ways of living in which they follow their concepts of the good life. But researchers should remember that the state is not as benevolent as it is presented in Nussbaum’s ideas (cf. Robeyns 2005a).

But capability researchers, highlighting capabilities as their political goal, do not depreciate the importance of functionings, although they propose to focus on the opportunities to function. However, there are situations when promoting functionings is justifiably more important than just simply facing people with choices; such domains of life are health and security (Nussbaum 2000). For example, some people (young children, mentally disabled persons) are not able to make “complex choices” (Robeyns 2005b: 101), or in case of severe material deprivation, when the evaluation of well-being should be made in terms of achieved functionings instead of capabilities.

Furthermore, the purpose of an evaluative exercise requests the use of different dimensions such as functionings, capabilities, and agency depending on what concept

of advantage it uses, e.g. achieved well-being, agency achievement, well-being freedom, or agency freedom:

“The central claim of the capability approach is that whatever concept of advantage one wants to consider, the informational base of this judgment must relate to the space of functionings and/or capabilities, depending on the issues at hand” (Robeyns 2005b: 103).

Robeyns (2003a) states that some capabilities could be understood as resources for other capabilities, for example, shelter and environment which are intrinsically valuable, but can also be seen as resources to achieve good mental and physical health. Wolff and De-Shalit (2010: 10) propose the term of ‘fertile functioning’, which means that they are “those functionings the securing of which is likely to secure further functionings”. Nussbaum in her turn also puts a slight emphasis on the fact that central capabilities have intrinsic value and are a supportive background for other functionings:

“The central capabilities are not just instrumental to further pursuits: they are held to have value in themselves, in making the life that includes them fully human. But they are held to have a particularly pervasive and central role in everything else people plan and do” (Nussbaum 2000: 75).

So, the capabilities have an intrinsic value, but also an instrumental value:

“Although each capability has an intrinsic value, it can be instrumental for other capabilities. For instance the capability of being in good health is an end in itself, but also a means of realizing the capability to be educated. Therefore, one form of capability failure constrains realization of another capability and/or functioning, and vice versa” (Biggeri et al. 2006: 64).

To sum up, the capability approach takes as its starting point in the measurement and assessment of people’s well-being not their incomes or resources. Instead, it starts from the individual person and her life, from the realized functionings (what a person can actually do and be) and from her capability, or real opportunities (cf. Sen 1999a). Capabilities are the personal freedoms of people; together with functionings, they are “properties of individuals” (Robeyns 2003a: 65), and the difference between functionings and capabilities is like the difference between outcomes and opportunities (cf. Robeyns 2003a). Compared with other approaches, Sen (1992: xi; original in italics) concentrates more “on the *extents* of freedoms, rather on the *means* – what Rawls calls the ‘primary goods’”. So, Sen (1999a: 87) strongly

argues that the assessment of individual advantage should be in terms of capabilities – “the substantive freedoms [a person] enjoys to lead the kind of life he or she has reason to value”. For the capability approach it is important to have people who can have the actual ability to live different kinds of lives, which means that they have different freedoms and opportunities (cf. Sen 2009a).

The main concepts described above have been elaborated by Sen and later by Nussbaum and by a great number of philosophers, educationalists, sociologists, political scientists and are the basis of the theoretical framework of the capability approach. But the capability approach needs further elaboration both theoretical and empirical. For example, Burchardt (2009: 16) proposes to expand the definition of capability in the direction of “capability as autonomy”. Her definition differs from “more conventional interpretations of capability as current substantive opportunity” (ibid.: 16), and includes conditions under which aspirations, agency goals and preferences of a person are formed. This means that the scholars should assess “the capability set from which agency goals are formed *and* the capability set within which they are pursued” (ibid.: 17; italics in original). Only if both capability sets are scrutinized, Burchardt (2009: 17) stresses, the researchers can “properly assess the degree of substantive freedom he or she enjoys”. Leßmann (2009) advances this discussion by adding a temporal dimension and the consequences of the achieved functionings for future capability sets.

Arndt and Volkert (2011: 317) introduce the term ‘individual potentials’ which reflects all determinants that are directly connected not with society but with an individual. An example is health: a person can suffer from asthma in any society of the world. These individual potentials are distinguished from instrumental freedoms and social conversion factors that influence the ability to convert and the freedom to choose and depend on society.

These briefly sketched conceptual elaborations suggest that the capability approach needs further theoretical and empirical development.

1.2. Framing the capability approach: theory of social justice or normative framework?

The theoretical and empirical studies based on Sen’s ideas on human development, well-being, freedom, capabilities and functionings have been conducted over 20 years and have given rise to abundant literature. Following Sen’s idea that human development should be seen as “a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy” (Sen 1999a: 3) and not merely as the growth of GNP, the focus of the

studies shifted to such determinants as social and economic arrangements, political and civil rights, agency, and of course freedom.

Published annually since 1990 by the Human Development Report Office of the United Nations, the Human Development Reports (HDRs)²⁶ undertake extensive efforts to cover the main domains of human development, to analyse its constraints and priorities and to give recipes for political actions and measures. Launched by Mahbub ul Haq HDRs represent examples where the measurement of well-being is not of economic well-being or economic growth, but of the valued and basic capabilities (cf. Fukuda-Parr 2003). The Reports apply the idea that human beings are the end of the development and assess the quality of life of the population of approximately 100 countries. Therefore, the Reports are also published in national and regional versions, which are called National and Regional Human Development Reports. These reports have generated such tools of human development measurement as the Human Development Index, the Human Poverty Index and the Gender-Related Development Index.

The theoretical basis of the HDRs are rooted in the capability approach, as they “have used Amartya Sen’s capability approach as a conceptual framework in their analyses of contemporary development challenges” (Fukuda-Parr 2003: 301). Instead of focus on the means of good living, the reports concentrate on the actual lives that people lead (cf. Sen 1999a) and on the improvement of their lives not by increasing their means, but by the expansion of the states and activities that people can respectively be in and do. Moreover, the reports “have developed a distinct development paradigm – the human development approach – that now informs policy choices in many areas, such as poverty reduction, sustainable development, gender inequalities, governance, and globalization” (Fukuda-Parr 2003: 301-302).

The interconnection and the interrelation of the capability approach and the human development approach is discussed by Fukuda-Parr (2003) and Robeyns (2011b) with a focus on the confusion which can arise through the use of these notions:

²⁶ These are the topics of the Human Development Reports to date: Sustainability and Equity: A Better Future for All (2011); The Real Wealth of Nations: Pathways to Human Development (2010); Overcoming barriers: Human mobility and development (2009); Beyond scarcity: Fighting climate change: Human solidarity in a divided world (2007/8); Power, poverty and the global water crisis (2006); International cooperation at a crossroads: Aid, trade and security in an unequal world (2005); Cultural liberty in today’s diverse world (2004); Millennium Development Goals: a compact among nations to end human poverty (2003); Deepening democracy in a fragmented world (2002); Making new technologies work for human development (2001); Human rights and human development (2000); Globalization with a human face (1999); Consumption for human development (1998); Human development to eradicate poverty (1997); Economic growth and human development (1996); Gender and human development (1995); New dimensions of human security (1994); People’s participation (1993); Global dimensions of human development (1992); Financing human development; Concept and measurement of human development (1990).

is the capability approach identical to or interchangeable with the human development approach or is one of them a part of the other?

From Nussbaum's (2011) perspective, the human development approach and the capability approach are equivalent notions. The difference is only in the fact that the human development approach is mostly used by the Human Development Report Offices, which do not pursue the idea of advancing political theories, but are directed to the reorientation of the political debates on the deprivations of people whereas the capability approach was created by Sen "as the best space within which to make comparisons of life quality" (Nussbaum 2011: 18), or as a theoretical framework for "interpersonal comparisons [to] be made in the space of functionings and capabilities" (Robeyns 2005a: 191) and for "theorizing about basic social justice" (Nussbaum 2011: 18).

Alkire and Deneulin (2009b) also consider the human development and the capability approach as similar concepts and understand both approaches as multi-dimensional frames for the measurement and assessment of well-being, which cannot easily be reduced to income or utility.

Robeyns (2011a, b) articulates the proposition that the understanding of the relation between the human development and the capability approach depends on a narrower or broader interpretation of the capability approach. In the narrow definition, the capability approach focuses on the individual level, on the functionings and capabilities of a person and on an overall assessment of well-being (cf. Robeyns 2011a). At the same time, the broader definition of the capability approach includes other normative considerations such as, for example, agency aspects or procedural fairness, and in this understanding the capability approach might be used for the evaluation of governmental policies and social institutions (cf. Robeyns 2011a). If in the first case, it is worth speaking about the capability perspective, then in the second it makes sense to speak about the comprehensive notion of the human development approach because it is more powerful in political terms and can be opposed to neoliberalism (cf. Robeyns 2011b).

In other words, while the capability approach furnishes the knowledgeable and conceptual basis for human development, the HDRs provide the initiations of political actions and changes. Putting people at the centre of social and economic progress and stating that "people are the real wealth of a nation" (UNDP 1990: 9), both approaches see people as active agents of change and fight for the expansion of their substantive freedoms. So, the capability approach in the narrow definition is designed to assess people's life (how well it is or/and has been): it evaluates the individual functioning levels, selects functionings and capabilities by giving them weight, assesses the well-

being achievement and the freedom to achieve well-being and, finally, provides interpersonal comparisons (cf. Robeyns 2011a, 2011b). The human development approach, on the other hand, has its origin in the influential Human Development Reports and is based on Sen's core ideas; it accommodates these evaluations and shifts the focus of policymakers from unsophisticated investments to the planning of the political priorities with the attention on what people really value to be, do and achieve, with the emphasis on the expansion of their freedoms and on the equality of their distribution (cf. Fukuda-Parr 2003).

The notions of capabilities and human development are closely related, so human development is based on Sen's ideas on capabilities:

“Development can be seen, it is argued here, as a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy” (Sen 1999a: 3).

“The purpose of development is to enhance people's capabilities, in the present and in the future, in all areas of their life – economic, social, political and cultural” (Alkire & Deneulin 2009b: 27).

“The basic purpose of development is to enlarge people's choices” (Mahbub ul Haq 2004: 17), but “the goal is not to expand the number of choices – it is to expand the quality of human life” (Alkire & Deneulin 2009b: 34). This does not mean that any choices should be expanded, but only valuable ones. In this connection it is worth mentioning the concept of the ‘equality of opportunities’, as the capability perspective has to be initially distinguished from this concept. The main capability idea is the view that a person should have capability to achieve valuable functioning in order to pursue her objectives whereas the main focus of the concept of ‘equality of opportunities’ is on “the equal availability of some *particular means*, or with reference to equal applicability (or equal *non-applicability*) of some *specific barriers or constraints*” (Sen 1992: 7; italics in original).

Used as a conceptual framework in the HDRs, and being the theoretical framework for a number of empirical works, the capability approach is “not a theory that can explain poverty, inequality or well-being” (Robeyns 2005b: 94), but a “broad normative framework for the evaluation and assessment of individual well-being and social arrangements, the design of policies, and proposals about social change in society” (ibid.: 94). Although the capability approach has an “underspecified character” (Robeyns 2003a: 64), two of its roles are nevertheless clear: “an evaluative (normative role), and a prospective (policy) role” (Alkire & Deneulin 2009b: 42):

“the capability approach is not a theory that can *explain* poverty, inequality and well-being; instead, it rather provides a tool and a framework within which to *conceptualize* and *evaluate* these phenomena. Applying the capability approach to issues of policy and social change will therefore often require the addition of explanation theories” (Robeyns 2005b: 94; italics in original).

“The capability *approach* is a proposition, and the proposition is this: that social arrangements should be evaluated according to the extent of freedom people have to promote or achieve functionings they value. If equality in social arrangements is to be demanded in any space – and most theories of justice advocate equality in some space – it is to be demanded in the space of capabilities” (Alkire 2005: 122; italics in original).

Following Robeyns (2011a: 1), the capability approach is a normative theory which can help to conceptualize notions and which represents a conceptual framework for a range of normative exercises, such as “(1) the assessment of individual well-being; (2) the evaluation and assessment of social arrangements; and (3) the design of policies, and proposals about social change in society”.

Despite the fact that the capability approach frames the evaluative space, Robeyns (2005a, 2009) underscores that it does not possess certain attributes necessary to become a theory of justice, among which are: 1) it only specifies an evaluative space, but does not show why the capability theory of justice is better than other metrics of justice; 2) a clear understanding whether a capability theory is an opportunity theory or an outcome theory; 3) a decision on the selection and justification of relevant capabilities; 4) the distinction between personal and collective responsibility; 5) the basis for the justification of principles and claims of justice. Sen (1992) writes about a ‘genuine incompleteness’ of the capability approach and does not provide a substantial theory of justice, merely a general framework. Leßmann (2009) points to several gaps within the capability approach: 1) there is a gap in the explanation of how people make their decisions concerning the way of life they want to live and how their decisions come about; 2) the time aspect is missing, which could make clearer the temporal interactions between achieved functionings and the capability set. Some gaps could be covered if the capability approach would work closer together with educational theories in order to explain, for example, the choosing abilities of people (cf. Leßmann 2009).

Moreover, the capability approach has been criticized for the lack of practical applicability and operationalization (Gasper 1997). These aspects will be discussed in the following section.

2. Operationalization of the capability approach

The probability of operationalizing the capability approach as well as the challenges and problems of its empirical application have been widely discussed in the literature (for example, Burchardt & Vizard 2011; Comim 2008; Chiappero-Martinetti & Roche 2009; Robeyns 2003a, 2005a). Such discussions have been partially influenced by the critique of the capability approach for its incompleteness, and its difficulties in measurement and underdevelopment. Comim (2008: 159) highlights the fact that “the multidimensional-context-dependent-counterfactual-normative nature of the capability approach might prevent it from having practical and operational significance”. Different ways to measure and assess capabilities have been proposed by different researchers, for example, Robeyns (2003a), Comim (2008), Burchardt and Vizard (2011). The research by Biggeri et al. (2006) and Di Tommaso (2007) has particularly contributed to the measurement of children’s capabilities. Despite the fact that nowadays the variety and multiplicity of data allows the application of the capability approach, it still needs further empirical proof and adaptation both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Operationalization consists of four sequences; one of them represents the process of transformation of a theory or theoretical concepts into the empirical ways of measurement and assessment (cf. Comim 2001). The problematic issue in the capability approach is connected with the measurement or assessment of capabilities as substantive freedoms and with the selection of the list of capabilities. How to select relevant and important capabilities? Should researchers create a list or, more generally, who should decide which capabilities are relevant?

Whereas capabilities are difficult to measure, functionings can indeed be measured. That is why the empirical literature is more frequently oriented to operationalization as measuring functionings (cf. Chiappero-Martinetti & Roche 2009) and the selection of functionings for the assessment of well-being. But taking into consideration that Sen (2004) does not provide any guidelines to the empirical application of the capability approach for policy analysis, the analysis can have different scopes due to the broad and context-dependent nature of the respective approach (cf. Chiappero-Martinetti & Roche 2009). Researchers might be confronted by: 1) “a plurality of *evaluative spaces*” (agency, capabilities, functionings); 2) “a plurality of *dimensions* and a multiplicity of *indicators and scales*, of a quantitative or qualitative nature”; 3) “a plurality of *units of analysis* (individuals, households, subgroups of population) and *personal heterogeneities*”; or 4) “a plurality of *environmental contexts*” (Chiappero-Martinetti & Roche 2009: 162-163; italics in

original). Moreover, the research into the capability approach depends on the given context, the research interest and availability of data.

The following discussion focuses on the choice of evaluative spaces for the present study; on the debates on how to select capabilities (their weighing and endorsing in a list); and lastly, on the use of qualitative methods to analyze children's and young people's well-being.

2.1. Lists of capabilities

The core claim of the capability approach "is that (inter)personal evaluations should focus on people's functionings (their beings and doings) and capabilities (their real or effective opportunities to achieve those functionings)" (Robeyns 2005a: 191). The administration of (inter)personal assessments is intertwined with debates, firstly, on the evaluative space (capabilities, functionings); secondly, on the necessity of endorsing capabilities or functionings in one specific list; thirdly, on who decides which capabilities constitute the good life; and fourthly, on the criteria for the selection of functionings and capabilities.

Functionings are "more directly related to living conditions, since they are different aspects of living conditions" (Sen 1987: 36), while capabilities, "in contrast, are notions of freedom, in the positive sense: what real opportunities you have regarding the life you may lead" (ibid.: 36). The first question which arises is therefore one of the choice of functionings or capabilities as evaluative spaces for the measurement and assessment of well-being. Sen writes:

"The capability approach is concerned primarily with the identification of value-objects, and sees the evaluative space in terms of functionings and capabilities to function" (Sen 1992: 43).

Robeyns (2005b) mentions that people make different choices and have different ideas about the valuable life, so that even when they have identical capability sets, they might end up with different achieved functionings. But it is the researcher who should decide on the informational base which relates to the space of functionings and/or capabilities, and this decision depends on the concept of advantage that the researcher uses, and on the respective context (for example, functionings should be chosen in the case of research on extreme deprivation) (cf. Robeyns 2005b).

The second debate is about the necessity to endorse the capabilities in a list for the assessment of well-being. The point is whether a universal list, which can integrate all capabilities and take into account people's heterogeneities, should really be created. But even if such a list is created, the most important feature is that it is really

representative of those to whom it applies (cf. Young 2009). If this is disregarded, the outcome will be undesirable: “an illegitimate process will result in illegitimate outcomes” (Robeyns 2005a: 199). The debate on the endorsement of a specific list of capabilities has already a long history in the capability approach.

Sen (2004) does not give any fixed list of capabilities and explains his decision not to endorse capabilities in a list with several arguments: 1) different lists of capabilities depend on the purpose of the exercise and might be suitable for different purposes; 2) lists are context-dependent: “social conditions and the priorities that they suggest may vary” (ibid.: 79); and 3) the development of capability lists is a process of public reasoning and open debates. Sen does not reject totally the listing of capabilities, but he is against predetermined lists proposed by theorists without open debate and social discussion. He proposes the idea that capabilities should be prioritized or highlighted by the people concerned themselves, thus giving them a free hand to evaluate capabilities: “fruitful participation on what should be included and why” (Sen 2004: 77). Thereby, Sen wants to include people’s agency in the process of choice with respect to the selection (cf. Robeyns 2005a; Alkire & Deneulin 2009b), and it is his position in the debate who decides which capabilities constitute the good life.

In order to define the list, scholars and politicians should find “fair and consistent democratic procedures to draw up the list” (Robeyns 2003a: 69). Sen (2009a) insists on *public* scrutiny and *public* reasoning instead of mere individual reasoning, because this public debate can give different sides and perspectives on the particular capabilities, and “is necessary for selecting relevant capabilities and weighing them against each other in each context” (Sen 2004: 77). This perspective on capabilities is a characteristic of Sen’s capability approach, or, as Robeyns states (2005a: 197; italics in original), its “*intrinsic* underspecification”. The capability approach forms the framework for the analysis, but not the prescriptions how to analyze and in which way to select. Although Sen justifies his position, he is criticized for not explaining carefully how public reasoning is to take place, and how the fair representation of people could be ensured (cf. Robeyns 2005b).

Nussbaum in her turn includes the capabilities in a list, although she also says that “people are the best judges of what is good for them” (Nussbaum 2000: 51). Nussbaum has constructed a list of capabilities which is a kind of threshold to reach the minimal level of justice, and represents general capabilities, whereas people themselves are to decide what are their specifications on the local level. Moreover, by proposing a list of central human capabilities, she wants them to become the basic social minimums that the constitutions of countries should provide to their citizens.

Robeyns (2003a: 68; italics in original) however disagrees with Nussbaum about the endorsement of “*one definite list of capabilities*”. She names two epistemological reasons and one concern of legitimacy against the endorsement of a final list by one philosopher or one researcher (Robeyns 2005a)²⁷. One of the epistemological reasons is that depending on the epistemological goal a different selection of capabilities might be made. Another epistemological reason, which also speaks against “*one catch-all definite list*” (Robeyns 2005a: 197; italics in original), is that one person cannot grasp what is important for people in different contexts, or understand the lives of all people around the world. Her concern for legitimacy refers to the fact that by imposing one list on people, one might insult or upset them, because the selection of capabilities does not reflect the process of choosing nor such aspects as “who decided on the content of this list, what kind of choice process was used, how dissenting voices were treated, whether everyone’s contribution to the production of the list was appropriately acknowledged” (Robeyns 2005a: 200).

Sen is not against listing important capabilities, but he is against making them into a predetermined fixed list. Although he sees “Martha Nussbaum’s use of a given list of capabilities for some minimal rights against deprivation as being extremely useful in the same practical way” (Sen 2004: 79), he still is convinced that “for another practical purpose, we may have another list” (ibid.: 79).

So, there are arguments for the endorsement of capabilities in one list as well as objections against it. Choosing and specifying the capabilities could face “two challenges: a challenge of *omission* and a challenge of *power*” (Alkire & Deneulin 2009a: 43; italics in original). In the case of omission, Alkire and Deneulin (2009a) underline, there is the danger that some key capabilities could be overlooked. In the case of power, they continue, there is the risk that a powerful group (e.g., an elite, family, or ethnic group) could select capabilities that are appropriate only for them and advance only their own interests. If people and communities decide through the method of public reasoning on what capabilities they find valuable, then the influence of local particularities comes into the play. The people who formulate their capabilities are under the pressure of norms, values, and preferences which obtain in a particular society or local area.

However, there are also some advantages to listing capabilities in one list: in this way it would be possible to have a clarified set and to check whether all capabilities are included. Even so researchers should be careful with the lists: they should be regularly revised and undergo a reality check with human life, so as to “not to overlook

²⁷ In this article, Robeyns (2005a:194) argues against the use of Nussbaum’s list in case of quality of life measurement.

key areas unintentionally” (Alkire & Deneulin 2009b: 22). For example, the active use of the internet as the major access to information and participation in the life of society reinforces the capability of ‘being able to access information and technology necessary to participate in society’, which has been included in the list of central and valuable freedoms for adults created by Alkire et al. (2009).

Besides the debate about the endorsement of capabilities in the list, there is a fourth discussion on the development of criteria for the selection of capabilities. Working in the framework of Sen’s capability approach, Robeyns (2003a) has created a list of capabilities for the conceptualization of gender inequality in post-industrialized Western societies at the ideal level and presents five criteria meant to help select the relevant capabilities and avoid biases (Table 2).

Table 2. Robeyns’ five criteria for the selection of capabilities (Robeyns 2003a)

<p>1. The criterion of explicit formulation. The list should be explicit, discussed and defended.</p> <p>2. The criterion of methodological justification. The method used for the generation of the list should be clarified and scrutinized.</p> <p>3. The criterion of sensitivity to context. The level of abstraction should be appropriate to the context to which the capability approach is applied, for example, to debates (philosophical, political, social or economic discussions).</p> <p>4. The criterion of different levels of generality. The multistage procedure of the list: ideal and pragmatic list depending on the aims of the specification.</p> <p>5. The criterion of exhaustion and non reduction. The list should include elements which are not reducible to other elements.</p>
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The Thematic Group on Children’s Capabilities of the Human Development and Capability Approach at Florence University has created a different procedure to select relevant capabilities, which supports people’s attempts at identifying the dimensions (see Biggeri, Trani & Mauro 2010). While the procedure of selection presented by the Thematic Group is mostly oriented to their questionnaire, it also can be a tool for the participatory method and consists of four steps: 1) participatory conceptualization of the capability dimensions; 2) report of the achieved functionings for each dimension; 3) agreement on the relevance of dimensions within the community; and 4) formation of the set of capabilities (cf. Biggeri, Trani & Mauro 2010).

Burchardt and Vizard (2011) describe a new, two-stage procedure for deriving a capability list which has been elaborated within the Equality and Human Rights Commission: 1) drawing up of the capability list within the international human rights

framework; 2) expanding and modifying the human rights-based capability list through the process of deliberation and public debate. Their work challenges the skeptical idea that it is hard to operationalize the capability approach, and that researchers can evaluate inequality only by monitoring resources and welfare, and propose their own framework for the operationalization. Moreover, they describe three aspects of inequality and deprivation in the position of individuals and groups: functionings (actual activities and states), treatment (treatment by other people or through social institution, dignity and respect) and autonomy (decision-making, control and choice).

There are many different lists of capabilities in the literature dedicated to different groups and countries and made by different methods of selecting capabilities: Robeyns (2003a) selected relevant capabilities regarding gender inequality in Western countries²⁸; Alkire et al. (2009) prepared a list of central and valuable freedoms for adults²⁹ within the Equality and Human Rights Commission Measurement Framework; Nussbaum (2000) created a list of central human functional capabilities (considered in greater detail below).

Martha Nussbaum's List of central human functional capabilities

Martha Nussbaum's work on the human capabilities has its origins in Aristotle's philosophy and deals more specifically with the issue of social justice. She highlights different particularities that her approach to capabilities provides in several works such as *Women and Human Development* (2000) and *Frontiers of Justice* (2006). Firstly, her starting point is "an intuitive idea of a life that is worthy of the dignity of the human being" (Nussbaum 2006: 70); secondly, relying on the idea of dignity she emphasizes a "*principle of each person as an end*" (Nussbaum 2000: 5; italics in original); thirdly, she proposes a list of central human capabilities and argues that this list promotes human freedom and gives "a basis for determining a decent social minimum in a variety of areas" (ibid.: 75). Her set of capabilities represent universal norms which are required in order to protect pluralism, diversity and personal freedom (cf. Nussbaum 2000).

²⁸ The list of capabilities for the conceptualization of gender inequality in post-industrialized Western societies at the ideal level includes: life and physical health; mental well-being; bodily integrity and safety; social relations; political empowerment; education and knowledge; domestic work and nonmarket care; paid and other projects; shelter and environment; mobility; leisure activities; time-autonomy; respect; religion (see Robeyns 2003a).

²⁹ The capability list for adults and children covers 10 domains: life; physical security; health; education and learning; standard of living; productive and valued activities; participation, influence, voice; individual, family and social life; identity, expression, self-respect; legal security (see Alkire et al. 2009; Burchardt & Vizard 2011).

Moreover, she uses “the idea of a *threshold level of each capability*”³⁰ (Nussbaum 2006: 71; italics in original), which means that there is a capability line below which the functioning of a person does not refer to the “truly human functioning” (ibid.: 71) and does not respect the idea of human dignity.

Endorsing the capabilities in the list, she argues that “all of them are implicit in the idea of a life worthy of human dignity” (Nussbaum 2006: 70) and adopts a “*principle of each person’s capability*” (Nussbaum 2000: 5; italics in original), which means that each person’s capability should be respected and considered when there is an investigation of people’s well-being.

While Nussbaum argues that the capabilities “can be the object of an *overlapping consensus* among people who otherwise have very different comprehensive conceptions of the good” (Nussbaum 2000: 5; italics in original), Robeyns (2005a) doubts such possibility, because, in real life and not on the level of ideal-theory to which belongs an overlapping consensus, it is difficult to imagine that all people share the principle of tolerant co-existence. Moreover, Robeyns (2003a, 2005a) assumes that Nussbaum’s list is highly prescriptive, although it corresponds to its origins from the philosophy of the good life, where a scholar proposes a list of capabilities. Furthermore, to the discussion of Rawls’ claim that the capability approach imposes a comprehensive notion of the good life, Robeyns (2009) adds that Sen refused to endorse capabilities in the list, so this claim should be addressed to Nussbaum’s version of the capability approach³¹. Thus, it is questionable if one who selects the relevant capabilities can justify the process of selection *and* at the same time respect all acceptable notions of the good life that people may have (cf. Robeyns 2009). Finally, Robeyns (2009) mentions that although Nussbaum points out that the government should guarantee a bare social minimum of entitlements, she does not write who should bear the responsibility for the formulated realizations and expansions in the list of capabilities. Alkire (2008b: 54) calls Nussbaum’s list “a list of normative things-to-done”.

Nussbaum (2003) in turn criticizes Sen who does not provide any list; she argues if Sen wants to make his version of the capability approach closer to the issue of social justice, and “if capabilities are to be used in advancing a conception of social justice” (Nussbaum 2003: 46), then it is important to specify them.

³⁰ Although Nussbaum agrees with Sen on the importance of the space of capabilities as an evaluative space of social inequality, she is more interested in strengthening a threshold level of capability than the equality of capability (cf. Nussbaum 2000).

³¹ Nevertheless Nussbaum (2000) writes that people who otherwise have different conceptions of the good can decide what capabilities should be in the list via an ‘overlapping consensus’ and her list is a list of opportunities for functionings and gives people spaces to function in the way they value.

Nussbaum proposes a list that could serve as a basis for constitutional guarantees and should be central for political purposes. It means that every person has these entitlements as a basic social minimum of what they should have, and government should provide them and incorporate them in constitutions. Each person should be seen as an end and each person deserves to have basic support and basic opportunities and liberties in their life, which is why society has to secure “a threshold level of the basic goods of life to *each*” (Nussbaum 2000: 247; italics in original) and “a bare minimum of social justice will involve bringing citizens up to a threshold level of capability” (ibid.: 246). Moreover, the list is fully universal (cf. Nussbaum 2000), i.e. the human capabilities are substantive freedoms for all citizens and all nations. Her list of central human functional capabilities has ten capabilities and is presented in Table 3 (Nussbaum 2000: 78–80).

Table 3. Nussbaum's list of central human functional capabilities (Nussbaum 2000: 78-80)

<p>1. Life. Being able to live to the end of a human life of normal length; not dying prematurely, or before one's life is so reduced as to be not worth living.</p> <p>2. Bodily Health. Being able to have good health, including reproductive health; to be adequately nourished; to have adequate shelter.</p> <p>3. Bodily Integrity. Being able to move freely from place to place; having one's bodily boundaries treated as sovereign, i.e. being able to be secure against assault, including sexual assault, child sexual abuse, and domestic violence; having opportunities for sexual satisfaction and for choice in matters of reproduction.</p> <p>4. Senses, Imagination, and Thought. Being able to use the senses, to imagine, think and reason – and to do these things in a “truly human” way, a way informed and cultivated by an adequate education, including, but by no means limited to, literacy and basic mathematical and scientific training. Being able to use imagination and thought in connection with experiencing and producing self-expressive works and events of one's own choice, religious, literary, musical, and so forth. Being able to use one's mind in ways protected by guarantees of freedom of expression with respect to both political and artistic speech, and freedom of religious exercise. Being able to search for the ultimate meaning of life in one's own way. Being able to have pleasurable experiences and to avoid non-beneficial pain.</p> <p>5. Emotions. Being able to have attachments to things and people outside ourselves; to love those who love and care for us, to grieve at their absence; in general, to love, to grieve, to experience longing, gratitude, and justified anger. Not having one's emotional development blighted by overwhelming fear and anxiety, or by traumatic events of abuse or neglect. (Supporting this capability means supporting forms of human association that can be shown to be crucial in their development).</p> <p>6. Practical Reason. Being able to form a conception of the good and to engage in critical reflection about the planning of one's life. (This entails protection for the liberty of conscience).</p> <p>7. Affiliation. A. Being able to live with and toward others, to recognize and show concern for other human beings, to engage in various forms of social interaction; to be able to imagine the situation of another and to have compassion for that situation; to have the capability for both justice and friendship. (Protecting this capability means protecting institutions that constitute and nourish such forms of affiliation, and also protecting the freedom of assembly and political speech.)</p> <p>B. Having the social bases of self-respect and non-humiliation; being able to be treated as a dignified being whose worth is equal to that of others. This entails, at a minimum, protections against discrimination on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, caste, ethnicity, or national origin. In work, being able to work as a human being, exercising practical reason and entering into meaningful relationships of mutual recognition with other workers.</p> <p>8. Other species. Being able to live with concern for and in relation to animals, plants, and the world of nature.</p> <p>9. Play. Being able to laugh, to play and to enjoy recreational activities.</p> <p>10. Control over one's environment. A. Political: Being able to participate effectively in political choices that govern one's life; having the right of political participation, protection of free speech and association.</p> <p>B. Material: Being able to hold property (both land and movable goods), not just formally but in terms of real opportunity; and having property rights on an equal basis with others; having the right to seek employment on an equal basis with others; having freedom from unwarranted search and seizure.</p>
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The list consists of “*separate components*” (Nussbaum 2000: 81, italics in original), all equally fundamental and of central importance for human life which can still relate to each other in different ways. Nussbaum’s list is “the result of years of cross-cultural discussion, and comparisons between earlier and later versions” (ibid.: 76) and “*may be justified for normative ideal theorizing, [...] not justified for quality of life measurement*” (Robeyns 2005a: 208; italics in original). But Nussbaum writes:

“The list remains open-ended and humble; it can always be contested and remade. Nor does it deny that the items on the list are to some extent differently constructed by different societies” (Nussbaum 2000: 77).

“... so with the central capabilities: they are not meant to be an exhaustive account of what is worthwhile in life” (Nussbaum 2000: 95).

“In my approach [...] the use of the list is facilitative rather than tyrannical: if individuals neglect an item on the list, this is just fine from the point of view of the political purposes of the list, so long as they don’t impede others who wish to pursue it. And if they pursue an item not on the list, that is to be expected, and exactly what the list meant to make possible. It is in this sense that the list is, emphatically, a partial and not a comprehensive conception of the good” (Nussbaum 2000: 96).

Indeed, the list provides inspiration (cf. Robeyns 2005a) for further elaborations, modifications and approaches to different societies. That is why the list has been widely used for philosophical debates and empirical projects in order to operationalize it (for example, Di Tommaso 2007; Uyan-Semerci 2007; Wolff & De-Shalit 2010).

The qualitative study by Uyan-Semerci (2007) reviews every central functional capability of Nussbaum’s list and explores it with the concept of the autonomous agency. The results of her study, which concentrates on migrant women living in squatter settlements in Istanbul, show that women do not see themselves as independent agents, i.e. the agency they pursue is defined by them in the relational terms as referring to their family. The author shows that the list itself is a helpful tool, whose premises should be reconsidered in every study that uses this list. On the other hand, simply drawing up this list and getting it incorporated in the legal system as a list of basic capabilities is not sufficient; one must also re-examine social structures in order to make the promotion of the capabilities efficient and workable (cf. Uyan-Semerci 2007).

Wolff and De-Shalit (2010) in their work *Disadvantage* examine the validity of Nussbaum’s list through the process of “*dynamic public reflective equilibrium*” (Wolff &

De-Shalit 2010: 12; italics in original), which means that they included the evaluation of the categories of Nussbaum's list by the interviewees in the revision and modification of their theory. The interviews were recorded in Israel and England. Nussbaum's ten categories were supplemented by four more capabilities (ibid.: 191) and are presented in Table 4:

Table 4. The capabilities added by Wolff and De-Shalit (Wolff & De-Shalit 2010: 191)

11. **Complete independence:** Being able to do exactly as you wish without relying on the help of others.
12. **Doing good to others:** Being able to care for others as part of expressing your humanity. Being able to show gratitude.
13. **Living in a law-abiding fashion:** The possibility of being able to live within the law; not to being forced to break the law, cheat, or to deceive other people or institutions.
14. **Understanding the law:** Having a general comprehension of the law, its demands, and the opportunities it offers to individuals. Not standing perplexed facing the legal system.

To sum up, it is important to highlight that the discussion is not just about comparing the lists produced by different research groups for different groups and countries, but to find an appropriate mechanism to define such list, to find criteria for the selection of capabilities, e.g., by taking into consideration cultural particularities, to include important capabilities and give justifications for such a selection. Sen (1992: 5) notices that “the selection and weighting of different functionings influences the assessment of the capability to achieve various alternative functioning bundles”. That is why research based on any elaborated list or one which needs to select capabilities in order to assess/measure them has to be aware of all methodological difficulties mentioned above. The current study research uses Nussbaum's list for an interview guideline, and in the next section the choice of this list will be argued for and legitimized.

2.2. Selecting Nussbaum's list of capabilities

Sen's capability approach needs additional specification, such as the selection of important capabilities, methods of weighting different functionings or capabilities, and a decision on whether to look at inequalities in functionings or capabilities (cf. Robeyns 2003a). Nussbaum's list plays a facilitative role but cannot be considered exhaustive (cf. Nussbaum 2000), although it renders good service as a starting point. In order to

escape possible criticisms, this thesis does not simply copy the list and apply it in research on young people; it will instead discuss it and report on the deliberative process of approval by the young people concerning the relevance and importance of every capability in their life. Taking into consideration all the critical points mentioned above, the present study first explains the advantages of having a list in general, and Nussbaum's in particular, as a basis for an interview guideline.

Here then is a summary of the advantages:

1) "People are the best judges of what is good for them" (Nussbaum 2000: 51). Taking the list as a starting point, firstly, makes it easier not to overlook some important capabilities (cf. Alkire & Deneulin 2009b), and, secondly, it becomes an impulse for young people to assess their life and to evaluate whether they lead the life they value. Moreover, Robeyns points out that to use Nussbaum's conceptualization of capabilities in qualitative analyses can provide information on "how people can cultivate their capabilities" (Robeyns 2003a: 75). In Robeyns' opinion (2005a: 201), "the process by which Nussbaum's list is generated might lack the democratic legitimacy that is needed for a political context and decision". In the present study, the evaluation of how well young people are doing and being and what real opportunities they have in their lives is made by the young people themselves during the qualitative interview. This allows to modify the list according to the context, which is what Sen and his followers require and make legitimate through their arguments.

2) Nussbaum's work "engages more with the power of narratives and poetic texts to better understand people's hopes, desires, aspirations, motivations and decisions" (Robeyns 2005b: 104). Nussbaum (2000) herself highlights the political importance of imagination and the emotions. This correlates with the method of this study, i.e, a problem-centred interview (Witzel 1982, 1985, 1996, 2000), which "bridges the individual constructions of meaning on the one hand and the influence of societal conditions on the other hand" (Scheibelhofer 2005: 19), and gives "insights into life choices and life chances from the point of view of a person at the specific moment of an interview" (ibid.: 26). Furthermore, practical reason and affiliation are crucial for Nussbaum (2000) in order to be truly human: a person can be able to plan their own life when a person is being able to think, to reflect and at the same time to have reciprocity with others. The reflection made by the young people on the different aspects of life (capabilities from the list were translated into everyday words) shows their way of reasoning and reflection.

3) Nussbaum's list has already been taken as a starting point by other researchers. Wolff and De-Shalit (2010: 38) "find it intuitively very powerful, building on related ideas from Aristotle and early Marx, concerning what it is that makes a life fully

human". For them, it could be a good starting point "because it is meant to be part of a policy oriented research project [...] and because of its grounding in cross-cultural empirical and theoretical work" (ibid.: 38). Moreover, "Nussbaum's list is indeed admirably comprehensive and inclusive, nevertheless there is room for extension" (ibid.: 45).

4) Nussbaum (2000) argues that her list of central human capabilities is sensitive to culture and context because it could be translated into a more detailed and specific list to suit the context. So this general list could be rendered more specific depending on the local context, although Nussbaum "defends [it] as universally valid" (Robeyns 2003a: 68).

5) Robeyns (2005a) argues that Nussbaum's list has only general principles³². Furthermore, she argues that Nussbaum's list leaves too much space for the interpretation. From the position that Nussbaum meant this list to be constitutionally applied and as a basic level of social justice, Robeyns' argument could be accepted: the list which claims to be universal needs to be clearly and explicitly formulated. But if this list is taken as the basis for a guideline to research and interpersonal assessment, then this list can be left open for further modification. This sounds persuasive, especially when it is applied to specific contexts. Not imposing, but presenting the list of capabilities for discussion and debate will expand the list and in some cases modify it. In general, even in fair democratic procedures there are certain people who will always lead the process of the policy design, secure the legitimacy of discussions, pass laws and political programs. All it is fair to ask for is that people should base their discussions on written, well defined statements in order to criticize, confront and modify them.

In Chapter IV the use of the list will additionally be argued through a debate of human diversity and cultural particularities, while Chapter VI examines empirically derived capabilities in qualitative work.

3. The capability approach and children's and young people's capabilities

The capability approach has become one of the central concepts in the multidimensional measurement of people's well-being. Freedom to choose a life people have reason to value is central to the notion of capabilities (cf. Sen 1999a), and Sen defines freedom as "the real opportunity that we have to accomplish what we value" (Sen 1992: 31). The notion of freedom is implicitly understood as freedom of adults,

³² Nussbaum (2003) in turn mentions that the items on the list ought to be abstract and general, because she wants to leave room for citizens to specify their activities.

and the capability approach is implicitly focused on measuring the well-being of adults (cf. Klasen 2010).

The capability approach sees well-being as a multidimensional phenomenon that includes among things health, education, material resources, and social interactions. It does not focus only on incomes or resources, but takes them as means to achieve well-being, while persons are treated as ends: “each person is valuable and worthy of respect as an end” (Nussbaum 2000: 56). Every child and young person, therefore, should be treated as an end and not simply seen in the light of the family or as the children/daughters/sons of their parents. Moreover, if well-being is measured only by incomes or consumption on the household level, this cannot tell whether children and adolescents receive the same amount of resources as others in the household, and whether the family income and resources are distributed equally (cf. Sen 1999a; Klasen 2010). The question is thus “to what extent the capability approach can be brought to bear on the analysis of well-being of children” (Klasen 2010: 103) and particularly of young persons.

The debates within the capability approach on the measurement and assessment of well-being of children could be presented in the following three ways: 1) the debate on functionings and capabilities as dimensions for the adequate measurement and assessment; 2) use of methods (quantitative and qualitative) and its complexities: in the case of secondary quantitative data, there is a lack of necessary dimensions in the data (cf. Biggeri & Mehrotra 2011), whereas the difficulty in the case of qualitative data is how adequately the children can assess their lives and express their evaluation in words; and 3) the selection of functionings and capabilities, and their endorsement in the list.

In what follows, discussion will focus on the debates on children’s and young people’s capabilities and functionings, on the research conducted and the methods used, and on the theoretical and methodological challenges that are faced by the analysis of children’s³³ and youth’s capabilities.

3.1. Debates on children’s and young people’s capabilities/functionings

In the capabilities debate on children and youth there are two strands (cf. Clark & Eisenhuth 2009; Klasen 2010): the functionings approach when “with respect to children, the relevant standard of justice is in terms of functionings, not capabilities”

³³ The use of the term ‘children’ in the context of children’s capabilities is conditioned, firstly, by the fact that some researchers use the term ‘children’ for all human beings who are aged below 18 years, for example, Biggeri et al. (2006), and, secondly, by the fact that the foundations in child development and capabilities can give an input for a better conceptualization of the capabilities of young people.

(Anderson 2010: 84), and a capability perspective with the claim that “children have and can define their capabilities” (Biggeri et al. 2006: 60).

The functionings approach contends that children cannot choose for themselves and have to rely upon adults who can help them to transfer resources into functionings. This leads to the idea that the level of the development of their functionings has profound impact on their capabilities of future adults (cf. Anderson 2010; Clark & Eisenhuth 2009). In other words, childhood and the early stages of life can be considered as an important “formative process” (Klasen 2010: 105). Sen also puts emphasis on the future capabilities or freedoms that children will enjoy when they become adults: “the capabilities that adults enjoy are deeply conditional on their experience as children” (Sen 1999b: 4). This means that the impossibility to use various functionings in childhood due to poverty, constrained living conditions, or more generally the conditions into which children are born could provoke irreversible changes in their lives and could restrict their future capabilities.

Furthermore, the freedom to achieve a valuable life is grounded on the ability to choose among various opportunities. The question is not only if children themselves really can take well-considered decisions concerning their life³⁴, but most likely that the person’s actual exercise of freedom depends “on the assistance of others and the nature of social arrangements” (Sen 2006: 10). The world that children and adults live in is an interdependent world, “and the demands of liberty are more complex than” “sic” the simple rule of leaving everyone to make their own little choices that animates some versions of the libertarian literature” (ibid.: 10). So on the one hand, Sen argues for the importance of children’s well functioning in childhood in order to enjoy various freedoms in adulthood, but on the other hand he highlights the impact of social arrangements and the assistance of others (parents and caregivers) on children’s well-being. Sen does not distinguish infants from children and adolescents, and was criticized for his equation of all children “with very young human beings” (Graf et al. 2011: 269).

Nussbaum agrees that adequate “functioning in childhood is necessary for capability in adulthood” (Nussbaum 2000: 90) and functionings, not capabilities, are a central concern in the case of children and adolescents: “where adult citizens are concerned, *capability, not functioning, is the appropriate political goal*” (ibid.: 87; italics in original)³⁵. She thinks that it might be legitimate not to take into account children’s choices as concerns health, emotional well-being, bodily integrity and dignity. As

³⁴ “Can children really take these decisions? But is that the right question?” (Sen 2006: 9).

³⁵ And this despite cases where “capability and not functioning is the appropriate goal even for children” (Nussbaum 2000: 91). Nussbaum describes an example of the play and freedom of children to choose whether they want to take part in play or not.

Nussbaum considers children as vulnerable³⁶, she believes that parents, other caregivers and the state should insist on the achievement of functionings in order both to prevent neglect, disease, mistreatment, and to enhance an appropriate physical, emotional development. At the same time, it is important to understand a distinction between inherent vulnerability and structural vulnerability (Lansdown 1994 cited in Hall & Rudkin 2011: 32). Whereas inherent vulnerability includes children's physical weakness, lack of experience comparing with adults; structural vulnerability limits children's participation (cf. Hall & Rudkin 2011). Furthermore, Hall and Rudkin (2011: 32) quote Lansdown (1994: 14): "children are also vulnerable because of their complete lack of political and economic power and their lack of civil rights in our society".

Researchers who develop children's capabilities agree that "the capabilities, the choices and the living conditions during this decisive phase of life crucially affect the children's position and capabilities as adults" (Biggeri et al. 2006: 63). But they stress (e.g. Biggeri et al. (2006)) that the relevance of a capability varies with age³⁷ and remark that:

"the relevance of a capability may vary (whether the child is in her/his 'early' childhood [0-5 years old], childhood [6-10 years old], 'early' adolescence [11-14 years old] or adolescence [15-17 years]). [...] The complete list of capabilities may be fully "sic" only by the older category of children" (Biggeri et al. 2006: 66).

Moreover, Biggeri, Trani and Mauro (2010: 3) state that it is applicable to all countries to say that "the relevance of different domains may change according to age". Klasen (2010) also agrees that older children and youth have a larger extent of the freedom aspect of capabilities, whereas for younger children, it is important to focus on their actual functionings.

So, in the capability approach children are assessed through their real opportunities and abilities to function: "through the capability approach we are interested in what children are effectively able to *do* and to *be*" (Biggeri et al. 2006: 63; italics in original). The instrumental and intrinsic values of capability mentioned earlier are applicable to children's capabilities (cf. Biggeri et al. 2006).

The focus on children's capabilities, however, brings with it some issues that need to be discussed. The first is the definition of the terms 'child' and 'children' (cf. Graf et al. 2011), already discussed above. The second is connected with children's

³⁶ Such an opinion was expressed by Nussbaum during the debate on the capability approach at a seminar with students at Bielefeld University, 27 July 2011.

³⁷ Biggeri et al. (2006: 75): "the relevance of the capabilities varies more dramatically than during adult life" and "some capabilities are age specific".

and young adults' dependence/independence from their parents or relatives, and their role in the choice of valuable functionings. In the capability perspective, research is concerned more and more with children as agents in their own lives and development (cf. Sadlowski 2011), and as individuals with voice (cf. Biggeri et al. 2006). This means that the family context, influence of parents and caregivers as well as social and economic arrangements should be carefully taken into account in the discussion on children and youth, but this discussion should be child- or adolescent-centred. The third issue relates to the boundary question of when a child or young person can have real freedom to choose between different ways of living and different valuable states and activities. For example, mandatory vaccination or mandatory education interferes with the freedom to choose one's educational institution and to have control over one's time (cf. Klasen 2010). Considering only young people, the shifts in their educational behavior, in the age of their first employment and in the point of time of leaving their parent's house (although country and culture specific) might define the extent of the freedom that they are entitled to in their family and social context.

Following Article 1 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), the child is defined as "human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier". Children in this way include all human beings from infants, who need total care and support in order to develop into young persons who can make important decisions and achieve the same functionings as adults, such as earning their own money or driving a car (cf. Graf et al. 2011). It seems that Sen treats all children the same and does not take into account the heterogeneous nature of children (cf. Graf et al. 2011).

But "child development means the process to acquire progressively human abilities and capabilities" (Sادلowski 2011: 215), it means that an analysis of the successive acquisition of abilities and the step-by-step achievement of different doings and beings (according to age), as well as the further expansion of various valuable doings and beings should be at the centre of the capability perspective on children/young persons. It is important to analyze child and adolescent development in combination with the achieved functionings and freedom to expand the capability set at different age-stages, and to demolish the constraints that impede the enlargement and enhancement of further freedoms.

Leßmann (2009) writes that the capability approach presented by Sen is a static model, whereas the issue of time and the consequences of the present choice of a functioning bundle for the future capability sets are very important. Gasper (2007: 351) also mentions the lack of "an explicit time-dimension" in the capability perspective, and gives an example of 'being able to enjoy own free time', which contains different

bundles of valuable functionings: an adolescent can enjoy playing football, meeting friends, doing sports, watching TV and so on. The chosen functioning of playing football might have consequences for the future capability 'being able to play in a professional football team'. So the capability set presented by Sen consists of feasible options at a specific moment of time, but Leßmann (2009), Graf et al. (2011) argue that capability set constantly changes over time, and the life itself is a dynamic process. Moreover, the conversion of new resources into valuable functionings in order to expand capability set needs the time for the learning process. So the capability should include "an explicit time-dimension" (Gasper 2007: 351).

The next issue in the discussion of children's capabilities is connected with the influence of parents on the decisions of children and young persons. Families and supportive networks (e.g., relatives) are obviously very important in promoting capabilities. Children and young persons are in most cases inseparably connected to families or supportive networks and institutions (for example, children's homes), which provide them with support and should ensure their full physical, emotional, and psychological development:

"Childhood and adolescence are the periods of human life during which interaction and receptiveness within the household and social environment reach their highest levels, and are, in a certain sense, the foundation for the development of human beings with both personal and societal consequences" (Biggeri et al. 2006: 63).

It is important to pay more attention to the agency of others (parents, caregivers) which influence children's conversion and choice abilities (cf. Sadlowski 2011). Volkert and Wüst (2011) highlight that early childhood research attaches great importance to the inclusion of the ability of parents or other caregivers to act on behalf of a child, e.g. to include parental agency. Foster and Handy (2008) introduce the notion of 'external capabilities', which means that the achievement of valued functionings especially in the case of younger children needs special assistance from others. These capabilities, then, are abilities to function, but with the direct help or assistance of other people: a person needs to form relationships with somebody and then to have access to another person's capabilities; but what is most important is another person's willingness to provide such assistance (cf. Foster & Handy 2008). While the idea of external capabilities fits very well with the capability approach, it is essential to give the individuals themselves the freedom to realize valued functionings, which before were achieved with the help of others. People should not adapt to the situation that some states and activities can only be realized through others. But they

should learn how to convert resources into valuable functionings, and such knowledge can become “investments in future capabilities” (Foster & Handy 2008: 15).

All state institutions (educational, health, sport and so on) as well as families should be supported so that children and young people can develop, grow up, and be able to do and to be what they value as they grow older. The political goal should be the person as an end in her- or himself as well as the promotion of each person’s capabilities (cf. Nussbaum 2000).

Biggeri et al. (2006: 63-64) indicate several important issues related to the influence of adults (parents, guardians, and teachers) on child/adolescent development and their capabilities:

1) the direct or indirect influence of parents’ capability to function on children’s capability set: “The capability of parents to function may directly or indirectly affect the capabilities of child [...]. The child’s capabilities are at least partially affected by the capability set and achieved functionings (as also by their means; i.e. assets, disposable income) of their parents” (Biggeri et al. 2006: 63);

2) the influence of parents on the choice of valuable functionings by children and adolescents:

“In the case of a child, the possibility of converting capabilities into functionings depends also on parents’, guardians’ and teachers’ decisions implying that the child’s conversion factors are subject to further ‘constraints’. On one side, parents need to respect the child’s desires and freedoms, but, on the other, they assist children to expand or acquire further capabilities even if the expansion or acquisition of the capability to function, in their own interest, is enforced as a duty. These two factors can conflict since the child is not a passive actor, especially as age increases. However, although sometimes the constraints can be perceived by the child as negative or unjust, on the contrary they can also be enabling and supportive of child development. This issue recalls the fact that in the expansion of each capability (opportunity) or of positive freedom, agency has a central role. We argue that the degree of autonomy of choice [...] can vary according to different ages especially regarding some capabilities” (Biggeri et al. 2006: 64).

Although debates on children’s capabilities are still taking place in the capability literature, Sadlowski (2011) missed an overview of the key terms of the capability approach with respect to child well-being, which gap she tries to fill in her work. She stresses that “child *development* is the foundational *childhood* capability” (Sادلowski 2011: 213; italics in original), and the child-development process should be evaluated in combination with developmental psychology and educational science. This necessity

of combining the capability approach or supplementing it with other theories or approaches is discussed as well in many other papers (for example, Leßmann 2009).

The next section will turn to a discussion of the conceptualization of children's and young people's capabilities.

3.2. Measurement and assessment of children's and young people's capabilities/functionings

There are several studies on the measurement/assessment of children's and adolescents' capabilities (for example, Addabbo & Di Tommaso 2008; Biggeri et al. 2006; Burchardt, Tsang & Vizard 2009; Biggeri, Trani & Mauro 2010; Di Tommaso 2007; Graf et al. 2011; Phipps 2002; Volkert & Wüst 2011). This section presents selected studies which used both quantitative and qualitative methods.

Phipps (2002) measures ten specific functionings (low birth-weight, asthma, accidents, activity limitation, trouble concentrating, disobedience at school, bullying, anxiety, lying, and hyperactivity) and compares results of children from Norway, USA and Canada.

Di Tommaso (2007) uses Robeyns' criteria for the selection of capabilities (2003a) in order to define the concept of children's capabilities and confronts Nussbaum's list with the list for gender inequality in Western countries (Robeyns 2003a) and Phipps' (2002) list for Canadian children; her list presents seven capabilities. In order to conceptualise children's well-being on the basis of Indian data, Di Tommaso works with a structural equation model called Multiple Indicator multiple causes model (MIMIC) for the measurement of functionings. Subsequently, Addabbo and Di Tommaso (2008) applied the capability approach to measure well-being of 6-13-year-old Italian children and explored the same MIMIC model to measure capabilities with particular regards to two capabilities, namely 'senses, imagination and thought' and 'leisure activities and play'.

Biggeri, Trani and Mauro (2010) discuss the dimensions relevant to an examination of the many dimensions of child poverty (health, material deprivation, food security, care and love, social inclusion, access to schooling, freedom from economic exploitation, autonomy and mobility) and define "child poverty as the deprivation of basic capabilities and related achieved functionings" (Biggeri, Trani & Mauro 2010: 2). Their results are based on the case of Afghan children (5-15 years old) and show that deprivation is especially severe among younger children and those living in rural areas.

In the research project "Children Establishing Their Priorities: Developing Bottom UP Strategies for Understanding Children's Well Being and Childhood, and

their Impact on Research on Child Labour”, Biggeri et al. (2006: 59) propose a view of children not simply as recipients of freedoms, but also as participants in the process of delineating a set of core capabilities. Children had an opportunity to define their capabilities³⁸, so the researchers had the opportunity to identify the tentative list of relevant capabilities for children depending on their age. To conceptualize children’s capabilities, the researchers used the categories of Biggeri’s list, which consisted of 14 child capabilities (Biggeri 2004: 6-9 cited in Biggeri et al. 2006: 65-66) (Table 5). The participatory methods used give an understanding that children can conceptualize capabilities and should participate further in such processes. Furthermore, Biggeri and Mehrotra (2011) point out the central place of child participation (i.e., child agency and autonomy increases gradually with increasing age and maturity) in the analysis of their well-being and deprivation.

³⁸ “Education, Love and care, Life and physical health and Leisure are foremost among the capabilities conceptualized by children” (Biggeri et al. 2006: 77). The relevance of such capabilities as mobility, time autonomy and especially work (‘being able to work in the labour market’) emerges when age increases and depends on the degree of autonomy the child enjoys.

Table 5. Categories of Biggeri's list (Biggeri 2004: 6-9 cited in Biggeri et al. 2006: 65-66)

<p>1. Life and physical health – being able to be physically healthy and enjoy a life of normal length.</p> <p>2. Love and care – being able to love and be loved by those who care for us and being able to be protected.</p> <p>3. Mental well-being – being able to be mentally healthy.</p> <p>4. Bodily integrity and safety – being able to be protected from violence of any sort.</p> <p>5. Social relations – being able to enjoy social networks and to give and receive social support.</p> <p>6. Participation – being able to participate in public and social life and to have a fair share of influence and being able to receive objective information.</p> <p>7. Education – being able to be educated.</p> <p>8. Freedom from economic and non-economic exploitation – being able to be protected from economic and non-economic exploitation.</p> <p>9. Shelter and environment – being able to be sheltered and to live in a safe and pleasant environment.</p> <p>10. Leisure activities – being able to engage in leisure activities.</p> <p>11. Respect – being able to be respected and treated with dignity.</p> <p>12. Religion and identity – being able to choose to live, or not to live, according to a religion and identity.</p> <p>13. Time-autonomy – being able to exercise autonomy in allocating one's time and undertake projects.</p> <p>14. Mobility - being able to be mobile.</p>

Graf et al. (2011) use group discussions, narrative interviews and semi-structured interviews in order to find out the capabilities that are valuable for the respondents (children, youth, caregivers, parents) from two different countries, Nicaragua and Namibia. They apply the capability perspective to the children and youth in care.

The list of central and valuable freedoms for adults discussed earlier (Burchardt & Vizard 2011) is based on a two-stage process (human rights-based capability selection and deliberative consultation) and has been complemented by the children's capability list, which applies to people aged 0 to 17 years (see Burchardt et al. 2009). The children's capability list went through a three-stage process: 1) human rights selection: examination of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and national children's frameworks; 2) deliberative process: consultation with children and their parents; 3) specialist consultation (children's organizations).

Other relevant work in a capability perspective will be briefly summarized below. Cameron (2011) discusses how girls and women grasp their learning possibilities through their life course and how they adapt their educational preferences to oppressive contexts. Working on social exclusion, children and education, Klasen (2001) applies a rights-based approach in combination with the capability perspective to a study of social exclusion. He stresses that those people who do not have access to the critical capabilities related to integration in society, and also have a diminished access to education at the earlier stages of life, can be socially excluded from further participation in society. Social exclusion in childhood can have negative societal impacts, among which are that children can become a burden for the society to support, the problem of social cohesion, antisocial behaviour, and in the case of an individual, the impact on personal well-being as well as suffering from shortcomings in other capabilities (cf. Klasen 2001).

The studies selected show that there is a number of empirical studies on children and adolescents in the framework of the capability approach. The use of participatory methods, in particular, gives children the opportunity to express their thoughts on the most important issues related to childhood and adolescence, and enables researchers to see the correlation between the degree of autonomy in the process of choice and the increase in age.

Summary

The capability approach puts at the centre of analysis not resources, income, economic growth or utility, but people's lives and their substantive freedoms. The capability perspective aims to enlarge people's valuable choices and to improve people's lives by enhancing the valuable states and activities, so that everyone can lead the life she/he values. States should create the basis for the expansion of all capabilities even though some of these may not be useful for economic growth (cf. Nussbaum 2000). At least they give people an opportunity to live a free and valuable life. What is important for the capability approach is the human being and his or her life, which should be full of human dignity. This approach highlights above all three things: first, material means are not the end of human living; second, it explores what people are really capable of doing in their life; third, it assesses different features of living (cf. Sen 2009a).

The present research, though based on the research summarized in part above, intends to focus on those parts of the capability approach which should be more

developed. As already mentioned several times, the capability approach is a normative and not an explanatory framework (cf. Robeyns 2011a) and it does not give answers to how precisely to assess or measure inequalities and well-being, nor to which capabilities are relevant and should be taken into account. Nevertheless, it allows to put together one's own puzzle from the list of capabilities, depending on the views of the society investigated, its cultural norms and traditions. This derives from Sen's capability approach which "does not defend one particular world-view" (Robeyns 2003a: 64). This cultural perspective on the capabilities includes, e.g. the formation of a set of capabilities, the choice of a vector of functionings, and the construction of agency goals, and should be analyzed and reflected upon in more detail.

Research on the capabilities of children is mostly concentrated on those of ages 7-15, while the adolescents of ages 15-17 and young people are not at the main centre of the capability perspective. This age group is interesting for research for its transition from childhood (when the political goal should be functionings) to adulthood (when the centre of political goals should be capabilities) and needs special investigation.

The capability approach, depending on the respective purposes of research, gives an opportunity to the researcher to aggregate the capabilities into an overall assessment. Research can thus broaden the assessment of young people's well-being by providing a qualitative framework for analysis, and can develop an evaluative framework for the analysis of interdependency and interference between individuals and social, educational, and governmental institutions in the choice of a life that young people have reason to value. In order to analyze such interdependency and interference, the next chapter focuses on main possibilities of Russian state, its public policies and social and educational institutions.

Chapter III

The case of Russia: space of opportunities or constraints?

In 1991 the Russian Federation became an independent state with a new constitution and presidential, federal and local elections (cf. Manning, Shkaratan, Tikhonova & George 2000). The researchers (Manning et al. 2000; Mikhalev 2003; Simonia 2003) state that Russia passed the transition from the socialist state with the planned economy and centralized equalizing system to the neoliberal state with the market economy. This caused the inequalities and the social stratification in Russia (cf. Mikhalev 2003; Simonia 2003). Furthermore, it led to the structural changes in political, social and economic systems: decrease of GDP and real wages (cf. Davidova et al. 2009); “decentralization of social expenditure” (Klugman & Kolev 2001: 255); regional differentiation, regional disparities and inequalities (cf. Mikhalev 1998; Manning et al. 2000; Lovyagin & Slutskij 2006); deterioration in living standards of the population (cf. Klugman & Kolev 2001); social problems such as infectious disease, alcoholism, prostitution, and crime (cf. Manning et al. 2000); decrease of birth rates and increase of death rates (cf. Manning et al. 2000).

The socio-economic and political changes which occurred in Russia after the breakdown of the Soviet Union are often characterized under the terms of ‘transition’ (as described above) and ‘transformation’. These terms are usually considered as synonyms, but some prominent researchers of social policy and social stratification in Russia, among whom it is worth to mention Zaslavskaya (2003)³⁹, highlight that the term ‘transformation’ reflects better the situation in the Russian Federation and assert that these terms are different⁴⁰. Zaslavskaya (2003) describes the transition as a process that has initial and final phases, and the subject that leads others knows the final goal of the transition and those, who follow the subject in the chosen direction, trust the subject. But she states further, the transition towards a modern and effective society is not observable in Russia; it is rather worth to mention about “the process of spontaneous transformation of social structures, where the final results and general direction are not predetermined” (ibid.: 190; my translation). The term ‘transformation’ fully reflects the real situation in Russia. Other researchers (for example, Shkaratan

³⁹ In the mentioned book *Societal transformation of Russian society. Activity-structural concept* Zaslavskaya collects her articles published in different journals and books. In the present study the references to her ideas from different articles are under Zaslavskaya (2003).

⁴⁰ In Zaslavskaya’s (2003) earlier works she referred more to the term ‘transition’ in order to describe Russia’s transition from post-totalitarianism to democracy and political pluralism, from planned economy to market economy (or from administratively distributed to privately owned economy). But later she found a term which adequately reflects the particularities of the process – the term of ‘transformation’.

2009) stress the same point: Russia belongs to the society in the process of transformation where the transition from the soviet system to a new state is not completed due to the fact that this new state is not fully defined. Davidova et al. (2009) highlight that:

“The complexity of the situation arose from the transitional stage of development in Russia, moving from the Soviet system to a desirable long-term model, many parameters of which are still not clear”
(Davidova et al. 2009: 2)

Nevertheless, in much socio-economic literature it is outlined that there is a transition, and this transition goes from the socialist Soviet state towards the state with (neo)-liberal system (cf. Mikhalev 2003; Simonia 2003). But this creates a contradiction: according to the Constitution of the Russian Federation (article 7), Russia is a social state, which means that all citizens should be entitled to good social standards in different domains of life (pension, health, education), whereas in fact the Russian state provides only minimum guarantees for all (cf. Davidova et al. 2009). Shkaratan (2009) evaluates the situation even more critical: Russia can just formally be recognized as a social state, because the rights (to labour, retirement, free education and health care) are formally kept at the level of constitutional guarantees, and there is a contradiction between formally declared and real goals of the social policy.

Whereas the final stage of transition or direction of transformation is still not clearly formulated, the initial stage, namely the socialist Soviet state is clearly defined. Although the evaluation of the Soviet social system⁴¹ and its influence on the socio-economic situation is not directly connected with the current study, it is worth to mention the debate about its effects and consequences. The employment in the Soviet time gave to a worker not only income, but also social provision: social services, housing, childcare, health care, recreational and cultural services as substantial enterprise benefits (cf. Manning et al. 2000; Piirainen 2005). In the scientific discussion there are two mainstreams on the development of the social policy in the Soviet Union: some researchers stress the stratifying function of the Soviet social system, others stress its advantages (cf. Danilova 2009). The first group of researchers points out a wide spectrum of services in education, health care, housing, pension benefits that the Soviet system granted to its citizens (cf. Danilova 2009). The second group of researchers highlights that the Soviet society was not so socially homogenous society as it was declared by its theorists (cf. Zaslavskaya 2003). Moreover, the place of work was one of the mechanisms of the stratification of the society (Radaev & Shkaratan

⁴¹ More about the Soviet social policy could be found in Manning et al. (2000).

1996; Romanov 2005 cited in Danilova 2009). It means that although on the first view the Soviet social system distributed the social goods to all its citizens, in fact the social system had some privileged categories of citizens (party officials, some representatives of working class) and unprivileged whose structure was changing (representatives of the church, officers of the tsar's army, rural residents) (cf. Danilova 2009). Moreover, the production capacities of enterprises and opportunities of authorities influenced the level of social benefits (cf. Danilova 2009).

In the 1990s the economical crisis and political transformation made the enterprises to reject their previous obligations and “crushed the foundation of a workplace-oriented service system” (Piirainen 2005: 197). In many cases, the enterprises transfer the housing to municipal control whereas social facilities to the private ownership (cf. Manning et al. 2000), although as Piirainen (2005: 197) states, “the new owners did not necessarily have the willingness or means to continue with the original activities”. The transformation led to the implementation of means-tested allowances and benefits, appearance of new groups that need to be supported by the state and changes in the legislation.

Following the results of the Survey conducted by the Independent Institute of Social Policy survey, Davidova et al. (2009) mark that the social policy in Russia can be presented by two periods. First period (from the beginning of the 1990s up to 1996-1997) is distinguished merely by reaction of the state to population's financial deficits, whereas the second period (the end of the 1990s) is characterized by the discussion of reforms' necessity in pension provision, labour market, social benefits (cf. Davidova et al. 2009). To these two periods Davidova et al. (2009) add the third period which, in their opinion, started in the crucial for the social policy year 2005. As they further highlight: “the year 2005 was marked by the movement of social problems from the political periphery to the centre of the government's socioeconomic programme and politics” (Davidova et al. 2009: 3)⁴².

The economic, political, social and cultural changes occurred in the 1990s had an enormous influence on the whole population by affecting different social groups, residents of rural and urban areas. The first decade of new millennium has been marked by reforms in education, health care, social benefits, and changes in the economical and political situation. Due to the fact that the focus of the study is on

⁴² The reform of social benefits and four-high priority national projects: health, education, affordable and comfortable housing, and development of agricultural sector were declared by the president (cf. Davidova et al. 2009). Moreover, the demographic problems that Russia faces made the government to pay more attention to the family, protection of maternity and childhood, and demographic issues: 2006 was marked by the introduction of a new concept – maternity capital, increase of benefits for the families with children below 1, 5 years, financial support of tutors; 2008 was announced as Year of family in Russia.

young people at the age of 15-18, interviews with whom were conducted in 2010-2011, and whose adolescence and youth periods are at the junction of first and second decades of the new millennium, the analysis of the socio-economic and political situation is done according to this time line.

Therefore, the Chapter IV is divided in two parts: the first part discusses socio-economic and political conditions in Russia. These conditions will be described through the instrumental freedoms which have been proposed by Sen (1999a) and allow to grasp the overall freedom in the country. The second part highlights the regional particularities of Russia, and describes the socio-economic situation in the chosen regions.

1. Instrumental Freedoms

To move away from the description of the socio-economic situation in Russia in economic indicators, Sen's (1999a) concept of instrumental freedoms is used in order to analyse arrangements that the state creates for young people in education, health care, security, and ways of political expression, and in access to economic facilities. For the further analysis of the data, it is important to take into consideration that what young Russians can achieve "is influenced by economic opportunities, political liberties, social powers, and the conditions of good health, basic education, and the encouragement and cultivation of initiatives" (Sen 1999a: 5). It means that instrumental freedoms "contribute, directly or indirectly, to the overall freedom people have to live the way they would like to live" (ibid.: 38) and influence the individual abilities to convert resources into valuable functionings (for example, bribery and corruption can impede the resource 'saved money' to be converted in the capability 'being able to start up own new business project').

Instrumental freedoms embody the "main possibilities of a state, public policies and social groups, and other social actors to expand or restrict individual capabilities" (Arndt & Volkert 2009: 8) and are determinants of the individual well-being:

"The central role of individual freedoms in the process of development makes it particularly important to examine their determinants. Substantial attention has to be paid to the social influences, including state actions that help to determine the nature and reach of individual freedoms. Social arrangements may be decisively important in securing and expanding the freedom of the individual. Individual freedoms are influenced, on one side by the social safeguarding of liberties, tolerance, and the possibilities of exchange and transactions. They are also influenced, on the other side, by substantive public support in the provision of those facilities

(such as basic health care or essential education) that are crucial for the formation and use of human capabilities” (Sen 1999a: 41-2)

Sen (1999a) distinguishes five instrumental freedoms: political freedoms, economic facilities, social opportunities, transparency guarantees and protective security. In this part, the instrumental freedoms or the “main possibilities of a state, public policies and social groups” (Arndt & Volkert 2009: 8) are described through Russian state documents and the results of different studies. In Chapter VI they are deeply reconsidered through their interconnection with interviewees’ individual freedoms.

1. 1. Political freedoms

Political freedoms “refer to the opportunities that people have to determine who should govern and what principles, and also include the possibility to scrutinize and criticize authorities, to have freedom of political expression and an uncensored press, to enjoy the freedom to choose between different political parties, and so on” (Sen 1999a: 38). Political freedoms give people an opportunity to choose the representatives and parties whom they trust, freely criticize authorities and discuss political events and politicians. Participation in defining and deciding can give people the feeling of “self-esteem, confidence and individual’s sense of power” (Duraiappah 2004: 23).

The Federal Act “On Basic Guarantees of Electoral Rights and the Right of Citizens of the Russian Federation to Participate in a Referendum” (Federal Act No. 67-FZ of June 12, 2002) states that a citizen of the Russian Federation who has attained the age of 18 years has the right to vote. The Federal Act “On Political Parties” (Federal Act No. 95-FZ of July 11, 2001) states that a citizen of the Russian Federation who has attained the age of 18 years has the right to become a member of a political party.

The results of different studies mentioned in the Strategy for state youth policy in the Russian Federation (Decree No. 1760-r of December 18, 2006) state that the Russian youth is not interested in politics and does not take part in activities of non-profit and voluntary organizations, in other words the youth is in general apolitical: less than a half of young people take part in the elections at the federal level, 33 % of young people (at the age up to 35 years) are interested in the politics, and only 2, 7 % of young Russians participate in the activities of public organizations. Results of the nation-wide survey of young Russians’ living conditions, values and future opportunities (see Dafflon 2009) confirm that young Russians remain little interested in political issues, and are very skeptic about the ruling elite and state institutions. 80 % of young

people believe that politicians do not actually care about what electorate wants, but are more interested in being elected for own status and economic position (see Dafflon 2009).

1.2. Economic facilities

Economic facilities “refer to the opportunities that individuals respectively enjoy to utilize economic resources for the purpose of consumption, or production, or exchange” (Sen 1999a: 39).

Although the economic situation in Russia in general has improved over the last decade (cf. Dafflon 2009; Davidova et al. 2009), there are still several tendencies to be mentioned. Firstly, as Dafflon (2009: 21) mentions “there are growing regional differences between provincial cities suffering from outmigration and larger urban centres attracting more and more financial and human capital”. People move to big urban centers both for professional perspectives and higher standard of living⁴³. Secondly, he continues, there is a discrepancy of the educational and labour markets in Russia, which means that young people have problems in finding a job which corresponds to their qualifications. Qualified young people change their profession, because they cannot find good job opportunities (cf. Boytsova 2008). Moreover, young people can be distinguished from the generations of the Soviet time by a “money-making” mentality: 37 % of young people interrogated are ready to work hard and earn more, even if their future is not certain (Dafflon 2009: 19-21). Young people’s money-orientation is found also by Boytsova (2008), who writes that young people are interested more in work that brings a significant profit, than in work in manufacturing.

1.3. Social opportunities

Social opportunities are arrangements created by the society to have the access to education, health care, decent housing, public services and other social institutions (Sen 1999a). This section draws a particular attention to the educational system and health care in Russia.

⁴³ “It is commonly accepted that there is growing disparity in terms of standards of living between large urban centres as Moscow and St. Petersburg, provincial cities and the countryside” (Dafflon 2009: 14).

Education

OECD's compendium of educational statistics "Highlights from Education at a Glance 2010" (OECD 2010) points that in 2007 in the Russian Federation above 7% of GDP was spent on education. This percentage is bigger than, for example, in France which spent around 6%, Finland which spent around 5,5 % and Germany with around 4,5 % of its proper GDP. In the Russian Federation as well as in 25 OECD countries 60% or more of all adults (25-64 year-olds) have completed at least upper secondary education: around 90% of 25-34 year-olds and 70% of 55-64 year-olds⁴⁴. This rapid expansion of the education in recent decades means that young people tend to have higher levels of education. Nevertheless, more than 20% of 15-19 year-olds are not enrolled in education in the Russian Federation (OECD 2010).

As to higher education, OECD (2010) shows that the percentage of young people that graduate from upper secondary education is substantially lower (55%) than the percentage of young people that get admitted to university (65%)⁴⁵. This could be explained by the following fact: some young people that graduate from upper secondary programs, choose firstly vocationally oriented tertiary education, and later on higher education (cf. OECD 2010).

In general, the main characteristics of educational processes occurred over last years in Russia could be characterized by the following changes mentioned by Cherednichenko (2001) and Konstantinovskij (2003): changes in the prestige of education, increase of prestige of some professions and decrease of others; reorientation of the educational system from the secondary complete general education to the basic general education; pluralism of education with introduction of paid education and hierarchy of the educational institutions ('cheap' and 'elite').

Following the Constitution of the Russian Federation every citizen has the right to education, while the basic general education is obligatory (article 43):

- “1. Everyone shall have the right to education.
2. Guarantees shall be provided for general access to free pre-school, secondary and vocational education in state or municipal educational establishments and at enterprises.
3. Everyone shall have the right to receive on a competitive basis a free higher education in a state or municipal educational establishment and at an enterprise.
4. The basic general education shall be obligatory. Parents or persons in law shall enable their children to receive a basic general education.

⁴⁴ The data provided in OECD (2010) is for 2008.

⁴⁵ Klyachko (2007) also points out that since 2000 the number of those who has got accepted to higher educational institutions is higher than the number of school leavers in Russia.

5. The Russian Federation shall establish federal state educational standards and support various forms of education and self-education.” (Constitution of the Russian Federation 1993)

To generally accessible and free education belong the elementary general education, basic general education and the secondary (complete) general education as well as preschool education; their organization is under the responsibility of the municipal district or city district authorities, whereas the state educational standards are approved at the federal level (cf. Roshina & Chernenko 2007). Local governments should register all children to the obligatory basic general education and give them an opportunity of choice of an educational institution, whereas the financial support (teachers’ wages, expenses on schoolbooks, utility supplies) is provided by the Subjects of the Russian Federation (cf. *ibid.*).

The elementary general education is a basis for the basic general education⁴⁶. The basic general education provides the basis for the complete general education, primary and secondary vocational education. The complete general education is a final stage of the general education and a basis for higher education.

Whereas young people can receive the basic general education and the complete general education at school, they also can choose among different opportunities in professional education, i.e. at vocational and secondary specialized schools. In order to understand the differences between the education at school and at vocational/ secondary specialized school, it is important to describe in details their particularities.

The vocational education gives certain alternatives for young people who do not continue education at school⁴⁷. After the 8th grade at school, young people can continue their education at vocational education school where they can follow the educational program comparable to the program of basic general education at school (with further acquisition of a certificate on basic general education) and additionally get a proficiency level in a chosen profession. After the 9th grade at school, the vocational education school proposes 2-3 years of the professional/vocational training, acquisition of the professional grade and the educational program comparable to the complete general education at school. If young people leave school even earlier than the 8th grade, then the vocational school proposes the educational program comparable to the program of basic general education at school and 1-2 years of studying professional skills and competences. In the 1990s the vocational education school became so

⁴⁶ This paragraph relies heavily on the information from the following internet resource: <http://www.edu53.ru/education/general/>

⁴⁷ This paragraph heavily relies on Cherednichenko (2001).

called 'buffer' for 'problem' adolescents. Nowadays, one of the functions of vocational schools is still the same - keeping socially 'difficult' contingent of youth in the educational system and giving them the training and opportunities for social advancement (cf. Cherednichenko 2011). There are also vocational education schools that require the complete general education and provide education in certain professions (accountant, social worker, secretary).

Young people can be accepted to secondary specialized educational institutions on the basis of the basic educational education (also on the basis of the complete general education). These educational institutions are specialized in the following disciplines: economics, finances and management; medicine; industry and transport; informatics and computer sciences; humanities (language, teaching), and have multilevel programs of professional education (cf. Cherednichenko 2001). One of advantages of the secondary specialized education is that a person can get a profession and continue education in a higher education institution afterwards. Such opportunity is possible when the secondary specialized educational institution has a special agreement with the university to be accepted without exams.

The differences and even advantages of the education at school comparing with the professional education are in a broad choice of further educational stages and usually in higher educational achievements of school leavers (cf. Cherednichenko 2011). Moreover, school leavers care much more about their educational and professional career and have an advantage in the construction of a continuous uninterrupted career. Nevertheless, 38, 5% (in 1998) and 43, 3 % (in 2008) of leavers of secondary specialized educational institutions continue their education in a higher educational institution (see Cherednichenko 2011).

Although it seems that the educational system in Russia provides different educational opportunities, Cherednichenko (2001) and Konstantinovskij (2003) point out that the educational system has been involved in the process of social selection with a masked social differentiation, reproduction of social inequality and construction of the subsystems of elite and mass education. Moreover, Cherednichenko (2001) and Konstantinovskij (2003) highlight the contradiction between declared equality of opportunities and real chances to get education due to the social differentiation. In general the reorientation of the educational system from the secondary complete general education to the basic general education with the consecutive students' dropout brings down the chances of dropouts for further promotion (cf. Konstantinovskij

2003). Konstantinovskij (2003) mentions the results of the longitudinal study⁴⁸ that show, firstly, there is a permanent student dropout before the secondary complete general education with the redistribution of places for the benefit of students from the upper social groups (for example, children of executives) and early dropout of students from the lower social groups (for example, farmers, workers). Secondly, youth from the groups with high potential of resources (families of executives, youth from the big cities) effectively use the conditions and easier overcome the difficulties whereas youth from the groups with low potential of resources (rural youth, families of the workers) are pushed aside to the spheres with less opportunities for the construction of a career. The parents in rural areas from another study reported that the opportunities for their children to enter secondary specialized education or even higher education during ten years of transformation have decreased (Ovchintseva 2005 cited in Danilova et al. 2009: 8).

In order to make higher education accessible for young people from low-income families and remote regions, the Unified State Exam for all school leavers has been recently implemented (cf. Klyachko 2007). The Unified State Exam is used as a graduate exam at school and as admission exam at university. Moreover, it is assumed that its implementation can be a barrier for corruption, whereas the verification of the quality of education does not depend on schools and universities (cf. Klyachko 2007).

The higher education becomes important for the career promotion and personal development, and “within the period from 1996 to 2004 the number of students doubled” (Danilova et al. 2009: 8). Those young people, who are not accepted to free higher education due to an inadequate knowledge, can still apply on a contract form of education (cf. Mogilchak 2009). The strong wish to have higher education, or, as described in Chapter I, merely to have diploma from higher educational institution leads to the choice of higher education, but not to a concrete specialization or profession, that is why not more than 50 % of students work after graduation in a chosen profession (Mogilchak 2009).

The development of mass higher education has led to the decrease of its quality (cf. Klyachko 2007). Moreover, Klyachko (2007) points out that higher education has obtained several social functions: 1) it is a mechanism of the acquisition of a certain social status for many employees, when higher education formally gives an opportunity to occupy a job position; 2) it becomes an institute of socialization, rather than professionalization for young people below 22 years; 3) it is a legal ‘mechanism’ of

⁴⁸ The longitudinal study (1998-2008) on educational and professional trajectories of leavers of schools, vocational education schools and secondary specialized educational institutions is based on the data from Novosibirsk region.

discharge from the army; 4) it compensates the low-quality school education; 5) it is prevention from unemployment.

To sum up, it is estimated that Russian educational system is rapidly transforming to a system of the reproduction of social inequality with different services and conditions for representatives of different social groups on all levels of the educational system (cf. Danilova et al. 2009). This social differentiation becomes especially apparent in the rural areas (cf. Konstantinovskij et al. 2007; Roshina & Chernenko 2007; Danilova et al. 2009).

Health care

A nationwide system of obligatory medical insurance was adopted in 1993 (cf. Gorbacheva 2011). The Russian Federation replaced the Soviet solidaristic system of health care by the insurance-based medicine (cf. Davidova et al. 2009). The Constitution of the Russian Federation guarantees the right to health protection and medical aid (article 41):

“1. Everyone shall have the right to health protection and medical aid. Medical aid in state and municipal health establishments shall be rendered to individuals gratis, at the expense of the corresponding budget, insurance contributions, and other proceeds.”

“2. In the Russian Federation federal programmes of protecting and strengthening the health of the population shall be financed by the State; measures shall be adopted to develop state, municipal and private health services; activities shall be promoted which facilitate the strengthening of health, the development of physical culture and sport, ecological and sanitary-epidemiological well-being.”
(Constitution of the Russian Federation 1993)

Russian citizens have the right to a minimum of medical services listed by the Government and compulsory for all citizens, which include general help, preventive, and emergency care, hospitalization, laboratory services, dental care with some exceptions, maternity care, vaccination, and transportation (cf. Gorbacheva 2011). The Federal Act “On General Guarantees of children’s rights in the Russian Federation” (Federal Act No. 124-FZ of July 24, 1998) guarantees a child the right to health protection. The article 10 of this Federal Act states that measures for the health protection are organized on the basis of state and municipal health institutions and health care is for free.

Nevertheless, Human Development report 2010 states that some countries including the former Soviet Union countries “have experienced the periods of regress, especially in health” (UNDP 2010: 1). It is already acknowledged that the reforms led the Russian population to a dramatic deterioration of the general physical, mental and

social health (cf. Tikhonova 2009), especially among people over-40 years and children as it is highlighted by Davidova et al. (2009). The key problem of Russian health care system is a significant gap between the state guarantees of free health care for the population and its financial realization (cf. Ovcharova & Popova 2005; Shishkin 2007). Moreover, the researchers mark the polarization of the Russian population on the basis of income in access to good-quality health care (cf. Ovcharova & Popova 2005; Davidova et al. 2009), due to the fact that “free medical services are being gradually phased out” (Davidova et al. 2009: 9). Davidova et al. (2009: 18) highlight that “real health care policy is constructed not only without taking into account real differences in the population’s ability to pay, but also disregarding people’s habitual health maintenance practices”. Moreover, only poor Russians use free state medical services, whereas others address to a fee-paying medical sector, where the payments for medical services have been increased (cf. Davidova et al. 2009). Some people with low level of resources even treat themselves, if they do not visit the municipal clinic or any other doctor (cf. *ibid.*), or they follow only those prescriptions of doctors which are provided for free (cf. Ovcharova & Popova 2005). Other astonishing results from the study on health crisis in Russia (Davidova et al. 2009: 21) are on people’s opinion about emergence care: “every third Russian citizen today is afraid that it will be impossible to receive medical care even in case of severe need”.

Such situation is evaluated by researchers as a tendency of the government to shift a part of the responsibility on shoulders of the population (cf. Shishkin 2007; Davidova et al. 2009; Shkaratan 2009). It could be understood that the state wants to reduce the guarantees in health care. This contributes to the development of paid medical services which are not accessible for all people due to the financial barrier. Moreover, the decentralization of public hospitals by transferring them to the local governments (cf. Davidova et al. 2009) raises a question about the ability of certain regions to support the health care on the level which replies to the health needs of the population. Significant differences in the socio-economic possibilities of regions (export-oriented or raw-material regions comparing to depressive regions) might lead as well to the polarization of the Russian population on the basis of place of residence.

1.4. Transparency guarantees

Transparency guarantees assure the openness that people can expect when they act (cf. Sen 1999a). So it means that people can act towards each other “under guarantees of disclosure and lucidity” (Sen 1999a: 39). The degree of bureaucratization, corruption, bribery in the society influences the choice and formation

of the individual capability set. Corruption and bureaucratic complexity could close an access to the social opportunities as health care or education for some people (cf. Arndt & Volkert 2009).

The article 17 and article 18 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation are devoted to rights and freedoms:

“1. In the Russian Federation recognition and guarantees shall be provided for the rights and freedoms of person and citizen according to the universally recognized principles and norms of international law and according to the present Constitution.

2. Fundamental human rights and freedoms are inalienable and shall be enjoyed by everyone since the day of birth.

3. The exercise of the rights and freedoms of person and citizen shall not violate the rights and freedoms of other people.” (article 17)

“The rights and freedoms of person and citizen shall be directly functional. They determine the essence, meaning and implementation of laws, the activities of the legislative and executive authorities, local self-government and shall be ensured by the administration of justice.” (article 18)

Following the results of the study on Russian youth (see Dafflon 2009), young Russians (at the age of 15-29) are skeptical towards the fight against corruption, efficiency of state institutions and respect of individual freedoms in Russia: “for instance, 42% of young Russians admit that state suppression of freedom is widespread or very widespread in the country” (ibid.: 24). Moreover, corruption remains a practice that can be used to solve one’s problems; 58 % of young Russians are ready to give a bribe if it brings them some advantage. The corruption becomes a common practice. At the same time, the results show that 39 % of young people find the Russian society unjust, despite the fact that they are satisfied with the country’s economic development under Putin’s first and second presidency. The money has a high value in the society (67 % of young people interrogated agreed with this statement), whereas 46 % of young people mentioned that the rising generation cannot distinguish right from wrong. Striking result is that dishonesty is considered by 39 % of young people as a way to become successful.

1.5. Protective security

Protective security includes institutional arrangements to support citizens in socially vulnerable situations, “to provide a social safety net for preventing the affected population from being reduced to abject misery, and in some cases even starvation and death” (Sen 1999a: 40).

The Constitution of the Russian Federation guarantees the right to social security in the article 39 (1): “Everyone shall be guaranteed social security at the expense of the State in old age, in case of an illness, disability, loss of the breadwinner, for upbringing of children and in other cases established by law”. It means that the state guarantees social security to citizens found themselves in a difficult life situation. The Federal Act “On Fundamentals of Social Services for the Population of the Russian Federation” (with amendments) (Federal Act No.195-FZ of December 10, 1995) provides social services to citizens who found themselves in a difficult life situation, such as illness, disability, inability to self-service in old age, unemployment, orphanage, conflicts and abusive treatment in the family, low income, homelessness and so on. The Federal Act “On General Guarantees of children’s rights in the Russian Federation” (Federal Act No. 124-FZ of July 24, 1998) fixes state guarantees and minimal standards of the quality of life for children (below age of 18).

Besides, the state youth policy in Russia is oriented on creation of economic, juridical, social conditions and guarantees for young people’s successful socialization and effective self-realization and development of youth organizations (cf. The Strategy for state youth policy in the Russian Federation 2006; Basov 2008). Following the General Direction of the youth policy in the Russian Federation (Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation No 5090-1 of June 3, 1993), one of the principles of the state youth policy is to provide a guaranteed minimum of services in education, physical and mental development, health care, professional planning and employment in order to develop a young person’s personality and prepare for an independent life. The system of state youth agencies is created in order to guarantee social and law security of adolescents and young people, integrate them into the socio-political, political and cultural life of the country, region, city, provide free time activities, conduct preventive measures against homelessness, drug addiction, delinquency (cf. Karpova 2008). Moreover, such agencies provide psychological, pedagogical and informational assistance, support young families, talented youth, help young people in social adaptation and professional orientation. The following agencies provide help and assistance to young people: integrated centre of youth social security; youth centre of socio-psychological help; youth social centre; centre of urgent psychological help over the phone; youth centre of family planning; youth club; youth centre of social rehabilitation; centre for professional orientation and employment (cf. Karpova 2008).

The analysis of the state documents shows that the state has created the system of social security for young citizens in a difficult life situation, and the conditions for young people’s successful socialization and effective self-realization.

The regional differentiation has been widely considered above in different aspects of life, but it needs a further conceptualization, which is made in the next section.

2. Differentiation of regions (Saint-Petersburg, Leningrad region, Novgorod region)

This part of the chapter focuses on an important aspect which should be taken more into account in the capability framework - regional or territorial inequalities within borders of one country and their influence on individual capabilities. Before proceeding to the review of socio-economic situation in the Northwest of Russia, namely St. Petersburg, the Leningrad region and the Novgorod region, it is important to make an emphasis on the significance of territorial disparities in Russia and conducted international and Russian studies.

Russia is a country with high degree of regional differentiation (differences in poverty rate, income level, employment rate, opportunities in the labour market, degree of urbanization), diverse regional economic and social conditions (cf. Mikhalev 1998; Ovcharova & Popova 2005; Lovyagin & Slutskij 2006; Burdyak & Popova 2007). During the transformational period the regional disparities became even more evident. Manning et al. (2000) highlight that the transformation of the centralised and equalising Soviet system led to the significant regionalisation of economy and intensification of regional inequality in Russia. On the one hand, the transformation reinforced urbanized regions, regions with raw-material resources and some regions that have a common border with other countries; on the other hand, it led to an appearance of depressive regions and an increasing recess of less developed regions (cf. Zubarevich 2007).

Sharp contrasts in living standards and poverty rates exist not only between regions but are essentially associated with type of residence: large cities, small towns, or rural areas (cf. Mikhalev 1998). In the 1990s the largest cities became major centers for the development of private business, commercial and banking centers, whereas smaller towns suffered more from the decline of local industrial enterprises which were unable to adjust to new economic conditions (cf. *ibid.*). High chances to fall into the category of poor in 2004 had low qualified workers, people with a low level of education, unemployed, people who lived in economically undeveloped regions, residents of small rural settlements and small towns, elderly and people with high dependent burden as it states in the ROMIR's research (see Danilova et al. 2009). So, the place of residence, namely large cities, small towns, or rural areas, defines

economic (cf. Ovcharova & Popova 2005) as well as educational opportunities, diversity of leisure and sport activities, and choice of social services and medical care. Large cities could be characterized by the diversified economy, developed labour market and service sector (cf. Zubarevich 2007). In the capability approach large cities are characterized in works of Nuvolati (2009: 181) “by a high degree of personal freedom – freedom in terms of real opportunities that people have regarding the life they may lead”.

Many studies focus on regional differentiation and regional disparities in Russia (for example, Mikhalev 1998; Manning et al. 2000; Cherednichenko 2001; Konstantinovskij et al. 2008). Some of them will be further discussed in more details.

Several studies stress the disparity of educational opportunities among young people from big cities and those from small towns or rural areas in Russia. Cherdnichenko (2001) highlights that the level of urbanization (material conditions, educational infrastructure, labour market, health care, leisure activities) influences young people’s educational and labour strategies in Russia. The results of her study show that school-leavers from big cities and regional centers have more chances to become students of higher education, whereas the chances of school-leavers from medium and small towns and rural areas decrease successively. Konstantinovskij et al. (2008) highlight factors of territorial barrier that increase the inequality among young people in the access to education (both secondary and higher education): type of settlement, quantity of accessible educational institutions, distance from a place of residence to a place of studies, accessible transport, level of urbanization. Moreover, they continue that the economic barrier also plays an important role. It means, whereas ‘strong’ schools (high proportion of teachers with high category, students with high achievements, specialization of school) are mostly located in big cities and regional centers, the question is whether parents are able to spend more resources (for example, to drive to school), so that their children have access to a better school.

Furthermore, Cherednichenko (2001) highlights that young people from rural areas and small and medium towns who would like to get higher education might also face the economic barrier. For example, they have to think about migration to big cities and regional centers, and look for an accommodation⁴⁹. This leads to the fact that starting educational opportunities could be unequally distributed among young people by territorial and economic barriers. Young people should proceed from family’s resources in order to reach a place of studies or choose an educational institution

⁴⁹ In the Novosibirsk region the entrants from small towns and rural area preferred to enter to less prestigious secondary specialized educational institutions because they provided dormitories (cf. Cherednichenko 2001).

which is located next to home. This constrains not only their access to the general education, but reduces their chances for the further education. Moreover, parents' socio-professional and economic status also depends on the living area or place of residence which can in turn influence family's financial opportunities to support a young person in the process of education and preparations for the exams (private or university courses; books and textbooks; financial support during studies, educational migration to another place) (cf. Cherednichenko 2001).

As to the capability approach, several studies have already specified regional disparities. The research on the multidimensional poverty and living conditions of adolescents in Uruguay based on the measurement of four dimensions (such as education, health, institutional affiliation and communications) shows that the adolescents from the rural areas live in much worse conditions than those from urban areas (see Alves & Zerpa 2010). One of the aspects which impacts this disadvantaged situation of adolescents living in rural areas is a strong influence of infrastructure deficiencies. The study mentioned in the Chapter II and conducted by Addabbo and Di Tommaso (2008) show that in Italy the geographical location or geographical factors are also important in the assessment of children's well-being. Biggeri, Trani and Mauro (2010) stress the attention of other researchers on low-income countries where the gender perspective and the distinction between children who live in urban and rural areas should be carefully studied. Klasen (2001) stresses that geographical dimension is insufficiently taken into account in many poverty analyses, and its use can give a better explanation to the social exclusion, than just individual-based measures (income poverty and unemployment). Moreover, he argues that the participation in society depends on mobility, networks and physical and social distance to the mainstream society.

As the main idea of the Human Development Report 2009 *Overcoming barriers: Human Mobility and Development* (UNDP 2009) is about the global unequal distribution of capabilities, which provokes people to move from one place of residence to another one in search for better living conditions and quality of life, one of the main focuses of this thesis is to analyze the choices that young people have and see (or do not have and do not see) in their place of residence, and to grasp what make them to move to another settlement. Besides, it is important to scrutinize if young people, who move out from their place of residence, can really expand their choices in another place, in other words, if skills and abilities that they have and that have been formed in their place of residence can compete with those of others (cf. UNDP 2009).

As a result, this thesis takes into consideration regional inequalities in Russia. In order to make interregional comparisons it has been chosen the Northwest region of

Russia, i.e. Saint Petersburg, the Novgorod and Leningrad regions. In order to find regional differences and to compare the opportunities that young people see in their lives, it is decided to focus on young people from two small towns in the Leningrad and Novgorod regions (with less than 50 000 inhabitants each) and Saint Petersburg (with more than 1 million inhabitants) selected following two criteria⁵⁰: 1) they are located on the same distance from the megalopolis and connected with it by developed transport infrastructure (with dominant railway), so that the citizens could have the opportunity for working and educational migration; 2) they are located in regions where it is observed a stable economic development or towns themselves are distinguished by the economic development, it means that the enterprises could adapt to the new economic circumstances and/or some new enterprises have been created and provided working places for regional citizens. The names of small towns selected are concealed due to the local gate-keepers' request, but a brief description of the socio-economic situation in both regions can be found in the next section.

2.1. Socio-economic situation in Saint-Petersburg

Saint Petersburg (Map 1) belongs to the regions of Russia with a high potential of the development (cf. Danilova 2009). On the one hand, due to its geographical location the city develops international cooperation, implements innovative projects and is an object of investments. On the other hand, historical significance and title of 'North' capital makes Saint Petersburg a centre of culture, arts, and science. Saint Petersburg is a scientific and educational centre with 8 % of all Russian students and 12 % of doctoral students (see Lovyagin & Slutskij 2006).

The Concept of Family Policy in Saint-Petersburg in 2007-2011 and the Concept of Family Policy in Saint Petersburg in 2012-2022 underline the following particularities of development:

- low number of children and young people⁵¹, high number of elderly in the demographic structure of Saint-Petersburg;
- high number of state budgetary employees with low income in such sectors as culture, arts, science, education, health care, social services⁵²;

⁵⁰ The same criteria for the selection were used in other studies on regional differences (see Danilova 2009; Danilova et al. 2009).

⁵¹ The positive dynamics of population growth since 2007 is conditioned by migration processes and increase of natality (the Concept of Family Policy in Saint Petersburg in 2012-2022).

⁵² Due to economic reforms profound changes in the process of income formation resulted in extremely diverse income among employees from different sectors, and contributed greatly to an unprecedented increase in wage inequality (cf. Mikhalev & Bjorksten 1995).

- high number of families which have inadequate accommodation. In both Concepts it is underlined that among problems with accommodation there are following: existence of shared flats (i.e. a flat is shared by several families), low level of technical conditions of houses, impossibility to buy a house for the majority of population, limited construction of state social housing, permanently increasing costs on accommodation in people's income;

- decrease of physical and psychic health in all age groups of population, decrease of health of every next generation relatively to previous one; appearance of health diseases appropriate to elderly at young age;

- poverty of families, for example, in 2011, 8, 7% of population of Saint Petersburg has an income below a minimum living wage, whereas 13, 1% of children live in families that are ascribed to low-income families. It means that such family gets the social support (reimbursement of accommodation expenses and payment of a difference between a real income and a minimum living age).

2.2. Socio-economic situation in the Leningrad region⁵³

The Leningrad region (Map 1) does not have own regional centre and among its 31 towns there is no a town with population more than 100 000 inhabitants. Population settlement is mostly dense on the West of the region, which is close to Saint Petersburg and Baltic Sea. The population in suburban towns (close to Saint Petersburg) have increased over last years, whereas the population in remote and economically weak towns significantly decreased. That is why there is a polarization in development of suburbs of Saint Petersburg and peripheral municipalities. The research on the situation of poor families with children in the Leningrad region points out that the Leningrad region has one of the lowest birth rates in the Northwest of Russia, whereas the rate of the aged population is one of the highest, and mortality rate is higher than the average in the country (cf. Burdyak & Popova 2007).

⁵³ The following section relies heavily on the Social Portrait of the Leningrad region retrieved from *Social Atlas of Russian Regions* (<http://socpol.ru/atlas/portraits/len.shtml>), except for those parts that refer to another literature.



Map 1. Leningrad region

Source: Map is downloaded from: http://map.rin.ru/cgi-bin/main_e.pl?Region=leningrad

The Leningrad region has an economic growth and a dynamic development of industry in the Northwest, stable migratory population which moderates the depopulation process. One of the main advantages for the economic development is its geographical location: the proximity to Saint Petersburg (the hugest market) and maritime location (on the way of export of the primary production). Such position attracts Russian and foreign companies and makes the Leningrad region one of the leaders of the economic growth. The main sectors of economy are food industry, automobile industry, oil processing, whereas wood industry and nonferrous metallurgy have decreased their capacities due to depleted raw materials in the region. The foreign investments have developed automobile and food industry, including tobacco industry. Industrial type of the economic growth gave rise to the increase of the employment rate in industry, especially concentrated nearby Saint Petersburg, where new factories and enterprises have been constructed over last decade. Old industrial centres are in the process of reorganization by new owners. But the increase of employment rate has not affected population's income, that is still reduced, and the poverty rate is very high.

It has been found⁵⁴ that 19, 2% of families or 23, 5% of the population of the Leningrad region are poor (absolute poverty⁵⁵). Absolute poverty has predominantly child face. Children at the age of 0-3 and 15-18 year old have the highest level of absolute poverty. The results of the study show that the following factors play a big role in an increase of the child poverty in term of 'absolute poverty': child load, absence in the family of father, low educational level of members, unemployed members, low wage and low pensions. In the terms of relative poverty, the risk to be poor for children is higher due to the place of the residence. If a family lives in a town with the population less than 20 000, the risk to be poor⁵⁶ is 2, 5 times higher than if a family lives in a big city.

Due to the lack of own centre, medical services of the high level are so called 'ascribed' to Saint Petersburg. Because of the neighbourhood with the huge educational centre Saint Petersburg, the region until 1990s did not have own higher education centre. The number of students in vocational training is lower than the average in the country. As to the general education, the region is covered by the net of schools, and the problem of the evening shift for the pupils is almost resolved (only 5% of pupils go to the evening school).

To sum up, the economic development is growing faster comparing with other regions, but the improvement of well-being and health goes considerably slower. Moreover, this economic growth is substantially evident in the suburb parts of Saint Petersburg, and less obvious in the South.

2.3. Socio-economic situation in the Novgorod region⁵⁷

The Novgorod region (Map 2) is located in the so called infrastructure 'corridor' between two economically developed agglomerations: Saint Petersburg with the Leningrad region and Moscow and its region, so that such location has an advantage for investments. The region distinguishes by relatively clean and attractive natural environment and historical-cultural heritage.

⁵⁴ The following paragraph relies heavily on the quantitative study on the situation of poor families with children in the Leningrad region (see Burdyak & Popova 2007).

⁵⁵ Necessary goods and services are approved by the government; their cost is a threshold or poverty line, and people who are below this poverty line are poor in term of 'absolute poverty' (cf. Burdyak & Popova 2007).

⁵⁶ In this case the poverty is assessed in the relative aspect which means inadequacy of resources in order to achieve the standard of consumption in this society (cf. Burdyak & Popova 2007).

⁵⁷ The following section relies heavily on the Social Portrait of the Novgorod region retrieved from *Social Atlas of Russian Regions* (<http://socpol.ru/atlas/portraits/novg.shtml>), except for those parts that refer to another literature.



Map 2. Novgorod region

Source: Map is downloaded from: http://map.rin.ru/cgi-bin/main_e.pl?Region=novgorod

The demographic situation could be characterised in the following way: an intense migration from the region to the capitals' agglomerations that causes depopulation; deterioration of population's health; decrease of life expectancy rate and low fertility rate. The Novgorod region is one of five regions of Russia with the highest level of the population loss due to natural causes. Being the smallest region in the European part of Russia, the region has permanent tendency to the depopulation. Young people represent less than 20 % in the age structure of the region. Following the regional classification of Russia, the Novgorod region has a capital with 30% of the whole population, two middle towns and others are small towns. Most of the small towns are concentrated next to the railways.

In the 1990s the region had a decline in the economy, but nowadays the Novgorod region is ahead some neighbour regions of the Northwest being behind only the over successful Leningrad region. The main sectors of economy are chemical industry, wood and woodworking industries, engineering industry, and food industry. The capital Novgorod is the leader of the industrial production (60%), some old industrial centres are either relatively stabile or in the situation of stagnation. Small N-

town chosen for the study is relatively young developing industrial centre which got foreign investments in the middle of 1990s.

Despite the age structure, the urban population is economically active and is at the same level of labour activity as the population in the whole Russia. At the same time the rural population is less economically active than the urban population in the whole country due to the problems of unemployment and age structure. The income in different municipalities of the region depends on industrial companies that are located in these municipalities. The advantages have the capital Novgorod and the chosen N-town which is evidently distinguished by investments of western companies.

If by economical characteristics the Novgorod region differs from the neighbour regions in the best way, the social problems remain the same. The life expectancy of men (54,9 in 2002 against 58,5 in Russia) is conditioned by the over mortality among men able to work. So this region could be described as a region with longstanding depopulation, prevalence of small villages and industrial settlements with depressive enterprises, badly organized social environment and the strongest alcoholization of the population. The region has never had the high provision of doctors. Elaborated in the Soviet time an extensive system of first medical aid nowadays is decreasing, because of the disappearance of small villages and reduction of the rural population.

The educational system has several particularities. The educational level of employed and particularly adult population is low. The region does not have big educational centres; it has the State University of Novgorod and branches of several higher educational institutions. As a result, there is no emulation in the higher education in the region. The most active young people are as before oriented towards Saint Petersburg's universities and higher educational institutions. Partly it causes the migration of young people aged 16-24 years from the region. Another negative trend is a predominantly female structure of the migrating youth, and in the most reproductive age (18-29 years)⁵⁸.

The Novgorod region is notable for housing with low equipment. Facilities such as sewerage, plumbing and central heating are provided only in 53-58% of available accommodation (while in Russia 70-75% of available accommodation is supplied by these facilities). Approximately 15 000 families with low income receive annually the social support as subsidies for housing and communal services⁵⁹.

So, despite the economic development of some sectors of economy, the region has many demographic and social problems.

⁵⁸ Demographic situation in the Novgorod region in 2009 (Administration of the Novgorod region 2009). Retrieved from: <http://www.region.adm.nov.ru/region/demography/> (15.02.2011)

⁵⁹ Demographic situation in the Novgorod region in 2009 (Administration of the Novgorod region 2009). Retrieved from: <http://www.region.adm.nov.ru/region/demography/> (15.02.2011)

Summary

In this chapter, close attention is paid to instrumental freedoms and regional differentiation in Russia. The chapter starts with a brief review of the debate on transformational processes and their consequences in Russia. In order to describe state actions and socio-political measures it is used Sen's concept of instrumental freedoms. The part on instrumental freedoms describes the educational system, health care, political freedoms, bureaucratization, and the social security system. This part is necessary in order to show the main possibilities of state from the perspective of Russian legislation, whereas later on the analysis of young people's individual capabilities shows whether their capabilities are expanded or restricted in such social arrangements. The second part focuses on regional or territorial inequalities in Russia and their influence on individual capabilities. Moreover, a brief review of the socio-economic situation in the Northwest of Russia, namely St. Petersburg, the Leningrad region and the Novgorod region, is presented at the end of the chapter.

Chapter IV

Framing the research concept

Chapter I of this thesis focuses on the literature review, namely on youth studies and research that has been conducted in the Russian scientific framework to measure and assess young people's well-being. Moreover, the chapter gives a synopsis of different international concepts of well-being and builds a bridge to the capability approach, which is a multidimensional framework for the analysis of individual well-being. Chapter II presents the origins of the capability approach and its main concepts. Furthermore, it introduces the debate on children's and youth's capabilities. Taken as a basis for a country-case description, instrumental freedoms describe existing social arrangements in Russia in Chapter III. The logic of research makes it necessary to sum up in this chapter previous reflections in order to frame a research concept and a research focus.

As Martha Nussbaum points out in *Women and Human Development* (2000), unequal social and political circumstances lead to unequal human capabilities and unequal chances to have a way of life people have reason to value. Such circumstances "affect the inner lives of people, not just their external options: what they hope for, what they love, what they fear, as well as what they are able to do" (Nussbaum 2000: 31). In other words, people's "preferences and choices are shaped and informed or deformed by society and public policy" (Walker 2003: 172).

The main assumption for the present study is that young people's choices are strongly shaped by the socio-economic and political conditions in Russia, which may have distributed unequally young people's chances to prosper and to have real opportunities in education, mobility, health care and so on. The main aim of study is to analyze how these different conditions and chances that young people see in their lives influence their capability sets.

This chapter starts with a detailed presentation of the research object. After that, the advantages of applying the capability approach as a theoretical framework are summarized and described precisely. Moreover, the use of Nussbaum's list is reconsidered in combination with the discussion on cultural particularities. Finally, the emerging theoretical concept of adolescents' and young people's capabilities is presented.

1. Research object

Putting at the centre the capabilities of 15-18 year old young people, the analysis implies a focus on their abilities to transfer resources into opportunities, on “the extent of freedom” (Alkire 2009: 32) they have in life, and on their life chances to live the way they have reason to value. Moreover, it is differences in the capabilities sets of young Russians of 15-18 years and their well-being under conditions of socio-economic and socio-political transformation in the Russian Federation that are analyzed in the present research. Whereas it has been shown in Chapter I that there is a debate on age frames and the definition of childhood, adolescence, and youth in general, this research focuses specifically on adolescents and young people between 15 and 18 because they are at the stage of taking decisions important for their life course: choice of profession, way of living, and acquisition of independence⁶⁰. The ambiguity of their position is that on the one hand they pass through physical, emotional and cognitive changes specific to adolescence, on the other hand their lives have been forming under socio-economic and political changes in Russia so that they are faced with new demands. They are asked, for example, to provide individual responsible decisions (cf. Dafflon 2009) on their own education and career planning under conditions of high competition in education and the labour market, reforms in the educational system, increasing costs of accommodation and changing values. Thus, applying to the thesis the insight that some capabilities are relevant when the age increases (cf. Biggeri et al. 2006), the assumption behind the choice of adolescents and young people at the age of 15-18 is that these young people are at a stage when most of their capabilities are likely to have already been formed and they are able to transform resources and commodities into capabilities and functionings, although this depends on their conversion factors (personal, social and environmental characteristics) and their being framed by the existing circumstances of instrumental freedoms which contribute to “the overall freedom people have to live the way they would like to live” (Sen 1999a: 38). So, scrutinizing the capabilities of this group of young Russians could open a new perspective on the transition to adulthood and the analysis of young people’s capabilities in the framework of the capability approach.

Furthermore, it is crucial to take into account the notion of human diversity, which is “no secondary complication (to be ignored, or to be introduced ‘later on’); it is a fundamental aspect of our interest in equality” (Sen 1992: xi). The present study on Russian adolescents and young people attaches considerable importance, firstly, to

⁶⁰ Youth as a social group has some particularities; at this period young people face the difficulties connected with the choice of profession, accommodation, employment (cf. Basov 2008; Boytsova 2008).

personal, social and environmental factors which influence the conversion of commodities into functionings, and stresses interpersonal variations (in terms of age, gender, place of residence); secondly, to “the material and non-material circumstances that shape people’s opportunity sets, and the circumstances that influence the choices that people make from the capability set” (Robeyns 2005a: 99) (through their socio-economic background). The young people chosen for this study come from better-off as well as low-income families, live in small towns of the Northwest of Russia and in the big, economically developed city of Saint Petersburg. On the assumption that opportunities (e.g. in education, qualitative health care, free-time facilities) in small towns are fewer and of lower quality than in big cities, this research will reveal whether the capability set and the manifestation of the ‘good life’ differ among the young people from different regions and of different socio-economic backgrounds. It is hypothesized that due to regional differences and respectively the *asymmetry* of opportunities, individual capability sets could be distributed unfairly. Moreover, living in times of social changes young people could experience a high level of uncertainty, and this may well influence their choices.

In order to reply to research questions, young people were selected in terms of the characteristics defined below:

1) Young people from better-off families from Saint-Petersburg, the Leningrad and Novgorod regions: parental wage average or more than average; living in good conditions; long-term employment of parents in well-paid jobs (or businesses of their own).

2) Young people from low-income families from Saint-Petersburg, the Leningrad and Novgorod regions: low income; living in bad conditions; unemployment, risk of unemployment or employment in low-paid jobs of parents.

As mentioned in other research, young people from high status families with more resources can choose individualized trajectories and shape them according to their own interests, whereas young people from low status families, with fewer opportunities and resources, are restricted to adaptive reactions (cf. Bendit 2008). Besides class, gender, education, and ethnicity, which still distribute resources and opportunities unequally, young people in general, are expected to provide individual decisions and to be responsible for their own education and career planning (cf. *ibid.*). The passage from adolescence to adulthood is not so certain, and even the choice of profession does not guarantee that it will be in demand in future. Children coming from better-off families with better economic, social and cultural resources are already at an advantage when it comes to educational opportunities and routes to higher education

(cf. *ibid.*). But they can also be deprived in some areas which are not obvious through other analyses.

Focusing on two different groups of young people, the concept of this study supports the statement that researchers should have a clear idea of “not just what we do not want but what we do want for children and adolescents” (Moore et al. 2004: 126). Focusing mostly on young people’s deprivations and problems, researchers receive abundant information, and programs to fight against such deprivations are clearly formulated (cf. *ibid.*). This is without any doubt very useful and helps all policy makers, social workers, and researchers to investigate more unfavourable conditions. But what the present research is in the position to investigate is: 1) to concentrate on all young people, including those who at first glance do not have any deprivations; 2) to ask all of them about issues which could affect all young people. In other words, “this means that we may have an abundance of information from disabled, and from homeless young people on living on the street; but we know far less about their views on issues which affect all young people. Disabled children and young people know about issues other than impairment, just as homeless young people have issues other than homelessness” (Roberts 2008: 271). By bearing in mind that it is less known how positive well-being looks like (cf. Moore et al. 2004; Fattore et al. 2009), the present research tries not only to focus on finding differences, but also on creating the positive well-being based on the aspirations and values of all young people interviewed and their life experiences. The focus only on problem youth in order to facilitate their transition to adulthood and to reduce the risks from their behaviour could take away attention from normal youth (cf. France 2007). In such countries as Russia where the influence of socio-economic conditions is strong and may affect any social group at any moment, attention should be paid to all young people and adolescents.

Several points should be added on the choice of the age framework. It is conditioned also by the following factors:

- nowadays, the Russian system of secondary education provides for nine years of compulsory education. This means that a pupil starting school at the age of 6-8 is assumed to complete his or her basic general education at the age of 15/17. It is important to mention that recently the elementary general education had three years (grades) of education instead of four, and after passing the basic general education, pupils automatically went to the fifth year (grade) of education. That is why the completed basic general education could be reached even earlier, at the age of 14/16. Depending on educational strategies, an adolescent can choose to stay at school for

two more years in order to have a complete general education, or choose specialized secondary education or vocational training⁶¹.

- many decisions in one's early life course have long-term implications (cf. Mills & Blossfeld 2006). Young people have, for instance, to opt for educational and professional tracks, to start looking for partnerships or even to make long-term binding family decisions, and they acquire partial or complete independence and have to deal with their problems as responsible actors and members of society. But to form their own real choices they should be informed about existing opportunities, because "access to information is a prerequisite for making informed choices and decisions in relation to education, health and protection" (Theis 2010: 345); they should be taught how to convert available resources in various combinations of valuable functionings (cf. Sadlowski 2011) and how to choose the most valued opportunity without being exposed to social conditioning (cf. Leßmann 2009).

- as has already been mentioned above, "the child has capabilities that are specific to the phases of life" (Biggeri et al. 2006: 63), and the complete list of capabilities may be fully "sic" only by older category of children" (Biggeri et al. 2006: 64). Thus it is assumed that from 15 to 18 adolescents and young people can recognize their real opportunities and that most capabilities have been already formed. Moreover, this age may be a focal point for the analysis of the development of people's capabilities. Following Biggeri et al. (2006), research sees young people as participants in the process of identifying a set of core capabilities.

- adults are usually willing to make decisions for young people as well as to define conditions of the 'good life' for them. But Ben-Arieh (2010) proposes that children should be directly asked about their understanding of well-being and living conditions in order "to capture children's own account of their lives" (Ben-Arieh 2010: 138). Children and young people have experiences of their own, they have something to value, to wait for, to aspire to. It becomes therefore important what adolescents and young people tell about their experiences of living in different types of families and regions, what influences their choices and decisions. They are seen rather as people with opinions, wishes, interests of their own and they are considered the actors of their own lives. The interview gives them a chance to express their opinions on their subjective world and subjective well-being: in this private conversation, young people have an opportunity to distance themselves from the opinion of parents and school teachers. Listening to children and to young people is "central to recognizing and respecting their worth as human beings" (Roberts 2008: 264).

⁶¹ For a detailed discussion of the educational system see Chapter III.

The chosen group of adolescents and young people is not static or stable, not a group that has reached the maximum of their physical, mental and physiological abilities. Although there are just two years between an adolescent at age 15 and one at the age of 17, there are also differences in abilities, skills, capacities (in Nussbaum's sense) and real options of choice/ real opportunities (in Sen's sense). Nevertheless, this group is considered in terms of the present research as a united group that is on the one hand in the intrinsically valued period of adolescence, but on the other hand in the process of becoming adults or adult citizens. The consideration of their actual doings and beings, of the formation of capability sets, of the influence of family and social context as well as of environmental conversion factors on real opportunities and execution of agency can, firstly, give an overview of adolescents' and young people's well-being freedom and well-being achievement; secondly, it has a prognostic character for their well-being as future adults; thirdly, it marks capabilities gaps among young people and thus leads to the analysis of social inequalities.

2. The advantages of the capability approach for this study

As was mentioned in previous chapters, the capability approach was chosen for this thesis as a theoretical framework to assess inequalities and young people's capability sets. The capability approach (in the form of a combination of Nussbaum's and Sen's versions with further developments made by other researchers) has several advantages for the assessment of young people's individual well-being in Russia:

- well-being can be assessed multidimensionally. Instead of taking income or living wage as main indicators of well-being and the only means to achieve well-being, such different aspects of life as health, education, social participation are taken into account. In the capability perspective scholars can concentrate on what young people are able actually to do and to be and what the constraints and barriers are that they have to deal with in their lives;

- the research method adopted is the qualitative one, which allows to follow "*the principle of each person as end*": "we should look not just to the total or the average, but to the functioning of each and every person" (Nussbaum 2000: 56; italics in original). The thick analysis⁶² of each adolescent's life in comparison with the assessment of an average example of well-being in the regions chosen gives an opportunity to scrutinize closely how adolescents' capability sets are shaped and what influences (i.e., constrains or enhances) their freedoms to pursue the lives and the goals they have reason to value. Moreover, "each person has just one life to live" (ibid.:

⁶² For a typology of capability analyses see Robeyns (2005a).

56), and each adolescent has just one adolescence and one transition to adulthood. And this period, which is intrinsically valuable, is valuable also instrumentally for the transition to adulthood, for preparations and the formation of life strategies, life plans and the beginning of educational and professional careers. Working with qualitative methods, real opportunities are considered not just in the average form, but for each and everyone: “the account we search for should preserve liberties and opportunities for each and every person, taken one by one, respecting each of them as an end, rather than simply as the agent or supporter of the ends of others” (ibid.: 55);

- the capability approach looks at each and every person and is directed to each person’s capability. This means that every single young person and adolescent has to be taken into account despite their ethnicity, sex, religion, gender and location;

- the capability approach to well-being wants an individual to have the largest set of opportunities to achieve valuable functionings (cf. Klasen 2010). Moreover, it is important to analyse if young people have valuable opportunities to do what they want to do and if there are barriers in their lives which impede their freedoms to lead the lives they want to lead;

- the capability approach does not highlight equality of resources, but equality of capabilities, equality of freedom for all people to choose the way of life they value (cf. Klasen 2001, 2010). In such a decisive period of life young people should feel that they have real opportunities to enjoy different aspects of life, different functionings, different activities and states which depend on their image of the ‘good life’. Even if finally they do not choose higher education or secondary specialized education, they still had that choice;

- the capability approach emphasizes human diversity and different abilities to convert available resources into valuable states and activities. Young people differ from each other in the same way as adult citizens. Moreover, highlighting human heterogeneities and environmental diversities particularly, the capability approach allows assessing differences in young people’s capability sets originating in territorial diversities;

- the young people are at a crucial moment of choice: education (profession, educational institution), achieving independence from parents, entrance to the labour market. In order to make all these choices, they firstly need to have various alternative combinations in their disposition. The formation of capability sets of different young people under social and personal conversion factors is at the centre of analysis. Secondly, “capabilities as *freedoms* require the act of choice to convert them in real-live “sic” functionings” (Sadlowski 2011: 217, italics in original). In this way, young people should choose or at least are expected or supposed to make a choice from

available opportunities, but the question that this study sets itself is whether they are really enabled to choose among various valuable functionings, and whether they really have substantive freedom to achieve and to choose (their real opportunities);

- the capability approach concentrates on each and every person's life situation, on what each and every person can actually do and be, but people's life is framed (enhanced or constrained) by social institutions and social structures. The constraints or the enhancements that people experience on the individual level within social arrangements should lead to the reexamination of social policy.

The capability approach is a "broad normative framework for the evaluation and assessment of individual well-being and social arrangements" (Robeyns 2005b: 94). The research concept of this thesis shifts the focus from an analysis of institutions by the quantity and quality of help and services provided and the way institutions are organized to a quite different focus: how young people see themselves in acting and exercising their choice and agency in the framework of these institutions and how these institutions, in these young people's opinion, influence their lives and form their life plan. So the capability approach gives an input to the social institutions and social arrangements to create the framework for their development and valuable life, but people themselves should both ascribe values to the activities and states they want to achieve and choose those which will make their life valuable. The present research is directed to the analysis of the freedom to achieve valuable functionings: to convert resources and services given by family, social institutions and the government into achieved functionings under the influence of conversion factors (such as family socio-economic background, place of residence, system of institutions). Moreover, this study sees young people as agents of their own lives.

The questions are: how do young people see themselves in the existing social structure? The opportunities of which group do they ascribe to themselves, e.g. do adaptive preferences play a huge role in their choice of future? So, the focus is on the youth's values and aspirations and the possibility of their realization within existing social arrangements. "A person's capability to achieve functionings that he or she has reason to value provides a general approach to the evaluation of social arrangements, and this yields a particular way of viewing the assessment of equality and inequality" (Sen 1992: 5). In other words: "The key idea of the capability approach is that social arrangements should aim to expand people's capabilities – their freedom to promote or achieve what they value doing and being" (Alkire & Deneulin 2009b: 31).

3. Nussbaum's list of capabilities and cultural particularities

The discussion of Nussbaum's list of central human capabilities is conducted in Chapter II. But it needs further consideration due to the cultural particularities of Russian society, the diversity of lives and conceptions of the good life among adolescents and young people. What is also necessary is the removal of obstacles connected with imposing a universal list of values elaborated in Western philosophical reflection on Russian reality. Endorsing human capabilities in the list, Nussbaum (2000) thinks that they are all important in human life and researchers can ask if people are really capable of these human capabilities, what people actually do in their lives and what they are in a position to do. So by taking the capability approach as an analytical framework the present investigation concentrates on the young people's actual doings and beings, on what opportunities they have and what they are able to do and to be, and whether they are able to pursue their well-being goals (in education, health care, travelling etc).

3.1. The discussion of a basic level of capabilities

There is no intention to test the whole Nussbaum's list, but it is taken as a starting point in order to apply it, firstly, in the eastern European cultural and social context; secondly, to people at the period of their lives when they effect the transition to adulthood; and thirdly, in order to assess whether the young people are able to function in the core life domains as adults or not. In this way both positions are combined: on the one hand, Sen's (1992) position as far as young people are compared not in terms of the possession of resources, the satisfaction in their activities or the income of their parents, but in terms of their abilities to function in a valuable way; on the other hand, Nussbaum's (2000) position in as much as public social and political arrangements should deliver to young people as citizens (although not adult citizens) *at least* a basic level of capabilities for functioning in the core life domains and should not allow them to fall below the threshold in any of the core life domains because such a situation is not only unjust and tragic in itself, but can, due to the high importance of adolescence drastically influence their whole life.

The threshold level of human capabilities or a decent social minimum should be deeply reconsidered under Russian social, economic, political and regional realities. The author agrees with Nussbaum (2000) that the framing of central human capabilities or opportunities to function in a truly human way can be achieved through cross-cultural consensus. Nussbaum (2000) argues that when certain deprivations are so

obviously terrible and tragic, people agree despite different understandings of the world that such deprivations are against a truly human life. But at the same time, the creation of a decent social minimum or threshold level of capabilities might be interpreted by the state and other responsible actors in the way that political and social arrangements should deliver citizens *only* a basic level of capabilities. Therefore, it is assumed that this basic level should be one metric for the assessment of human lives, and another one might be the median level or decent social meridian⁶³. Such scores take into consideration several ideas, firstly, they include “certain universal norms of human capability” (Nussbaum 2000: 35) and, secondly, they reflect on those functionings which are most valued by citizens, or particularly by young people, and might constitute desirable goals, whose non-achievement carries the risk of falling behind. This necessity to assess and weigh valuable functionings is due to the constant changes in different areas of life⁶⁴. So if the first list (for example, Nussbaum’s) is meant to be a threshold falling behind which people are deprived in their central capabilities and this situation is considered unjust worldwide, the second threshold list (for a specific country) means that if people fall behind it, this will make them unequal to those who are in the same political and social arrangements and are able to lead the life they have reason to value.

Obviously the barriers in the first and second list can be different, and the author thinks that for a country such as Russia this twofold structure could be appropriate. An example for this could be education, or in the words of Nussbaum “an adequate education” (Nussbaum 2000: 78), which is however not limited by Nussbaum only to the basics in mathematics and literacy: the level of valuable education can vary

⁶³ Such thoughts are influenced by the Innocenti Report Card 9 (UNICEF 2010). The Innocenti Report Card 9 “The Children Left Behind” (UNICEF 2010) proposes an advanced methodology to measure inequality in child well-being across economically advanced countries based on nine indicators grouped in 3 dimensions: material well-being, health and education. The gap or the distance is measured not between the top and the bottom, but between the median (which could be considered as a standard of normal living) and the bottom (“how far behind are children being allowed to fall” in the specific country): “the median level of child well-being – whether in material goods, educational outcomes, or level of health – represents what is considered normal in a given society and falling behind that median by more than a certain degree carries a risk of social exclusion” (UNICEF 2010: 3). The idea of the report is to show that countries that achieve the same level of economic development but have different indicators of child well-being could improve their policies to “the extent to which ‘falling behind’ is policy-susceptible – the extent to which it is not unavoidable but unjust” (ibid.: 4).

⁶⁴ Valuable functionings in turn are connected with “*conversion* and *choice* abilities” (Sadlowski 2011: 223; italics in original). The importance of conversion abilities can be illustrated with the example of the intensively growing world of information technologies which constantly produces new devices of communication with new applications. These devices are resources which can be converted into the capability of “being able to engage in various forms of social interaction” (Nussbaum 2000: 79) or of ‘being able to express own ideas’. Such new devices as tablet PCs or smartphones request a new conversion ability from people in order to use them. “Developing conversion and choice abilities might be explained by the experiences made based on former capabilities and their realization as functionings” (Leßmann 2009 cited in Sadlowski 2011: 223).

among people worldwide and can go beyond basic education. As stated in Chapter I, higher education is becoming very popular and valuable among young Russians. The educational system in Russia provides an obligatory and free basic general education, and gives an opportunity to continue in vocational training and secondary specialized education while also allowing students to complete their general education at school, with higher education being accessible only to those who pass the necessary examinations. The status of higher education is very high and the question is whether young people feel that they are able to receive higher education in their circumstances.

Although the idea of a medium list could be criticized, the point behind it is that every person should at least have an opportunity for the highest potential, for the maximum extension of own freedoms which other people in Russia are able to achieve.

3.2. The application of the capability approach in Russia

The capability approach was mainly developed by Western researchers based on empirical material from India, African countries and has been recently applied to the developed countries (e.g., Germany and the UK). The present research concentrates on a post-communist country and presents new challenges to the capability approach.

The capability approach provides a general framework but the issue is to which extent it can accommodate cultural differences, especially taking into account the important role of human diversity, and the presence of different well-being concepts among people, societies, cultures (cf. Binder 2009). Nussbaum (2000) argues that her list of the central human capabilities is sensitive to culture and context because it could be translated into more detailed and specific lists to suit the respective context. "Nussbaum has used the capability approach to develop a universal theory of the good: it applies to all social justice issues, and to the global world" (Robeyns 2005a: 197). Sen (2004) refrains from defining a definite list of capabilities: he proceeds from the context (e.g., the geographical area and the type of evaluation) and argues that each evaluative exercise needs a list of its own.

Few Russian researchers who have worked on the evaluation of the capability approach and its placement among approaches and theories of justice have concluded that it could be difficult to implement it in Russia. Kanarsch (2011), for example, highlights that any concept which comes from the West cannot be adapted to Russian reality. He refers to the Russian national character and the unreadiness of Russians to live under a scheme, following certain conceptions because it is specific to Russians to systematically violate rules. So, he calls for a cautious application of western theories and conceptual schemes. Nussbaum (2000) anticipates such cautionary words from

national and local researchers and writes, “it may still be problematic to use concepts that originate in one culture to describe and assess realities in another” (Nussbaum 2000: 36) and asks “whether it is appropriate to use a universal framework at all, rather than a plurality of different though related frameworks [...] whether the framework we propose, if a single universal one, is sufficiently flexible to enable us to do justice to the human variety we find” (ibid.: 40). She supports the idea of creating a general framework of universal values and responds to arguments from the perspectives of culture, diversity and paternalism. Research should pay cautious attention to cultural variety, cultural particularities, local knowledge in the understanding of people’s problems and aspects of human life, and not make “each tradition the last word” (ibid.: 49) in the assessment of the quality of life. Furthermore, she highlights various types of diversity but says that they should be “compatible with human dignity and other basic values” (ibid.: 51). Finally, paternalism gives an impulse both to reconsider ideas that take into consideration the respect of people’s ways of life in a pluralistic society and “to prefer a form of universalism that is compatible with freedom and choice of the most significant sorts” (ibid.: 51). People should feel free to choose and pursue ways of life they value, to form and follow own conceptions of value, but their sets are limited “by the protection of the equal worth of the liberties of others” (ibid.: 55).

The use of Nussbaum’s universalistic list in order to assess young people’s capability sets should be verified through these three arguments. Firstly, following Nussbaum, research moves away from taking culture for granted and ascribing to it a decisive role in the way how people live in Russia. The ideas mentioned above (Kanarsch 2011) about the important role of the Russian national character in influencing how Russians lead their lives and, grounded on it, the systematic violation of rules should not mislead researchers to put aside Western theories and concepts of justice and equality. The particularities of Russian culture and traditions and its influence through norms and prescriptions will be assessed in the framework of social conversion factors which may influence the value of functionings, the choice of functioning vector and the construction and ranking of capability sets (cf. Binder 2009).

Binder (2009) emphasizes several ways how cultural contexts can affect capability sets and the conversion of commodities and goods into functionings: 1) different attitudes through different social groups and societies to what is taken to be a ‘commodity’; 2) “cultural influence on the characteristics of commodities themselves” (ibid.: 213)⁶⁵; besides, the conversion of commodities and its characteristics into functionings can be either restricted or increased by cultural factors; 3) ascription of

⁶⁵ Gasper (1997) also pays attention to the cultural analysis of characteristics.

value to different functionings in different cultures. Culture, particularities of national character and traditions should be taken into account because they influence values, capability sets and choices, but they should not be considered the final argument in order to explain people's choices. In the capability perspective there are already studies that try to combine local perspectives with universal norms of human capability. Young (2009) used the capability perspective "to combine the local perspective on valued learning within a framework of generic elements of valued learning outcome through which to evaluate substantive freedoms of the individual to improve the life" (Young 2009: 296).

Secondly, the argument of diversity leads to a consideration of the different ways of lives and actions which do not harm others and are attuned with human dignity and basic values. There are different styles of living that adolescents and young people have in Russia. As mentioned in Chapter I, youth subcultures, different educational and professional plans that young people choose, their participation in different organizations (political, sportive, environmental) show that young people have different forms of activities and lives.

Finally, the endorsement of universal norms is compatible with the respect for different ways people are leading and choosing to lead their lives, and the many conceptions of the good life people might have, but in case people's values and their actions harm others, such diversity in life styles should be considered in the framework of legitimacy and justice.

People might have different ideas on the good life, which is why the list is not a list of actual functions that people should perform, but a list of opportunities for functionings and which gives people space to function in the way they value (cf. Nussbaum 2000). This research uses the list but is oriented to the spaces that young people define, their real opportunities in order to pursue their valued functionings. The list can be modified, broadened, and extended following the conceptions of the good life that young Russians have. Moreover, the analysis can give a view of those capabilities that are valuable for only certain groups of young people, capabilities that may not have such a central importance in the life of every single person, but are central for certain people (for example, boys who have to do national service).

Assessing the adolescents' and young people's capability then sets the research focus on "the range of options a person has in deciding what kind of life to lead" (Drèze & Sen 2002: 36), or the various alternative combinations of functionings adolescents have and from which they can choose that vector which allows them to achieve what they value. The lack of such alternative combinations, the lack of real opportunities, the impossibility to live the way he/she wants are considered to be the

influence of personal circumstances and even more so social constraints (state structures, social norms, state institutes, place of residence, family socio-economic situation, local circumstances). The gap between the opportunities of those adolescents who have more real opportunities and those who do not have a choice or only a limited choice can be assessed in terms of social and personal conversion factors. “The extent to which people have the opportunity to achieve outcomes that they value and have reason to value” (Sen 1999a: 291) is also assessed in connection with geographical circumstances.

In order to proceed to the conceptual scheme of this study it is worth giving a brief summary of the assumptions on which it is based. Among them are the notion that the distribution of capabilities is unequal and depends on the family social and financial situation, the level of urbanization of the respective city/town/area; the existence of a gap between the capability set of young people from small towns and the capability set of young people from big cities. How can the capability approach close this gap? And how can it close the gap between the capability set of young people from low-income families and that of young people from well-off families?

4. Research framework

The conceptual scheme presented in Chapter II must be reconsidered in order to accommodate the particularities of the period of adolescence and the transition from childhood to adulthood. The conceptual framework has been further elaborated and presented in Figure 9. This table is based on “A stylised non-dynamic representation of a person’s capability set and her social and personal context” (Robeyns 2005b: 98) and has been revised taking account of Bartelheimer (2011), Burchardt (2009), Leßmann and Bonvin (2011), Sadlowski (2011) and Sen (1999a). The next part will explain the analytical work done for the development of the research framework.

The conceptual framework of the conversion of resources into valuable doings and beings as well as the choice of a specific vector of valuable functionings in order to reach achieved functionings (or well-being achievement) and to follow the way of life a young person values, is presented in Figure 1.

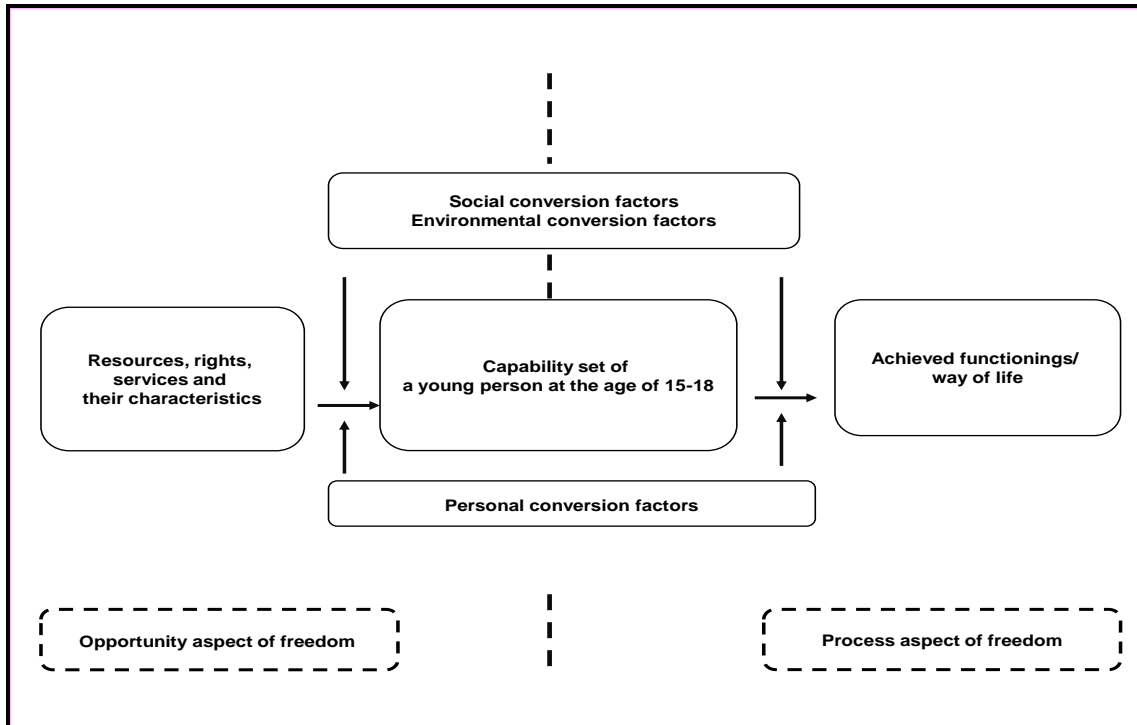


Figure 1. The conversion of resources into valuable beings and doings and the choice of a vector of valuable functionings (modified after Robeyns 2005b, Bartelheimer 2011)

Note: The inclusion of the process and opportunity aspects of freedom in the conceptual scheme is influenced by Bartelheimer (2011), but their graphical representation is needed to be further expanded.

— — — — The dotted line indicates a conventional border between the opportunity and process aspects of freedom. Whereas the opportunity aspect is concerned with “*opportunities to achieve valued outcomes*”, the process aspect is concerned with “*processes of decision making*” (Sen 1999a: 291; italics in original). The dotted line is also used to frame the different aspects of freedom in order to highlight their placement in the scheme.

To form adolescents’ and young people’s capability set what is needed is two components:

- 1) combination of resources and conversion factors:

“By conceiving the capability set as resulting from the interaction of both resources *and* conversion factors, the CA reminds us that neither material conditions – including commodities or goods – nor institutions and skills are sufficient for ensuring a good life. It takes the concurrence of both” (Leßmann & Bonvin 2011: 92; italics in original).

- 2) conversion ability:

“A resource may only be converted into a valuable doing and being if it is possible to set up a relation between the resource characteristic and the person via conversion. [...] The range of child capabilities reached with certain resources if influenced by the child’s age – corresponding conversion ability and by the quality and the amount of co-conversion and proxy-conversion executed through agency by adults, mainly by key-caregivers. The child’s conversion ability is

restricted and will broaden according to age by learning shaped through the input and opportunities endowed by their families, care-givers and the society as a whole. We face a dynamic conversion relation between resources and capabilities (and functionings) which changes and evolves during growing-up and development” (Sadlowski 2011: 218-219).

“Conversion abilities determine the availability of capabilities” (Sadlowski 2011: 220), and together with choice abilities are acquired and developed through formal and informal education (Vaughan 2007 cited in Sadlowski 2011). The abilities to convert and to choose are acquired through successive development from the basic abilities (use of a spoon in order to be able to eat, learning how to play with a ball in order to be able to play) to the more complicated abilities (acquired knowledge of school subjects in order to be able to pass the entrance exam to university) (cf. Sadlowski 2011). It means that conversion and choice processes are formed through the process of socialization, through the formal education in kindergartens, schools, sportive and artistic courses and through informal education, namely parents, siblings, relatives, friends.

The ability to convert resources increases with age and experience and is not a static process. Such ability is improved, supported and, in the early stages, assisted by parents and care-givers. The influence of parents and care-givers is apparent not only in the availability of resources, but also in the conversion of resources into valuable beings and doings through their agency. Parents also pursue their agency goals concerning their children and may influence their children’s capability set with their values. For example, they might insist and prepare them for special educational and work trajectories.

Sadlowski (2011) adds a new element – the agency of significant others - in a scheme for children. Sadlowski’s scheme for children looks like this: “*personal conversion and choice*”, “*proxy conversion and choice* [...] agency, executed by someone for a child”, and “conversion and choice processes are shaped by *societal and political* conditions” (Sadlowski 2011: 220; italics in original). Sadlowski (2011: 223; italics in original) highlights the importance of “the building-up of the individual *conversion and choice* abilities” in childhood, while in adolescence, from the perspective of present research, the main (basic) abilities have been already learned, although the parents’ (caregivers’) role is still important (Figure 2). In childhood and adolescence conversion and choice processes are different although they depend on personal characteristics, agency of significant people (parents and caregivers), social context and environmental conversion factors.

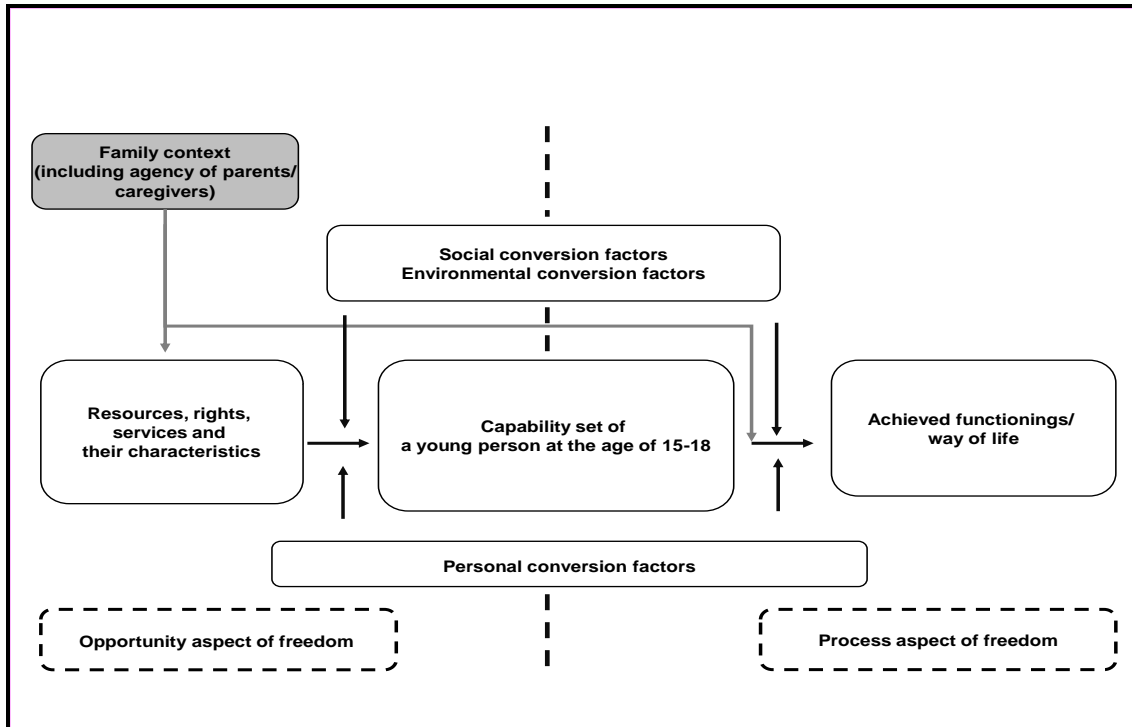


Figure 2. The influence of the family context on the capability formation and the choice of a vector of valuable functionings (modified after Robeyns 2005b, Bartelheimer 2011, Sadlowski 2011)

Note: The function of the grey colour is to make a new box visually distinguishable. Moreover, it is needed to indicate the direction of arrows.

- - - - The dotted line indicates a conventional border between the opportunity and process aspects of freedom.

Biggeri et al. (2006) also highlight the influence of agency of others, namely parents, or care-givers on the choice by the child or adolescent of valuable functionings. Parents’ decision making can clash with the child’s or adolescent’s desire to be more autonomous as age increases, but at the same time parental care is important for development and growth and in most cases parents’ decisions are enabling and supportive for the child’s or adolescent’s development (cf. Biggeri et al. 2006). Moreover, Biggeri, Trani & Mauro (2010: 14) state, “as suggested by Sen (2007) and Ballet et al. (forthcoming) in the case of children, there are several freedoms that depend on the assistance and actions of others (parents/ or caregivers) and, of course, on the nature of social arrangements”. The degree of autonomy in decision making and in the process of choice grows with an increase of age and the expansion of freedoms. But here the issue of responsibility for choices and actions made needs to be discussed. If younger children are “unable to take full responsibility for their circumstances and are dependent on others to look after and raise them” (Bradbury et al. 2001: 1), the autonomy degree that adolescents and young people have is, by contrast, very high and they are eager to make their own decisions concerning their

lives. In most cases parents act in the best interest of their children, their support and the enhancement of their opportunities and living conditions, but in this case where does the responsibility of young people begin?

So, besides parents' influence, the choice of a valuable functioning can be affected by young people's past experience, their values and ideas of the good life (Figure 3).

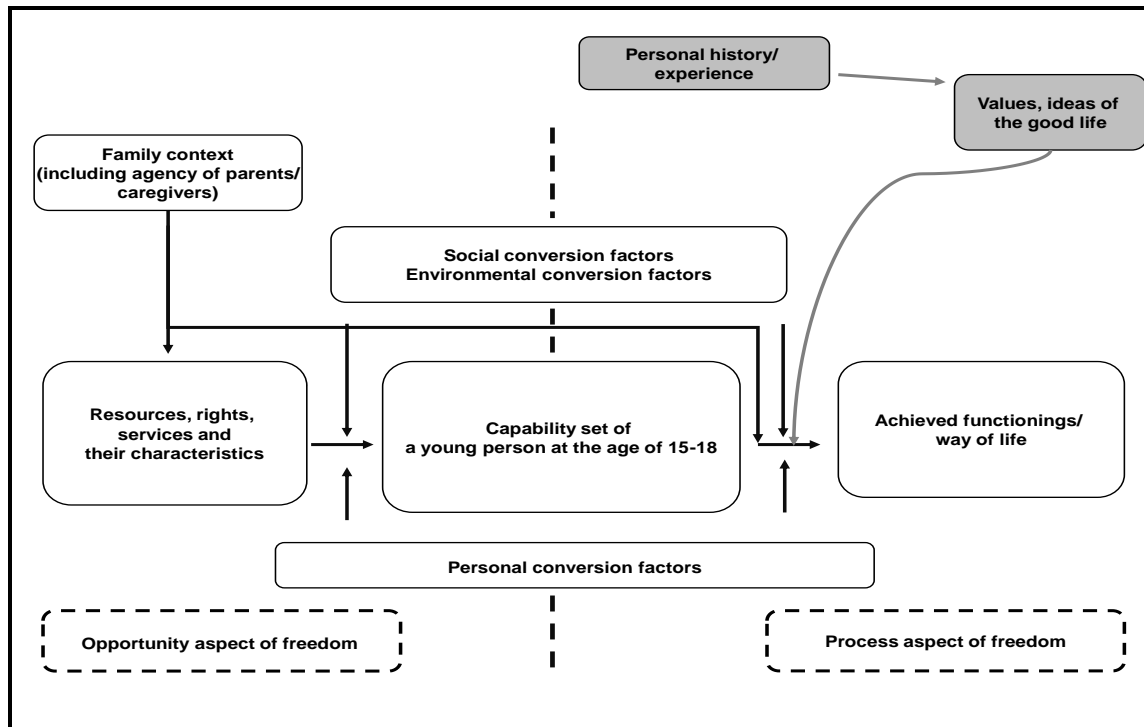


Figure 3. The influence of the personal experience and values on the choice of a vector of valuable functionings (modified after Robeyns 2005b, Bartelheimer 2011, Sadlowski 2011)

Note: The function of the grey colour is to make a new box visually distinguishable. Moreover, it is needed to indicate the direction of arrows.

- - - - The dotted line indicates a conventional border between the opportunity and process aspects of freedom.

Additionally, mention must be made of the influence of peers and friends (Figure 4).

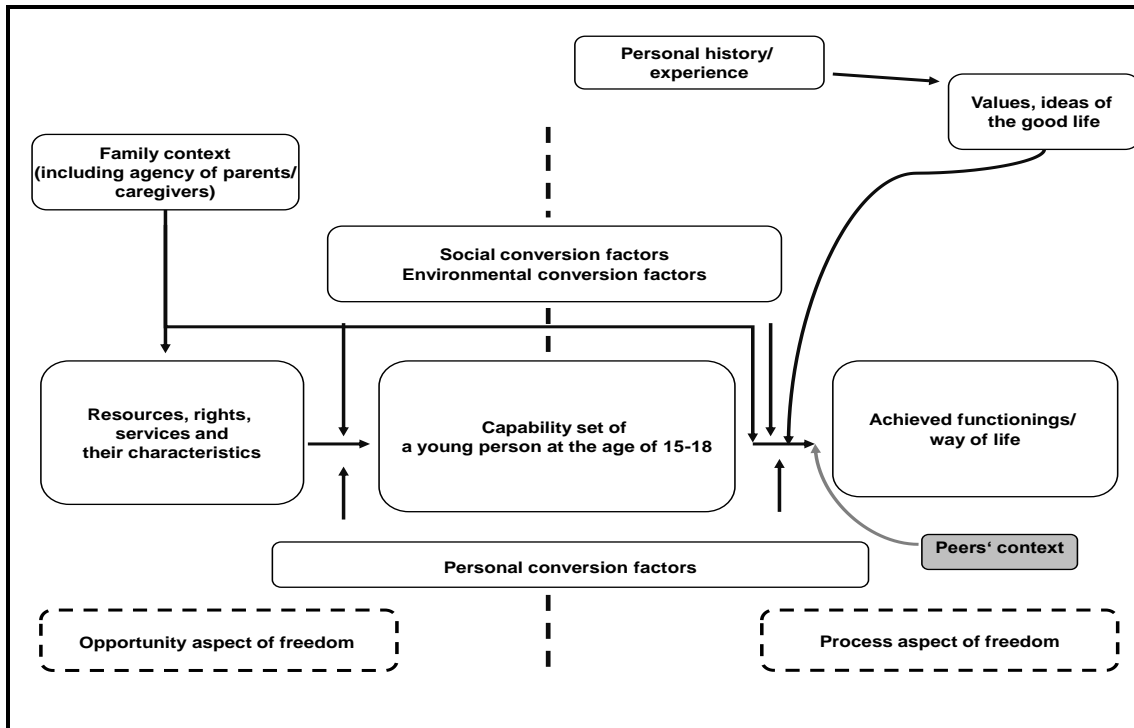


Figure 4. The influence of the peers' context on the choice of a vector of valuable functionings (modified after Robeyns 2005b, Bartelheimer 2011, Sadlowski 2011)

Note: The function of the grey colour is to make a new box visually distinguishable. Moreover, it is needed to indicate the direction of arrows.

- - - - The dotted line indicates a conventional border between the opportunity and process aspects of freedom.

Young people can be guided by personal considerations and/or by adaptation to the circumstances or to the context. Adaptation can come into play on different levels of the capability scheme:

1) on the level of the choice of a valuable functioning from the capability set (cf. Burchardt 2009) (Figure 5):

“The chances of selecting an advantageous functioning [...] from a given capability set is, it appears, strongly correlated with previous experience of socio-economic inequality, and this association gives rise to the suspicion that simply looking at contemporary capability sets is an insufficient basis on which to compare individuals’ well-being freedom. Differences in aspirations, which are shaped by earlier experiences, produce different chances of selecting a given functioning vector from broadly equivalent contemporary sets” (Burchardt 2009: 15).

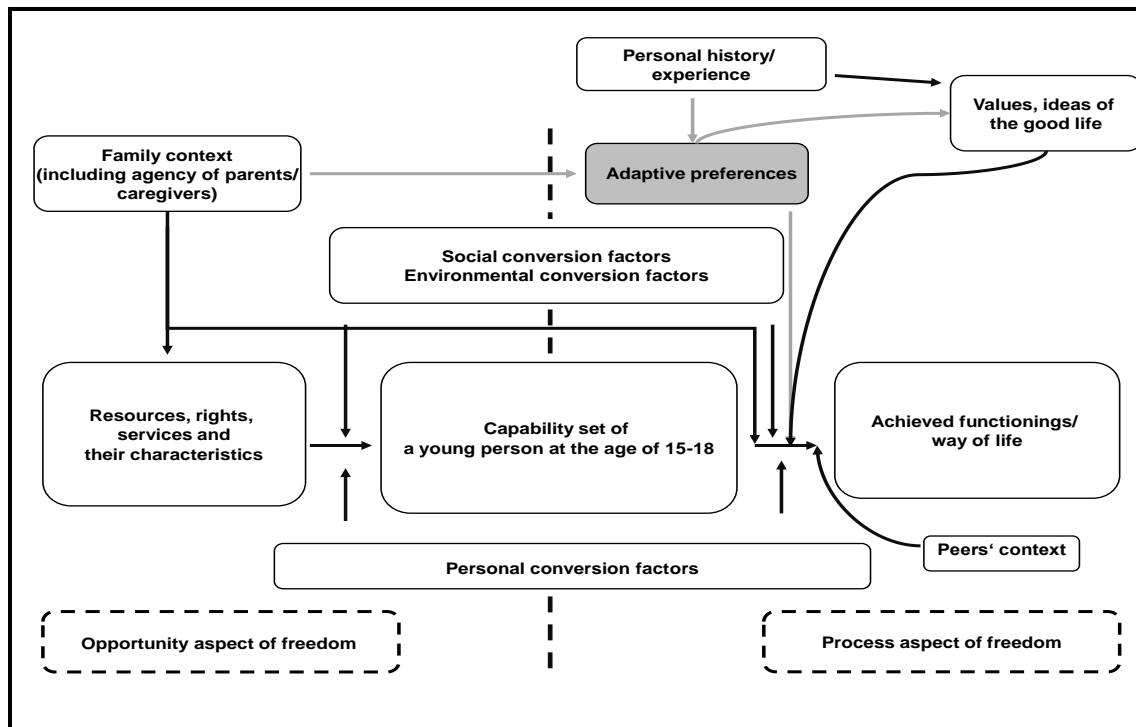


Figure 5. The influence of adaptive preferences on the choice of a vector of valuable functionings (modified after Robeyns 2005b, Burchardt 2009, Bartelheimer 2011, Sadlowski 2011)

Note: The function of the grey colour is to make a new box visually distinguishable. Moreover, it is needed to indicate the direction of arrows.

— · — · — The dotted line indicates a conventional border between the opportunity and process aspects of freedom.

2) on the level of the formation of agency goals and the exercise of agency freedom (cf. Burchardt 2009) (Figure 6):

“Agency goals, at least in the form of aspirations for future education and employment, are adaptive” (Burchardt 2009: 16);

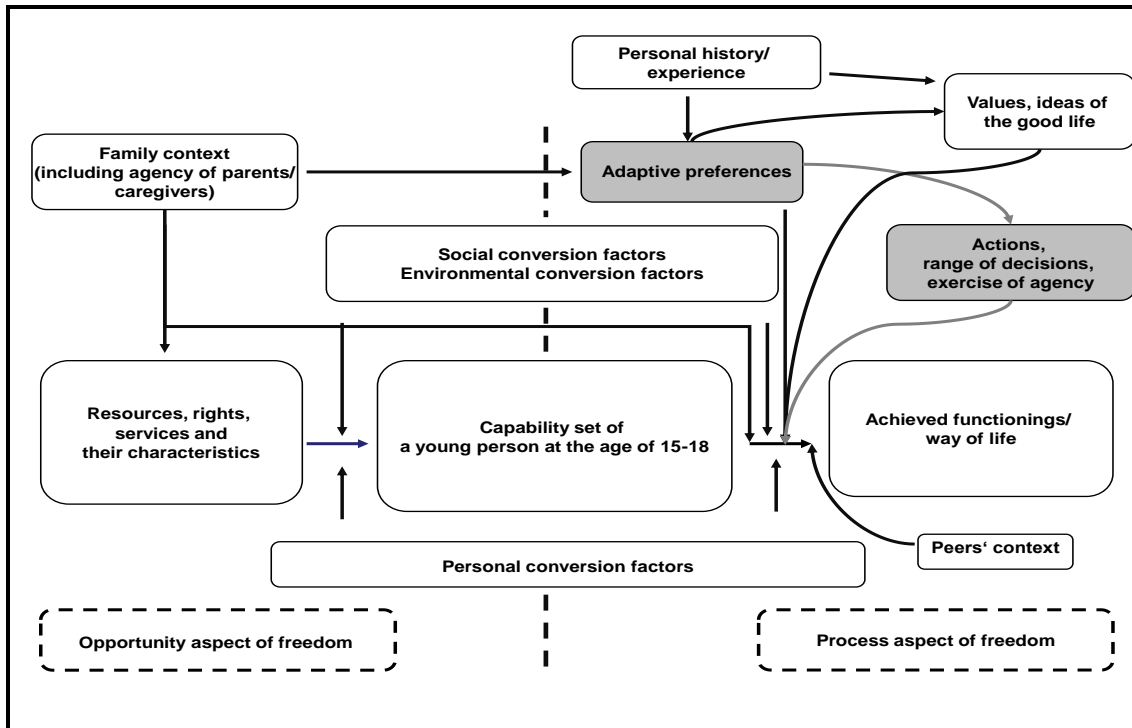


Figure 6. The influence of adaptive preferences on agency (modified after Robeyns 2005b, Burchardt 2009, Bartelheimer 2011, Sadlowski 2011)

Note: The function of the grey colour is to make a new box visually distinguishable. Moreover, it is needed to indicate the direction of arrows.

- - - - The dotted line indicates a conventional border between the opportunity and process aspects of freedom.

Social conversion factors or social context affect also the choice itself: decision making is influenced by social norms, social institutions, power relations (cf. Robeyns 2005b). The ideas of the good life or of the desirable life are formed gradually, and the young people acquire social norms and cultural values during the process of socialization (Figure 7). Cultural influence has been discussed earlier, but it is worth repeating here that different cultures might ascribe different values to functionings, and the choice of functionings in turn can be restricted by cultural factors (cf. Binder 2009).

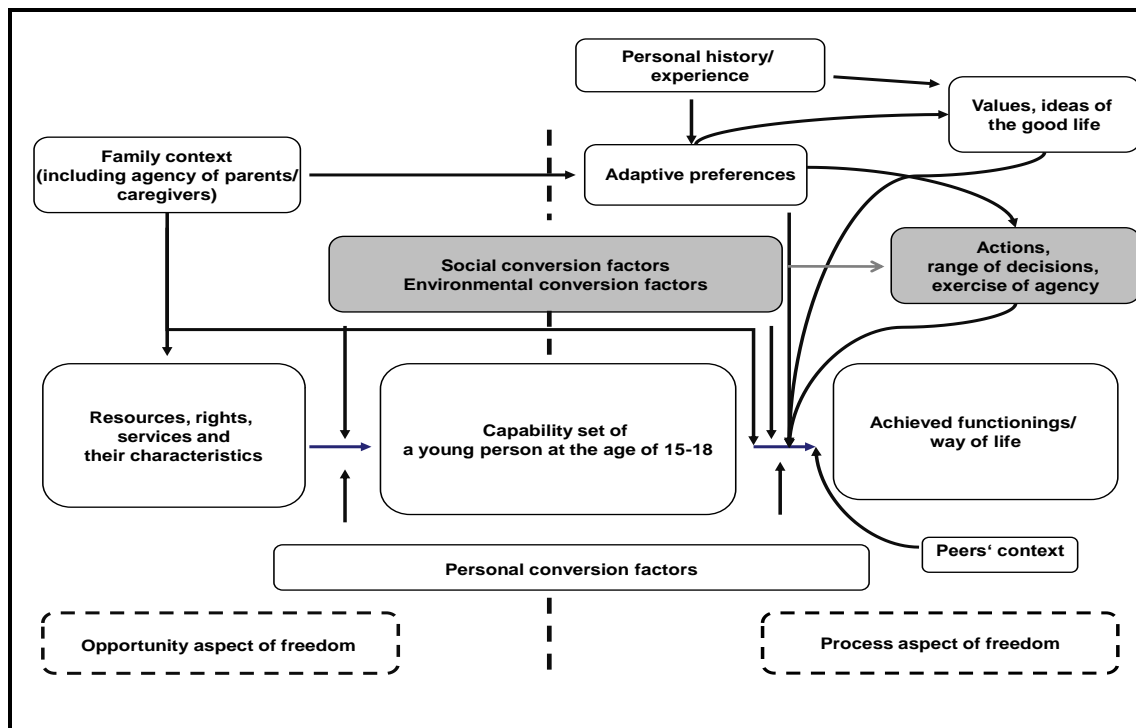


Figure 7. The influence of social conversion factors on young people's values (modified after Robeyns 2005b, Burchardt 2009, Bartelheimer 2011, Sadlowski 2011)

Note: The function of the grey colour is to make a new box visually distinguishable. Moreover, it is needed to indicate the direction of arrows.

— — — — The dotted line indicates a conventional border between the opportunity and process aspects of freedom.

Resources that adolescents have depend in most cases on the family socio-economic background, transfers, non-market resources that the family possesses, and according to Sen (1999a), on their distribution among family members. Additionally, in order to have some important capabilities such as 'being able to be adequately educated' or 'being in good health' the non-market resources embodied in schools, health care, and sport activities should be at children's and young people's disposition in order to translate their characteristics via conversion into these capabilities (cf.

Sadlowski 2011). It is important to take into consideration that what young people can achieve “is influenced by economic opportunities, political liberties, social powers, and the conditions of good health, basic education, and the encouragement and cultivation of initiatives” (Sen 1999a: 5). It means that instrumental freedoms “contribute, directly or indirectly, to the overall freedom people have to live the way they would like to live” (ibid.: 38) and influence the individual abilities to convert resources into valuable functionings (Figure 8).

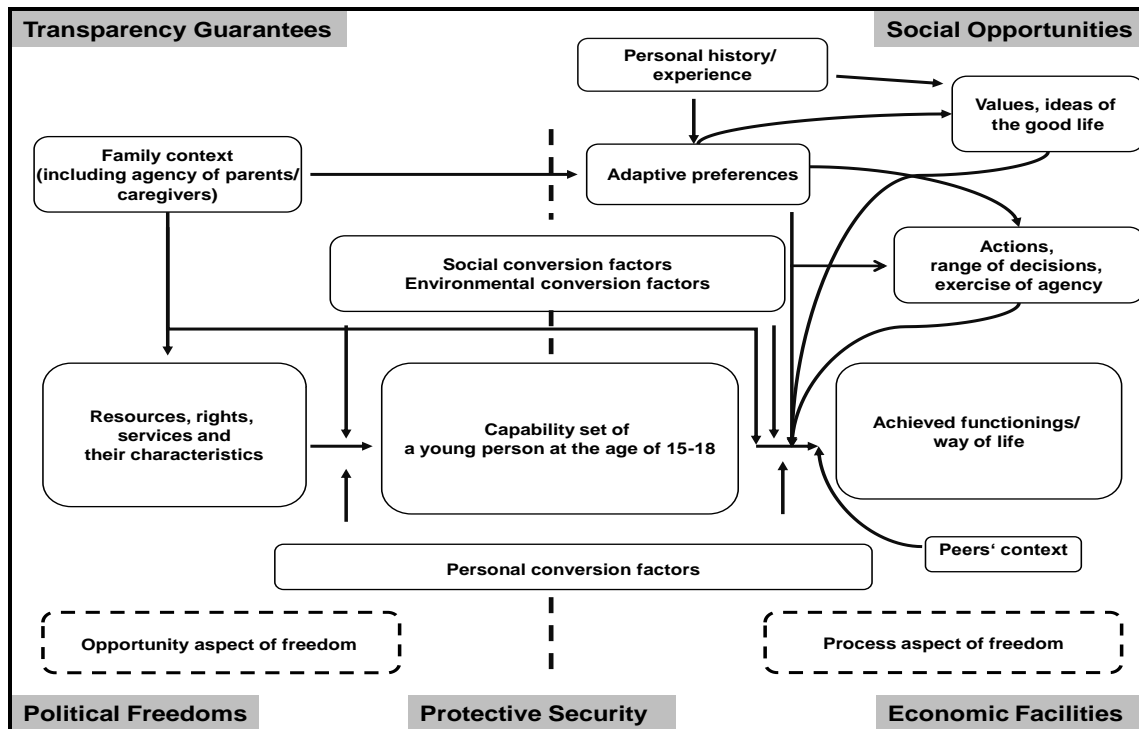


Figure 8. The influence of instrumental freedoms on the expansion of individual capability (modified after Sen 1999a, Robeyns 2005b, Burchardt 2009, Bartelheimer 2011, Sadlowski 2011)

Note: The function of the grey colour is to make a new box visually distinguishable. Moreover, it is needed to indicate the direction of arrows.

— — — — The dotted line indicates a conventional border between the opportunity and process aspects of freedom.

In the capability literature, there is already a discussion about the interconnection and interaction of resources and conversion factors: “they are interlaced in many ways and it is often not possible to classify the conditions in a uniform way as either resources or conversion factors” (Leßmann & Bonvin 2011: 92; italics in original). Robeyns (2005b) also mentions that the inputs could also be social institutions broadly defined (Figure 9).

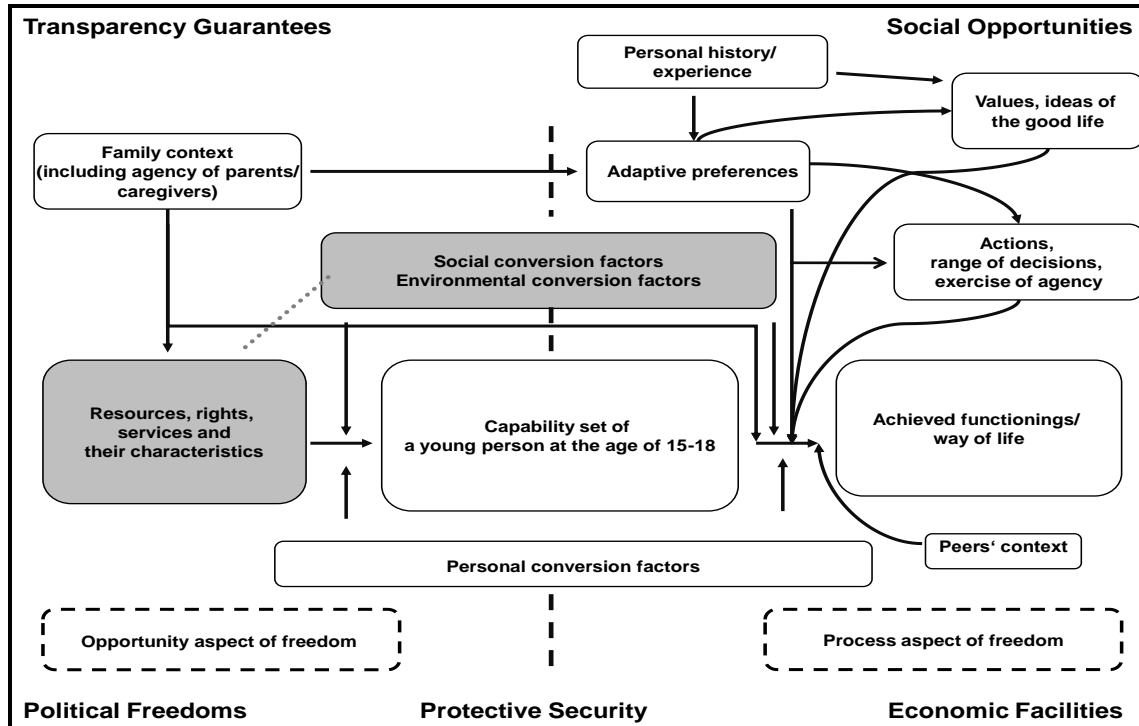


Figure 9. The conceptual framework of young person's capability formation and choice of valuable functionings (with interaction of resources and conversion factors) (modified after Sen 1999a, Robeyns 2005b, Burchardt 2009, Bartelheimer 2011, Leßmann & Bonvin 2011, Sadlowski 2011)

Note: The function of the grey colour is to make a new box visually distinguishable. Moreover, it is needed to indicate the direction of arrows.

— — — — The dotted line indicates a conventional border between the opportunity and process aspects of freedom.

..... The dotted line indicates the interconnection and interaction of resources and conversion factors.

The lives of adolescents and young people are presented as a dynamic process of permanent achievement of basic functionings, such as being nourished, being healthy, having good sleep, playing etc. and the extension of the set of valuable functionings, which can include more complex functionings when age increases such as using different computer programs, driving a car, speaking foreign languages etc.

Such extension is possible when resources are in turn expanded by parents, caregivers, teachers, the state and by learning the ability to convert such resources into valuable functionings.

The dynamic process of development in adolescence allows to speak also about future capabilities, the preconditions of which are forming progressively. Such capabilities are future beings and doings⁶⁶.

The framework of qualitative research and the research questions allow a focus only on certain dimensions of this scheme. The present analysis takes into consideration the methodological elaborations of the Equality and Human Rights Commission Measurement Framework within which the list of central valuable capabilities for adults and central valuable capabilities for children have been explored (see Alkire et al. 2009; Burchardt, Tsang & Vizard 2009; Burchardt & Vizard 2009; Burchardt & Vizard 2011). The underpinning element of their operationalization of the capability approach consists of three distinct aspects of inequality and deprivation: inequality of outcome, inequality of process, inequality of autonomy (Alkire et al. 2009; Burchardt & Vizard 2011).

Interpersonal comparisons are made in the space of capabilities and functionings. The starting point for the present analysis is a focus on achievements, on what adolescents actually are doing and being. But taking into consideration that functionings are those activities and states which are valuable, those realizations which were achieved but are not valuable will be also analyzed in the context of inequality. Inequality of outcome is “inequality in the central and valuable things in life that individuals and groups actually achieve” (Alkire et al. 2009: 2), in other words it focuses on the realizations young people achieve.

Inequalities in achievement may have their origin in inequalities in substantive freedoms: “even the freedom-based perspective must pay particular attention to the nature and value of the actual achievements, and inequalities in achievement can throw light on inequalities in the respective freedoms enjoyed” (Sen 1992: 5). So the focus on the achievements gives an answer to how well a person is doing and being, but what is more important to know is to which extent an adolescent was able and free to choose valuable functionings and what was his capability set from which he/she chose. It is important to assess achievements, but only regarding the capability set (all valuable feasible options) people have had to choose from at the moment of choice, because here the issue of adaptive preferences and the quantity and quality of feasible

⁶⁶ For a detailed discussion of the time issue and consequences of the present choice for the future capability sets see Gasper (2007) and Leßmann (2009) in Chapter II.

options comes into play. If researchers concentrate only on one chosen functioning and evaluate an achievement rather than freedom of choice and freedom of process, then they restrict themselves to a limited evaluation. That is why “any approach that places value on individual freedom must define and protect a sphere within which individual choices are respected” (Burchardt 2009: 16).

The next step of the present analysis leads to the capability set that a person has at the moment of choice and her real freedom to choose one or another lifestyle. To assess the capability set (and well-being freedom) all combinations of alternative functionings from which a person can choose should be considered. The method of qualitative analysis used in this research cannot encompass all opportunities that an adolescent has had or has at the moment of choice. The interviews were conducted only with the adolescents and reflect only on the subjective assessment of their life situation, while all important people such as parents, peers, teachers, doctors, relatives and so on were not questioned. Nevertheless, this study focuses on the capability set consisting of valuable doings and beings which were reflected by adolescents as valued and reproduced in the interview, and on the capability set in a reverse order: “identifying constraints on action is what enables us to identify what lies inside, and what lies outside, a person’s capability set” (Burchardt 2009: 16). Thus, the research is concerned with “individual formulations of well-being” (Unterhalter 2003a: 5).

The real opportunities that adolescents have are converted from available resources and influenced by personal, social and environmental conversion factors and their family context. The distribution of freedoms and real opportunities between adolescents from different regions and with different socio-economic backgrounds leads to the analysis of inequalities in capabilities and the opportunity aspect of freedom, e.g. the freedom of a person to achieve the states and activities that he/she has reason to value. The (unequally) distributed resources (of education, income, health care) which are shaped in the social context of institutions (e.g., educational system, labour market, legal system, health care) are converted under the influence of personal, social and environmental conversion factors into an (unequal) set of valuable functionings, and here inequalities in the social contexts are crucial for the analysis⁶⁷. An important focus is on the differences in the capability sets conditioned by external conversion factors: “the material and non-material circumstances that shape people’s opportunity sets” (Robeyns 2005b: 99).

⁶⁷ Although it is important to bear in mind that both the distribution of resources as well as the social structure should be accommodated into a single analytical view (cf. Wolff & De-Shalit 2010).

Here analytical logic raises Alkire's (2009: 33)⁶⁸ question once again: whether the capability scholars should promote "equality in the capability space", or whether they should promote "expanding capability" in general or till a threshold or bare minimum. The present analysis is conducted from the assessment of inequalities in achieved functionings to inequalities in the space of capabilities, and the question is what constrains young people from expanding their capabilities, e.g. valuable functionings they want to be and to do. The "interpersonal comparisons of advantage for the purpose of social justice" (Robeyns 2009: 85) are made in the space of capabilities, but the task for this research is not only to assess the capability sets in terms of whether young people "enjoy *equal* capability sets" (Alkire 2009: 34; italics in original), although "justice requires equality in the space of capabilities" (ibid.: 54), but to grasp to what extent or how large the gap is between young people's capability sets and what should be changed in their social arrangements in order for the gap to be narrowed and the capabilities to be expanded, and for the equality in the capabilities to be advanced. So, in this part of the analysis the focus is on the real opportunities, in other words on "the range and quality of the spectrum as well as the number of [...] opportunities and capacities" (Ziegler 2010: 99), and on the freedom to achieve those beings and doings that young people aspire to, in other words on "the real and genuine freedom to choose among such options" (ibid.: 99).

The issue of the good life as a central issue of the capability approach means conducting a life in the way that individuals can realize their potentials (cf. Leßmann, Otto & Ziegler 2011). Being in a crucial transitional phase, adolescents and young people are expected to formulate own conceptions of a good life whereas they are still under parental and social control (cf. Leßmann et al. 2011). The position of an adolescent in taking decisions important for their lives is concerned with the process aspect of freedom: the freedom to take decisions concerning their own lives and the influence of others and of adaptive preferences on the individual choices and actions. Accepting Sen's statement that "issues related to the process aspect of freedom demand that we go beyond seeing freedoms only in terms of capabilities" (Sen 2009b: 371), the Equality and Human Rights Commission Measurement Framework captures the process aspect of freedom by monitoring "treatment" and "autonomy" aspects (Burchardt & Vizard 2011: 98). Leßmann et al. (2011) also point out the scope of self-determination and autonomy which are important constituents "to render a good life possible" (Leßmann et al. 2011: 18). In addition, the present research takes into consideration both how adolescents are treated by social institutions and by other people (family, peers, relatives) on their way to the achievement of what they value and

⁶⁸ This is a question from Chapter II.

how autonomous their individual choices are. That is why the focus here is on inequalities in the process and inequality in autonomy. But the crucial question is whether they are really able to develop and realize their conception of the good life, given parental and institutional control and under certain Russian socio-economic and socio-political conditions.

Inequality of process or treatment reflects “inequalities in treatment through discrimination by other individuals and groups, or by institutions and systems, including not being treated with dignity and respect” (Alkire et al. 2009: 2). In the case of the present research, there are institutions and systems (educational, health care, after-school courses and activities) which influence people’s decisions and individual choices to undertake what they value in their life: “the circumstances that influence the choices that people make from the capability set” (Robeyns 2005b: 99).

Inequality of autonomy is “inequality in the degree of empowerment people have to make decisions affecting their lives, how much choice and control they really have given their circumstances” (Alkire et al. 2009: 3). This point is especially interesting in light of the discussion about the dependence/independence of young people from parents, and assesses the control and interference from others that the adolescents experience when they make decisions concerning their life.

Summary

The concern of the present analysis is to investigate the inequalities that people have at the point of making a choice from all feasible options, and to see whether such choice exists in the first place (this concerns the opportunity aspect of freedom). In a next step, this study will outline the influence of external factors (social institutions and government) which might constrain or expand people’s capabilities, and it will analyze the treatment of young people’s choices by others, as well as constraints that might be imposed by others on young persons’ path to the achievement (this is the process aspect of freedom).

As has been mentioned earlier, life is a dynamic process, and this is why young people’s views of their own chances to lead the life they have reason to value in future are also evaluated from achieved functionings with a projection of future capability sets, because the achievement of functionings at any particular time influences the formation of future capability sets.

This research does not have the aim to derive the central and valuable freedoms for all adolescents and young people and to endorse them in any list. Rather, its aim is to rethink the position of youth in Russian society and to examine whether the

social arrangements create a situation of equality where all young people can promote their real opportunities, and if this should not be the case, to what extent the young people have freedom to achieve the functionings they value.

Chapter V

Research Methodology

The probability of operationalizing the capability approach as well as the challenges and problems of its empirical application have been widely discussed in Chapter II. As Chiappero-Martinetti and Roche (2009: 193) emphasize: “there is no standard or exclusive procedure for “translating” the capability approach’s theoretical level into its empirical counterpart”. How the capability approach can be applied empirically depends on the specific objectives of research (cf. Chiappero-Martinetti & Roche 2009). But as Robeyns (2003b: 33; italics in original) points, “empirical applications should not be reduced to *quantitative* applications, nor to well-being measurement”. Depending on epistemological goals and relying on different methodologies, the capability approach could be used for the different types of analysis (cf. Robeyns 2005a).

In order to analyze young people’s lives, capability gaps and inequalities, it has been chosen the qualitative research methodology. There are several reasons for such choice which heavily rely on Denzin and Lincoln (2000:1) the qualitative research focuses on “*how* social experience is created and given meaning” (ibid.: 8; original in italics); 2) through detailed interviewing it is possible to get closer to the actor’s perspective; 3) qualitative researchers see the world in action and are more likely to confront “the constraints of the everyday social world” (ibid.: 10); 4) the rich descriptions of the social world can give detailed explanations of everyday life.

So, the qualitative analysis can give a deeper explanation of people’s choices, process of capability set’s formation and influence of conversion factors. In this case, functionings and capabilities could be distinguished through elements of narrative (cf. Robeyns 2005a). Moreover, it focuses on the actor’s perspective which allows to follow “*the principle of each person as end*” (Nussbaum 2000: 56; italics in original). Qualitative field studies have been already conducted in the framework of the capability approach, such as, for example, a study on youth care by Babic, Germes-Castro and Graf (2009). Authors decided not to limit themselves and do not apply already existing lists of capabilities, they prefer to keep the research methodology open. They had group discussions, narrative interviews and semi-structured interviews to avoid misinterpretations. Another example of the use of qualitative methods can be found in Young (2009), when the data from focus-group discussion provides the perspectives on valued learning outcomes and their influence on the individual’s freedom to live a better life.

As it has been mentioned in Introduction and in Chapter I, the current study is actor-centred that means that it focuses not only *on*, but also *with* young people⁶⁹. So, it pays “more attention to the need to listen to young people and has recognised them as competent and reliable witnesses to their own lives” (France 2007: 177). Besides, it gives an opportunity to young people to reflect and become aware how they live, what they want and how they can lead the life they have reason to value.

So, this chapter discusses research methods, in particular the methods of the data collection and data analysis, the process of participants’ selection and problems of data collection, and the steps of data analysis. Whereas both the data analysis and the data collection are based on problem-centred interview (Witzel 1982, 1985, 1996, 2000), the steps of data analysis are intertwined with an application of the capability perspective.

1. Data collection

The problem-centred interview is chosen as the method of data collection and is discussed in this section. Furthermore, the construction of the guideline and problems of data collection are considered in details.

1. 1. Methodological aspects of the interview as a qualitative tool and the choice of method for this thesis

In general, in pedagogical and sociological studies there are different quantitative and qualitative methods and techniques, which try to embrace children’s and young people’s perspectives, among which Heinzl (1997) underlines following: 1) Observation methods (for example, observation of interaction with peers, family; observation of a life world, of a day schedule); 2) Discourse analysis (for example, analysis of child’s and adolescent’s speech; acquisition of linguistic competences by children); 3) Tests (for example, school achievement; psychological development; satisfaction with life); 4) Inquiries (for example, structured, semi-structured, open interviews, questionnaires, group discussions). Interview has been chosen for this study, and such choice is justified in the next paragraphs.

Interview is “an appointed meeting which is framed in the form of a direct interaction of two people who act as Interviewer and Interviewee on the basis of agreement and defined roles” (Friebertshäuser 1997: 374; my translation). This direct

⁶⁹ This idea is influenced to a large extent by France (2007: 177; italics in original), who wrote that: “up until the mid-1980s most research was focused *on* rather than *with* young people”.

interaction could be distinguished by time and formed by the research design as one-to-one interview, or interviewer and more than one interviewees (for example, married couple; mother and child), or several researchers ask one interviewee. In the present study all interviews have been conducted in the type one-to-one.

The choice of a specific interview technique is a resultant from the analysis of research design, research interests, object, methodical arrangements and sometimes resources of an interviewer (time, mobility, financial support) (cf. Friebertshäuser 1997). The reflection on a choice of interview leads to interview techniques and a question: to what extent it is important and helpful to have pre-constructed answers (cf. *ibid.*). Friebertshäuser (1997) underlines that there are differences between pre-constructed and open forms of inquiries: in case of guideline or focus interview, an aim is to generate the narration in conjunction with the early prepared structure (questions), whereas in case of narrative interviews formally there is no prepared guideline. So “the choice of specific interview technique self-evidently structures possible results of research” (Friebertshäuser 1997: 375; my translation). In the present study it is important to get narration, but based partially on early prepared questions and topics. Such choice takes into consideration possible risks and difficulties. Among such risks could be named a danger not to give the interviewee the space for own thoughts and reflections, when an interviewee replies only on questions of the interview guideline.

Among the qualitative interviews which could be used with youth the following could be named: semi-structured interviews (ethnographic, focus interviews), narrative interviews, psychoanalytical interviews (cf. Heinzl 1997). The choice of the problem-centred interview (Witzel 1982, 1985, 1996, 2000) was conditioned by the fact that researchers have a theoretical concept before they go to the field, whereas the concept can be modified through the interview. In the problem-centred interview, the guideline is prepared in advance, and researchers have the scientific concept on all the subjects of the interview, but at the same time researchers try not to influence the process of interview, they do not share with an interviewee any of their theoretical presumptions (cf. Lamnek 2005). The term ‘problem-centered’ means that researchers proceed from societal problems to a personal meaning that a person has concerning these societal problems (cf. Friebertshäuser 1997).

The main elements of the problem-centred interview are discussed in the next section.

1.2. The problem-centred interview

This section presents the advantages and limitations of the problem-centred interview and the guideline construction.

1.2.1. Advantages and limitations of the problem-centred interview

According to Witzel the problem-centred interview is a combination of methods, namely “the integration of qualitative interview, case study, biographical method, focus group and content analysis” (Witzel 1985: 230; my translation)⁷⁰. It focuses on reconstructing individual forms of meaning: “this method tries to bridge the individual constructions of meaning on the hand and the influence of societal conditions on the other hand” (Scheibelhofer 2005: 1). It approaches a certain research area from different methodological angles by combining an open narrative beginning with prepared questions and other forms of data collection at later stages of the interview (cf. Scheibelhofer 2005). The problem-centred interview is frequently used in the German context of social studies (for example, works of Kühn & Witzel 2000; Mundorf 2004; Scheibelhofer 2005). In common, studies conducted in problem-centred interview try to take into account specific structuring conditions, under which interviewees gain experiences, incorporate them into their action orientations and reflect on them (cf. Scheibelhofer 2005). This important advantage of the problem-centred interview fits to the research design of this study.

Among main principles of the problem-centred interview the following could be distinguished (see Witzel 1985, 2000):

- problem-centered orientation which means that a research is oriented on the socially relevant problems, which have been already worked out before an interview phase:

“the interviewer makes use of the formerly noted objective conditions of the observed orientations and actions in order to understand the interviewees’ explanations and continue the problem-centered questioning and re-questioning. Action-related contexts of education, [...] gender, class or regional specifics are objective to the extent that individual action is a precondition and that they can not be altered by individual factors.” (Witzel 2000: 2);

⁷⁰ Although Witzel (2000: 3) highlights that “the PCI was developed as a combination of methods among which the interview is the most important instrument”.

- object-orientation means that the research comes from characteristics of an object and not from an application of an entire instrument, so it “emphasizes methodical flexibility in face of the different necessities of the objects being observed” (Witzel 2000: 2). This flexibility is also reflected in conversation techniques which proceed from respondent’s reflection (his/ her openness or closeness, eloquence, wish to share own opinions and views);

- process-orientation is directed on a flexible analysis of the research field, on consecutive steps in data collection and assessment. When the trust relationship and the feeling of being taken seriously are set up, “new results are produced again and again by means of the cooperation between the interviewer and interviewee” (Witzel 2000: 3), and both interviewer and interviewee could profit from the interview (cf. Mayring 1999). Moreover, it “may lead to alternative aspects on the same topic but from a different perspective, corrections of earlier statements as well as redundancies and contradictions” (Witzel 2000: 3). Redundant statements could give new formulations and facilitate interpretation in most of cases. Contradictions emerged can both help to avoid misunderstandings between interviewer and interviewee, and show reflections on problems, “contradicting interests, decision making dilemmas” (Witzel 2000: 3). This helps to understand how every respondent was reflecting on different subjects. So the problem-centred interview gives an input to make an interview process more flexible, taking into consideration an interviewee’s perspective on problems and his/her reflections.

The capability approach as a multi-dimensional approach “combines a focus on outcomes with a focus on processes” (Alkire & Deneulin 2009b: 23). It concerns with both culmination outcomes (narrowly defined outcomes) and comprehensive outcomes, which include aspects of the choice process and the identity of a chooser (cf. Sen 2009b). This emphasis on the process could be grasped in the problem-centred interview as well, because it shows reflections on the decisions making, balancing among contradictions, interests, values, aspirations. The interviewees can create their own logically constructed schemes of their actions and reconstruct their orientations (cf. Witzel 2000).

The main characteristic of the problem-centred interview is that it tries to let interviewees to express freely in order to create an open conversation, but at the same time it is centred on the specific problem imposed by interviewer. Unlike in the biographical method where there is no scientific concept on topics of the interview, and the interview is based on expressions from respondents, in the problem-centred interview the researcher prepares his guideline in advance and has a scientific

concept⁷¹ (cf. Lamnek 2005). During the data analysis this concept could be modified. So in the problem-centred interview there is a combination of the induction and deduction when the researcher can modify the theoretical concept of his study (cf. Witzel 2000; Lamnek 2005).

As it was mentioned above the problem-centred interview is an integral combination of methods such as biographical method, case study, group discussion, that it why the instruments of data collection are based on these methods. The graphical view of the data collection is presented in Figure 10.

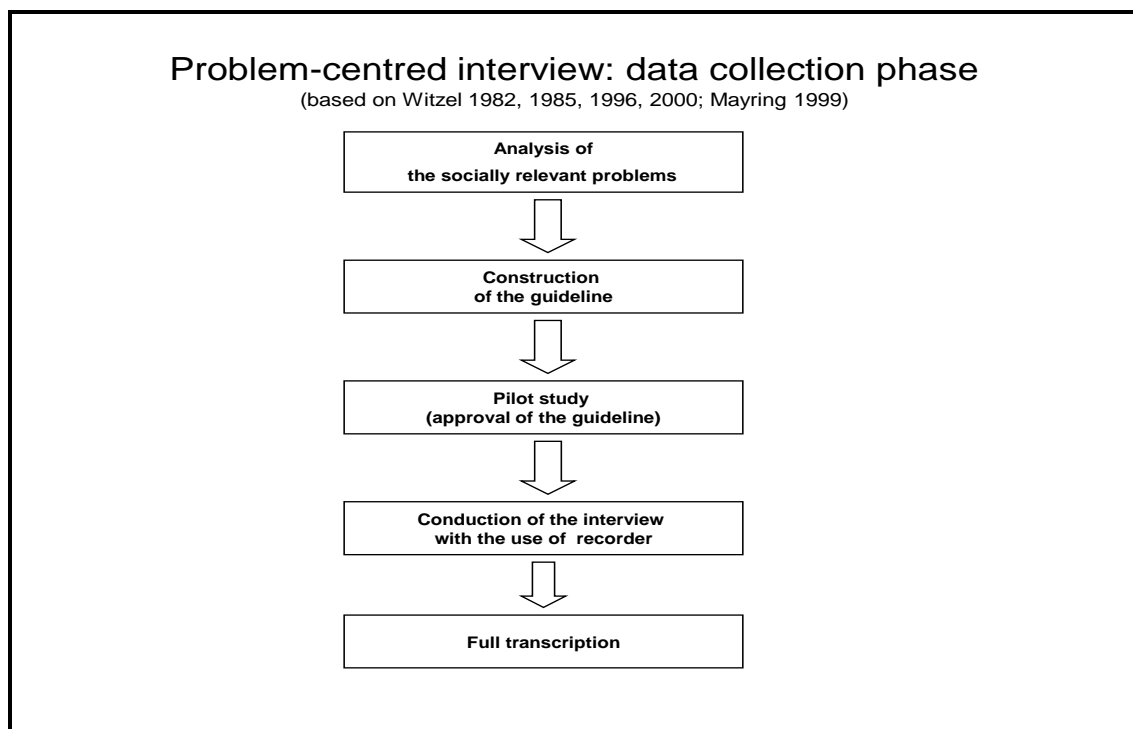


Figure 10. The model of the data collection in the problem-centred interview⁷² (based on Witzel 1982, 1985, 1996, 2000; Mayring 1999)

The instruments of the problem-centred interview are a short questionnaire, interview guideline, tape recordings and a postscript (cf. Witzel 2000).

A short questionnaire has different functions. The questionnaire is standardized and has to be filled out by all participants.

⁷¹ The theoretical concept is prepared at the stage of the literature review, during the collaboration in research groups or with specialists in this area. After the preliminary information is analysed, the construction of the theoretical concept and guideline can be started.

⁷² Although some authors mark out the pilot-study as one of the steps of the problem-centred interview, in the present study the pilot-study was left out due to the impossibility to reach interviewees in a short time period.

Although Witzel (2000) advises to give a short questionnaire to interviewees just slightly in the beginning as an 'access' or 'introduction' stage, justifying it by the fact that it helps to make a bridge to the interview and is very useful tool for the understanding of interviewees' social background, in this study it was given at the end of the interview. One of the functions of this short questionnaire is to provide with the demographical information (age, parents' occupation, education etc.) and later on to use this data in order to pose questions. But from the perspective of this study, to give it in the beginning could also cause problems: contact and trust relationships are still fragile, and interviewees can feel insecure to share private information (for example, parents' occupation).

Guideline is a crucial part of the problem-centred interview, which is not only a pre-structured scheme of questions, but also a supportive device for the orientation in the interview (cf. Witzel 2000). It reinforces the interviewer's memory and provides the framework for the further comparability of interviews. Guideline consists of subjects that should be raised in the interview and could be in the form either keywords and prompts or questions (see V.1.2.2).

The tape recordings allow to possess a precise and authentic record of the communication process, whereas an interviewer can also concentrate on nonverbal expressions, situation-related conditions (cf. Witzel 2000). All interviews are recorded and later on fully transcribed (see Appendix 1).

Directly after the interview, it is necessary to draw up a postscript (cf. Witzel 2000). It includes all important information about the interview process, discussed subjects, interviewee's nonverbal expressions and behaviour before and after the tape recorder starts to work, gestures, way of sitting and positioning during the interview. Important information which could be mentioned is first interviewer's interpretations, doubts, suppositions, observations.

Moving from the instruments of the problem-centred interview directly to the structure of interview it is important to underline that a stage of establishing of contacts is an important part of the interview process which can influence the whole situation. Interview's process should start with the administration of interview procedures. The interviewer should ensure the anonymity of participation in the interview as well as of transcript, interviewee's rights (right to give up from the interview at any moment, right not to reply on some questions). It is very important to enhance the confidence, to underline that interviewee's thoughts and opinions are central for the discussion, in other words the interviewees are "experts of their orientations and actions" (Witzel 2000: 5). In order to enhance an interviewee for the conversation there are several

techniques which are widely discussed by Witzel (2000), Lamnek (2005) and are introduced below:

- preformulated introduction question is an open question that can stimulate to an open conversation (taken from the biographical method), but at the same time first problem area is localized;

- general exploration covers main topics and is introduced just after the narrative phase. So an interviewee is asked to reflect on several topics, give some examples, clarify some unclear terms and expressions. The interviewer could use ad-hoc questions which “are necessary if certain topics are left out by the interviewees but are needed to secure comparability of the interviews” (Witzel 2000: 5). Such ad-hoc questions are also necessary in the case when new aspects or subjects have appeared in the interview, but are not presented in the guideline, so the interviewer could spontaneously formulate them, if they are meaningful and significant (cf. Mayring 1999). Further at the analysis stage, the researcher can use the key words of ad hoc questions;

- specific exploration is a part in the interview when the deduction comes into play (cf. Witzel 2000). The interviewer tries to understand the sequences of the data and uses several strategies for this. The first strategy is ‘mirroring’, which means that the interviewer tries to understand the meaning of what a participant has just said by repeating it. So in this case the interviewer can control the validity and accuracy. The second strategy is to ask further questions in order to understand contradictory and evasive answers (cf. Ibid.). The third strategy is confrontation which is also directed on detailed answers. But as Lamnek (2005) prevents, such strategy should be used carefully, so that the interview atmosphere established would not be injured by remark or disaccords. The respondents should not feel misunderstood.

The problem-centred interview combines on the one hand the opportunity of the interviewees to express their preferences in an open way, and on the other hand to grasp the “socially relevant problems” (Witzel 2000: 2). The principle of openness allows to express subjective perspectives, opinions and to show its systematic development. This gives the feeling of naturally occurred conversation and not just “isolated answers to isolated questions” (Bahrtdt 1975:13 cited in Witzel 2000: 3). The interviewees can create their logically constructed schemes of actions and reconstruct their orientations. Moreover, some precise details could be additionally asked by the interviewer to follow the story.

Nevertheless, it is important to mention some constraints of the method. Firstly, if the interview takes place in the given by the gate-keeper place and is supervised by the gate-keeper or by parent, then this causes concern about the naturally occurred

conversation. Moreover, it depends on the interviewee himself/ herself, on his/ her openness, sincerity, directness. Secondly, the interviewee can select the topics to discuss and can hide some ideas from the interview. Thirdly, when the interviewees reflect on their lives, they “document their past in a way which fits [...], highlighting certain features and downplaying others” (Silverman 2007: 8) and in this case the researcher has an invitation to “a retrospective rewriting of history with an unknown bearing on the causal problem with which this research is concerned” (ibid.: 8). Finally, from the capability perspective, a person cannot grasp all various combinations of the functionings. Especially it might not happen at the moment of the interview, when the interviewee should remember about a chosen vector of functionings and all potential functionings that he/ she could have achieved, so it means that the interviewee can formulate limited choices he/she could have had in the past. All these points are taken into consideration, but the study proceeds from Witzel’s (2000: 5) idea that interviewees are “experts of their orientations and actions”, so their choices and achieved outcomes are respected in the way interviewees reported about them.

1.2.2. Construction of the interview guideline

The guideline in the problem-centred interview is a crucial point and allows to structure the data collection, enhances a respondent to speak and gives the opportunity to compare the interviews at the stage of analysis. In the present study the guideline has a broad set of topics which could as much as possible cover the life.

An introductory question is broadly formulated in order to start a narrative phase of the interview. It invites respondents to tell about the childhood, reflect on the childhood from the current moment of the present. Then the process of inquiry continues with the questions prepared beforehand. The main topics for the guideline have been constructed on Nussbaum’s List of the central human capabilities (Nussbaum 2000)⁷³ translated into the everyday’s language: family, relatives, siblings and social relations; accommodation; health and health care system; security, safety on the streets, in the district; expression of emotions; education, educational system, value of education; friends, approval, recognition by peer group; control over one’s environment, i.e. influence on the political and social process; future (see Appendix 2). The guideline covers different topics and dimensions of life, because the capability approach “could appreciate *all* changes in a person’s quality of life” (Alkire 2005: 119; italics in original). At the end the young people are asked to fill a short questionnaire (see Appendix 2).

⁷³ See Chapter II.

Diverse inquiries have been used in order to construct the questions and topics. Due to the fact that the data has been collected in Russia, the regional particularities have been also taken into account⁷⁴. Some questions have been influenced by The Saint-Petersburg integrated form of the evaluation of a child and a family (2008), and partially taken from the following studies: Witzel (2000), Anand, Santos & Smith (2007), Albus et al. (2010) (see Appendix 2).

The introduction question. As an invitation to start, it is proposed a maximum opened question: "Could you tell me about your childhood?" In case when a participant cannot reply to this question freely and in details, the interview continues with an interrogation on relationships with parents in childhood and at the present time. In case an interviewee speaks on topics which could be further developed with the use of the strategies of the problem-centred interview (mirroring, confronting, specifying contradictions), the flow of the interview is guided by interviewee's expressions (object- and process-orientation). To sum up, following the first answer the structure of the interview is either modified in order not to lose the logic and sense of the story, or follows the consecutive order of the guideline elaborated preliminarily.

Family and family relationships. To continue a talk, the following subjects are proposed for the discussion: relationships with parents in childhood, relationships with parents or other members of family in the present, the time spent with parents, their care and participation in studies, interest or disinterest in young people's life. If other relatives play more important role in the family than parents, then a question concerning relatives and siblings is asked. The main subject is the family situation and the quality of relationships within the family such as the support/neglect from parents (completion of wishes, respect of rules, system of punishments and motivation) as well as the techniques to cope with quarrels and problems if they occur between a young person and parents.

Friends. The peer group can be an important source of self-esteem for an adolescent; he/she is recognized and could feel important and accepted not only by the members of family but by someone outside (cf. Hamachek 1973). It means, peer group could give a feeling of belonging, can help to define the identity, to show the personal and social competences. Moreover, "being liked and accepted by peers is crucial to young people's health and development" (Settertobulte & Gaspar de Matas 2004: 34). The relationships with and treatment by friends and classmates, the wish how a young person wants to be treated are the topics for this subject.

Expression of emotions. In this section, young people are asked whether they have somebody with whom they can share their fears, wishes, emotions, problems;

⁷⁴ See Chapter III and IV.

whether they trust family members or any other close people; whether they are emotionally attached to any family member or friend. It is proposed to compare themselves with their peers in the expression of love, grief, longing, gratitude and anger, in order to understand whether it is easier/ difficult for them to express their feelings (cf. Anand et al. 2007). Furthermore, young people are interrogated about situations of embarrassment, malice, anger, and if such situations happen, how they cope with. The adolescents' sexual needs cannot be ignored, but it is a complicated subject to speak, although almost half of 15 years old Russian boys reported that they have had a sexual intercourse whereas the percentage of girls at the same age who have had a sexual intercourse is considerably lower (24%) (see Currie et al. 2008). The sexual needs are discussed if a young person is eager to speak on this topic.

Free time, membership in the organizations. This part of the inquiry investigates not only in what kind of free time activities young people are engaged, but also by what factors the choice of such activities is conditioned, what opportunities young people do see to fulfill their wishes about free time and after-school activities (sport, dancing, courses or foreign languages). Social participation (adolescents' involvement in social activities), membership in political youth organizations or any other youth organization are in focus of the interrogation. In case that young people do not take part in any social or political activities, the reasons and possibility of the membership and/or participation are discussed.

Nature. Environment. This part discovers the role of nature and environment in the life of young Russians, their attitude towards animals, plants; pollution and ecology (cf. Albus et al. 2010; Anand et al. 2007).

Accommodation. The section on accommodation starts with questions on number of family members, who live with a young person in the same flat/ house, satisfaction with living conditions and allowance by parents to bring friends and peers to the flat/ house. If an interviewee expresses a wish to change the accommodation or to make renovation, the inquiry continues in the way why he/ she is not satisfied with accommodation and what should be renovated. The availability of own room and place for studies and free time is under a special attention in this section: it shows the opportunity to possess own space and to spend time without any disturbance. That it is why the questions of the possession of own room and adequacy/ inadequacy of the place for current needs are included (cf. Anand et al. 2007). Additional question is about availability of computer, electric devices, writing materials. The description of living conditions is followed by the description of district where the accommodation is located, social infrastructure near the house (school, hospital, shops, youth clubs,

church). Furthermore, a young person is asked whether there is a lack of any objects of social infrastructure in his/ her district, town, city, and region.

Health and security. In this part an interviewee is asked to describe his/her health at the moment of the interview, to mention if he/she has any problems with health (headaches, stomach aches, problems with falling asleep) and needs special medicine and/ or special health care services. Additionally, a young person is asked to reflect on his/ her health in the future: who can help, how to cope, what kind of problems could happen, why. This is a subjective assessment of the general health, but it can give the connection with the states of depression, anxiety, with school pressure: “psychosomatic complaints or symptoms are thought to be indicators of how adolescents are responding to stressful situations” and “subjective health complaints include somatic symptoms like headaches or backaches and psychological symptoms such as nervousness or irritability” (Currie et al. 2008: 67). Important part of the interrogation is connected with the evaluation of health care services in Russia, experience in hospitals, polyclinics, and at private doctors.

The next questions are about the availability of adequate clothes for every season and satisfaction/ dissatisfaction with food. It is asked whether a young person has an opportunity to enjoy the healthy food as well as to indulge in eating sweets and snacks. Healthy food habits are important for adolescence to avoid some health and social problems, to get into the way of regular diet; especially, a regular breakfast is a part of a healthy diet (cf. Keski-Rahkonen 2004 cited in Currie et al. 2008).

Security is an important issue to be included in guideline. In this part an interviewee should tell how safe he/she feels in his/her city or town and in his/her district in general. Additional questions are asked: whether a person feels insecure walking alone and/or with friends/family in the area near home during the daytime and at night (cf. Anand et al. 2007); where he/she feels uncomfortable to be alone in general.

Education. Young people are asked to evaluate their chances to get secondary and higher education in the existing educational system in Russia, importance and value of education in their lives and quality of education at school and higher educational institution. Besides, young people discuss their school achievements and educational and professional plans.

Control over one's environment. This section includes two kinds of questions. First one is about whether young people have real opportunities to influence socio-economic and political processes in Russia. The question gives an insight into young people's political activities and social participation. The second question is about the degree of the freedom of choice that young people feel they have in their lives. Young

people reflect whether they are free to choose education, profession, place of living and to make decisions independently. Additionally, they are asked about the fears they have towards the future, their evaluation of life changes and whether there are any events in the future they are afraid of or they wait for.

Future (education, work, fears). In this section an interviewee is asked to evaluate the life he/she leads (cf. Anand et al. 2007), to share thoughts about the transition to adulthood and working life. Besides, an interviewee reflects on what is important for the good life in general, what are the most important things in the life, what are events that make him/ her to feel insecure. Furthermore, young people might reflect on changes that they would like to have in their lives and what impedes them to change the life situation in the present (cf. Albus et al. 2010). Finally, young people are proposed to imagine themselves at the age of 30-40 (cf. Witzel 2000). This is a hypothetical question, but it helps to grasp young person's plans and the ability to reflect. Some other questions are hypothetical as well and might cause some criticism, because they do not reflect the real states. But these questions could help to grasp a set of opportunities a person has and constraints that impede to live the life a person has reason to value.

To understand the options a young person has in his/her life in different life domains, an ARB-model (cf. Witzel 1996, 2000) has been constructed during the stage of data analysis. This model will be considered in details in the section "Data analysis. Witzel's analytical concept in combination with the capability approach" (V.2). At the stage of the data collection, this model has been implemented in the interview guideline. The questions are constructed in the way that they try: 1) to find out *the real states* of young Russians today; 2) to analyze what they *want to achieve* and what it is for them the '*good life*'; 3) to investigate what *they really can achieve*.

1.3. Sampling and the characteristics of the selection of the interviewees

The "perspectives of the participants and their diversity" (Flick 1998: 27) are crucial for this study. This corresponds to one of the aspects of the capability approach which has to be taken into account in assessing social inequality - human diversity (Sen 1992; Roche 2006), which is "no secondary complication (to be ignored, or to be introduced 'later on'); it is a fundamental aspect of our interest in equality" (Sen 1992: xi). Moreover, Unterhalter (2011: 2) underlines that researchers should pay more attention to "how different children might talk about capabilities across different contexts". Moreover, young people "are seen as subjects with unique perspectives rather than objects of interest" (McAuley et al. 2010: 39), and in order to grasp the

differences between their capability sets it is decided to select young people from families with different socio-economic background. Besides, it allows to analyze how strong is the influence of adaptive preferences on young people's lives. Therefore, the family is taken "as a locus of person's development" (Nussbaum 2000: 251). Whereas the family shape influences the central human capabilities (cf. Nussbaum 2000), the study does not pursue an idea to assess the influence of the family shape on the formation of capabilities, although the variety of family forms is taken into account⁷⁵. At the same time, "the distribution within the family" (Sen 1999a: 71) is under a special attention.

Beside the selection by the family socio-economic background, the young people are selected by the place of residence. Both the place of residence and the family socio-economic background are understood as social and environmental conversion factors, but the place of residence can be also understood in Sen's term of "environmental diversities" (Sen 1999a: 70-71), because environmental and climatic conditions could influence people's capabilities: for example, being able to have necessary clothes or heating facilities, being able to breathe a fresh air or to walk in green areas. Besides, the place of residence could be recognized as "variations in social climate" (Sen 1999a: 70), for example, it influences the quality of life by "the prevalence or absence of crime and violence in the particular location" (Sen 1999a: 71). Russian researchers (Cherednichenko 2001; Konstantinovskij et al. 2011) underline that it is important to pay attention to the place of residence and the level of urbanisation that together with parents' cultural capital and their socio-occupational status determine young people's educational and professional orientations and life opportunities.

In order to find regional differences and to compare the opportunities that young people see in their lives, it is decided to focus on young people at the age 15-18 living in the Northwest of Russia: two small towns in the Leningrad and Novgorod regions (with less than 50 000 inhabitants each) and Saint Petersburg (with more than 1 million inhabitants) selected following two criteria⁷⁶: 1) they are located on the same distance from the megalopolis and connected with it by developed transport infrastructure (with dominant railway), so that the citizens could have the opportunity for working and educational migration; 2) they are located in regions where it is observed a stable economic development or towns themselves are distinguished by the economic development, it means that the enterprises could adapt to the new economic

⁷⁵ In the study, the young people are from the following families: nuclear, single-parent, multigenerational, patchwork and foster.

⁷⁶ The same selection was made in other studies on regional differences (cf. Danilova 2009; Danilova et al. 2009).

circumstances and/or some new enterprises have been created and provided working places for regional citizens. The names of small towns selected are concealed due to the local gate-keepers' request, but a brief description of the socio-economic situation in both regions can be found in section III.2.

Thus, the object for the study is young people with following characteristics:

Low-income families:

- Saint-Petersburg, the Leningrad region and the Novgorod region;
- Living in bad conditions;
- Unemployment, risk of unemployment or employment in low-paid jobs of parents;
- Low-income.

Better-off families:

- Saint-Petersburg, the Leningrad region and the Novgorod region;
- Living in good conditions;
- Long-term employment of parents in well-paid jobs (or businesses of their own);
- Parental wage average or more than average.

In the study, the focus is on a *young person* who is perceived to be an end and active agent of own life, *but* is connected to family and regional contexts.

The next section describes the particularities of data collection (e.g. access to gate-keepers and interviewees).

1.4. Description of data collection and its particularities

18 interviews have been conducted in Russian by the native-speaker researcher (see Appendix 3). It is important to mention that 9 interviews have been conducted in St. Petersburg, whereas 6 interviews in the Leningrad region and 3 interviews in the Novgorod region. In St. Petersburg young people have been from different educational institutions, namely school, two secondary specialized schools and vocational school. In the Leningrad region all young people interviewed studied at school at 11th grade. In the Novgorod region young people studied at school at 9th grade. The selection of interviewees in the regions has been controlled by the gate-keepers. Further particularities of interviews conducted in Russia and difficulties to get an access to the interviewees are described in this section.

In the qualitative literature two types of getting into contact with interviewees are distinguished (Silverman 2007: 255): 'open' access which is free and 'closed' or 'private' when access is controlled by gatekeepers. The ways to get an access to interviewees younger than 18 years old should be planned beforehand, because it could be a problematic issue. Firstly, in most cases the access is possible through the gate-keepers only, such as schools (principles, teachers, social pedagogues), social services offices (social workers, psychologists), sport/dancing/arts clubs (teachers, trainers) and etc. Help of gate-keepers is very important, but at the same time the choice through gate-keepers leads to the question about their competence: Who and how defines if a person is competent to speak about own life and decision-making? Who defines if a child or adolescent is competent to speak about decision-making? Who are excluded or defined as incompetent and why? (France 2007: 181).

Secondly, if contact with gate-keepers is installed, another issue is under consideration: permission of parents/guardians to have a discussion with a young person. Despite the fact that it is largely discussed the importance to give a voice to children and young people in definition of their lives and the recognition of children as competent and reliable agents of own life (cf. Biggeri et al. 2006; Sadlowski 2011), it is still important to evaluate the notions of 'informed consent' and 'protection from harm' from the perspective of their influence on the results of study and on the position of a child/adolescent as a decision-maker (France 2007: 179). In case of 'informed consent', there are two situations: 1) young people as givers of consent and 2) parents, guardians or people-in-charge as givers of consent. While the first situation is the choice between willingness or unwillingness of children themselves to take part, the last one is a next step in order to get an access to interviewees.

Informed consent is connected with the notion of 'responsibility' of parents, guardians, people-in-charge to protect children from harm (cf. France 2007). In case of the interview, it means to protect children from the possible harmful influence of research or researchers. This position of parents and guardians can cause difficulties for the research itself: to what extent the 'openness' of an interviewee is controlled or not by a consent-giver (cf. France 2007):

“Not only does it deny young people the right to make their own decisions about involvement but it gives control over the research to others” (France 2007: 179).

“Requiring parental consent can also be seen as a denial of young people’s right to be heard or to make decisions for themselves” (Masson 2004 cited France 2007: 180).

The ambiguity of the situation is that, on the one hand, parents or guardians take care of children or adolescents in the way that they will not be morally or psychologically harmed, on the other hand, the child should be heard, because the right to be heard is a fundamental right of childhood (Fostin 2002 cited in France 2007). Moreover, as Masson (2000: 39) writes “a child who has the capacity to understand fully decisions affecting his or her life automatically has the capacity to make that decision”, which means that a young person is mature enough to decide about own participation in the research.

Finally, the researchers have to be responsible and to protect children and young people from potential harm of some questions and topics of the interview.

In the present study, the ‘closed’ access, e.g. through gate-keepers at schools and centres of family support, has been mostly used. In such hierarchical structured organizations as schools and centres of the family support the accessibility is conditioned by the principle’s autonomy to make decisions, the openness to innovations and research, the willingness to take care of a researcher and organize for him/ her a working place⁷⁷. The desirability to help in the conduction of the research could depend as well on past experiences of organisations. If such experiences were good, and negative image of organisation and its practices was not created, the researcher would receive a strong support. Moreover, it is important to get the permission of controlling organizations (for example, the Committee of the Education). So, organisational context of schools and different social work agencies plays an enormous role in the success of the study.

Two main tendencies in the behaviour of gate-keepers with an external researcher have been found out:

- 1) to provide ‘the best respondents’ who can give a ‘correct’ information from the perspective of schools or family support centres;
- 2) to follow their own perspectives in order to resolve the problems of the most ‘difficult’ young people with help of new researcher from outside, so to select the most difficult young people in order to pursue the goals of organization.

In general, at first sight, school has advantages as a place to find interviewees: it is the easiest way to contact youth. But at the same time there are disadvantages: not every interviewee feels secure and intimate to give an interview at school, even if all conditions (a calm separate room) are followed. Another important factor has to be taken into account is that teachers can classify children and adolescents by status (Danilova et al. 2009: 11). Teachers define the pupils not only by their notes, who is

⁷⁷ This paragraph describes the experience received during the data collection in Russia.

capable, who is weak, but also take into consideration parents' professional status, educational level, family structure, living conditions. So they classify pupils in their own ways on better off and low-income pupils, as it happened during the data collection of this study. In the study this problematic issue has been resolved: the classification has been modified by taking into consideration the typologies that can be created in the framework of the capability approach.

In general, it is very important to create an atmosphere of trust, to assure the confidentiality and not to be judgemental (cf. Miller & Glassner 2009). Especially when the interview is conducted at school, it is essential to construct trust relationships, and avoid situations, when interviews are conducted in the subordinate way. The techniques of the impression management could be widely used: for example, "avoiding giving an impression that might pose obstacle" (Silverman 2007: 255) and creating the atmosphere of positive interaction. The interviewee should not feel as someone who passes an exam, because "interviews should be mutual process" (Heinzel 1997: 408). In order to protect the confidentiality, it is important to sign an agreement. In the agreement there are several points: the anonymity of the interview, the voluntary participation, the opportunity not to answer some questions and the awareness that the interview could be finished at any time.

It is important to think about how the researcher should be introduced to an interviewee, what status position the researcher should play (cf. King 2008) and how the study project should be presented. The issue how gate-keepers and later on interviewees "respond to us based on who we are- in their lives, as well as the social categories to which we belong, such as age, gender, class, and race – is a practical concern as well as an epistemological or theoretical one" (Miller & Glassner 2009: 128). At the same time, if there are differences between a researcher and an interviewee (they have different socio-economic background, different life styles), in some situations it can cause misunderstanding or distrust and unwillingness to discuss, but in other situations it could give an empowering reflective work for a researcher to understand who are interviewees.

It is important to pay attention to researcher's feelings and behavior during the interview, to "the experiences not only of our participants but also of ourselves as researchers" (King 2008: 175). Moreover, the researcher should consider participants as autonomous persons with own opinion and experiences, but also take into consideration that the process of the interview is the social situation in which every participant attaches own sense (cf. Hülst 2000).

The interviews conducted in Russia show that young people are willing and able to share their wishes, beliefs, and fears with researchers, with people who are

interested in them and their opinions and who respect them. Some young people mentioned that it was for the first time in their life when they reflected how they live, what they want to achieve and if there are opportunities for this. They were partially surprised to know that there are people outside of their social environment who are interested in their lives, problems, and aspirations and take them seriously when they speak about their lives, understand and accept what they feel in their lives.

2. Data analysis. Witzel's analytical concept in combination with the capability approach

The data analysis is based on the suggestion made by Witzel (1996) to divide the interpretation process into discrete steps which are: 1) Reconstruction of pre-interpretations in the interview; 2) Case description; 3) Biographical chronology; 4) Dossier; 5) Central topics; 6) Validation; 7) Systematic contrasting through case comparisons (A. encompassing, spreading central topics; B. selective coding) (Figure 11). Such steps as Reconstruction of pre-interpretations in the interview; Case description; Biographical chronology; Dossier; Central topics are steps of the case analysis while Validation serves to strengthen theoretical terms received. Finally, Systematic contrasting through case comparisons allows to work with several cases.

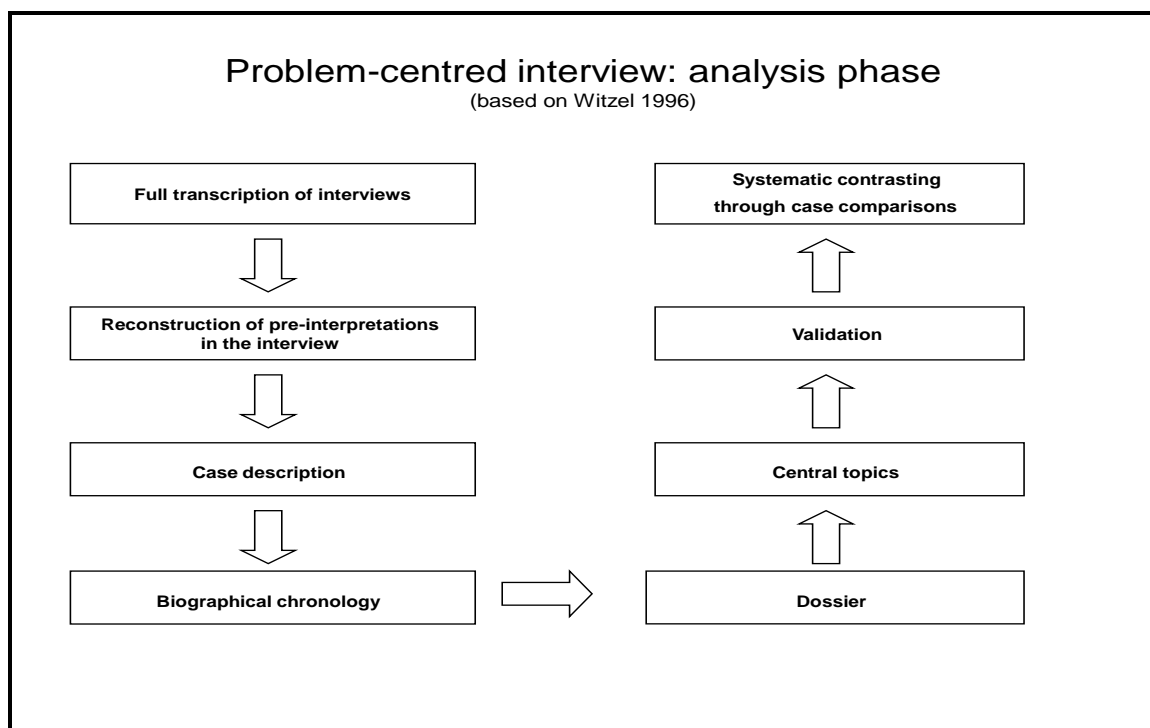


Figure 11. The model of the data analysis in the problem-centred interview (based on Witzel 1996)

Witzel (2000: 6) argues that “given the principle of object-orientation, there are various methods of analysis depending on the research interests and topics of reference”. Proceeding from the aim of the study to assess the life opportunities and chances that young Russians see in their lives, the following strategy has been elaborated: to combine a thorough case-study analysis which is linked to potential and achieved functionings with the construction of typology of spreading central topics evolved in the cases.

1. Reconstruction of pre-interpretations in the interview.

The first step consists in the sentence by sentence interpretation of the interviewee’s speech on basis of completely transcribed interview texts. The results of this interpretation should be reproduced in two columns. In the left column there are keywords taken from the interview guideline and “concepts which are suited to the thematic aspects in the interview partner’s account” (Witzel 2000: 6), it means, keywords found in the text (the principle of openness). The left column is meant for the comprehensive work with all subjects written in the guideline and also with new subjects mentioned by the interviewees. It is “more descriptive step” (Witzel 1996: 59; my translation). This could help at the stage of comparison in order to follow a person’s story and bring together all text passages, because sometimes an interviewee interrupts his/ her speech, spontaneously changes topics, gives different opinions and repeats.

In the right column which serves “more as analytical step” (Witzel 1996: 59; my translation) it is written the content of topics and peculiarities which also could be copied out as ‘In-vivo-Codes’.

Working in the framework of the capability approach the deriving of keywords in the text is made in the terms of Nussbaum’s List of central human functional capabilities (Nussbaum 2000): 1. Life. 2. Bodily Health. 3. Bodily Integrity. 4. Senses, Imagination, and Thought. 5. Emotions. 6. Practical Reason. 7. Affiliation. 8. Other Species. 9. Play. 10. Control over One’s Environment. A. Political. B. Material. It is also important to sort out the following components: values; achieved states and activities; potential functionings; resources to be converted; personal, social and environmental conversion factors; instrumental freedoms; agency.

In this connection it is very reasonable and convenient to use the computer program for coding. In the present study the program Atlas.ti has been used for creating codes and ‘memos’ (see Strauss & Corbin 1990). The program Atlas.ti belongs to computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software. It helps to import and

display texts; to construct the code lists, in most cases as hierarchy; to retrieve the text that has been coded; to examine the coded text in the context of the original documents; to write memos that can be linked to codes and documents (cf. Gibbs 2007).

2. Case description.

The following step is case description which provides basic and significant details of every case and is intended for better understanding of the case. Moreover, it makes a design of the biographical course. The main topics of the guideline as well as new topics mentioned by the interviewees are described using interviewee's expressions and small concepts. This is a factual description without researcher's interpretation.

3. Biographical chronology.

In the course of the step called biographical chronology researchers can "bring individual statements or sequences of text into a general context" (Witzel 2000: 7). In order to describe the case, researchers put together stages of individual biography and construct an ARB-model (Witzel 1996: 61). But taking into consideration the main aim of the study and using the above mentioned principle of the object orientation, this step in the present study is modified. Scheibelhofer (2005: 25; italics and bold in original) highlights that "with the help of an action model, Andreas Witzel reconstructs and interprets each single phase of an individual biography" and "this "ARB *model*" (**aspirations- realizations- balances**) is based on the assumption that each phase of the narration contains the wishes, imaginations and expectations of the interviewed person". As the aim of the study is not to concentrate on the biographical course, but to grasp what kind of real opportunities young Russians have in different areas of their lives, the ARB-model is constructed in the way to grasp achieved functionings, set of potential beings and doings and a balance between wishes, opportunities, instrumental freedoms and conversion factors.

The ARB-model in the original version consists of three components (cf. Witzel 1996, 2000):

Aspirations are justifications of realized and not realized options, but they are not simple wishes, but rather refer to conditions of actions.

Realisations are concrete steps of actions to realize aspirations and individual solutions. For the fulfilment of tasks people need resources and means.

Balances are related to decision-making and are consequences of these decisions and actions. They assess the relationship between aspirations and

conditions of action on the one hand and the influence of consequences of taken actions on the biography on the other hand.

In this study, in order to understand the options a young person sees in his/her life, the ARB-model has been firstly translated in the interview guideline in the following way (see also V.1.2): 1) to find out *the real states* of young Russians today; 2) to analyze what they *want to achieve* and what it is for them the '*good life*'; 3) to investigate what *they really can achieve*. It means that the main question in every topic is followed by ad-hoc questions focused on young people's choices, estimation of what they really can achieve and have achieved. So, the ARB-model was reconsidered in the following way:

Aspirations are young people's values and what they want to achieve;

Realizations are achieved functionings and real states, and actions that led to these real states (exercise of agency). Additionally, the attention is paid to the influence of conversion factors on the choice of a vector of valuable functionings;

Balances are the capability sets or various combinations of functionings that the young people mentioned at the moment of the interview. Additionally, the attention is paid to the influence of conversion factors on the formation of capabilities.

As the aim of the study is not to concentrate on young people's biographies, but to study the gaps in young people's capabilities and constraints that impede young people to lead the life they have reason to value, the shape of Biographical chronology has been modified and combined with the capability approach.

4. Dossier.

Dossier represents researchers ideas, his/her critical reflection on the process of analysis and probably forgotten or misunderstood details: "the dossier contains a comment by the researcher on the composition of the available interview materials, special features of the case, interpretive uncertainties, unusual events and methodical errors" (Witzel 2000: 7).

5. Central topics.

Witzel (2000: 7; italics in original) highlights that "the development of *case-specific main topics* is a first step of theory development with thematically or biographically oriented ideas for interpretation". Two stages could be distinguished. Firstly, the researchers abstract frequently emerging topics and patterns in the course

of the interview and ascribe them to central topics (cf. Witzel 1996)⁷⁸. Simultaneously they try to find concise and laconic statements to each central topic and to link these statements “to places in the original text, paraphrases and analytical statements” (Witzel 2000: 7).

Secondly, the subjective relevance of topics is checked for correlation with contextual conditions, such as specific life circumstances and social context (cf. Witzel 1996). In this case the ARB-model can be useful again, because it shows an interaction of the biographical course (in this study achievable and achieved states and activities) with social conditions. This stage corresponds to ‘axial coding’ by Strauss and Corbin (1990).

6) Validation.

Before the last step of systematic contrasting, it is necessary to strengthen the theoretical terms received through the case analysis; they need to be “*discursively validated* individually in relation to the text and then by an evaluation team” (Witzel 2000: 7; italics in original).

The validation through the text is necessary for the verification, modification or rejection of the interpretative hypotheses (cf. Witzel 1996). The hypothesis can be kept if any contrary evidence was found in the data, although Witzel (1996) warns that this contrary evidence as verification has to be carefully used. This step is connected to the work with the original text.

The validation through the discourse with the members of working group is equally used. Members can provide versions of new reading and understanding and bring to the “exhaustion of the interpretative hypotheses” (Kelle, Kluge & Prein 1993 cited in Witzel 1996; 67; my translation). The group work has only one danger: the interpretations might cause “sociological fantasy” (Witzel 1996: 67).

7) Systematic contrasting through case comparisons (A. encompassing, spreading central topics; B. selective coding).

At this stage, the main central topics of different cases are systematically contrasted, and the list of capabilities and valued functionings is defined for young people. Although the cases of the study are already interpreted, their comparison will give more results and new interpretations could be an impulse for the development of new ideas. This contrasting is carried out according to the principle of “maximum and

⁷⁸ “The assignment of individual passages to Central topics and their naming is the first stage of theoretical conceptualization and the formulation of empirically meaningful categories and theoretical statements, which must then be verified” (Witzel 1996: 65-66; my translation).

minimum contrast” (Gerhardt 1986: 69 cited in Witzel 1996: 68; my translation). The individual cases are compared in particularities and characteristics of their central topics and also with respect to region, and socio-economic background. The main idea of this step is to discover encompassing, spreading central topics. The aim of this step is to develop ‘core categories’ (Strauss & Corbin 1990) which tie all other categories together. Finally, the last step is ‘selective coding’ (cf. Strauss & Corbin 1990) which makes the typology more selective. At the stage of selective coding capabilities important for the Russians are formulated, and the differences in the capability sets among young people are highlighted.

Summary

The current study is based on the qualitative research methodology. The particularities of both data collection and data analysis have been discussed in details in this chapter. All interviews have been conducted using the problem-centred interview which gives “insights into life choices and life chances from the point of view of a person at the specific moment of an interview” (Scheibelhofer 2005: 26). The first section has widely discussed the main elements of the problem-centred interview, selection of interviewees, and particularities of interview process. The second section has been devoted to the data analysis and its steps, which are intertwined with an application of the capability perspective.

Chapter VI

Results of the study: Capabilities of young Russians

The following chapter presents the results of the study in a combination with their discussion. The first and the second parts focus on derived capabilities: capability to be healthy and capability to be well-educated. The third part discusses revealed in the data young people's inability to influence socio-political process and feeling of powerlessness.

By evolving capabilities, this thesis has not implied their endorsement in one uniform, definite list, but rather the specification of capabilities in the Russian context. The capabilities that emerged are context-dependent, culture-specific, and also age-dependent (i.e. relevant to 15-18 year old Russians). Age-dependency corresponds to the argument of Biggeri et al. (2006) who stress that the relevance of capabilities varies according to age, while cultural and local specification complies with Nussbaum's (2000) argument, and context-dependency with Sen's argument (2004) (see chapter II. 2.1, II. 2.2 and IV.3).

1. The capability to be healthy

The description of health state at the moment of interview offers a list of different illnesses from which young people suffer: stomach aches and gastritis; feeling nervous and stressed; difficulties in falling asleep or few hours of sleeping; brain concussion. The description of health shows not only its present state, but also coping strategies with health problems which have been undertaken by the adolescents and their parents as well as the value they ascribe to health. The state of health depends on many factors, including individual factors such as age, sex, physical and genetic particularities, and innate physical abilities. But the ability to support health on the highest attainable level, level allowing the development and promotion of full value, depends to a large on social context, health care system and medical insurance in the country, parents' participation in health issues, family economic situation in order to provide necessary treatment and medication. As Sen writes:

“The factors that can contribute to health achievements and failures go well beyond health care, and include many influences of very different kinds, varying from genetical propensities, individual incomes, food habits and life styles, on the one hand, to the epidemiological environment and work condition, on the other.” (Sen 2002b: 660)

In the capability approach the focus is rather on “the process of generating health” (Ariana & Naveed 2009: 234). That is why the analysis is done on the conversion of family resources (parents’ and other relatives’ resources), and resources and services of the health care into a valued functioning of being healthy and on the fairness of health care processes. Particular attention is paid to value that young people ascribe to health in their life. It means that the real opportunities depend on combination of resources and social and environmental conversion factors to form the capability set, whereas an achievement of functioning chosen from the set depends to a large on the treatment in the health care. Moreover, the capability approach advances the reflection on the following issues⁷⁹: To what extent does the health care system ensure the capability of being healthy and being treated to the highest standard of physical and mental state? Does the health care system treat people equally and with dignity? To what degree do the unequal health achievements depend on the medical services and medical treatment?

The data received from the interviews allows to grasp the following issues: reconstruction of individual opportunities that young people interviewed have had in state and private polyclinics and by state or private doctors; achieved health state (outcome); reconstruction of opportunities to relax and have holidays; nutrition in family and commercial establishments (e.g. refectories, cafeterias). The young people subjectively evaluated their health states, discussed their experience in the Russian health care system and reflected on their healthcare options. They also mentioned the quality of food and overlapping of different life domains.

Postponed doctor’s visits, untreated diseases, expensive and unaffordable treatment and/or medicaments – these experiences lead the analysis to study much deeper than just health outcomes. They lead to the analysis of processes which have led to such situations, or to Sen’s investigations of inequalities in people’s capabilities and analysis of processes that led to those inequalities (cf. Robeyns 2011a). As Ariana and Naveed (2009: 235) write “the choice of inputs is determined by identified outputs”, in this case the analysis starts with health states and access to health facilities, services and their quality and continues with treatment by health institutions and the process of care choice. What is also important in such analysis is “to what extent the childhood and youth experience [is] able to counteract initial disadvantages (e.g. disability, vulnerability to particular illnesses, inherited conditions, etc.) to ensure that they do not compromise equal access to the capability as adults” (Klasen 2010: 108)

⁷⁹ The following questions have been influenced by the analysis that Klasen (2010) has made in the educational system.

and to what extent the health care is able to counteract such disadvantages and to treat young people equally and to the attainable grade of physical and mental state. Following Sen (2002b) who advises to concentrate not only on the distribution of health care, but to concentrate also on the fairness of processes of treatment and non-discrimination in the delivery of health care, versatility of resources and impact of social arrangements, the current analysis tries to grasp a multi-faceted character of health (Figure 12).

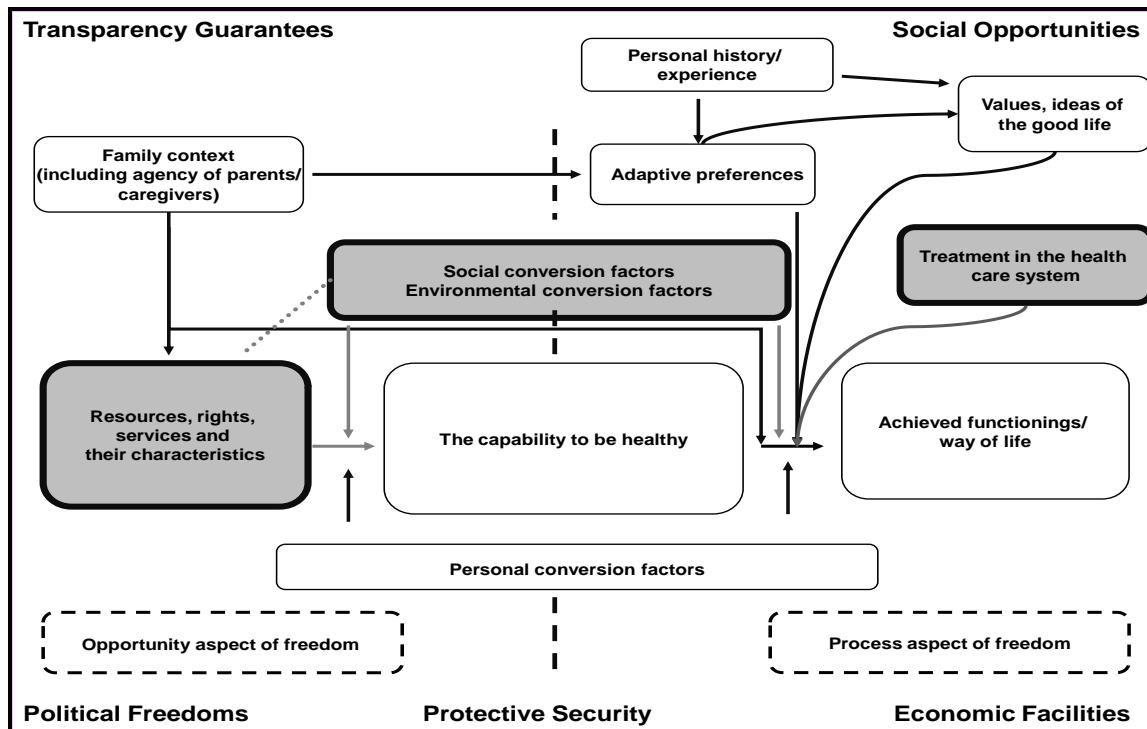


Figure 12. The capability to be healthy

Note: The findings of special attention are in the grey boxes with a bold framework. The scheme is constructed on the basis of the conceptual framework of young person's capability formation and choice of valuable functionings (with interaction of resources and conversion factors) (modified after Sen 1999a, Robeyns 2005b, Burchardt 2009, Bartelheimer 2011, Leßmann & Bonvin 2011; Sadlowski 2011), Chapter IV.4

--- The dotted line indicates a conventional border between the opportunity and process aspects of freedom.

..... The dotted line indicates the interconnection and interaction of resources and conversion factors.

The next sections describe revealed capabilities and especially concentrate on the process of treatment in the Russian health care system.

1. 1. Being able to be treated adequately

The results reveal the value that young people attach to their health, the importance of health care and medical services in their life and opportunities to use medical services in their place of residence and in the country in general. But the focus is on whether young people have an access to high-quality medical services, which can provide an adequate treatment to their health problems and respect their dignity.

The starting point of the analysis is health achievement of a young person at the moment of interview:

- health state and health problems (stomach aches and gastritis; feeling nervous and stressed; difficulties in falling asleep or few hours of sleeping; brain concussion);
- use of medical services in the local/municipal hospital/polyclinic (free/by insurance);
- use of private medical services (paid/not covered by insurance);
- use of medical services in another city/town;
- self-treatment/treatment by parents;
- postponement of treatment, leaving a disease uncured;
- being rarely sick.

The starting question is: did a person choose one of these options, because of its value and among other valued options, or because this option was only one possible in the constrained conditions she had? Sen (1992: 52) writes: “there is, in principle, some real advantage in being able to relate the analysis of achieved well-being on the wider informational base of person’s capability set, rather than just on the selected element of it”. Starting from young people’s health achievements the analysis goes backwards to what constraints young people in order to have good health and to be treated adequately. Depending on conversion factors, young people have differently formed opportunity sets and they chose differently one vector of functioning. But the main point is, whether an achievement or outcome is valued by the person, or the person was constrained to choose such vector due to the influence of conversion factors.

The inequalities in the outcomes that some young people are treated adequately and are cured, feel good and do not have any aches, and others are uncured, they postpone their treatment and suffer from permanent or temporary diseases, lead to analyse inequalities in the capabilities and choice young people have had. Other inequalities could be found in the process of treatment by medical

institutions. In case of those who are cured, the analysis should concentrate not only on the culmination outcomes, but especially on the comprehensive outcomes⁸⁰ - to understand how the choice was made, what kind of resources were used (inequality in resources) to choose this valuable functioning and how the person was treated.

Regions

The interviews reveal that there are young people who are satisfied with medical services and medical treatment that they receive in their hometowns. They use medical services of local hospital and/or polyclinic and they do not have any negative opinion on the medical services in their hometown or in Russia in general (Konstantin, Nikolai). Besides, they feel healthy (Grisha), some of them are engaged in sport activities. For example, in Konstantin's case, the value to be healthy and awareness to take care of own health is connected to a large extent to his sportive style:

„That is, the chest is well developed, and the lungs are not. ECG⁸¹ revealed or how it is ((laughs)) that I need to run, to run. I ride on the bike to the garden.“ (Konstantin, 17, Leningrad region 2010, 380-381)

Some other young people have used and use medical services of a local hospital, but their experiences are rather negative. Such personal experience in combination with other people's experience with medical infrastructure in the hometown (institutional conversion factors) influence young people's decision making to choose the following functionings: use of medical services in another city (for example, St. Petersburg or regional centre Novgorod), use of local hospital (only in urgent cases), self-treatment than a visit to a doctor.

Use of medical services in another city

The main characteristics of the social context which influence young people's decision to go to another place, namely St. Petersburg or Novgorod, in their opinion, are either the lack of professional and specialized doctors:

„Well, of course, I would like to have more doctors. We have here, for example, that the children's surgeon died and there is no another one now“(Andrej, 15, Novgorod region 2011, 521-522)

„Yes. I know that it seems that a dermatologist comes on some days too, there is no dermatologist as well.“ (Andrej, 15, Novgorod region 2011, 526)

⁸⁰ Sen discusses culmination and comprehensive outcomes in *The Idea of Justice* (2009a).

⁸¹ Electrocardiogram.

„well, the adult doctor checks and sends to Novgorod, sends all there to go."
(Andrej, 15, Novgorod region 2011, 522)

"Yes, well in K-town there are no dentists, while in P-town there are." (Pavel,
17, Leningrad region 2010, 464)⁸²

or bad conditions of hospital/polyclinic in the hometown, that have been experienced by some young people:

“Well I personally do not like our hospital, though it is a district hospital, I go always in St. Petersburg’s hospital since my childhood [...], and my brother goes there all the time, all vaccinations were done for him in St. Petersburg. Our hospital, I do not trust it at all, because we have dirty, very dirty [hospital] and maternity hospital we have is very dirty, all the kids come from it with some allergies and something like this.” (Regina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 464-469)

Regina from the Leningrad region uses the local hospital only in urgent cases, and prefers to go to Saint Petersburg due to, in her opinion, dirtiness in the local hospital and in the maternity hospital in the town. She thinks that children in her hometown are sick and have many allergies due to such dirtiness in health institutions. She does not trust local medical services and prefers to go to St. Petersburg. Her younger brother is also carried to St. Petersburg by her parents in order to receive qualitatively good health care. At the same time, it is obvious from the data that her parents take care of her and her brother’s health, and her opinion about hospital can be based both on her experience (when she uses hospital for urgent cases), and her parents’ opinion.

Andrej, 15, from the Novgorod region, emphasizes a lack of professionals, e.g. specialized children’s and youth’s doctors. He actually has constraints to get necessary health care at his place of residence and needs to go to Novgorod for the medical treatment. Despite the fact that he lives in the small industrially developed town the health care system does not reply to his requests and creates the situation when the health problems could not be cure adequately and he is not able to have a good health and to receive treatment to the highest attainable grade of physical health due to the lack of professionals. His set of opportunities is limited to being able to be treated in another place, and such choice is made not freely, but due to the influence of institutional context. Moreover he highlights the bureaucratization of the health care system: he has to pass several doctors who send him to each other and the process becomes a bureaucratic procrastination, rather than a qualitatively good treatment:

⁸² Pavel lives in the settlement near by the small town.

"Well, well they do all so long. Some of them here, I have already told, I have been at the surgeon, he gives a referral, in order that I go to my doctor, although he should have written the health certificate, but he sends to another doctor, and that doctor tells: "And why did he send to me?" Do not want to write or something in this way." (Andrej, 15, Novgorod region 2011, 513-516)

Nikolai, 16, also from the Novgorod region, points out that there is a lack of some specialized doctors, and some doctors come to his town only on certain days, but he does not complain. Moreover, when he had a problem with a knee, he got a referral to Novgorod's hospital and was treated there.

Nevertheless, such situation that doctors come only on certain days and there is a lack of some specialized doctors may lead to a delay of medical treatment and as consequence to a possible decrease in adolescents' health. The young people's capability set in this small town in the Novgorod region is constrained by the influence of social factors and institutional context, although the value which Andrej ascribes to health is high and he wants to receive the qualitative care. The referral to another city due to the lack of professionals in the hometown in both cases, Pavel's (lack of dentists in the settlement near by the small town) and Andrej's, are connected with the capability of '*being able to be mobile*'. Discussion on the mobility is introduced later in this section and in the section "The capability to be well-educated" (VI.2).

Such health context, in which young people are in small towns, when they are afraid to be treated inadequately or to be left uncured, when they not always can get a qualitatively good treatment at the place of residence, constrains their capability to have a good health and to prosper in the life. They might accumulate health problems and suffer from the health deterioration in the future. In this case health achievements, uncured or postponed treatment might be partially caused by the process of treatment in the health care institutions.

The interviewees did not clearly mention if they use the medical services of private doctors or state polyclinics and hospitals in St. Petersburg, but the most important is that they do not mention an alternative in their small towns (private doctors) and go to the big centre. This means that inadequate medical services or lack of doctors and high-quality medical services in their small towns might cause negative outcomes in their health. The statistical data on young people's health state in the Novgorod region shows that between 2010 and 2011 the children morbidity (0-17 years old) has increased (Main indicators ...2011; Main indicators ... 2012). The same situation can be observed in the Leningrad region where between 2009 and 2010

incidences of general and primary disease among adolescents and adults raised, as well as the deficit of doctors⁸³ tended to grow (Analytical review ... 2010).

The different cases have shown that young people value to be treated adequately in local hospitals, but existed institutional conditions constrain and do not guarantee the substantive freedom '*being able to receive treatment to the highest attainable grade of physical and mental health*'.

If the analysis focuses only on means, then it can be shown that small towns have medical services, but in this case only "instrumental valuation" rather than "intrinsic valuation" that people ascribe to these means⁸⁴ can be grasped. Medical services for own sake are not so much valued if they do not bring to young people the expansion of the capability '*being able to receive treatment to the highest attainable grade of physical and mental health*'. Some young people in the Leningrad and Novgorod regions point that there is a hospital in their hometown, but the hospital and its medical services are not valued and appreciated by them due to the lack of necessary doctors and/or quality of doctors' work which is perceived by young people as unprofessional. So these medical services (means) existing in the regions do not foster the capability '*being able to receive treatment to the highest attainable grade of physical and mental health*'.

Sen insists on the importance of "concentrating on the real freedoms actually enjoyed, taking note of *all* the barriers" (Sen 1992: 149; italics in original) and advocates the assessment of social arrangements with the regard to the freedom. Moreover, the "development consists of the removal of various types of unfreedoms that leave people with little choice and little opportunity of exercising their reasoned agency" (Sen 1999a: xii). So health arrangements in regions should be changed, the barriers that young people have in order to exercise the real freedom of being able to be adequately treated should be demolished, the assessment of health institutions should be made with the regard to the freedoms that young people appreciate.

Use of local hospital (only in urgent cases)

Nikita from the Leningrad region goes rarely for the medical treatment to St. Petersburg, but if he goes, he uses medical services in St. Petersburg. For example, he visits oculist and specialist in ear-nose-throat (ENT):

⁸³ Only 60, 9 % of doctor's positions were occupied in the Leningrad region in 2010 (Analytical review ... 2010).

⁸⁴ Robeyns (2011a: 8) introduces the means-ends distinction and the contribution of means to the expansion of capabilities.

"Yes, we went to the ENT specialist and ((*coughs*)) this year we go for the last time to the eye doctor." (Nikita, 17, Leningrad region 2010, 250)

On the one hand, such doctors should be also in the hospital of the small town, because they are not too specialized doctors in order not being represented in the small town. On the other hand, a question appears: does it mean that he and his parents do not trust the local doctors? From his interview it seems that he is happy that he has not been already for half a year in the local hospital, and he constructs his attitude to the local hospitals on experience of others:

"Well at present I have not been there already half a year in our hospital and so far I am alive. I am happy." (Nikita, 17, Leningrad region 2010, 225-226)

"Right there, how many people could be saved, two people, and two people were not saved due to the doctor's mistakes, as it seems to me." (Nikita, 17, Leningrad region 2010, 230-232)

At the same time, he highlights that the doctors from the local hospital once saved his life (231-233). It seems that in general perception of the local hospital is rather negative for some inhabitants (Regina, Nikita). In case of urgent situations they use medical services of the hospital, but if they have a choice, they rather use medical services in another city. Regina uses the local hospital only in urgent cases, and when she does not have serious diseases:

"Well if I have any small diseases, of course, I treat everything here, when it is not about anything terrible." (Regina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 471-472)

From the paid services the young people from the Leningrad region named only dentist (Pavel and Nikita).

The previous sections have indicated that young people do not perceive health care that exists in their places of residence as corresponding to their health problems and their understanding of high-quality health care. Young people and their families undertake different coping strategies in order to have access to high-quality health care. The local health care does not expand young people's substantive freedoms '*being able to have different healthcare options*' and '*being able to have access to high-quality healthcare*' at their place of residence.

Self-treatment than a visit to a doctor

Pavel from the Leningrad region mentions that he is rarely sick or uses self-treatment in case of non-severe health problems. Pavel also indicates another aspect

of situation with the health care: a nominal/formal work of doctors, which means that doctors became not so much real providers of medical services, but more providers of medical certificates for schools. He uses doctors to receive a sick-list for school and he mentions that in some cases such doctors might advise the treatment, but not all the time:

"Well in K-town there is a place where you come, you are given the health certificate that you are sick with something, they can even prescribe any medicaments, they might advise. Well then you come simply with the certificate at school, and you tell: "This is a health certificate which has been written to me and I was ill". And that is all. In principle this is how it is." (Pavel, 17, Leningrad region 2010, 451-454)

So the most important becomes not to treat, but to respond to the rules, which means that if a pupil was not at school, he has to prove that the absence was connected with an illness. Darina's words give a further assertion of the formality in work, disregard, and poor attention to the adolescents' health:

"I went to the neuropathologist, she prescribed me a heap of medicaments, sort of pills, she prescribed the warming up. I went on warming up, and I did not take all pills, I had no money in general on them. Because last year the father worked at another work, mother did not work. Well, practically there was not any financial means, the salary was not even paid to father at all, delays were very strong. We lived with the grandmother and so we were completely supported by the grandmother, I could not anymore spend money on pills while living by the grandmother. So I did not treat properly. This year I have passed the medical examination, well, of course, the neurologist swore on me, but has put a stamp that the medical examination is passed." (Darina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 514-521)

Darina's case shows an interweaving of several factors which influence the capability '*being able to receive treatment to the highest attainable grade of physical and mental health*': firstly, the treatment, which she got, implied not only procedures which are covered by the state insurance, but also the medication which Darina should have bought on her own money; secondly, the poor economic situation at her family by this time. '*Being able to receive treatment to the highest attainable grade of physical and mental health*' was not possible due to the economic reasons, she was constrained in finances and she left her disease uncured. Her achieved outcome is that she still suffers from regular pains. This actual state of health might influence her future capabilities and opportunities to be healthy. Her individual example is similar to general situation in the country that is described by Shishkin (2007). In his article on social policy and health situation in Russia, he mentions that the state guarantees free health care for population in state and municipal health care institutions, but de-facto due to the lack of state financial support, population becomes a bearer of own medical

expenses. People's own expenses on medication and medical services grow, and such situations, when sick people buy medication not only for home use and self-treatment, but also when they are treated in the hospital, are not anymore rare examples, continues Shishkin (2007).

So the problem is in the insurance system and in the lack of an adequate state financial support. Doctors try to treat, but cannot contribute to the purchase of medication and are forced to admit that a person is healthy, so that she would not have problems with bureaucratic issues⁸⁵. Back to Darina's situation, it is important to say, that her treatment is not completed due to the lack of financial support, and she still feels pains, but she has to leave the disease uncured.

So, the role of social conversion factors in the formation of an opportunity set of valuable functionings and in the choice of a valuable vector is enormous. The lack of doctors, unfavourable conditions in local hospitals, bureaucratization of medical services, formality of work of some doctors constrain young people's capabilities '*being able to receive treatment to the highest attainable grade of physical and mental health*', '*being able to have access to high-quality healthcare*'. The importance of choice is another significant factor to be considered in the relation to health issues. The young people's health in the small towns becomes the full responsibility of their parents and themselves and the health care does not adequately reply to their health problems.

Saint Petersburg

In Saint Petersburg there are young people, who also (as in the regions) are not often sick, so that they do not have problems with health (for example, Vladimir), and young people who were sick over the last years (for example, Senja), but both use medical services of polyclinics and hospitals and are satisfied or rather satisfied with the health care. There are young people who are satisfied with health care in the polyclinics, although have resources to be converted in paid health care, and choose state care instead of private doctors (for example, Rustam).

But the majority complain that they do not feel secure with the health care in polyclinics or state hospitals. The use of private doctors' services is strongly accentuated in Saint Petersburg.

⁸⁵ The medical examination takes place before the beginning of new school year at school and the parameters of physical development are measured.

Use of private doctors' medical services

Varvara prefers private doctors to a polyclinic or a hospital:

"There is a possibility to go to the private doctor. Yes, sometimes I would even go to the private doctor, than I go to our polyclinic." (Varvara, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 510-511)

She might go to polyclinic only in urgent cases, because the process of treatment is very difficult and full of bureaucratic problems:

"Everything is rather very difficult and consequently. In rare cases I should do in this way - go to polyclinic at eight o'clock." (Varvara, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 507-508)

The difficulties in getting an appointment in polyclinic, in other words bureaucratic obstacles are mentioned also in St. Petersburg (as they have been mentioned in regions). Moreover, Varvara and Katya think that doctors in polyclinics are irresponsible to people's health. Varvara points on doctors' disregard, carelessness, dereliction especially in adults' polyclinics. She can compare the quality in children's and adults' polyclinics. After she became 18 years old, she uses the services of adults' one:

"In polyclinics once more it is in general something with something. Children's polyclinics take care of you more or less, while in adults' polyclinics they simply spit upon you. If you feel bad, the people simply) the doctors simply will pass you by and will tell nothing, will make nothing." (Varvara, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 492-494)

Katya also indicates irresponsible attitude to the people's health from doctors. For her, the whole system of the state health care should be revised and modified:

"Or, for example: "These are not our opening hours". It means, if you feel bad, you can die, but they are not opened now. This is how it is." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 617-619)

"Well I do not know, it seems to me, most likely, that the problem is, that such professions, in general I would reconsider, for example, the medicine because there is no such confidence, that if something happens, it seems to me, that you will address, let us assume, somewhere in the medical centre and you surely get help." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 1296-1299)

Furthermore, some young people interviewed have an experience of an angry attitude from doctors towards them. Another characteristic was ascribed to state health care by Nina and Katya (606-607), they are afraid of getting sick in polyclinics:

"((laughs)) There are too much people there, there are a lot of mummies with children that you know, it happens, that you come there healthy in order to be examined, and you leave from there already chilled and infected with something. However." (Nina, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 116-118)

"It is better, it seems to me, to have an appointment somewhere in private clinics and pay more money, than you will go to an ordinary policlinic, spend your time and there is no evidence that you will get an appointment and you will gain, probably, more diseases there, than here." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 604-606)

Both girls feel uncomfortable in state polyclinics not only because of treatment, but also because they are afraid to become sicker. Varvara is also influenced by gossips (influence from other people's experience) that polyclinic sells the data and information about patients that could be used by people who want to buy people's organs:

"Yes there, and to the same people on human organs which are engaged in this and ((laughs)), therefore I am afraid to go somehow." (Varvara, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 521-522)

This is directly connected with the capability on life from Nussbaum's (2000: 78) list "*being able to live to the end of a human life of normal length; not dying prematurely, or before one's life is so reduced as to be not worth living*". Such criminal practices make young people feel insecure and afraid. It is important for everybody, but especially for young people '*being able to be treated confidentially*'.

The size and infrastructure of the city allow young people to find private doctors, but the question is whether the choice of private medicine was free or not and whether the result of achieved functioning '*being healthy*' and '*being treated adequately*' proceeds from an unconstrained choice. Their opportunity set could be framed as following: being able to receive the health care by private doctor (which, in young people's opinion, is flexible, confidential, and quick); being able to receive the health care in polyclinic on the basis of state insurance; being able to undertake self-treatment or treatment by parents. Under the influence of the social context (irresponsibility of state doctors, fears being inadequately treated), own experience and value of flexible, quick help of private doctors they choose the private medicine. But this choice is constrained; they are forced to go to the private doctors. Katya chooses the private doctor under doctor's influence and due to the impossibility to have an appointment for a free treatment:

"or they might tell: „Well you can, but for paid medical service“. When I went to the surgeon to be examined, I always went only for paid medical service. It was impossible to get a free medical service." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 598-600)

In this example it is obvious that Katya is forced to the paid medicine. So young people are not able to use a valuable functioning of insurance-based and qualitatively good state health care, to which they should be entitled by law, and have to achieve the healthy state by another way, which is restrained in turn by social conversion factors. Gosha also mentions the issue of being forced to the paid medicine. Both Katya and Gosha want to use firstly free medical services provided by state guarantees, but doctors force them either to undertake additional analysis, which are not for free, or give directions to the paid specialists. That is why Gosha describes the situation in the medicine as a fiction:

"I: So, is it one of the tricks how to pull out money?"

Gosha: Well, how to tell. In this country the doctors are all state, all of us have medical insurances, that means that YOU do not pay. It means that you come to a doctor, and everything is for free, you come within his opening hours, stand in a queue and so on. Yes, and the point is that, doctors, of course, the majority of them are these new graduate, they prescribe: „well, take here these medicaments“, while 3 pills cost one thousand roubles⁸⁶, generally, when medicaments are very high, - „then pass the examination, innovative technologies so that everything could be accurately measured“." (Gosha, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 334-341)

Although the Russian citizens have state insurances which assume that the health care should be provided, they cannot use the insurance completely and this fact is grasped by interviewed young people as well. Many services should be paid separately by patients themselves. This brings again to Shishkin (2007) who writes that state guarantees should provide free health care in state and municipal health care, but there is a disparity between expected by population medical services and real opportunities of state. Citizen becomes the last subject in the chain of financial provision of own health (cf. Shishkin 2007). At the same time children's and young people's health, as interviews show, also becomes the full responsibility of family and depends to a large on family financial situation.

At the same time such situation makes young people to adapt their health behaviour to the situation. They go to the private doctors and pay additional money instead of receiving health care of a high standard in state polyclinics and hospitals, they feel afraid to get sicker in polyclinics, they are frightened by the cases of selling the data and they believe only in their own resources (resources of family) to cope with health problems, e.g. finances, familiar doctors, self-treatment, rather than in the declared opportunity to be treated by state health care.

⁸⁶ Around 25 euro.

So the young people and their parents pay money for health care of a high standard and the most important for the confidentiality, flexibility, quickness by private doctors. This they cannot find by state health care. But this choice is constrained and is not based on complete freedom to choose the valuable functioning, but is made due to the constrained conditions they live in. But despite the fact that interviewed young people can and pay for services, it does not mean that every single family can afford it and can choose paid services. A condition of social justice in some core human functionings is to deliver the basic level of the capability (cf. Nussbaum 2000), and health belongs to this core human functioning. But from the analysed data it is obvious that young people from St. Petersburg feel constrained in getting even such basic level.

Varvara thinks that if she does not care about her health, nobody cares:

"Yes, because to whom it is necessary except me. Only to me." (Varvara, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 531)

It seems that the main tendency, which has been already analysed by the researchers about adult population, is the transfer of responsibility to support the health from the state to the population (cf. Shishkin 2007; Davidova et al. 2009; Shkaratan 2009). But the question is: to what extent can every single family support health of own members and especially of children and youth? Those young people, who prefer private doctors, recognize that the responsibility of health is completely on them, and the state does not pay attention to the health of any citizen and even to the health of adolescents and young people.

To sum up, if the analysis is made only on a basis of achieved functioning (state of health), it can grasp that young people in most cases *are* able to support their health adequately, so they have been treated. But such analysis does not give, how and what were the constraints to get the qualitatively good medical services. The involved resources and their conversion into functionings under the influence of particularities of social context, namely features of health insurance system, health care system, value of health in the society and from the perspective of governmental programs are invisible to such analysis. The conducted analysis took into consideration such particularities and revealed inequalities in resources and treatment, it showed influence of social conversion factors on the capability to be healthy in Russia.

Differences among young people from better-off and low-income families

If poor and better-off have the same real opportunities to have a good health and to be adequately treated, it could be strange to recognize that young people from poor families systematically prefer the functioning being inadequately treated or having a bad health, if they have the same real opportunities.⁸⁷ It is more likely that young people from poor families do not have the same resources to convert them into the valuable functionings of being healthy, do not have the same options and also are more influenced by the inequalities in the process of agency exercise.

"Inequalities in resources can be significant causes of inequalities in capabilities and therefore also need to be studied" (Robeyns 2003a: 64). So this leads to the analysis of inequalities in resources, which led to the inequalities in capabilities and functionings.

The young people from the poor families from small towns and St. Petersburg have several things in common. They have to postpone the treatment or the purchase of medication on another time when their parents or family members have money. They try to be more careful with all medical instructions, so that they will not overpay. Gosha can afford private doctors, but he became very informed about the duties that doctors have, and his rights as a patient. Moreover, he reflects on the necessity of prescribed treatment and analyses⁸⁸. His knowledge of duties, health care and insurance system, medical issues is his individual conversion factor. For him the medicaments which the doctors prescribe are expensive:

"Yes, and the point is that, doctors, of course, the majority of them are these new graduate, they prescribe: „well, take here these medicaments“, while three pills cost one thousand rubles⁸⁹, generally, when medicaments are very high, - „then pass the examination, innovative technologies so that everything could be accurately measured“." (Gosha, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 337-341)

For example, Darina due to the lack of money in the family could not complete her treatment and has permanent aches and pains:

"I went to the neuropathologist, she prescribed me a heap of medicaments, sort of pills, she prescribed the warming up. I went on warming up, and I did not take all pills, I had no money in general on them. Because last year the

⁸⁷ The argument is influenced by Robeyns (2003a) who discussed the transfer from the inequality in outcomes to the inequalities in capabilities on the example of the gender inequalities in the Western societies.

⁸⁸ Here there is an interconnection with the capability of being knowledgeable: „literacy is also a general precondition for participation in social life, access to information on valuable beings and doings, the efficient use of health systems, further development of skills accessing information, understanding and benefiting from social security rules" (Volkert 2006: 375).

⁸⁹ Around 25 euro.

father worked at another work, mother did not work. Well, practically there was not any financial means, the salary was not even paid to father at all, delays were very strong. We lived with the grandmother and so we were completely supported by the grandmother, I could not anymore spend money on pills while living by the grandmother. So I did not treat properly. This year I have passed the medical examination, well, of course, the neurologist swore on me, but has put a stamp that the medical examination is passed." (Darina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 514-521)

Despite the fact that she has been by doctor, she could not afford the treatment and she did not finish it. Her diseases might accumulate or might assume an irreversible character which can influence other capabilities (cf. Ariana & Naveed 2009).

The young people from the better-off families have a larger capability set. Their parents possess more financial resources, so that they can convert these resources in the larger capability set and have more opportunities to choose from. For example, Rustam prefers state polyclinic to private doctors, although his father proposed him to be treated by a private doctor. In general, he is not so much familiar with the expenses he has daily, but he knows that his parents can help him to manage any situation.

Olga from the better-off family also complains about doctors' unprofessionalism based on own experience, when she suffered due to doctor's mistake (452-460). Nowadays she postpones visits to a doctor due to the lack of time. She likes self-treatment than a visit to a doctor. But in case she needs to buy any medication, her family can afford it.

To sum up, the role of resources that a family possesses becomes very important in order to be healthy in the modern Russian conditions. While better-off families can use private doctors and paid health care and choose among different options, the poor families postpone the treatment and use those medical services which were for free. This finding is also stated in Ovcharova and Popova (2005), Davidova et al. (2009) for the adult population. Some poor families try to save money for the qualitatively good care, but it is not the case in every family. Therefore, young people from poor families are not '*being able to receive treatment to the highest attainable grade of physical and mental health*'.

1.2. Value of being unhealthy

The data on health brings to an interesting reflection about overlapping of different life domains, and individual values and public duties. Here Gasper's (2007) reflections on well-being and agency and Robeyns' (2003a) on risk come to the fore.

Gasper (2007: 354) writes: “while the capability approach is operationalized in terms of well-being freedom, much of its appeal may come from ‘agency freedom’”. Robeyns (2003a: 89) in turn gives an example of those people who undertake risk: “focusing on capability and not on achieved functionings implies that we do not need to be concerned about persons who have the capability but deliberately put their achieved functionings at risk”. This can be an example of Gosha, who has an opportunity to go to any physical activities to support own good sportive form, but consciously chooses not to do so. But here, what the focus should be, is on socially conditioned and constrained choice of his action. His choice is strongly conditioned by the system, by the fear to be called for the military service, by the fear not only to loose time in the army, but to be hurt, violated and physically deprived. So, here many dimensions of the life interconnected with the social system come into play, whereas distorted system itself constrains his capability, his real opportunities. The duty of the military service which is not accountable as valuable among some boys pushes them to value the state ‘*being unhealthy*’ in order to escape the army for the period of time when they can be called.

This important in Sen’s approach distinction of well-being and agency together with distinction in freedom and achievement (mentioned earlier by Gasper (2007), which is absent in Nussbaum’s work could be empirically shown on Gosha’s example. Following Nussbaum’s (2000) logic it could be said that the health care system and free time sport activities make available a capability to be healthy and give the freedom to an individual to choose or not to choose a relevant functioning. She writes: “But I am not sure that any extra clarity is added by using a well-being/agency distinction here: healthy functioning is itself a way of being active, not just a passive state of satisfaction” (Nussbaum 2000: 14). Now it is important to mention Gosha’s choice not to visit any physical, sportive activities and to be unhealthy at least on the paper, so that to escape the military duty. He pursues the goal which he values – not to be in the army for one year of his life, and he does not engage in any physical activities in order to be less strong and active. He obviously pursues his agency goals, which distort well-being goals. Here the question of autonomy rose by Burchardt (2009: 16), in her words “capability as autonomy”⁹⁰, should be posed: how have these agency goals and preferences been formed and how do they influence on the capability set? Was the choice of a valuable functioning made autonomously?

In Gosha’s case his agency goals and preferences are formed by the experiences of others (comparison with the conditions in the different world armies)⁹¹,

⁹⁰ The discussion on “capability as autonomy” (Burchardt: 200916) is mentioned in Chapter II.

⁹¹ “And you know, let’s speak slightly concerning the army, yes, because) Actually yes, the foreign army you look, how good it is, I would like to go there. And in our Russian army: „Oh, swear about the army“.

by the fear to be assaulted and mistreated in the army. The system allows him to discharge from the military duty, if he is unhealthy (medical reasons for the deferment of military service) or he studies in a higher educational institution on the full-time tuition (Klyachko 2007)⁹². But what would be the case, if he did not have an idea about the Russian army as frightening and humiliating? The system puts young men in the position to choose a vector of functioning, which could be called *even* valuable for this period of life – the age when the young man can be called for the military service – ‘being unhealthy’, so that they can discharge from the military duty.

This analysis shows how spheres of life are strongly interconnected. Health could be as a fertile functioning (cf. Wolff & De-Shalit 2010) for other capabilities and is a basis for the promotion in other spheres. But health or being healthy could be also disadvantage for some capabilities, although it sounds paradoxical. It means that army and health, and army and studies become interconnected for young men in the Russian conditions. In many interviews service in the army is understood by young men as negative, risky and unnecessary life event, which can damage the whole life, disrupt educational and professional plan, can in some cases even change the psychological state of a person⁹³. The army is seen as a waste of life time for other opportunities, for example, for studies. The young people know several ways to escape the military service. Studies on the full-time tuition are seen as an option not to go to army:

„and as the father says that: „Why will you lose one year in army, it is better if you study““ (Rustam, 17, St. Petersburg 2010, 373)

„Yes. From it there is a protection, either to be, to study on a full-time tuition of any educational institution, or the deferment by the health state.“ (Gosha, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 257-258)

„It is him who also says me that: „If you enter now [higher education], I will not worry for you, and if you do not enter, your whole life simply breaks off“. That is, the majority who goes to army, after army works, instead of entering [to higher education].“ (Pavel, 17, Leningrad region 2010, 660-662)

In order to escape from the military service the young people try to enter higher education (Gosha, Rustam, Pavel), to have any documents which help them to escape the military duty, in case of Konstantin he has important sportive competitions:

Yes, at own barracks is more scaring, than in the war *((laughs))*.“ (Gosha, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 250-252).

⁹² It was stated in Chapter III that higher education is a legal ‘mechanism’ of discharge from the army (Klyachko 2007).

⁹³ Danilova (2004) mentions that the Russian army is not able to provide basic guarantees of soldiers’ life and health. She highlights that in general there is no army which can give absolute guarantees of life and health, but decrease of accidents in the army in the peaceful time should become one of the main tasks of reforms in the army.

"((sighs)) This all will happen, if I do not enter [higher education], then the army. Well. Well I have passed a medical examination ((laughs)), that's right, I am not eighteen years old still. I will be eighteen in June; therefore they told that if you do not enter, then in an interval from the fifteenth, from July first to July fifteenth, you can be called up for military service ((laughs)). I said to them: "If you call me up, I will give a certificate". (Konstantin, 17, Leningrad region 2010, 78-82)

or to have a medical certificate of ineligibility (medical reasons for the discharge of the military service), e.g. health evidence from discharge from army:

"Well, if anything happens, I passed recently a medical examination that year, and it is necessary to pass in September, here, I have a deferment by the health state." (Rustam, 17, St. Petersburg 2010, 373-375)

"I had a concussion, I have gastritis well, I am registered in a neurologic clinic, so." (Rustam, 17, St. Petersburg 2010, 375-377)

"Victor: I was planning to go to the hospital, but it's just in order to find some diseases. I was there to be easier discharged from the army. Well, it is true, a friend of mine has already stole my idea. He did the same, stayed in the hospital. Well, I still think I will do so.

I: That is for the future, you have to think ahead, right? How to be discharged from the army?

Victor: Well, yes, I must have a backup.

I: What is the army for you?[]

Victor: This is the end of the life, yes. I do not want it." (Victor, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 565-571)

"From it there is a protection, [...], or the deferment by the health state." (Gosha, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 257-258).

So in some cases to be unhealthy or to have chronic disease could be advantageous for boys (Gosha, Rustam, Victor). For this life period among boys' valuable functionings towards the health can be even '*being able to be unhealthy*'. But such benefit is questionable because by escaping the military service due to the health reason, a young man is in the ambiguous situation when the system itself influences his life the way that he can choose only among negative functionings (being unhealthy). Young person can even support such unhealthy state to escape the military duty and change the educational behaviour/activities due to the unwillingness to pass military service. Gosha does not visit any sport clubs or any activities which can detect that he is healthy and can be called up for the military service. After careful look at his age, it can be mentioned that he still has two years till the official time of the call for the military service, but already at 16 he thinks how to escape this duty:

"Therefore I have just ceased to visit [hobby and sports] groups temporarily. Because when I have been asked already at the end of secondary school: "Do you visit any groups?" And you tell specially, though you visit, for

example, I visited courses, and therefore I told: "No, I do not go anywhere, I am completely ill, all hurt me, I am almost a disabled person". (Gosha, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 258-262)

This leads to the point that young people by reflecting on their future, where army is seen as a barrier for the promotion, life opportunities, as a waste of time, try to decrease own opportunities to be called at the expense of own health. Instead of developing own physical abilities some young people consciously choose to be unhealthy at least on the paper and prevent themselves from the activities. Here into the play come agency goals which confront with well-being goals and "may result in actions deleterious to the individual's own well-being" (Burchardt 2009: 6) in the present. This happens in Gosha's case: he sacrifices his physical sportive activities and postpones them on the time when the military service does not constrain him in his choice. But this example is even more ambiguous. At the same time, not going to the army can be also recognized as well-being goal for the future that young people and their parents pursue. They think about a good and successful life without loss of one year for military duty, which can disrupt their educational and professional plan and influence the whole life course. Moreover, young people think about possible change of psychological and physical state that might happen after army, and its influence has a life-long effect for them.

Although the above debate shows that young people (mostly from St. Petersburg and the Leningrad region) do not value the military service and try to find different opportunities to escape it, it is important to mention that boys interviewed in the Novgorod region positively evaluated the army. Grisha was not against it and he said that he is not going to skip it, Nikolai chose a navy college for further education, and Andrej valued the military service, because Andrej's father thinks that army is important for man's self-esteem:

"Yes, for example, my father, the place where he lived, it meant that if you do not go to army, then you are a quitter, and so on (*laughs*). It is necessary to do military service, so that it will not be anything /in this way/." (Andrej, 15, Novgorod region, 2011, 631-632)

It seems that there is a difference among residents of different regions and towns towards the service in the Russian army. The issue of army and military service is under constant attention in Russia. Danilova (2004) raises several issues: compulsory military service and civil rights (freedom of choice in order to complete the military duty in the way a man values) and parents' attitude to army (for example, army as man's socialization).

The findings of the current study show that valuable activities and states of many interviewed young men are not connected with military service, which is a duty for young men at the age of 18-27 years in Russia. Whereas the capability approach aims on expansion of people's capabilities and ensuring freedom to achieve valuable states and activities, the military service (as overall military duty), which might not be valuable activity among young men, then can contradict with their idea about a 'good life' which is partly "a life of genuine choice, and not one in which the person is forced into a particular life" (Sen 1996: 59) even for one year of service.

To sum up, the interconnection of different life domains, individual values and social and public duties give a new perspective for the capability approach on questions of agency and well-being goals, freedom of choice and values that people ascribe to own states and activities.

1.3. Being able to have holidays/ relaxation

The health is also connected to recreation. Nussbaum's (2000) list includes 'being able to enjoy recreational activities' which is embedded in the capability *Play*. The recreational activities could be presented by amusement facilities, entertainment, but also by relaxation of body, recreation of physical and emotional forces. Nina mentions how important for the health is '*being able to have holidays*', '*being able to have relaxation*':

„the rest is very important as well, when a person allows oneself to leave for somewhere to relax somewhere there, it lifts very strongly the vigour.“ (Nina, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 741-742)

The studies are an important part at this stage of life that occupy everyday life, and might be connected, with the stressful situations of exams, entrance to the university, loading of homework, long preparations hours. In this context studies are conversion factors which influence the capability set of a pupil/student and the choice of functioning related to the health. Varvara and Katya pay a lot of attention to studies and they sleep less due to studies/exams, Katya even uses pills to overcome the stress during exams period:

"And I studied till two or three o'clock at night, and we had a huge homework in the first semester, and I slept in general, probably, the last month I slept four-five hours a day, constantly, of course, there was only one day off, and in order to fall asleep I took both a valerian and sedatives.“ (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 495-497)

"It is too much workload, it is too much. There are out-of-class activities, out-of-class work, too much of out-of-class work, and this practice, and even more, homework is big, so simply sometimes I go to bed at four o'clock in the morning, and it happens that at eight o'clock, while I have to wake up nine or at ten o'clock." (Varvara, 18, St.Petersburg 2010, 256-259)

They do not have time for treatment and to visit a doctor and in these cases they have to simply postpone the treatment, they use self-treatment which is not successful:

"as there was no time to go to the doctor, I practiced self-treatment and as a result I became ill in the way that the whole month I was at home and I always had a temperature 37,5 degrees and it never got off and, it was unpleasant, certainly." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 593-595)

"And because you morally, you physically are tired, you come crawling at home and it would be desirable to go to bed simply, but you understand that it is necessary to do homework, you sit down to do homework and, of course, everything breaks up, everything hurts everywhere." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 516-518)

"but when I arrived here, for the first time in my life I understood that there are such moments when there is no time for health. Simply there is no time, there is no time to visit simply a doctor because you understand, if you miss now, then yes, then you will not catch up with it." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 539-542)

The studies load a lot and influence health. The studies become the priority, and girls postpone the treatment because the education is more important; they know that, if they miss some subjects, it influences their achievements. Here is a confrontation of two basic capabilities, health and education.

'Being able to receive treatment to the highest attainable grade of physical and mental health' depends also on the medical services at school and college. Schools and colleges where young people spend at least half a day usually have a doctor's/nurse's consulting room, where young people can have check-ups and necessary vaccination, but they also provide medical services in case of emergency. Varvara mentions the irrelevance of the health care at college. She complains about the impossibility to get medical services during the studying day, because the nurse assists only on the specific time, and she might be not available in case of emergency. So constraints in receiving the health care at college, discrepancy of opening hours and students' needs impede the realization of the capability *'being able to receive treatment to the highest attainable grade of physical and mental health'*:

"Let's say even in the college, it seems to me that a nurse should be there six days per week and till the last hour we are studying. We have a nurse who appears, how many, three-four days per week and from 10 o'clock though the study program begins at 9 o'clock with us and literally till two, till

one o'clock. And, I am sorry to say, if you feel sick, to whom should you address?" (Varvara, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 488-491).

The balance between studies and relaxation are very important at this age. By postponing the treatment of diseases due to the lack of time, young people care more about studies. The disease might be left uncured, and this causes health problems in the present and future. Therefore, the capability approach should pay more attention to the overlapping of several capabilities and their influence on each other.

1.4. Being able to be nourished

Health is associated with following components: sport, sleep, pernicious habits, adequate meal, day regime, health preventive measures and treatment. Nussbaum includes in her capability *Bodily Health* "being able to [...] be adequately nourished [...]" (Nussbaum 2000: 78). The nutrition, the quality of food reflects a lot on the state of health.

All interviewed young people appreciate home-cooked food and regular eat at home. Depending on parents' workload, they might cook for themselves and for the whole family, or the relatives (grandparents, parents) cook for them.

The difference between young people from poor and better off families can be distinguished in the availability of food at home. In case of Regina, Nina, Katya the variety of food is in the availability of fruits and vegetables, as well as sweet, honeyed, tasty food. They can choose whatever they want to eat. For example, Katya keeps to a diet, because she wants to loose weight, although she is not limited in food; she has vegetables, fruits, sweets at home. But she takes a conscious decision to keep to a diet.

Darina wants to have more fruits at home. She can buy on her own snacks or chocolate, but fruits are less affordable to her. Vladimir wishes to have juices and sweets at home, so that when the guests come, he can provide them tea and juices with sweets and cookies. For him it is not even matter of food, but matter of the prosper life and a symbol of hospitality. This wish could be analysed through the cultural values and cultural meaning the people ascribe to commodities. Sweets, cookies, juices are not just attributes of the prosper life, but also cultural characteristics of commodities. For Vladimir it is very important to show his hospitality.

Gosha mentions that food preferences are very diverse, and it replies to the principle of human diversity in the capability approach:

"You know, the concept of delicacies differs as well, because any insect that creeps (Cyclops), take it, eat it, but no, of course, no." (Gosha, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 441-442)

The food that people eat should be of good quality and support everyday people's activities, but the preferences depend on people.

The young people spend at least half of the day at a place of studying, so they should have an opportunity to eat adequately at the place of studies. The capability '*being able to be adequately nourished*' should be specified till '*being able to be adequately nourished in the place of studies*' in case of young people. This reflection is sorted out from the data, when young people are able to pay money for the warm food, but the conditions in schools and colleges do not correspond to an adequate nourishment. Such situation is a distinctive characteristic of colleges and schools in St. Petersburg, where the interviewees study. Interviewed young people refer to low quality of food:

"Certainly, it is possible to slightly save on products, of course, it is not a restaurant, it is possible something such low-standard there, something such average, it is possible even lower. You know something simply to throw in a stomach and, figuratively, to dash off [to hamster]." (Gosha, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 453-455)

"At the first year we found in a salad, sorry to say, it should not be said during a meal, a flea, in a salad. " (Varvara, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 672-673)

"Naturally, I bought last week a roll with cheese and mushrooms, I thought everything will be good, but straight way the next day, I felt unwell and it turned out the poisoning." (Varvara, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 678-680)

The young people know about such conditions and low quality of food, but they adapt themselves to the social context and feel unable to change the situation. They are under a risk of the low quality food and might permanently suffer from the lack of food or due to the intoxication. Moreover, they tried to address college authorities to change the conditions, but nothing has been changed:

"Well, what is the point to report? Of course, we reported, but it was told to us: „It is time to close down this shop“. But nevertheless it exists as it existed, indeed." (Varvara, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 675-676)

Another problem with the nutrition at the place of studies is connected with the short breaks for the relaxation and meal. Nina highlights that she does not have time to eat at school, so she has to have small snacks instead of qualitatively good food, and

Varvara does not have time at all, because she spends her breaks on the way to another building:

"at school we have very small breaks, well at least for me they are small, twenty – thirty minutes are not sufficient for me personally in order to eat normally. For me it is not enough. That is why I do not eat properly. I do not like these school snacks." (Nina, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 693-696)

"Our break in the college is ten minutes, whereas it is necessary to get from one building to another in time." (Varvara, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 639-640)

The loading of studies, small breaks for meal at schools and colleges influence young people's nutrition which in turn influence young people's health. Uncured diseases, stress during studies, low quality food, postponement of the meal might become in the future preconditions of severe health problems.

The capability perspective opens the process of choice of a functioning vector and shifts the analysis from the means to the process of the choice and influential factors. Schools and colleges can report about the quantity of food and variety of meals, but if students adapt themselves to the low-quality food, their freedom to be healthy and to be adequately nourished is constrained.

Summary

The current analysis concentrated not only on the distribution of health care but also on the fairness of treatment, versatility of resources and the impact of social arrangements (cf. Sen 2002b) on young people's capability to be healthy. Moreover, it took into consideration that the overlapping of several life domains can drastically influence health.

Nussbaum's list of capabilities contains the central human capability *Bodily health* which is introduced as "being able to have good health, including reproductive health; to be adequately nourished; to have adequate shelter" (Nussbaum 2000: 78). The current study specified this capability for the Russian context and more precisely for young people. It is formed according to the results of the study and is presented in Table 6. The capability to be healthy and its components are not exhaustive, but do introduce valuable states and activities as reflected in the interviews.

Table 6. The capability to be healthy

The capability to be healthy

includes, for example:

- being able to receive treatment to the highest attainable grade of physical and mental health;
- being able to have different healthcare options as well as to be given information about health and healthcare options without any physical, financial or age-related barriers;
- being able to have access to high-quality healthcare;
- being able to be treated confidentially;
- being able to have holidays to maintain physical and mental health;
- being able to be adequately nourished, and to get adequate sleep.

Health is genetically-conditioned: on the one hand, diseases and health particularities can be inherited, on the other health is influenced by different factors (e.g. the environment, life and work conditions) and it is impossible to make all people absolutely healthy. Moreover, well-being and health are not characteristics of groups or communities, but are appropriate to individuals (cf. Sting 2011). What government of different countries should do is to deliver “the *social basis*” (Nussbaum: 2000: 81; italics in original) for the individual capability of “*being able to have good health*” (ibid. 78) or ‘*being able to be healthy*’. Governments can create a basis for people’s capability to be healthy through a developed system of first and urgent aid, a network of hospitals, polyclinics, private doctors and an insurance system. The major finding of this thesis concerns the importance of maintaining, securing and promoting⁹⁴ young people’s health through health care; the interconnection and interference of health with other important life domains (studies and study conditions, military service; relaxation; mobility); and the importance of resources. Further important matters are the performance of the health care system; the inequalities of treatment that allow or do not allow young people to achieve the highest attainable degree of health, to be treated adequately and with respect, and to have different healthcare options. The availability of medical services plays an important role it is true, but what is more important is to what extent people are able to use these medical facilities in order to be healthy.

⁹⁴ Sting (2011) mentions that the concept of health promotion is not explicitly discussed in the capability approach, and proposes that the potentials and difficulties of the health promotion by children and youth could bring new reflective discourses.

The analysis showed that personal, social, and environmental factors are extremely important in the process of the conversion of resources and other inputs into valuable states, which happens in turn under the influence of the instrumental freedoms that exist in the society. It is difficult to distinguish resources from conversion factors, which, in the case of the health capability, are social conversion factors, such as private and governmental health care and its services, insurance assistance and provision of medication. The existing health care system (public and private), the availability of hospitals and polyclinics in the region and their accessibility, the availability of doctors as well as their professionalism are social conversion factors or social opportunities which influence the process of transforming services into functionings. But public or private health services are part of the resources that young people convert into various functionings, such as that of 'being treated adequately', 'having access to different healthcare options', and 'having access to high-quality healthcare'. This finding is in accord with the discussion in the capability literature on the interconnection of resources and conversion factors: "they are interlaced in many ways and it is often not possible to classify the conditions in a uniform way as either resources *or* conversion factors" (Leßmann & Bonvin 2011: 92; italics in original). Moreover, they argue that material conditions, institutional conditions, individual skills and abilities are important for a good life: "by conceiving the capability set as resulting from the interaction of both resources *and* conversion factors, the CA reminds us that neither material conditions – including commodities or goods – nor institutions and skills are sufficient for ensuring a good life. It takes the concurrence of both" (Leßmann & Bonvin 2011: 92, italics in original).

The comparison of the approximate capability sets of those who live in the small towns and those who live in St. Petersburg shows that young people are constrained to achieve '*being able to receive treatment to the highest attainable grade of physical and mental health*' in state polyclinic and hospitals. Medical institutions are seen as places with a high level of bureaucratization, lack of doctors, in some cases unprofessional care, and with inadequate treatment so that young people try to adapt themselves to such circumstances and/or find other means of '*being able to be healthy and to receive treatment to the highest attainable grade of physical and mental health*'. Despite the fact they have health insurance and are entitled to health care from the state, they do not feel free to achieve the state of 'being healthy' and 'being adequately treated' in the state polyclinics and hospitals. Depending on their place of residence, they have different capability sets:

1) Following the data, many young people from the regions are not able to have access to high-quality healthcare nor to different healthcare options in their

hometowns. Their health capability set is limited to the opportunities and resources of their families. Young people from the regions have to travel to other places, mostly to the big cities such as St. Petersburg and Novgorod. So, being healthy is connected to being mobile and to the mobility of parents or other family members. In most cases young people are accompanied by their parents or siblings and in this case they are dependent on the time and resources of their family to travel to another city. Besides, medical services in St. Petersburg could not be free for them, so that they would need to have additional resources.

2) Young people from St. Petersburg do not need to travel to another part of the country, but they need nevertheless to find qualitatively good healthcare and doctors whom they can trust. In many cases such healthcare has to be paid for, and doctors are private. The data shows that the young people from poor families still try to afford paid-for health care, the reason for this being found in their own and their parents' attitude to health. Health becomes the responsibility of a person and her family. Moreover, in the context of St. Petersburg they feel forced by doctors to have private medical services and are forced to buy expensive medications.

The task of public policies and social groups is to create social arrangements that protect the individual from various diseases and support her health to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. If some people suffer from a lack of opportunity to achieve good health because of inadequate social arrangements, this is a serious injustice (cf. Sen 2002b). The results show that in the case of young people from better-off families, patients are given the full course of treatment, even if additional payments become necessary. On the other hand, in the case of some young people from poor families, some illnesses are not treated or prevented for social reasons. In the interviews this latter group indicated that they can follow the instructions of their doctors only if they are for free (medical services, medications) and they have to break off the treatment if it implies additional paid services or medications. In this case, the diseases remain uncured and can be a reason for a decrease in health in future. This definitely differs from the personal decision not to worry about health or physical/sports activities in the case of boys. But a deeper analysis shows that the reasons not to worry about their own health are also embedded in the social context for boys. Young people mention that it is better to be unhealthy for several years than to go to the army.

In general, health is not valued in the same way as, for example, education. Health is understood as minor value, as something that can be postponed to the future. Some people postpone the visit to a doctor for treatment to the future due to lack of time and an excessive courseload at university; in the case of poor families, it is lack of money, and in the case of young people in small towns, it is the lack of specialists in

their hometown and the distance they would have to travel that causes them to delay these visits. When the last two cases are connected with the social reasons and the organization of social arrangements, the first case shows the overlapping of life domains: health and education. The girls who are oriented towards higher education and a career demonstrate that health becomes a personal responsibility, that to support it becomes expensive and difficult, and that they should make a choice between health and education. They highlight in particular the importance of the capability of *'being able to have holidays to maintain physical and mental health'*.

Another important finding is connected with adequate nutrition and arrangements that should be created in places of study for young people. In general young people like home-cooked food, but during the day they have to eat in commercial establishments. The capability of *'being able to be adequately nourished'* should take this fact into account. The centre of special attention should be the quality of food in refectories, cafeterias etc. as well as sufficient time for meals.

To sum up, a person herself can be competent in self-medication or the use of traditional medicine, but the choice of such methods should be realized only when the person has other real opportunities such as *'to receive treatment to the highest attainable grade of physical and mental health'* within the governmental health scheme. In the end, it is the person's freedom to decide which treatment to choose, but the choice should not be constrained by a lack of such opportunities. Moreover, their actual states of health and health indicators reflect whether people have adequate healthcare in their country.

Furthermore, the findings in the Russian context show that it is the maintenance of the health of children and young people that should be deeply discussed within the capability approach. The capability approach opens a perspective onto actual life situations, in which the young people experience health problems and problems with the access to the good-quality healthcare. It gives an opportunity to closely scrutinize "the extent of freedom" (Alkire 2009: 32) young people have in the present Russian health care system in order to reach a satisfactory state of health. Finally, it shifts the focus from the measurement of separate indicators of health (without neglecting its necessity and importance) to the overall view of social and institutional reasons that limit the extent of freedom to achieve the valuable state of being healthy.

2. The capability to be well-educated

The education plays an important role in the reproduction and modification of the social structure as well as in the process of the social mobility (cf. Cherednicheko 2001), but also brings an empowerment to a person and is central to human flourishing (cf. Unterhalter 2009). The education, the choice of educational opportunities existing in the society and their realization are crucial for young people at the age of 15-18 years.

The main aim of this thesis is to focus on institutional conditions and social arrangements and expansion of people's capabilities. That is why the analysis concentrates on the performance of the educational system in order to expand "the capability to be well-educated"⁹⁵ (Klasen 2010: 109) within the Russian educational context and on the equality of capability among young people from different groups and regions. So the current analysis focuses on the formal education, namely on the engagement in the compulsory basic general education, the choice of opportunities for the complete general or specialized education, the access to higher education, the development of intellectual skills and abilities to the highest possible level. Klasen (2010) originates the following questions to the educational system:

(1) "For example, to what extent does the educational system allow children to exercise their freedom of choice, expression, and association? To what extent does it promote other capabilities such as the ability to be healthy⁹⁶ and socially integrated?" (Klasen 2010: 110)

(2) "First, does the educational system ensure that children are able to attain the capability to be well-educated? [...] Second, to what extent is the educational system responsible for inequalities in educational outcomes? Third, to what extent does the educational system equalize initial inequalities due to parental background, race, ethnicity, sex, talents, or disabilities to promote capability equality? [...] Fourth, to what extent does the education of children affect their ability to enjoy other capabilities as adults? (Klasen 2010: 109-110).

The analysis takes into consideration these questions. For this reason it focuses, to a certain extent, on the treatment of young people by educational institutions, the dependence of their capabilities and the achieved outcomes on the performance of the educational system. Besides, the relevance of some capabilities

⁹⁵ This definition will be used furthermore in the text.

⁹⁶ The interconnection of functionings 'being educated' and 'maintaining own physical and mental health to the highest attainable grade' has been considered in details in part "The capability to be healthy", chapter VI.1.

depends on age (cf. Biggeri et al. 2006), so achievements on different educational stages will lead to the analysis of the capability set, available at that stage.

All interrogated young people passed the compulsory free elementary general education at school and most of them passed or still study at the level of compulsory basic general education. At the time of interview, they were at the different levels of education: 1) general education, namely basic general education (Andrej, Grisha, Nikolai) at school and complete general education at school (Vladimir; Nina, Regina, Nikita, Pavel, Konstantin, Darina, Jura; Victor); 2) professional education, namely secondary specialized education at college (Olga, Varvara, Gosha, Katya, Rustam). One boy (Senja) was attending a vocational education school⁹⁷. The interviewed young people have studied or study at school to attain the basic general education level⁹⁸, and depending on age have been or are in the crucial phase of the choice of further education by assessing possibilities framed by social opportunities and transparency guarantees (Sen's (1999a) instrumental freedoms), and their chances to enter educational institution. Their educational paths can differ from each other, but the most important is the freedom to achieve the education they value, to achieve the highest possible level of knowledge and to study in the comfortable conditions without any constraints.

2.1. Basic general education

The young people interviewed in general ascribe a high importance to the education. They point out, that the education has an important value, because it is a key of future achievements; it is also necessary in order to achieve more than they have and to get promotion in their life:

"To study, well I understand, of course, that without studies nothing could be reached in this life. Therefore I try to study. That's the way." (Rustam, 17, St. Petersburg 2010, 252-253).

"I understand that later on I want, let us assume, in the future to leave for somewhere, that is why, naturally, it is necessary to apply as much as possible forces, means, efforts in order to leave." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 1137-1139).

"It is very important. At the moment I simply do not see another way to make one's way in the world and to reach some success. Well in professional sense, in terms of career. Because after all the education is very important now. I want to enter the university." (Nina, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 376-379).

⁹⁷ See the particularities of the Russian educational system in Chapter III.

⁹⁸ Except for Senja, who changed a school on a vocational education school, where he also has an opportunity to attain the basic general level of education.

"Well certainly, it is important, because without education there is nothing you can do. Certainly, you can do something, but to reach completely what could be reached, (it will not be possible without education)." (Gosha, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 241-242)

"Because it is impossible to be admitted somewhere without education nowadays." (Nikolai, 16, Novgorod region, 2010, 34)

"Before the beginning of this year I made myself a condition, that this year I should study well in order to get a good certificate /on general education/, otherwise I cannot be admitted anywhere. That's it. So I made a condition and I almost fulfilled it." (Nikolai, 16, Novgorod region, 2010, 376-378)

Young people underline an instrumental value of education; they want to be well-educated in order to achieve more than what they currently have, to get promotion in their life and career, and to reach goals they would like to achieve (for example, moving abroad). The young people acknowledge the importance of knowledge in the society, but some of them point out that the *teaching process* at schools and teachers themselves are not successful in motivating students or at least in promoting students' interest for the different subjects

"Though it is considered that I need this knowledge, but well it is not interesting to some extent." (Vladimir, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 146-148)

Therefore, this part of analysis focuses on the quality of the basic general education at schools, and achieved outcomes that ensure (or not) the transition to the next educational stage. By the Constitution of the Russian Federation (article 43) all citizens of the Russian Federation are eligible for the free and compulsory basic general education. That is why the question is not, whether young people have an opportunity for the basic general education, (since it is guaranteed by the Constitution) but whether the education at school meets their individual needs, develops their intellectual skills and capacities and prepares for higher educational stages. Here it is important to discuss *the treatment during an educational process* and *the influence of the treatment on achieved functionings*, e.g. educational process at school that "ensure[s] that children are able to attain the capability to be well-educated" (Klasen 2010: 109).

Any capability is a personal attribute of every single person, but in order to make a theoretical conceptualization of the capability, it is necessary to schematically visualize the received data. Figure 13 shows a schematic view on the capability to be well-educated at the level of the basic general education based on the data received from Russian young people.

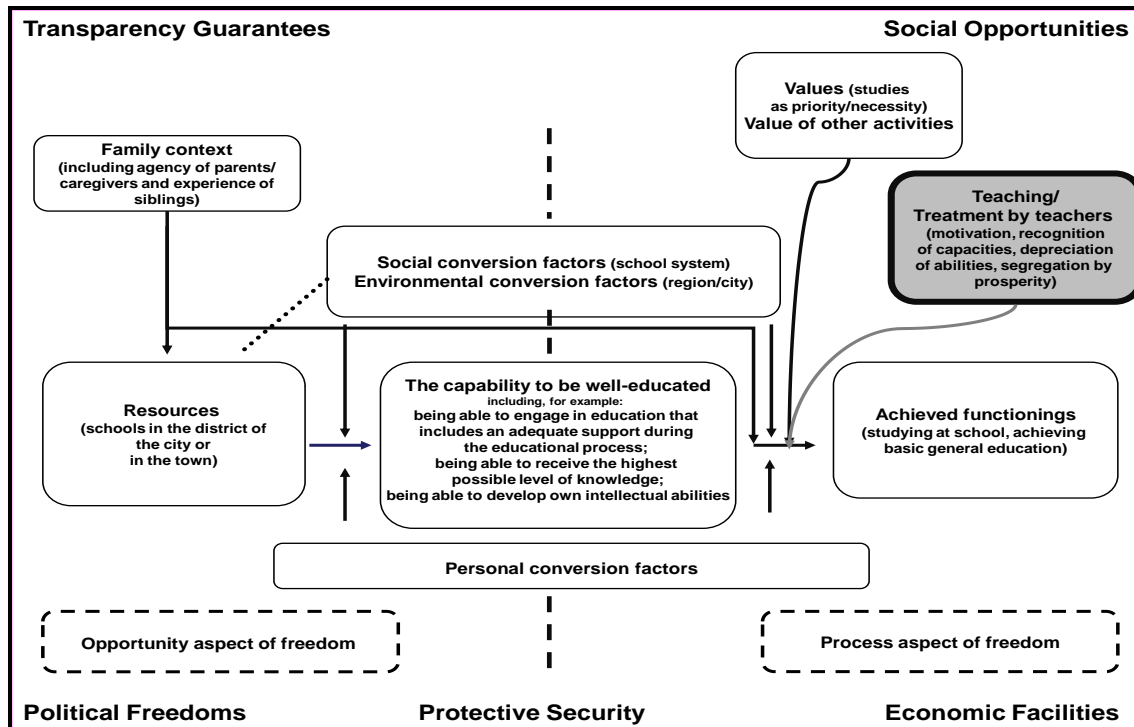


Figure 13. Education at school

Note: The findings of special attention are in the grey boxes with a bold framework. The scheme is constructed on the basis of the conceptual framework of young person's capability formation and choice of valuable functionings (with interaction of resources and conversion factors) (modified after Sen 1999a, Robeyns 2005b, Burchardt 2009, Bartelheimer 2011, Leßmann & Bonvin 2011; Sadlowski 2011), Chapter IV.4

- - - - The dotted line indicates a conventional border between the opportunity and process aspects of freedom.

..... The dotted line indicates the interconnection and interaction of resources and conversion factors.

The problem of *treatment* during the educational process is revealed in many interviews (both in the regions and in St. Petersburg). Young people refer to bad quality of teaching of general subjects; complains of teachers instead of teaching; teachers' low responsibility towards teaching, and problem of mutual understanding with teachers. The methods that teachers are using do not wake up the interest in subjects being taught and in the educational process in general; moreover, pupils do not feel motivated and their potentials are not recognized by teachers:

"that teacher treated me kindly, in the sense that she considered that I have abilities and consequently I even learned algebra and geometry, but from this year it became again boring for me " (Vladimir, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 167-170)

"Simply I did not have any desire, any incentive to do something, because I tried, tried, and then when we had a test, something such as homework's check, in this way, you come and you see that other people do nothing. It means, it is fine, it was a miracle, and I need just to forget it. And the sense to do something /homework/ disappeared." (Gosha, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 230-234)

Regina points out the difficulties in the mutual understanding with teachers that she has had earlier. She tried to adjust to teachers' requests. Gosha remembers difficult relationships that his peers have had at school.

"Naturally, I thought earlier that it is difficult, there were sometimes conflicts with the teachers, it was difficult to understand each other, and especially, it was too hard to adapt to each teacher." (Regina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 82-84)

"And, of course, not all, I had acquaintances whom, for example, from our schools, especially Russian, the teachers who still have own principles, some beliefs, for example, one of my acquaintances was turned out of school because of a bad haircut." (Gosha, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 41-44).

Rustam points out that only when teachers' work is assessed by the state commission or by any authorities, then teachers start to teach and to overload pupils with the homework. But they make it not in order to increase the level of pupils' knowledge, rather in order to be better assessed by the commission:

"the head of municipal council will be asked, „and how is it so, that all children have a bad progress and also have a bad knowledge, probably the problem is in the teachers?“" (Rustam, 17, St. Petersburg 2010, 294-296)

"Therefore now, of course, the teachers became anxious, that their pupils have a bad progress, they do not teach here, if children pass badly a test, they /the teachers/ will be asked at once why." (Rustam, 17, St. Petersburg 2010, 294)

The teachers feel their responsibility only when they see a direct correlation between pupils' results and assessment of own professional work. Although young people did not discuss the reasons of teachers' low responsibility, it should be still mentioned about the situation with teachers in Russia. Mikhalev (1998) mentions that among previously (in the Soviet time) highly paid professionals, nowadays there is a high incidence of poverty, especially among low paid budgetary-sector workers, to whom teachers belong. Cherednichenko (2001) in turn mentions that the value of this profession among young people is lower nowadays than it was in the Soviet time⁹⁹. Such deep-rooted reasons influence pupils' outcomes.

⁹⁹ Katya later on also underlines that her chosen profession of teacher is not valued in the Russian society as it was before: "it seem to me, they are education, medicine, the professions which were earlier really

Vladimir also highlights that the school is interested not so much in pupils' personal development, rather in preparations for exams and evaluations:

"Well the school, it seems to me, the most important is to pass the exams, at the present moment, in the present educational program." (Vladimir, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 174-176)

He expects from the education at a school not just certification of the level he achieved, but also the development of his intellectual skills and capacities and the recognition of his capacities. From the ideas of some young people, it is evident that the school became not a place of the development of pupils' intellectual skills and abilities, but rather a place of certification, issuance of educational documents (although the teaching process itself is also a subject of discussion, as it is mentioned earlier). Cherednichenko (2001) also highlights that in 1990s the school became a channel of transmission of students to other educational institutions. The motivation from both, the school and its teachers, the recognition of personal skills and the development of pupils' abilities are what the pupils miss in the modern Russian school:

"I would add more activities and, perhaps, the school has some kind of influence. Even cannot, but has the influence." (Darina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 998-999)

"As far as I know, there were many hobby groups, something else at school that) they made children interested in something. Now at school here, I do not know something in this way. Well, there are some sports groups only, but this is all. Well and it seems there are dancing groups, although not all of them." (Darina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 1002-1005)

"Well and, of course, the school, of course, does not give such big, well how to tell, well not so professional as though) they cannot develop the person thus much (?it can actually be)." (Gosha, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 151-154)

"Well, last year, it was a competition of school certificates /academic progress/, I decided to study hard in order to stay in /this/school. But this year, I do not have any particular desire /to be/ at this school, somehow I feel very tired. Every teacher reminds us every time that we are 34 people in one class, yes. As it exceeds the limit, the school has to pay a fee, and because of this, well, there is a rumour that wages of some teachers got cut, something like that. Well, it is a complex system. And many teachers hate us for this and say "Well, there are so much extra pupils in the class, it would be necessary to kick away some of you till the eleventh form." In general, they do not hide that it is necessary to kick away a half. Absolutely, that's how they say. Well, today especially, mathematician has been mad, she is just a guilty person, she tells everyone just that it would be a good idea to kick away all of us." (Victor, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 193-203)

good, it is the military sphere, now they are not appreciated, they are now in principle, well they are necessary, but when you come, let us assume, and you have the diploma of teacher, you will be employed, of course, in any school, but it will not, it will not be appreciated at true value." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 1283-1286).

School should not be only a place which provide the basic general education, obligatory by the Constitution, give certificates, but rather a place of personal development and development of individual interests. The young people know examples of their parents in the Soviet time, and want to have more personal attitude from teachers, more individual attitude. The capability *'being able to engage in education that includes an adequate support during the educational process'* highlights that the educational system should reply to individual needs and provide an adequate support to each and every pupil during the educational process. Moreover, every pupil should have the capability *'being able to receive the highest possible level of knowledge and education at any educational institution'* and *'being able to develop his/her own skills, abilities and intellectual interests'*. Even if the school is only an intermediate level to the next educational level, it should give an opportunity to achieve the highest possible level of knowledge at any subject and discipline regardless of the next educational choices of a pupil. This knowledge is important for the transition to the next educational level. The personal motivation is irreplaceable, but if the motivation is not supported or even neglected by teachers, then the pupils are discouraged and loose the wish to study:

"Because they discourage completely from studies. They follow mainly the curriculum unthinkingly. And it is not their business, if you are interested, you are not interested, if you understood, you did not understand." (Darina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 284-286)

Interestingly, young people have ideas about an improvement of teaching quality that influence pupils' results and knowledge:

"No, well in principle, of course, I would personally make in the way that the children studied well, and that their teachers taught them at school, for a start. Because there are such schools where they do not teach. There they like to talk, to simply scold the children, but to teach, they teach nothing. That is why, for a start, I would make so that all teachers were good, that all teachers taught normally, that the children knew a subject which is taught by a teacher. Because in many respects it depends on HOW a teacher introduces this subject. That is the way." (Rustam, 17, St. Petersburg 2010, 861-867)

But at the same time the young people feel unable to change the methods of teaching or general school's attitude towards pupils:

"well, perhaps, I would like to change something, but it is impossible by definition" (Vladimir, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 155-156).

The young people perceive that school and teachers are, to a large extent, responsible for achieving educational outcomes. Firstly, most of those young people, who marked problems in the process of teaching (low responsibility of teachers, low quality of teaching, low recognition of abilities and motivation), had an average school achievement (in their subjective opinion). Darina spoke a lot about the responsibility of teachers towards the motivation and recognition of pupils' abilities; she gave an example from her own experience and from her younger sisters' experience. She is bored with the methods of teaching and does not estimate her results at the high level. Rustam shared that he did not learn anything at school in such subjects as chemistry and English. Vladimir has an average school achievement and is satisfied with this. He has no interest in studies at school (145-147) due to the method of teaching; his interest wakes for subjects, where he can show up and develop his intellectual interests, and it is supported by a teacher. He emphasizes two subjects, physical training, and basics of sociology and political science, because he likes the teaching method of those teachers and he can show his intellectual and physical abilities during their classes:

"they are social science and physical culture because during these classes it is possible to show up and it is interesting to listen" (Vladimir, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 165-166)

Unterhalter, Vaughan and Walker (2007: 4) mention that low quality of education can be "a serious life-long disadvantage", which means that bad educational practices can influence negatively not only the educational level itself, but also the life course.

Some young people acknowledge that they are more interested in other activities than studies, for example Konstantin and Nikita from the Leningrad region. They find the reasons of their average or even poor progress in studies in the interest in other activities (in Konstantin's case sports, and in Nikita's case going out). They do not refer to teachers, teaching method or parents, but rather fully recognize their passion for other activities. Some boys pointed out that after the elementary school where they had good grades and studied with an interest, in the secondary school they lost an interest in studies and started to be lazy and neglected schoolwork (for example, Nikolai, Grisha, Senja). It seems that this transition to a new teacher and to the next level of education has to be more supported by school teachers and social pedagogues.

Secondly, the difference in the level of knowledge among regions is clearly emphasized in the interview with Andrej. Andrej thinks that the knowledge he can get

from his school in the hometown (the Novgorod region) is of lower level than the knowledge given at the school in the bigger town/city. The knowledge he has acquired at school seems to be enough to pass to the vocational education school, but not to university:

I: Well and in general, how do you think if you wanted to attend a university, I do not know, let us assume, in Novgorod or St. Petersburg, would it be easy or not for you?

Andrej: I think, not /easy/.

I: Why not /easy/?

Andrej: Well the admission requirements are higher there, I think so, they require more, more than we are required here." (Andrej, 15, Novgorod region 2011, 123-127)

"Andrej: Yes, here they give us less, it seems.

I: Than [that knowledge]

Andrej: Yes, than in the big city. Bigger the city, I think so, they give more knowledge." (Andrej, 15, Novgorod region 2011, 131-134)

The difference in the level of knowledge between region and cities might lead to the difference in chances to have an access to higher education. Some young people think that their skills and abilities, which have been formed within social arrangements of their place of residence, might not compete with those of city inhabitants. This leads to the capability '*being able to engage in education that includes an adequate support for transitions between educational levels*', which means that the educational system should support each and every pupil in the transition between educational levels by giving him/her an appropriate level of knowledge.

The education at school is a complex concept which could be considered from many different aspects (cf. Munn 2010). The data gives an obvious indication that the process of teaching influences the pupils' motivation, their level of knowledge or, in the capability perspective, their achieved functioning. Based on results of interviews, it can be summarized that not everybody, who values the education, can achieve good results in schools. It happens not only due to individual conversion factors (intellectual level, self-regulation), but also due to the particularities and problems in the process of teaching. It seems that, the educational system (at the level of the basic general education) does not completely ensure the equality in the achieved outcomes.

In general, the young people have shown an interest towards studies, knowledge and promotion in the education. But they expect from school not only school-leaving certificates, but an enhancement of their intellectual abilities and knowledge. This coincides with the finding made by Unterhalter (2003b) that "sometimes schooling does not entail an enhancement of capabilities and substantive

freedom" (ibid.: 7) and "sometimes education, particularly that in schools, is not an enlargement of freedom" (ibid.: 11).

After the obligatory basic general education, young people can choose among different educational opportunities: the complete general education, the specialized education, the vocational education. The transition to the next stage (the freedom of choice) as well as to what extent other educational institutions ensure the capability to be well-educated is considered in the next section.

2.2. Choice of complete general, specialized or vocational education

Olga, Rustam and Gosha studied at school in St. Petersburg, and after the 9th grade changed the education at school to the education at college. The reasons to change the educational institution were the quality of teaching and teachers' attitude at school. The low quality of teaching the general subjects and teachers' constant complains about their small wages brought some young people to low results and level of knowledge:

"And at school they did not teach us at all, teachers only complained that they have a small salary and that was all." (Rustam, 17, St. Petersburg 2010, 203).

"At school I did not learn any word /in English/, because they did not teach us properly." (Rustam, 17, St. Petersburg 2010, 220)

Olga was failed by teachers, although she was oriented on good results and good achievement:

"at school many teachers did not like me, they failed me and so on" (Olga, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 252-253)

Olga describes herself as very hyperactive girl, and she is aware that this problem might disturb her studies. But Olga's example shows that teachers did not support her abilities and could not accept her individual particularities and even failed her somehow. Such teachers' attitude did not lead but might have led to Olga's exclusion from the educational institution or even to social exclusion. Klasen (2001) makes an important point about the consequences of child's exclusion and low responsiveness from school to his or her special needs:

“In particular, segregation of children with special needs, permanent exclusion of unruly and difficult children, and, to some degree, differentiated education structures can foster social exclusion, particularly if they primarily aim to free the regular school system from poorer achievers and more difficult students rather than cater specifically to their needs. Similarly, greater school choice can also have exclusionary effects” (Klasen 2001: 438).

Varvara has a positive experience of educational institution’s change. Her knowledge was adequately assessed by a school principal at her school, and the school principal advised her to go to college which is specialized in foreign languages.

All the above mentioned interviewees ascribe a high importance to the education and have elaborated a plan for further education. For them it is important to have the capabilities *‘being able to transfer to a different educational institution, and to choose a place of studies without any physical, cultural or social barriers’* and *‘being able to choose among different educational institutions that meet the needs of the individual and are adequate to her level of knowledge’*. If a previous educational institution does not meet the needs of the individual, her intellectual abilities and personal ideas about a good education, then every person (pupil) should have the freedom to choose another educational institution which will reply to the needs. The schematic description of the capability presented in the Figure 14.

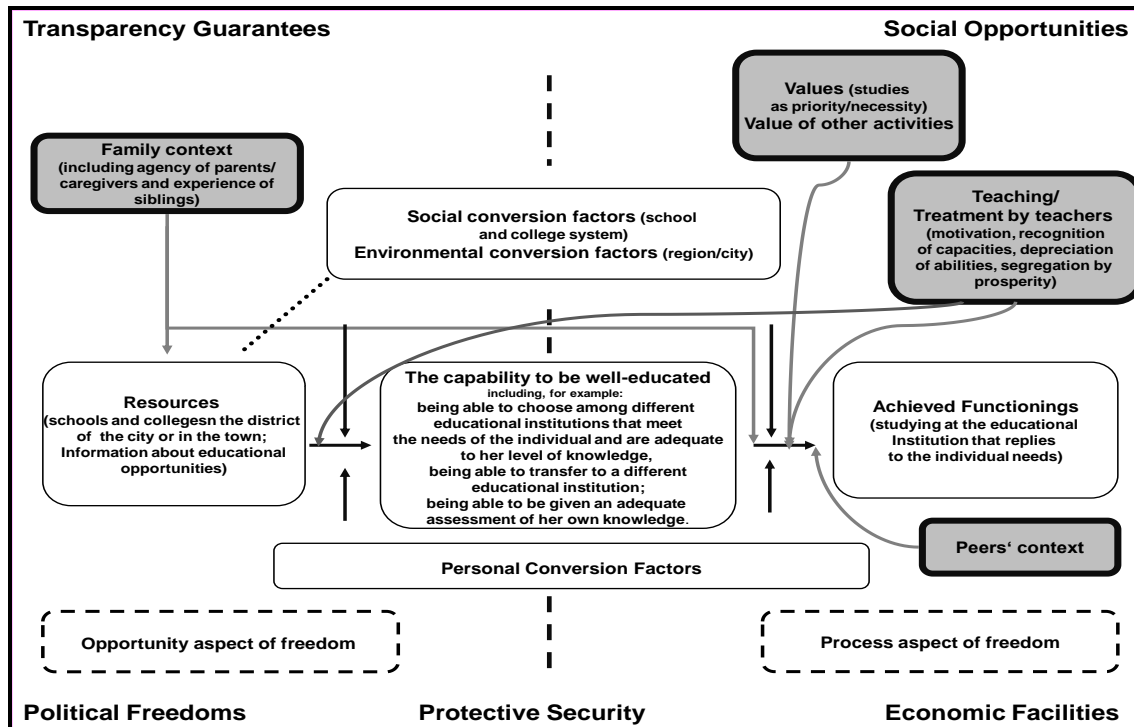


Figure 14. Choice of complete general, specialized or vocational education

Note: The findings of special attention are in the grey boxes with a bold framework. The scheme is constructed on the basis of the conceptual framework of young person's capability formation and choice of valuable functionings (with interaction of resources and conversion factors) (modified after Sen 1999a, Robeyns 2005b, Burchardt 2009, Bartelheimer 2011, Leßmann & Bonvin 2011; Sadlowski 2011), Chapter IV.4

- - - - The dotted line indicates a conventional border between the opportunity and process aspects of freedom.

..... The dotted line indicates the interconnection and interaction of resources and conversion factors.

Discussed in previous section teachers' attitude towards pupils and teaching process also become important subjects at this level of education for those, who chose to complete the general education at school. The subject on teachers' attitude towards pupils is considered in the new perspective in this section.

Darina speaks again about the cases of scolding and depreciation of young people's intellectual abilities by teachers; teachers compare their pupils with the pupils of another educational institution (vocational education school), who, in their opinion, have lower level of knowledge:

"That is the way, and more, it happens that teachers swear: "Why did you enter the tenth class? Why did you enter? It would be better, if you entered the vocational school. So-and-so". Constant humiliation." (Darina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 889-891)

Firstly, this indicates a lack of teacher's respect towards young people attending this school and also students from another educational institution; secondly, it contributes to formation by young people of prejudged opinion towards their peers from another educational institution; thirdly, it influences an implicit segregation of educational institutions. By comparing students, teachers ascribe to those, who stay at school, a better position, which can make young people feel predominant towards their peers from other educational institutions and create tense relationships or even an educational segregation among young people in general.

As it was mentioned earlier in Chapter III, one of the functions of vocational school is keeping socially 'difficult' contingent of youth in the educational system and giving them vocational training (cf. Cherednichenko 2011). The data of this study shows that vocational schools still partially play a function of keeping difficult children in the educational system. Senja's example shows that he was moved up to a vocational school due to his particularities in behaviour and relationships with teachers, and now he completes the program of the basic general education and receives a profession. On the one hand, in the society there is indeed such an idea that vocational education school is a buffer for 'difficult' young people with low achievements. But on the other hand, such school gives an obligatory minimum of educational program and also a profession that means, it provides an opportunity to be able to work in the future. In Senja's case, the social work agency took care of him and elaborated an educational plan for him.

On the contrary, Andrej wants to go to a vocational training school, because he likes the profession of motor mechanic, and his main reason for not staying at school is a peer influence. All his friends leave the school after the 9th grade, and he does not want to stay at school with new peers. In his case, vocational education school is a place where he can get training in the profession he values and likes.

Friends and peers are strong connection to the school for some young people. Andrej (as already mentioned), Victor and Vladimir match their educational strategies and choices with peers' educational strategies:

"No, it is simple, our class /classmates/ leave the school, and with others I do not want somehow to study. If our class remained, I would remain, but all leave the school." (Andrej, 15, Novgorod region 2011, 151-152)

"I need only one year more to finish my studies. I do not know, if half of my friends leave this school, I'll leave as well." (Victor, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 250-251)

"I do not want to go to the college, because at school there is already an established company, my friends, with them I want to complete the school and to continue to contact with them." (Vladimir, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 153-155).

Family (including sibling's experience) and peer context play a huge and sometimes decisive role in the choice of educational strategies. Olga, Gosha and Konstantin took into account siblings' experience in order to choose the next educational institution. Parents control studies and achievements, actively engage in the process of choosing the educational institution: such as in case of Rustam, Olga, Pavel, Nikita, Nina, Katya, Regina, Darina, Senja, Grisha. In Nikolai's case mother provided information about different educational opportunities. The family engagement is also influential at the stage of higher education, which will be considered later.

Not all young people changed the school to another educational institution. Nikita, Nina, Katya, Regina, Konstantin, Darina, Vladimir and Jura chose to continue the general complete education at school where they received the basic general education. The reasons are different, some trends in their educational strategies have been considered above.

Whereas in St. Petersburg young people have chosen different ways to continue the education: the complete general education at school and specialized education at college, in the Leningrad region all interviews with young people were taken at the end of the 11th grade which means that the young people initially chose the complete general education. There was no explicit indication about the freedom of choice that they had after they completed the obligatory basic general education. But in the interviews, young people indicated a limited number of specialized and higher educational institutions in the region. In the Leningrad region, in their hometown young people named only a vocational school and a branch of one of St. Petersburg's universities. At the same time, in case of young people from St. Petersburg they have had different options in mind and following personal educational plans they chose different ways. In the Novgorod region, two young people chose to leave school: one for vocational training and another one for the navy college, whereas the third person chose to stay at school.

The next section analyzes deeper the particularities of higher education, and young people's freedom to receive higher education.

2.3. Access to higher education

The young people were asked in the interview about their educational plans after school: "After school (secondary specialized school) what are you going to do?", and on the perception of the instrumental freedoms in the country: "What do you think, is it easy to receive higher education in your city, in your country?" (Appendix 2)

The answers present perceived difficulties, that young people might have during examinations or preparatory stage. Moreover, young people's views on their chances to achieve in the future the educational level they have reason to value is evaluated from the achieved functioning with a projection on future capability sets, because the achievement of functionings at any particular time influences the formation of future capability sets (cf. Leßmann 2009). Moreover, most of interviewed young people are already at the educational stage when they have to decide about further education, including higher education (11th grade at school or 2nd-3rd year at secondary specialized school).

The analysis concentrates on several main findings: firstly, it discusses an influence of instrumental freedoms on individual freedoms to live the life and to have the education young people value; secondly, it considers an influence of available resources and conversion factors on the choice of an educational institution; thirdly, a deep focus on differences in the educational strategies of school graduates from regions and from city is scrutinized. The last point is in turn interconnected with an analysis of mobility and knowledge of foreign languages by young people.

Instrumental freedoms

This part focuses on the influence of *instrumental freedoms* "that contribute, directly or indirectly, to the overall freedom people have to live the way they would like to live" (Sen 1999a: 38). The reflection of some young people on their freedom to achieve the valuable educational level, namely to receive higher education, is embedded into the reflection on transparency guarantees, revealed in the degree of bureaucratization, corruption, bribery in the society and educational system. Both (transparency guarantees and educational system) influence the choice and formation of the capability set. The access to education and especially higher education is closely interconnected with transparency guarantees in the Russian context.

The Figure 15 shows the schematic view on the capabilities '*being able to have access to higher education on the basis of knowledge, skills and capacities*' and '*being able to be given an adequate assessment of own knowledge, skills and intellectual abilities by any educational institution*' based on the results from the data.

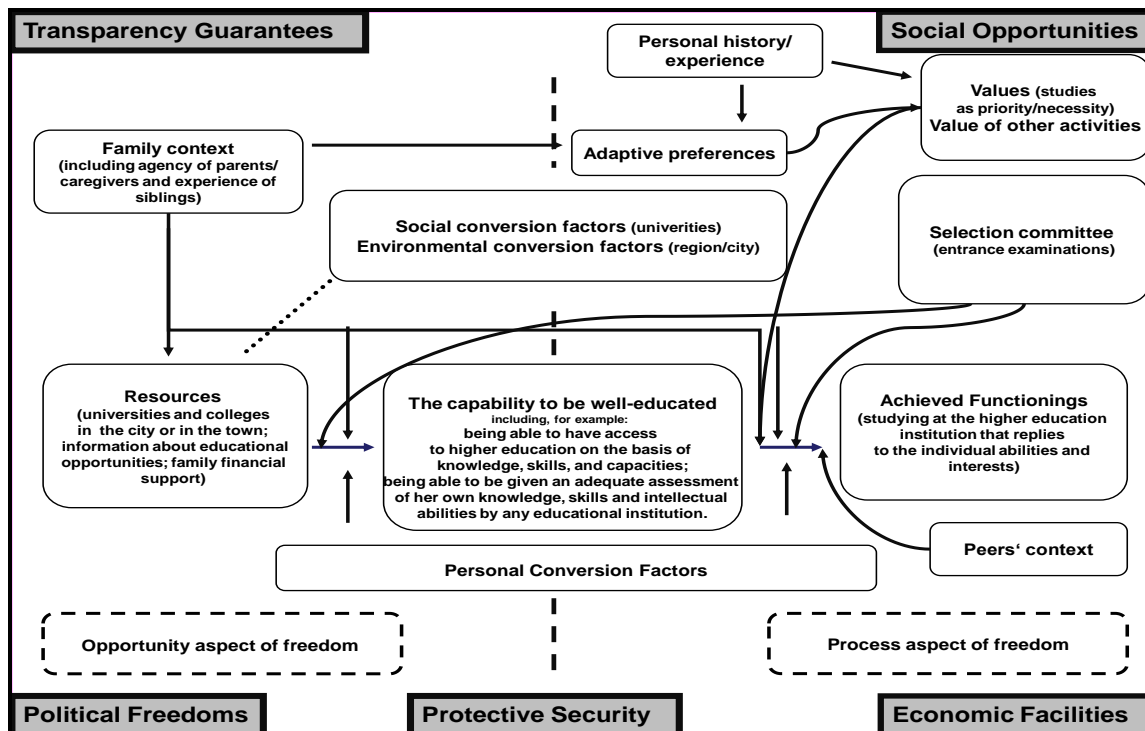


Figure 15. Higher education

Note: The findings of special attention are in the grey boxes with a bold framework. The scheme is constructed on the basis of the conceptual framework of young person's capability formation and choice of valuable functionings (with interaction of resources and conversion factors) (modified after Sen 1999a, Robeyns 2005b, Burchardt 2009, Bartelheimer 2011, Leßmann & Bonvin 2011; Sadlowski 2011), Chapter IV.4

- - - - The dotted line indicates a conventional border between the opportunity and process aspects of freedom.

..... The dotted line indicates the interconnection and interaction of resources and conversion factors.

Throughout the interviews, independently from the place of residence and family socio-economic background, young people specified the following situation with instrumental freedoms, in which they are embedded with their freedom to live the life they would like to live and to receive the education they would like to have:

- all could be bought in the country, including an access to higher education and the transition between educational levels:

"Well, and also everything could be bought here, therefore even if something somewhere is difficult, to buy will be also easily, so to say ((laughs))." (Olga, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 208-209)

"The education as well as the majority /of other things/ is bought in this country. It is very difficult here /in Russia/, let us assume, now in the eleventh class, I communicate with people who are already enrolled on the faculty of philology, let us assume." (Nina, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 401-403)

"He /father/ tells me: „If you do not study, you will go to army“. That is what he has already told me, he will not pay money for me." (Pavel, 17, Leningrad region, 2010, 642-644)

These examples show young people's awareness of opportunity to 'buy' education and 'all' what they want, if they or their parents have money. If something cannot be reached by knowledge or competences, for example, exams, then there is another way – bribery. Olga knows that in case of difficulties with exams, she can overcome them by 'buying' exams. Although she emphasizes in the interview her mathematical abilities, she still keeps in mind that she has a spare way to achieve the educational level she values. The openness of bribes and fees in the education, firstly, is deeply settled down in young people's consciousness; secondly, as it will be mentioned later, it limits the young people's substantive freedom to reach the education they value; thirdly, it frames the young people perception about the overall freedom people have in Russia.

The openness of bribes and fees in the education has a double-effect. Not only students have the confidence that they have an 'option' to pass exam, but lecturers use their position in order to earn money and force students to pay fee while in fact, if a student is on a free budget-based place, he/she cannot be obliged to pay:

"you entered, you did, and, you are studying. But the point is that the majority of St. Petersburg's higher education institutions, the lecturers, in order to pass any test, to write a diploma work, it is necessary to have a very good financial situation. Yes, you face this and the fact that more often the lecturer simply says: „I will not accept“. You need to give him 1000 [roubles]¹⁰⁰, and then „I will give you [a test] and you will write“." (Gosha, 16, St. Petersburg, 2010, 271-275)

Another example of the priority of financial resources was shared by Katya. The experience of her friend, who lives in the dormitory, influenced her perception of the whole system of education in Russia:

"if someone from more influential family comes, they move /a poorer/ from the apartment on the third floor to another on the ninth floor, so he wrote to me and told that such problem exists." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg, 2010, 975-978).

¹⁰⁰ About 25 euro.

- the access to higher education can be still realized on the basis of knowledge: "there are places, where it is necessary to know" (Rustam, 17, St. Petersburg 2010, 246), but also on the basis of money, namely on the basis of payment, bribes or fees: "Well, there are such institutions and institutes where it is necessary to pay" (Rustam, 17, St. Petersburg 2010, 245).

"In Russia it is easy to receive /higher education/, because here (1.0), well, it seems to me, here in all higher education institutions m:: the wealth plays a role only. That means, if you have sponsors, or you have financial resources, it is easy for you to enter." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 120-122)

"If you come with your own knowledge, (? not) it is difficult in general. It seems to me that the knowledge is not so appreciated as the wealth." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg, 2010, 122-124)

"((P)) I mean that if there is money, it is easy. And if now, let us assume, now I have to enter, I doubt that I will enter on a free place at the faculty, I do not know, it will be something like a miracle, something transcendental, though I will not tell that I study badly. That is the way, while on paid [place], well, my parents will not have enough means in order to simply support both me and the sister on the paid form of education." (Darina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 169-173)

"Now, one is poor, another one is rich, that is how it is. It means that not everyone is enabled to enter higher education. This is how it is." (Pavel, 17, Leningrad region 2010, 63-64)

- unjust education/ unequal access to higher education institutions (universities, academies, institutes) is reflected through openness of briberies, privileges and backstairs, private contacts and social networks that can facilitate the access to higher education.

"Well it is quite clear that if you pay any money to universities for these courses, you are known already by lecturers." (Nina, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 408-409)

"Well this is how it is. Well, how many times I even faced the situations, let us assume, at institute, it was very offensive, when the guys had, let us assume, three hundred points at the Unified State Exam, that means one hundred /percent/, but they cannot enter there. And those, who had for two exams just only one hundred twenty /points/, they are accepted without any problems." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg, 2010, 149-152)

"I know a boy who studies at the faculty of law, because his mum is a judge in our hometown, well generally all entered either on favourable terms, or well one girl, she is my friend, she studies in the medical university, in Pavlov." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg, 2010, 93-96)

"Yes, because with whomever I start to speak, who studies on the budget-based place, and I ask, the guys have few points, those who passed the Unified State Exam. Well they explain so: either the father works somewhere, or the mother is a head of department, or something in this way." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg, 2010, 126-127)

"It is difficult, rather difficult, because generally everywhere the entrance is realized now either by backstairs influence, or for big money." (Varvara, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 214-215)

Some young people might even change their educational strategies when they become aware that they are not entitled to any privileged group:

"I simply wanted to enter another university, but now practically to the groups not entitled to a benefit to get higher education is impossible, while the cost is very high." (Regina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 572-574)

Or it is impossible to get a free place at some universities without social network and good protection:

"Where I wanted to be admitted /to a university/, the cost is very high; it is almost unreal to get a free budget-based place there, especially without acquaintances who hold a high position." (Regina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 574-576)

Admission to higher education can be also on the basis of privileges connected with health state. Darina's sister has problems with health. Darina thinks that this facilitates her sister's admission to higher education:

"The sister has more opportunities to be admitted to the university because I have three younger sisters, all of them have asthma, two of them are disabled. That sister who is going to be admitted together with me, she is also disabled, and in this connection she has some privileges, she can get acceptance somewhere right away, and she has more opportunities, firstly." (Darina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 855-859).

- orientation of educational policies on paid services:

"But nevertheless look: those who attend the courses, the courses are paid, seventy percent of pupils enter." (Nina, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 406-408)

Olga studies at college where there is an opportunity to enter the university which has a contract with the college (directly to be enrolled on the 2nd -3rd years of education). But she has been already informed that there is an accidental chance to be enrolled on a budget form of education at the university. This information could be assessed as rather reorientation from a free place to a paid one:

"Only if someone leaves the budget-based place voluntarily, then there will be a place, then it is possible. But indeed there are no chances, as they told us." (Olga, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 199-200)

- loss of the value of high-quality education. The value of university diploma and importance of documents are higher than the education of a high standard itself (see also Chapter I). The young people highlight that many people value not the knowledge that can be acquired through the studies, but the document – diploma – which certifies that a person has been affiliated with any higher educational institution.

"Well it seems to me that for many it is important not so much the knowledge they receive, rather the diploma. When you ask those who study at the St. Petersburg State University, at the Moscow State University, for example, at the MGIMO University, the diploma itself is very important, even if it was bought." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 141-144)

"M: diff) m:, well the adequate education, just when a person knows, such people, in my opinion, in Russia are very few. There are those who study and graduate as botchers, with the red diploma, for money and such people are numerous." (Regina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 87-89)

"I want to graduate in order not just to graduate, but in order to get a decent job with a worthy salary " (Darina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 831-832).

The decrease of value of education results in the graduation of lower educated specialists (among them the interviewees emphasize especially doctors). Despite the fact that many young people in the country have a diploma of higher education, the informants point out that there are many botchers among such university graduates.

"In whole I have a negative opinion because it seems to me that the problem proceeds from the education and the problem proceeds, probably, from our government. As many diplomas are bought, then, of course, the doctors, who are not capable to define an illness seriously, are graduated." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 611-614)

"And exactly to sit and to study, to study in order to get the diploma, there are not so much such students, at least as far as I know." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 145-147)

- young people assess the Russian labour market as unbalanced with a disproportion of working opportunities and number of specialists¹⁰¹. This makes young people feel uncertain and insecure about their career and future. The choice of valuable profession does not assure the prosperity and stability in future:

"Family, I do not even know. How it will go further, because in our country there are lots of these lawyers, economists, and these technical professions, but there are not enough of milling-machine operators, of course, or

¹⁰¹ This problematic issue has been also marked by Russian researcher Boytsova (2008): 25 % of unemployed are qualified young people with higher education.

engineers here, but on the other hand who needs the engineers without qualification?" (Gosha, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 819-821)

"when you come, let us assume, and you have the diploma of teacher, you will be employed, of course, in any school, but it will not be, it will not be appreciated at true value" (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 1284-1286)

The discrepancy between the educational and the labour markets in Russia has been also mentioned by Dafflon (2009: 15): "it seems that educational institutions do not sufficiently take into consideration the needs of the labour market". So, young people feel unsecure concerning employment perspectives in Russia and opportunities to find a valuable job.

The openness of bribes and fees, need of financial resources in order to be admitted to the university is impressed in young people's consciousness. On the one hand, it frames the freedom context for the young people, the context in which the capability set is formed. It constrains directly and indirectly their freedom to choose the education and educational institution they value. On the other hand, the young people adapt to the circumstances and inequalities and adjust their lives to these conditions. It means that young people grow on the examples of bribes and corruption, and subsequently might adjust their values to the corruptive system. Young people try to achieve what they value whereas, firstly, they have experienced or heard about an unjust treatment at the universities during admission examinations and during the studies, and, secondly, they feel uncertain and insecure towards their future.

Moreover, the interviewees point out the decrease in importance of the knowledge required for the admission to higher education. This might cause impairments in the social mobility, stagnation in the development and inequalities in the education. The young people want to try to change their social position through the education, to reach more than they have, but the system based on the access with a help of financial and other not knowledge-related resources can impede their social mobility and expansion of substantive freedoms.

Vladimir, Konstantin and Jura, who are going to try to be admitted at higher educational institution, do not share the ideas mentioned above. They rather propose other ideas on difficulties to be admitted to higher education in Russia. For Vladimir to receive higher education becomes more difficult, more complicated, because the country needs workers, people with working professions. Due to lack of working forces, the requirements for admission become more and more difficult (Vladimir, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 189-191). Konstantin takes part in many sport competitions that is why he emphasizes on the importance of the public participation in order to be admitted to university:

"Well I do not know, those factors are taken into account, which are your studies, but not only your studies are considered or exams, but what you have done for the society, it means, if you have taken part somewhere in the social life. That is the way." (Konstantin, 17, Leningrad region 2010, 359-361)

To sum up this section, it is important to say that the instrumental freedoms, presented in young people's perception, frame the context in which they make their choices. This is how they understand the educational reality, and in this reality they form their choices. Moreover, the analysis leads to formation of the capability '*being able to have access to higher education on the basis of knowledge skills and capacities*', which in most cases is inseparable in the Russian context of educational opportunities and transparency guarantees following the data with the capability '*being able to have adequate assessment of own knowledge, skills and intellectual abilities by any educational institution*'. The next section focuses on the influence of conversion factors and resources on the choice of educational institution.

Value of higher education, choice of educational institution and influence of conversion factors

At the time of the interview none of young people was a student of higher educational institution, that is why it is not clear what their achieved functionings in higher education are. By this time, it could be assessed only their subjective intentions and expectations. But what is important at this moment is to analyze how valuable functionings in education are understood by young people, and whether young people are confident that in the future they are able to achieve those valuable functionings. The findings made by Burchardt (2009: 11) suggest that "the confidence to define objectives for oneself for the future is strongly influenced by socio-economic status and past experience". In other words, she says, "it appears that the ability to formulate agency goals at all is conditioned by pre-existing inequality" (ibid.: 11). The analysis of the perception of instrumental freedoms by young people showed that the formulation of plans and goals on higher education is deeply conditioned by the pre-existing inequality in the society and the inequality experienced by others (peers, acquaintances) which young people project on themselves.

Following the answers, educational plans on higher education could be presented in the following typology:

1a) young people with the orientation on higher education, with a clearly formulated plan: educational institution, matching educational choice with a further professional career and elaborated preparations for the entrance examinations. These

young people want to pass on a free budget-based place at St. Petersburg's universities. They have a detailed plan for the preparations to be admitted to the chosen university. The following interviewed young people could be related to this group: Olga, Nina, Katya, Vladimir.

1b) young people who are also orientated on higher education, have chosen an educational institution, and are in the process of preparations for the admission examinations, *but* the choice was influenced (changed, made) by others: principal/school, family (parents, siblings) or peers. The following interviewed young people could be related to this group: Regina, Jura, Pavel, Konstantin.

2) young people with the motivation to receive higher education at the universities of St. Petersburg, but they are not definite with their choice. The following interviewed young people could be related to this group: Rustam, Darina, Varvara, Gosha, Grisha, Victor. In case of Darina, her educational horizons are quite vague, she does not possess a proper information about the institutions in St. Petersburg, although she has a motivation to study in St. Petersburg.

3) young people who do not see the necessity of higher education at this time period. They prefer the second specialized education or the vocation educational school in order to get a working profession. The following interviewed young people could be related to this group: Andrej, Nikita, Nikolai, Senja.

At this age young people are in the decisive phase of life, because the planning of life is closely interconnected with the choices of further education and working perspective, place of residence and the beginning of relationships. The planning of life or in the words of Nussbaum's list *Practical reason* - "being able to form a conception of the good and to engage in critical reflection about the planning of one's life" (Nussbaum 2000: 80) - is the capability that at this specific age becomes extremely relevant. Practical reason and affiliation are crucial for Nussbaum in order to be truly human: a person can be able to plan own life when a person is being able to think, to reflect and at the same time to have reciprocity with others (cf. Nussbaum 2000). Being able to make decisions concerning the further education, being able to plan is important for the young people at this moment in combination with being able to have access to higher education on the basis of knowledge, skills and capacities. The following analysis shows that the planning of life and education by young people are influenced by conversion factors and embedded in the described earlier context of instrumental freedoms.

Admission to the higher education seems to be a turning point for many young people (for both girls and boys), who indicated their plan to receive higher education.

The life in their case is reflected in a successive way: exams at school, admission to the chosen educational institution, adaptation to the new teaching process, and then entrance to the labour market. Boys worry more due to the army issue described in the section "The capability to be healthy" of this Chapter (VI.1.1.2).

1a) Nina, Olga, Katya and Vladimir from Saint Petersburg have a clearly formulated educational and professional plan. These young people match their abilities and skills with educational and professional requirements, and they can formulate what they want to reach in the life and in profession. They collect the information about different educational opportunities, visit open doors at universities and are oriented on studies.

Katya has already tried to enter higher education. The year before the interview she tried to be accepted at the Pedagogical University in St. Petersburg. For her, education is a key of achievements and allows to achieve more than she has, it is an instrumental resource to realize other goals, namely moving to Germany. Although she values the higher education abroad more than in Russia, she wants to improve her knowledge of foreign languages (English and German) in Russia and then to move abroad. She had a bad experience of getting the admission to the university, and this has reflected in her attitude to the Russian higher educational system:

"well actually it was awful and the memory is also awful, especially about Herzen University" (Katya, 18, Saint Petersburg 2010, 99-100)

First reason named by Katya was her regional origin (she comes from a small town in the Pskov region):

"Well it is difficult, even in terms that when you come, it is difficult to be admitted, because at first they accept /people/ from Leningrad¹⁰², accept /people/ from the Leningrad region, well but only then, let us assume, they accept not locals." (Katya, 18, Saint Petersburg 2010, 96-98)

Nowadays she lives in St. Petersburg and has a registration in St. Petersburg in her grandmother's flat. Relatives' presence in the place, where university is located, makes conditions of university admission as well as accessibility of medical services easier. Another problem for Katya was that her knowledge was not assessed adequately; the financial resources of her family were rather more precious in order to be accepted:

¹⁰² St. Petersburg.

"if you find, let us assume, sponsors who could pay for your studies, we will take you, and if not, we will not " (Katya, 18, Saint Petersburg 2010, 109-111)

She does not hide that she tried and succeeded to be admitted at Saint Petersburg State University at the faculty of Sociology, but her value is studies of foreign languages at Herzen Pedagogical University:

"therefore I chose purposefully the languages and I was very glad that I have the gift for languages and also the desire" (Katya, 18, Saint Petersburg 2010, 1125-1126)

"as I purposefully wanted the languages, I decided that I will do it, therefore I went to college. That is the way. That is why this year I will try to enter once more time." (Katya, 18, Saint Petersburg 2010, 116-118)

Despite the fact that she spends a lot of time on studies, she doubts about her future chances to get a free budget-based place at Herzen Pedagogical University. She speaks openly about bribes and fees and possesses the information from different universities. In her opinion, the higher education is more oriented on the paid education or bribes in order to get acceptance in a free budget-based place:

"Notably, now everything is meant in the way that it is necessary to go to the higher education institutions for a fee. And all speak openly about the price, all speak openly, that yes it is for a fee and the approximate acceptance costs so much." (Katya, 18, Saint Petersburg 2010, 661-663)

"Well, let us assume, if at St. Petersburg State University on the faculty of foreign languages, for example, one should pay 120 thousand for half a year, it is clear that very few people can pay it." (Katya, 18, Saint Petersburg 2010, 666-668)

Katya is a goal-oriented and self-organized person, but her capability '*being able to have access to the higher education on the basis of knowledge, skills and capacities*' is constrained by the barriers created in the educational system. The pre-existing inequality is expressed in the access to higher education only for those who can pay for studies or who has sponsors.

Olga and Nina understand the importance of education. They both do not have an experience about how to get admission to the university, but speak about their chances from the information received at the university and the inequality experienced by others, which girls project on themselves. Olga is originally warned about unavailability of free places for the college graduates although the college has a contract with the university, and she is channeled to the university on the paid education:

"/I want/ on a free budget-based place, but they told us that there are few chances because /we are/ after college. Only if someone leaves a budget-based place voluntarily, then there will be a place, then it is possible /to be admitted on a free place/. But indeed there are no chances, as they told us." (Olga, 16, Saint Petersburg 2010, 197-200)

For Nina, the education is to have more than she has and to prosper in the life:

"It is very important. At the moment I simply do not see another way to make one's way in the world and to reach some success. Well in professional sense, in terms of career. Because after all the education is very important now. I want to enter the university." (Nina, 16, Saint Petersburg 2010, 376-379)

She chooses the profession by her interest and skills. Although she still feels uncertain about the choice of profession: "I am afraid, that I do not know, to what extent is the choice of profession right, well and it is unclear what is further." (Nina, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 885-886), she thinks that the profession in general should bring people not only financial security, but also pleasure: "After all the profession should bring not only money, but also pleasure." (Nina, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 414-415). She wants to study at the faculty of Journalism at Saint Petersburg State University. She also thinks that studying is the only way to promote in the life and achieve more:

"Yes, at St. Petersburg State University at the faculty of Journalism, I want very, very much, and I do not see another way except to study." (Nina, 16, Saint Petersburg 2010, 381-382)

"Well in general there are /other alternatives/, of course, but this is what I want. Try to understand, one can take other option for the acceptance, while it is possible to consider it as something you want to do in life." (Nina, 16, Saint Petersburg 2010, 412-414)

Nina's parents were saving money for her higher education from the 7th grade, because she explains, her parents knew that in the 11th grade they will need to have an amount of money for the preparation to the admission examinations (Nina, 16, St. Petersburg, 2010, 392-394). She did not clearly express, if she visited the preparatory courses at the chosen faculty, but she knows about such opportunity and her parents saved money for such extra preparatory courses:

"Nevertheless, look: those who visit the courses, they are paid, seventy percent of pupils get acceptance. Well it is quite clear that if you pay any money to universities for these courses, you are known already by lecturers." (Nina, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 406-409)

Based on the information collected, Nina considers the preparatory courses at university important in order to get admitted to university.

The mentioned above cases show the orientation of the educational system on the paid education, and adaptation of young people and their families to such conditions. The young people's process freedom is constrained by the treatment of educational institutions oriented on the financial donations.

Vladimir can formulate his goal: he wants to get accepted at the theatre academy, and he visits the school theatre club, where he performs on French, and the preparatory courses in the theatrical studio. But by the way he plans his life and his goals in the life "are constrained by [his] previous experience" (life in poverty) (Burchardt 2009: 13), the analysis comes to the point that "the more disadvantaged have more modest goals" (ibid.: 13) His reflection on the chosen profession leads to the reconstruction of normality (it is life in poverty for him) and adaptation/ resignation to the circumstances.

On the one hand, the profession of actor can give opportunities for the well-provided life:

"Well it is possible, of course, show business, this is it, perhaps on television, well if so, then, of course, everything will be good, there will be a lot of money and so on." (Vladimir 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 550-552)

This is what he knows from the mass-media, from successful promotion of actors. But on the other hand his planning of life, his conception of personal life is embedded in the life circumstances he lives now, and he is adjusted to the adaptive preferences - life in the poverty:

"Well by forty years, well if everything succeeds, I will become an actor and I will live in poverty, probably, most likely, because the actor is very ungrateful profession." (Vladimir 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 545-546)

"I live anyway the whole life in poverty, I do not need to get accustomed again to this." (Vladimir 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 555)

"Well, of course, I would like to live better, but I am fine, I am aware and I understand that most likely it will not be better (?)." (Vladimir 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 559-560)

He reflects a lot on his life and compares his life with other peers, especially with peers in other countries (France). He gives explanation to his life, asserts his life through comparison with others:

"Well to me, it looks like everything is learned in comparison, it could be even worse. So, it seems that I live in the normal way, I study, I am dressed, so everything is normal." (Vladimir, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 371-372)

He points out that the life is constructed on oppositions, and those who have everything in the life cannot understand the value of what they have, because the feeling of happiness is based on the contrasts, when you know that could be worse:

"well, on the other hand our life, the whole life is on the contrasts and those who live in France, for them from the very first days it is normal, they do not feel directly happy that they use own room and have father and mother, for example" (Vladimir, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 690-693)

This is acquired tolerance to the life, life circumstances he lives: he was raised by his grandmother; his parents have never married; he understands his relationships with father as relationships between partners, rather than relationships between father and son; one of the rooms in their three-rooms flat is rented out to another family. It makes him think that his future life will be also in constrained conditions.

1b) Another group of young people is also oriented on the higher education, reflects on the chances to be admitted and prepares for the entrance examinations, *but* the choice of educational institution has been influenced somehow by others: principal/school, family (parents, siblings) or peers. The following interviewed young people could be related to this group: Regina, Jura, Pavel, Konstantin. All of them are from the Leningrad region.

In case of Regina and Jura the choice of educational institution has been made by the school/ principal. Jura shows a passive position, he was directed by the administration of school and he adapted his educational plan to the suggestion from school:

"An offer was made, a referral was given." (Jura, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 56)

"Well, I do not know what the time was, I was going already to go simply home, well after lessons, I was told to come to the director, and the chief sat there, and suggested me to pass exams." (Jura, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 58-60)

"Well I was told that it is the faculty of applied mathematics, well it seems that I am on friendly terms with the mathematics. Well." (Jura, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 71-72)

"[Well I wanted at first] in the Lesgaft University, well it is also in St. Petersburg, I will be given a referral there as well, well I will also try there but if I get admitted to /the university of/ the Ministry of Emergency Situations, I will go to /the university of/ the Ministry of Emergency Situations, if I do not get admitted at /the university of/ the Ministry of Emergency Situations, still I will try somewhere else. Well I will try anyway somewhere." (Jura, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 115-118)

"I: Aa: so why cannot you get admitted at once at that /university/ which you like more?

Jura: Well, they gave so far to this one." (Jura, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 351-353)

The choice was by coincidence:

"Well it occurred somehow absolutely accidently ((laughs)), somehow." (Jura, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 58)

He does not think about future perspectives, he hopes that the life and the educational institution will help him to formulate his future career plan, but now he might get a place and this is a decisive factor:

"I: And how will you use it then?

Jura: Well they will direct then." (Jura, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 344-345)

"[There it seems to me] that if I enter the applied mathematics, after a while it is possible to change to another faculty." (Jura, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 349-350)

"I: Well is it possible to tell, that you have in principle, you get a university acceptance), you have such a clear plan, what will you do in the future?

Jura: Well so far I do not have." (Jura, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 362-364)

Regina's first choice was in the track of her father, who works on the railway. She started to prepare for the examinations at railway institute, visited the open doors, and collected the information:

"I planned absolutely to another institute, to railway /institute/ because my daddy works at the railway, well and I have been on open doors, more than once, I have learned a lot, I liked it " (Regina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 96-99)

The change of educational institution and educational strategies happened by coincidence after the directive from school:

"but everything turned out so spontaneously, the school advised me to go on my faculty, on my department" (Regina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 99-100)

A free budget-based place was a decisive factor which conditioned the change of wishes, the preparatory stage:

"Well there was no choice: firstly, it is a budget-based ((laughs)), I think, there is no choice here, and:: well I do not know, wanted, changed my mind." (Regina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 100-102)

Despite some problems with fitting to the admission requirement (Regina needs to gain weight in order to enter university), she is striving and fighting not only for the future economic and social position, she is striving for the opportunity to have a *free* place in higher education. If she follows her initial plan and enters to the chosen previously educational institution, she might have to pay for the education or for the university admission. So the choice of educational institution shows, firstly, the fight for the opportunity to have a free place at any educational institution, and, secondly, the adaptation to the circumstances.

Moreover, these young people chose their profession not just by the professional interest (they adapt to the professional interest), but also by favourable conditions of the entrance, by advantages they have, if they follow an emerged plan. So the educational choice is not what they want to do, but where the circumstances are favourable to get a university admission, and the conditions of admission embedded their freedom to achieve the higher educational level. This might lead to the decrease of the level of their motivation in the future, firstly, due to the previous lack of interest in the profession and to the artificially acquired interest to the profession; secondly, due to the probable difficulties which could happen during studies.

Both young persons are financially supported, and can allow expensive things, but the analysis, as it is shown, should have a look beyond their financial status, it has to look at the extent to which they can achieve the education they value, especially in the case of Regina. So the point here is actually not what Regina is *doing* (she is studying at school, going to pass exams to university), but what she is really *being free* to do in existing educational circumstances? And whether she is being free to choose her way of life that she values? She has changed her way of life because of circumstances; she adapted herself to new circumstances. Moreover, if the capability is connected to the notion of freedom and to the different aspects of freedom such as 'the opportunity aspect' (the actual opportunities a person has) and 'the process aspect' (equality of treatment) (cf. Sen 2009a), the person/Regina should have both the equity of the substantive opportunities in the education and the fairness of admission processes to any chosen educational institution. Sen highlights that capabilities as characteristics of individual advantages "fall short of telling us enough about the fairness or equity of the processes involved, or about the freedom of citizens to invoke and utilise procedures that are equitable" (Sen 2009a: 27). But the constraints that limit people to follow the chosen vector of functionings (being educated in the railway institute) might give the characteristics and features of equality of treatment. The potential assessment of the process freedom "goes beyond the overall advantages of

persons into other – mainly procedural concerns, and these concerns cannot be adequately addressed through concentrating on capabilities only” (Sen 2009a: 28). Following the logic of the study the procedural concerns could be evaluated through constraints of the system. On the one hand, the young people from the regions try to follow the goals that they find important, but on the other hand, they value not to stay in the hometown where they do not see any professional perspectives. That is why any educational opportunity with a decisive factor of a free budget-based place is considered and becomes valued.

The educational strategies of Konstantin are connected with sport, and he matches his choice with peers, with whom he plays sport (gorodki¹⁰³):

"Yes, there are a lot of friends, well I am going to apply for sports university together with the schoolmate. My schoolmates apply for the same institution of higher education." (Konstantin, 17, Leningrad region 2010, 28-29)

Peers influence his decision with their desire to study:

"Therefore it is necessary to catch up with them ((*sighs*)) in this aspiration for studies." (Konstantin, 17, Leningrad region 2010, 123-124)

He collects information on the admission requirements and goes regularly to St. Petersburg. He also has a spare alternative, which is connected with his brother's experience:

"I will try in Lesgaft /university/ in St. Petersburg, or in Pushkin in Agrarian /university/, well it is the last option." (Konstantin, 17, Leningrad region 2010, 34-35)

"The brother studied in Agrarian /university/, I do not know somehow, I do not want in Agrarian /university/ so much, /I want/ more sports." (Konstantin, 17, Leningrad region 2010, 37)

But he keeps the hope that despite his below average achievement at school he can enter the chosen university of physical culture. This admission is possible on the basis of certificates. He did not make clear the origin of documents, but later in the interview he mentioned that these documents are about his participation in the different sportive competitions:

"To get the approval for admission is not so easy as I study not so (simply). And if I collect these certificates, then, perhaps, I will be accepted." (Konstantin, 17, Leningrad region 2010, 39-40)

¹⁰³ A game is similar to skittles.

Pavel did not know at all what he wants to study after school; it was a decision or an advice of his parents to enter the customs academy:

"No, the parents take it normally, but they in principle advised to me, because till the eleventh class I even did not know, where I will study. That means that I did not even have any slightest options." (Pavel, 17, Leningrad region 2010, 75-77)

Now he prepares for the examinations on the local courses, he visits the open doors at universities. His father warned him that he will not pay for his studies or the admission, and he will not help him to get a discharge from the army:

"He /father/ tells me: „If you do not study, you will go to army“. That is what he has already told me, he will not pay money for me." (Pavel, 17, Leningrad region 2010, 642-644)

He adapted his interest to the educational institution proposed by parents, but he does not have any spare alternative except army. For him, army is not desirable, but acceptable option: "Well I have not decided yet, I think, if I do not get the admission approval for what I want, I will go to the army." (Pavel, 17, Leningrad region 2010, 48).

These examples show the adaptation of their educational strategies to the circumstances and to the advices of parents, peers and principles. They chose professions which later become their valuable options, although were not before. They are embedded in the circumstances: in case of Jura and Regina, they are embedded by the decisive factor of a free budget-based place; in case of Konstantin, he follows his peers in the aspiration to study, and he tries not to be lost; Pavel follows parents' advices and adapts his interest to the chosen profession.

2) Uncertainty and difficulties to find the way of life and the profession are attributes of the next group of young people. Despite a constant wish to get admitted to higher education, young people feel uncertain of what they want to do in their lives and postpone the moment of decision-making to the future.

Darina feels very uncertain about what she will do after school exams. She values the higher education for the worthy work, wage and financial security. But comparing with her sister, who knows what she wants to study, Darina still cannot decide. She even analysed different opportunities to study, namely in colleges and in universities, but she postpones her choice:

"I have got already written out on two leaflets: on one leaflet it is written out colleges, on the second universities. It is just necessary to take up and to

learn what is necessary for the admission, what documents to submit."
(Darina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 871-873)

Rustam feels uncertain towards future; he does not have definite perspectives and definite decisions concerning his studies:

"Well, certainly there is such a fear what will be next. Apparently I have not decided yet, I did not define for myself, what I will do." (Rustam, 17, St. Petersburg 2010, 874-875)

He thinks that, the age of choice of profession and educational strategies is set up very early for some young people in the present educational system. At this age (16-18) he and any other person does not know exactly what she/he wants to achieve in the future:

"Apparently, the person at such age has not defined yet what he wants to achieve in the life." (Rustam, 17, St. Petersburg 2010, 850-851)

"Well I do not know. But I think about what I should do /in the life/." (Rustam, 17, St. Petersburg 2010, 875-876)

People who can help at this age are parents, they are the best advisors:

"Well, whatever happens, I try to seek advice at first from parents. That's the way. After all parents know somehow what is better for me, what will be better for me." (Rustam, 17, St. Petersburg 2010, 813-815)

The best age for the best decision making for Rustam is 25 years. At this age a person should know what to do in the life:

"I think, the person makes up one's mind about what she wants for hundred percent at 25 years. She PRECISELY should know at least what she wants to achieve in the life." (Rustam, 17, St. Petersburg 2010, 853-855)

Here the discussion is about the ability to convert the resources into valuable functionings and the ability to choose from the valuable options. Despite different educational opportunities and different forms of studies some young people do not know how to proceed further in their educational paths. They try to get the information from different educational institutions, they study and visit additionally other different courses and they accumulate the knowledge, but some of them do not know how to convert their resources, knowledge and resources of the educational system, in the functioning 'being well-educated in the profession they have reason to value'.

Grisha from the Novgorod region postpones the decision-making to the 11th grade, when he has to finish the school. He does not know what he wants to do in the

life and what profession to choose. Nevertheless, he is not so much anxious, because he can also choose father's profession and work on the railway. Moreover, he thinks that it is an advantage that his father works on the railway and this can help him to be admitted at university in the future:

I: What do you think, do you have an opportunity to be admitted there?

Grisha: Yes.

I: Why?

Grisha: Because my father works on the railway, that is why it will be easy to get admitted at university in St. Petersburg.

I: Do they take it into account?

Grisha: Yes." (Grisha, 16, Novgorod region, 2010, 65-71)

Moreover, he can be admitted to a vocational school (specialized in railway professions) even after the 9th grade, but he prefers to have time to think more.

Varvara and Gosha have an intention to get higher education, but now they study at the secondary specialized school, and have not chosen any definite higher educational institution. Varvara even considers getting higher education abroad.

Finally, Victor wants to get higher education. He has even chosen a university and visits additional advanced courses in order to be keen with economics. But he does not believe that he can be admitted on a free budget place at a prestigious university in St. Petersburg. From the beginning he orients himself on a failure to be admitted on a free place and reflects on his opportunities to study on a paid place. The paid education, however, is very expensive and his father cannot pay such sum of money for him and his brother:

"And, well, if the education is not financed by the state, it is very expensive, my parents will not finance it, plus my brother will study at the university (too much for my dad). Well, it is difficult to be accepted on a budget place, it is important to take part in competitions. I do not know, it is unlikely I manage it." (Victor, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 222-225)

Victor's case shows that the paid education becomes for some young people an access to higher education, if they can finance it. At the same time, it indicates that some young people become more oriented on paid education which is easy to get (if they can pay for it) and are less motivated to study hard in order to get a free budget place, because they do not believe in their chances in this system.

3) The last group of young people at the moment of the interview did not want to get higher education, and chose to continue education at vocational educational school (Nikita, Andrej, Senja) or navy college (Nikolai). Nevertheless, it is interesting to reflect on Nikita's answer on the question about higher education:

"I: Well, do you want yourself to be admitted into an institution of a higher education?"

Nikita: Well if they give, then yes." (Nikita, 17, Leningrad region, 129-130)

His reply shows the dependence of young people's choice and reflection on educational opportunities they see in the society. But it also indicates a position of waiting for an easy opportunity.

At the same time Nikolai wants to get sooner a profession in order to find a job. The wish to work is appropriate to all young people interviewed in the Novgorod region.

To sum up, it is worth to say that every individual has own value of higher education and constructs own educational and professional plan following aspirations and ideas of a good life and a good education he/she has. But the most important is that all barriers, which impede getting a valuable education and particularly higher education, should be demolished.

2.4. Self-development: foreign languages

The additional education and self-development is an attitude of those young people who have a clear educational and professional plan and are oriented on higher education. Such additional education is connected in interviews mostly with language courses, sport activities (if health state and physical parameters are important for the admission), private courses on different school subjects. Young people, who attract a lot of attention to their level of preparations, try to develop themselves and strengthen their abilities. The influence of conversion factors is self-evident here. Young people from the small town in the Leningrad region point, that although they have courses for preparations to exams, the choice is limited due to the size of the town.

Knowledge of foreign languages gains a high importance in the contemporary socio-economic conditions and from the perspective of human capital theory the accumulation of language competences (by learning the language at institutionalised and private courses, through private contacts and communication, self-learning, and especially through studying the language at the country of its origin) might be converted in the better employment¹⁰⁴, higher wage, quicker promotion (Cherednichenko 2007). But in the capability perspective it could be considered, firstly,

¹⁰⁴ The results of the qualitative research conducted with the professionals from Russia who had passed advanced training, additional educational program or language courses abroad show that "better knowledge of English (any foreign language), better work that a person can apply on" (Cherednichenko 2007: 125).

under the question of equality in the capability '*being able to study and/or improve the foreign language competences*', e.g. the opportunity to study foreign language, and, secondly, as a fertile functioning for other capabilities (Wolff & De-Shalit 2010). For example, people possess the knowledge of one/many foreign languages and this knowledge become a resource which they can convert into the functioning of studying what they value or working on a valuable work or to have valuable educational and professional plan to be realized.

The first issue to consider is the capability '*being able to study and/or improve the foreign language competences*', derived from the data analysis. Learning of foreign languages requires not only personal efforts, long persistent work on acquisition of language, but also financial and time resources, availability of literature, institutionalised support or private courses. Here the regional differences come into play: only in one case (the case of Regina) in the Leningrad region, the learning of foreign language was highlighted, whereas in St. Petersburg several people highlighted their motivation for the foreign languages. The main foreign languages were German, English, French and Norwegian. So learning a foreign language is not as just learning any other subject at school to pass exams and to get the certificate of basic general or general complete education, but it is a key for future achievements, a better and prosper life and in order to have more than they have now.

Second issue is in the advantages of foreign language competences. Why do people study foreign languages? How can people use a foreign language in their life? What advantages does the knowledge of a foreign language bring? How can people convert such resource? Are there impediments for such conversion? Additionally, the knowledge of a foreign language might be a 'fertile functioning' (cf. Wolff & De-Shalit 2010) for the improvement of other capabilities such as being able to work (for example, in an international company), being able to study abroad, being able to communicate and affiliate with different people, including foreigners, being able to grasp the different cultures and to travel. So, the knowledge of foreign language opens to people the knowledge of the countries where the language is practiced and used: traditions, customs, socio-economic situation, educational and labour opportunities, social assistance and health care. Learning of language it is not just learning of words, grammar, acquiring of oral, written, reading skills, but it is also acquaintance with the particularities of the culture, political, social and economic system.

The striving for the additional knowledge and education has been emphasized in other Russian studies and is characterized as young people's value to the individualism, expressed in the hope only on own forces and skills (cf. Omelchenko 2004).

The results of the present research show that the knowledge of language(s) is, in young people's opinion, a precondition for the improvement of own well-being, and those who learn foreign languages have more ways of life to choose from, namely have larger well-being freedom: 1) availability of set of opportunities for the further employment (Katya); 2) preparations for education abroad, in particular for necessary examinations (Varvara, Katya), studies abroad with further potential opportunities to find better jobs abroad; 3) moving to the Western countries (Germany, France, Norway, Canada) and living there in the stable socio-economic situation, with the law-respecting government and citizens (Gosha, Vladimir, Varvara, Victor, Katya). So the knowledge of foreign language plays a role of the resource converting which young people have larger capability set of valuable functionings for education, work, living, travelling. Young people start to think about emigration and better life abroad. The analysis on moving abroad and staying in Russia is considered in the next section.

2.5. Practical reason and moving abroad/ moving to a city

Moving abroad

The guideline of the interview had a question concerning the future plans and valuable states and activities that young people want to reach in the future, which showed also their ability to plan own life - practical reason (Appendix 2). In most interviews conducted in St. Petersburg, an interconnection was found between the knowledge of foreign languages and further education and plans on moving abroad. Young people from St. Petersburg, who learn foreign languages and have an access to the information about the life in other countries, connect the planning of life with moving abroad. At the same time in most interviews taken in regions the planning of life was connected with moving to bigger cities, where there are more educational and professional opportunities comparing with hometowns, where young people can realize their perceptions of a good life and maximize their well-being (cf. Ziegler 2010) and have an access to the valuable states. The young people from the regions did not think at all about moving abroad or emigration at the moment of interview, only about short touristic trips.

Vladimir, Victor and Nina learn French at school: Vladimir and Victor want to move to France, whereas Nina wants to move to Canada. Varvara learns English and Norwegian, her dream is to move to Norway. Gosha does not know exactly where he wants to emigrate, but he speaks more about Germany. Finally, Katya, who has moved from a small town in the Pskov region to St. Petersburg, wants to emigrate to Germany. Young people acknowledge that the value that they ascribe to the life abroad is partially

influenced by their schools or colleges, where they learn foreign languages, but also by instrumental freedoms which exist in these countries in the way they are perceived by young people. Young people value the quality of life in these countries expressed in the security, respect of laws, and value of education:

"As though there is a high standard of living of the population there, good health care, there everyone has a car, a house, a work, there are no such huge megalopolises, where there is a crush and a mad rhythm of life, there is very beautiful, cool (lifestyle)." (Nina, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 771-774)

"because well there it is indeed simpler, laws function better there, it is paid attention to people, (rather than here)" (Nina, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 784-785)

"And consequently you start to reflect, whether it is necessary to stay in general here to get this diploma. Only if to go abroad, there, it is more appreciated, it seems to me." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 570-572)

"No, well in general it seems to me that the institutions of higher education are good there because it is much better there with the economy. Well in general, it seems to me, the European countries, they are more disposed to the education, than, let us assume, with us." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 157-160)

What is very important is that these *instrumental freedoms* are seen by the young people in the same way as Sen (1999a) writes: they contribute to the overall freedom of people to lead the life they have reason to value. These instrumental freedoms create the framework where people can expand their substantive freedoms, have access to what they aspire and to choose among different valuable options. But what is more important and this leads to the focal point of the capability approach: the personal perspective on the good life that every person has and values. The Russian young people understand that it is a person who is a starting point in the realization of own wishes and an agent in the process of choice and acting:

"It seems to me, it does not depend on the country where an ambitious person lives, it depends on the person. It is possible to live in the country where all is handed on a silver platter, but without a desire to reach a saucer and to get it. That is the way. I think it does not depend on the country, it depends on the person, on his abilities and whether he is lazy, it is possible, that also whether she finds a common language with other people, whether she wants to achieve any goal." (Nina, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 990-995)

The life is constructed on oppositions, as Vladimir says, so young people reflect on their life course and the experience embedded in the Russian socio-economic and political context, but they also critically evaluate the opportunities in different countries. But what they value the most in other countries, is that any person can achieve whatever she wants in these countries, because social arrangements expand her

freedoms. The same they cannot say about Russia. They also value goods which they think would be more affordable in foreign countries, such as own accommodation, car, work:

"there everyone has a car, a house, a work" (Nina 772-773)

That is why some young Russians underline in the interviews that their planning of life is connected with the planning of stages that eventually will be leading to moving abroad:

"Well, as I have said, I want to study at the faculty of Journalism, there are /student/ exchanges there and I expect to participate in /these/ exchanges and I think that it will be possible to catch /some opportunities/ somehow, probably, if you participate in exchanges, in trainings." (Nina, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 779-781)

"I understand that later on I want, let us assume, in the future to leave for somewhere. That is why, naturally, it is necessary to exert as much as possible forces, means, efforts in order to leave." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 1137-1139)

The young people also understand that they might idealize foreign countries and the life in these countries, but conditions in Russia do not correspond to their value of the high-quality education, high-quality health care and the chosen profession:

"It seems to me that the main problem in principle as to our country, I do not know, probably I simply idealize the European countries. But it is clear that there everything is better yes concerning economy and everything. but I would, probably, /name/ the main problems, it seem to me, there are education, medicine, the professions which were earlier really good, it is the military sphere. now they are not appreciated, they are now in principle, well they are necessary, but when you come, let us assume, and you have the diploma of teacher, you will be employed, of course, in any school, but it will not, it will not be appreciated at true value." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 1279-1286).

Katya reflects on the situation with some professions in Russia¹⁰⁵, among which she names teachers as an example. Although she values this profession and wants to be a teacher, she is afraid that being a teacher in Russia does not lead her to a prosper and successful life. This example correlates with the findings made by Dafflon (2009), that in reaction to this frustration (difficulty in finding a job which corresponds to their qualification and idea about a valuable job) young Russians are ready to go abroad to find job or to study further. But the present study gives much deeper understanding of reasons why young people want to move abroad. Young people value instrumental

¹⁰⁵ The situation with the profession of teacher has been already discussed in part "Basic general education" of this section.

freedoms that, in their opinion, exist in Western countries and expand individual capabilities. Young people think that moving abroad allows them to choose among different valuable options not only in employment, but in other life spheres and lead a valuable and successful life.

So the moving abroad is connected with the ideas about the good life they might have as soon as they move to any Western country.

Moving to a city

The higher educational institutions are in most cases concentrated in the big cities¹⁰⁶. But it seems to be that the education and especially higher education is not only the valuable end in itself, but also a reason to move from the hometowns for many young people from the small towns, as interviews show.

Young people describe their native small town in the Leningrad region as a place for the rest, relaxation and where their relatives live:

"What is easier here is for example to come to rest, take a rest with relatives." (Regina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 155-156).

"Well then who holds me here, if not parents ((laughs))." (Nikita, 17, Leningrad region 2010, 746-747)

Their hometown is a place where they feel comfortable to come back in the future, to take a rest and to spend time with relatives. The town in the Leningrad region is perfect for the childhood and for the adolescence, but they connect their educational strategies, professional perspectives and even health care with Saint Petersburg (as it was discussed in the previous section "The capability to be healthy", VI.1):

"And so, it seems to me while /we are/ small, till 18 years, as though here there is absolutely everything. Especially in summer here it is simply splendid, P-town is surrounded by unreal number of lakes, rivers where it is possible to have rest, well it is perfect generally." (Regina, 19, Leningrad region 2010, 541-544)

Katya (originally from a small town in the Pskov region) also emphasizes on the interesting facilities (sport) for children and adolescents in her hometown, but her strong unwillingness to stay in the hometown is due to the lack of higher educational institutions and job opportunities.

There are several reasons to move out from small towns to St. Petersburg that the young people highlighted in their interviews. Most of reasons are connected again

¹⁰⁶ For a detailed description of the educational system and situation in the regions in Russia see Chapter III.

with existing in hometown social and economic opportunities which do not contribute to overall freedom of young people to live the way they want, and make young people to move out of hometowns¹⁰⁷:

- exhaustibility of social and cultural infrastructure. Young people from the Leningrad region point out a poor variety of leisure activities, sightseeing and dancing clubs:

"Well friends, they, for example, kind of go to clubs, have fun, while we sit here together in this K-town, and to us it is simple) we cannot anymore, we want directly now to go away there and that is kind of all. ... While we are at home every Wednesday." (Pavel, 17, Leningrad region 2010, 382-385)

"Nikita: Well to renovate the cinema, yes, in order that new movies are quicker released.

I: Is it not as quick as in Petersburg?

Nikita: Well, with us it is not as quick as in Petersburg. In Petersburg they have already watched, then it comes to us only." (Nikita, 17, Leningrad region 2010, 549-552)

I: Well let us assume, all these discos, entertainments, are they enough?

Nikita: Well discos somehow yes, one disco is with us out of town, another one in town and the third one is stupidly to sit, to drink beer.

I: That means, you have already in every place your own activities?

Nikita: Yes ((laughs)).

I: Does it bother?

Nikita: This is what exactly bothers in a small town." (Nikita, 17, Leningrad region 2010, 553-559)

"Everything here is already familiar, it is necessary to go somewhere, at least to St. Petersburg." (Nikita, 17, Leningrad region 2010, 145)

"((coughs)) Well therefore here everything is already familiar to you, you know everything, and you want new emotions ((laughs))." (Nikita, 17, Leningrad region 2010, 513-514)

"And there is even no place to walk. We went for a walk somehow simply with a friend two weeks ago. In two hours, probably, we walked far and wide the whole town. There is no place to walk. There is simply even no place to walk." (Darina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 231-233)

"[Well it is exhaustible]. Really it became very quickly exhaustible. Constantly all the time the same, to make circles on the area." (Darina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 236-238)

- not enough educational and especially higher educational opportunities. For example, in the small town in the Leningrad region there is a subdivision of one St. Petersburg's university with the tuition by correspondence, but this opportunity either not known at all or not desired by young people. In general, there are not so many opportunities for young people to get higher education in regions:

¹⁰⁷ Soviet and Russian studies on important role of urbanization of residence places in young people's lives and their educational and professional plans have been in details discussed in Chapter I (for example, Titma 1992; Cherednichenko 2001).

"That is the way. In Petersburg by correspondence. From St. Petersburg in this, either at our school, at n-school, or in college there is a kind of." (Darina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 945-946)

"There are no higher educational institutions of the humanities in our town, we have there medical, technical. Well also there was one higher educational institution for humanities studies, which is connected, for example, with sociology, with psychology, well it is not absolutely what I like and is not absolutely close to me." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 63-65)

- no professional/ work perspectives for the future, no interesting work opportunities, especially for some professions even if a person has the diploma of higher education:

"simply there are no opportunities there, if to come with languages, probably, the unique place will be a school." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 131-133)

"Because here work, anything in my opinion cannot be found." (Darina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 12)

"but here there are no perspectives for the future in general, I THINK SO. If you get, if I get higher education, here the earnings well: are very small" (Regina, 18, Leningrad region, 2010, 135-137)

Grisha from the Novgorod region supports Regina's argument about the prestige and priority that attached to higher education in the big city. He points out that if a person wants to move to St. Petersburg and work there, it is necessary to have higher education. That is why Grisha decides to study further at school and have a chance to enter university, and does not choose vocational education after the 9th grade.

Katya points out that the size of a town (in her case – hometown) is a factor for decrease/ increase of work opportunities, and is connected with decrease/increase in earnings of some professionals, for example teachers:

"But as it is not a centre, it means, it is small, not so big city, for sure, for example, financially especially to young specialists it will be difficult to find a work, and it is not enough paid." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 133-135)

"And in St. Petersburg it is much more convenient, here it is possible /to work/ also as translator, and in the kindergartens, and to translate the texts, it means there are more possibilities." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 135-137)

Moreover, young people think about income that they can have in a big city, particularly in St. Petersburg, and compare it with income they can have in their small town in the region:

"It is a big city there, of course, it is possible to earn more there, that is why it is necessary to go there." (Nikolai, 16, Novgorod region, 2010, 244-245)

- peers' influence is very strong conversion factor. The young people emphasize a wish of majority of peers and friends to move from the hometown to a bigger city, especially to St. Petersburg:

"when we finished the eleventh class, we entered all together, and many wanted to enter here, exactly in St. Petersburg " (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 91-93)

"In N-town a wish to stay m:: have probably five percent of all my acquaintances at the age plus minus two years." (Regina, 19, Leningrad region 2010, 150-151).

"Well all friends study in St. Petersburg." (Nikita, 17, Leningrad region 2010, 749)

The young people from the Leningrad region connect their educational and professional opportunities with St. Petersburg. For them, St. Petersburg has more educational and professional opportunities and they feel the differences between their small towns and St. Petersburg in term of the availability of working places, salaries and the prestige of some professions:

"therefore here there are a lot of possibilities and concerning the studies, and in general even apparently concerning the future profession, that means it is much simpler to find, for example, work even after institute or during the studies, than, for example, at home with us. That never happens there /small towns/ and, yes it is not so good with languages there /small towns/." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 70-74)

"with us in P-town to be an auditor, I even do not know, it seems to me, in general there are no such people in our town. And in Petersburg it seems) both salary and prestige are very high." (Regina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 143-145).

"Because it is the megalopolis, because there are more perspectives there, bigger choice of professions, the studies are also there, well, this is basic." (Regina, 18, Leningrad region, 2010, 154-155)

"but a normal work with a normal salary and so to say with /social/ security can be found only in St. Petersburg as the nearest. And in P-town I do not know." (Darina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 214-216)

In general, young people express the wish to move out from their small town to St. Petersburg. The strong unwillingness to stay in the hometown is expressed in such sentences as:

"I would, probably, reach St. Petersburg anyway." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 80-82)

"Well I also have relatives in Petersburg, I crave only for /St. Petersburg/. I will move there in any case. I will not stay in P-town, no way ((grins))." (Regina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 130-132)

"I love this town. I like to live here, but in future I am going to move to St. Petersburg and to move off from here forever." (Darina, 18, Leningrad region 2010,10-11)

"I do not want simply to stay here at all." (Darina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 953)

Some young people feel discomfort in the new and unknown places; it takes time for them to get used to the new places (for example, to Jura and Konstantin). But they also admit that educational opportunities and later professional perspectives are connected with moving to another place, to a big city, but their preferences are not formed yet and they still try to balance between their attachment to the hometown and their understanding of the educational reality:

"I want to study there, but to live I do not know so to say." (Konstantin, 17, Leningrad region 2010, 61)

"To return, of course, I want, but another question is if I return ((grin))." (Konstantin, 17, Leningrad region 2010, 352)

"I: Well, let's us assume, if you have a possibility to stay in St. Petersburg, will you stay?"

Pavel: I do not know, of course, perhaps, I stay, probably." (Pavel, 17, Leningrad region 2010, 376-378).

"I: Is it comfortable for you here or do you want move to the big city?"

Jura: Here and there. Sometimes I want to a big city, and when I feel tired from the big city, I want to a small." (Jura, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 394-396)

Some parents are skeptical towards their children's moving and trips to St. Petersburg. For example, parents of Nikita and Darina do not support their trips and even moving to St. Petersburg. Parents think that it is a waste of money. Darina's parents are also afraid of her sister's and her security in St. Petersburg and even force both sisters to enter the same university. This shows an influence of parents' agency and family financial support on young people's set of opportunities.

Besides, moving to St. Petersburg needs to be secured with accommodation opportunities in St. Petersburg. The young people think not only about the place where they will study, but also about where they will live (considered as economic and territorial barrier in the study of Cherednichenko (2001) in chapter III.2). Regina knows that there is an opportunity to live in the dormitory, but she wants to rent:

"Regina: ... I have where to live.

I: with relatives?

Regina: Most likely I will rent." (Regina, 18, Leningrad region, 128-130)

Katya has an experience in university admission examinations, and she is registered in her grandmother's flat in St. Petersburg, and she knows the difficulties with students' registration (Russians, but from other regions) through friends and her own experience:

"No, but when we came, they said obligatory, that either a document certifying pers) a temporary registration, or the document certifying that the neighbours or someone there agrees that you live here." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 972-974)

"I know that in some higher education institutions they can expel you if you do not have the registration." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 964-965)

Moreover, she thinks that the place of residence influences life chances a lot:

"at first they take /people/ from Leningrad¹⁰⁸, take /people/ from the Leningrad region, well but only then, let us assume, they take not locals" (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 97-98)

'*Being able to have access to higher education*' in this case should be understood not only related to the access on the basis of skills, capacities and knowledge, but also in the framework of physical and bureaucratic access. If the registration for people from other towns might cause limitations in the access to the studies, then young people who live and are registered in the place of studies have an advantage. In this case young people from regions have an additional barrier to meet, which can lead to a disadvantage. Moreover, the lack of the opportunity to be registered can become a corrosive disadvantage in being educated and having access to higher education, which means that "a disadvantage in one functioning leads to disadvantages in others" (Wolff&De-Shalit 2010: 133).

The considered examples lead further to another capability '*being able to choose a place of studies without physical, cultural or social barriers*'. It means that young people are able to choose a place of studies and to move to this place of studies, whereas social arrangements allow them to move and know all information about living and educational conditions in the chosen place. People should not feel discriminated in the new places of residence, and their skills and capacities should be comparable with the skills and capacities of those who live in this area.

¹⁰⁸ She means Saint Petersburg, but uses the previous name of the city.

Another important issue has to be reconsidered additionally. Some young people from St. Petersburg (Nina, Victor, Vladimir) pointed out that they visit different preparatory and advanced courses in order to get ready for admission exams. But Darina's example shows that young people from regions have fewer opportunities for university preparations in comparison with opportunities that school graduates from St. Petersburg have¹⁰⁹. The lack of necessary preparations due to the unavailability of private teachers and special courses might lead to smaller chances to obtain an admission from chosen university, as it is in Darina's case:

"Darina: I want, as I finished artistic school with a good grade, almost perfect, I want to join the architectural university, at the Faculty of architecture. Well, but it is extremely difficult to get the university acceptance there. For being admitted it is necessary to know subjects that I do not know what they even are. Such as descriptive geometry, and it is impossible to find private teachers for this subject.

I: Is it impossible to find in P-town or in general?

Darina: It is in general difficult to find, but there are no such teachers at all in P-town." (Darina, 18, Leningrad region, 2010 146-152)

Some young people can travel regularly to St. Petersburg to pass special trainings and courses (for example, Regina has a free railway ticket, because her father works with the railway company). For all others, it means that either to use the school study program, or to try to find private teachers and local courses, which are not abundant:

"I attend courses here, I do not go to St. Petersburg for additional /courses/. Well here I attend courses of Russian, social sciences and mathematics which are necessary for the university admission examination. Three subjects." (Pavel, 17, Leningrad region, 122-124)

Being mobile becomes an important functioning in order to have more educational opportunities. Konstantinovskij et al. (2008) previously showed that being mobile (availability of transport and time resource) directly correlates with the quality of education and it is extremely important not only on the phase of the general secondary education, but also on the level of higher education. The present analysis shows an importance of mobility in the framework of the capability approach.

Mobility as the ability to move freely and without constraints is mentioned in several lists of capabilities. Providing the idea of basic social minimum for the life worthy of human dignity Nussbaum embeds mobility in *Bodily integrity* and calls it "being able to move freely from place to place" (Nussbaum 2000: 78). Biggeri et al.

¹⁰⁹ Previously it was considered Andrej's example who evaluates his knowledge received at a regional school lower than that one of St. Petersburg's school graduates (section "Basic general education").

(2006) identify the mobility as 'being able to be mobile'. In the Final children's list (Burchardt et al. 2009: 30) the mobility is included in the capability "of knowing that you will be protected and treated fairly by the law" and is called "have freedom of movement". Robeyns (2003a: 81) in turn writes: "relative to other capabilities, being mobile is an instrumental capability", but "it can also be valuable in itself, since it enables movement between geographical locations" (ibid.: 81). If mobility as capability is valuable in itself, then it means not to have any restrictions or limits to move, to choose different ways of moving and travelling.

The results of the current study show that not all young people at the age of 15-18 are completely able to move freely from place to place. Young people's mobility is restricted by parents' control and safety measures:

"Darina: My sisters were in the hospital /in Saint Petersburg/, and my mother was not able to visit them. ... I went to see them, my mother let me easily go for one day, my father firstly, of course, worried: "How does she go alone? I will not let her go alone". Well I travelled alone. But I only use the express-train, any other transport not at any price. Unless, of course, there will not be express-train, I can take an ordinary train, but somehow the main thing is that there are my friends around, so that I am travelling with friends.

I: And why can't you take any other public transport, a bus, for example?

Darina: ... A ride on the buses, which have somewhere an accident, I do not want [...]

I: And the ordinary train?

Darina: Simply, well, recently, as far as I know in the ordinary trains, firstly, there are few people, and secondly, there are more kind of people, so that it is not very safe to take those trains late in the night. During the day - then what, I'm going back and forth, I can take express-train in the evening or in the morning to go (?)" (Darina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 479-498).

Moreover, travelling (for example, from young people's hometown to St. Petersburg) demands financial resources and availability of transport infrastructure and in case parents accompany young people – parents' time resource.

Mobility depends to a large extent on availability of transport infrastructure, its quality and security (as in Darina's example). Pavel from the Leningrad region and Grisha from the Novgorod region highlight that the bus connection in their hometowns is badly organized. Grisha tells that buses do not regularly come at his bus station because the road there is very bad, and the bus drivers are afraid to break their buses. Some of his friends do not visit him, because they cannot take a bus. In Pavel's case he does not feel secure whether he can take bus after school to go home:

"Pavel: No, there was not a problem to arrive at school, but there was, of course, a problem to go back at home.

I: Why?

Pavel: For example, in winter you wait for a bus at the bus station, and then they say, that the bus does not come. So how then should I go back home?" ((laughs)) (Pavel, 17, Leningrad region, 2010, 97-102)

In parts of this section and in the section “The capability to be healthy” (VI.1), it has been shown that several young people have to be mobile in order to go to another city for a qualitative medical care and education at university. So ‘being able to have a good health’ and ‘being able to be well-educated’ means for the young people from small towns first of all “*being able to move freely from place to place*” (Nussbaum 2000: 78), to have an opportunity to move: to have resources (money for tickets) which they can transfer under influence of social and environmental conversion factors (network of public transport, security and safety¹¹⁰ in public transport) into being mobile and having physical access to educational and health institutions. This leads to the notion of “fertile functioning” introduced by Wolff and De-Shalit which means that “doing well in one functioning (or preconditions of a functioning) will lead to improvements in other functionings” (Wolff & De-Shalit 2010: 133-134) or “something the secure presence of which will lead to positive effects elsewhere” (Wolff & De-Shalit 2010: 138)¹¹¹.

The analysis of the living conditions that Russian young people see in their lives shows that the social infrastructure and its development in different regions matters a lot for young people’s life chances. Large cities in many countries could be characterized “by a high degree of personal freedom – freedom in terms of real opportunities that people have regarding the life they may lead” (Nuvolati 2009: 181). Depending on the remoteness from regional centers or big developed cities, development of economy, small towns could be distinguished by smaller quantity and sometimes worse quality of economic, educational and social resources that people can convert in valuable functionings. Thereby young people may have fewer real opportunities regarding the life they value to lead. So the revealed capabilities gap in education, health, mobility between those who live in different regions within the border of one country should become one of the central concepts for the analysis of children’s and young people’s well-being.

Summary

The capability to be well-educated is presented in Table 7; the capability to be well-educated and its components as revealed in this study are not exhaustive, but present the valuable states and activities reflected in the interviews.

¹¹⁰ Security and safety “in and on the way to school” is underlined by Unterhalter (2003a:5). Failure to ensure safe conditions for children and young people “would be a failure to ensure freedom for valued outcomes” (Unterhalter 2003a: 5).

¹¹¹ Nussbaum (2011) finds the proposed concept of great interest, but she thinks that there is no sufficient clear association of the fertile functioning to either capability, or functioning.

Table 7. The capability to be well-educated

The capability to be well-educated

includes, for example:

- being able to engage in education that includes an adequate support during the educational process and an adequate support for transitions between educational levels;
- being able to choose among different educational institutions that meet the needs of the individual and are adequate to her level of knowledge;
- being able to transfer to a different educational institution, and to choose a place of studies without any physical, cultural or social barriers;
- being able to receive the highest possible level of knowledge and education at any educational institution;
- being able to be given an adequate assessment of her own knowledge, skills and intellectual abilities by any educational institution;
- being able to have access to higher education on the basis of knowledge, skills and capacities;
- being able to develop her own skills, abilities and intellectual interests;
- being able to study and/or improve the foreign language competences.

The capabilities retrieved from the Russian data have many similarities with capabilities from the children's capability list of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (see Burchardt et al. 2009). At the same time, however, they reflect the particularities of the Russian educational context and the values that young Russians ascribe to them.

The analysis employing the capability approach "stresses the importance of conversion factors and diverse institutional arrangements for educational inputs to be translated into valuable outputs" (Unterhalter 2009: 207). The capability approach contributes to the analysis of real opportunities that young people have had or have in converting their own resources, those of their families and of the educational system into different combination of functionings under the influence of conversion factors and within diverse institutional arrangements. It is clearly shown in the analysis that the influence of conversion factors and constrained instrumental freedoms is decisive for young people "to make informed choices in order to achieve a life [they have] reason to

value” (Unterhalter 2009: 217). The question is only whether they really choose what they value in education, which corresponds with their ideas about a good education and a good life, or whether they simply try to adapt to the educational system and to the requests of educational institutions.

The interpretation of the data is mostly focused on the analysis of the educational system as subjectively perceived by young people from the perspective of “the extent of freedom” (Alkire 2009: 32) that the young people have in order to achieve the valued state of ‘being well-educated’. The young people from different regions and with different socio-economic backgrounds meet barriers which impede or make difficult their progress towards the functioning of ‘being well-educated’ at the stage of basic general, complete secondary and especially higher education. The strategies that young people undertake to achieve ‘being well-educated’ (on the individual level) are analyzed in the framework of instrumental freedoms which exist in the society.

The analysis proceeds in a temporal order, and discusses the different stages of education. It is necessary to check the accessibility and quality of education, the freedom of choice that young people have had or have, and the extent of the freedom they feel they have in order to attain the capability to be well-educated at every stage of the educational system. The lack of high-quality education or access to education may lead to the accumulation of problems in earlier stages and impede people’s progress to higher education or to any type of valuable education. So the purpose is not to evaluate academic achievements (grades and certificates) that the young people have attained, but to evaluate to what extent they are able to fulfil in the present educational system their aspirations for a valuable education at the different stages of the pedagogic process and what factors constrain their freedom of choice and agency.

In almost all interviews, the young people ascribed a high value to education, and mostly an instrumental value: education was valued in order to get ahead in life. In some cases education even is the only means of getting promotion in life. That is why education, its quality and accessibility, should be one of main subjects of political debate and state programs, and also why the capability perspective should play here an important role.

Basic general education is very important for further education and further educational strategies. The quality of the knowledge received can be decisive in the choice of the next educational institution and the definition of a career. The interviews show that most young people have an interest in knowledge and share the aspiration to be well-educated. Moreover, some young people are aware of the importance of good

academic achievements, but lack motivation, support and recognition of their abilities in their schools. As they indicated, their educational institutions do nothing to stimulate their motivation to study. These results might cause the critical objections from the scientific community that young people blame schools and teachers for their educational outcomes. Whereas Bendit (2008) writes, that in modern times young people are expected to accept responsibility for their education, career and social security (in the form of individual provision), the results show, that the responsibility for good academic achievement on the level of basic general education still rests with different actors: first, of course, young people themselves, but also parents, teachers, and educational authorities. The last two actors are also responsible for the extent of inequalities in the educational outcomes among young people from different social strata and from different regions. There are also those youngsters who do not criticize their school or teachers, but this is for diverse reasons: some young people are highly motivated and love to study; in other cases teachers become aware of unsatisfactory achievements and ask parents to check up on their child more often; or young people have other interesting activities and have little motivation for their studies. This last case however raises again the issue of teachers' inadequate responsibility for young people's achievements.

The regional differentiation on the level of basic general education is explicitly expressed by an adolescent from the Novgorod region. He subjectively evaluates his knowledge as lower than that of his peers in the cities (Novgorod and St. Petersburg). He points out that the teachers at his school in the Novgorod region demand fewer tasks than those in St. Petersburg, and he considers his chances to enter the university as low. Such a gap in the capability of '*being able to receive the highest possible level of knowledge and education at any educational institution*' in any part of the country creates inequalities in the knowledge received and may be decisive for young people's further educational planning.

The choice of further education based on achievements at the basic general level of education is connected with their family and peer influence on the one hand, and their own educational strategies and the quality of education received at the previous educational institution on the other hand. The interviews have shown how significant is influence of family and the experience of others (relatives, peers, acquaintances) in the choice of the next step. In all cases relatives (parents and/ or siblings) took part in the choice of an educational institution, the difference being only in the extent of their participation. There is only one opposite example when a mother was not interested in the success of her child's studies at all. The main result is that in

such a crucial phase the formation of the capabilities '*being able to choose among different educational institutions that meet the needs of the individual and are adequate to her level of knowledge*' and '*being able to transfer to a different educational institution, and to choose the place of studies without any physical, cultural or social barriers*' is influenced to a large by the agency of significant others and different resources of family. At this stage of their lives young people talk a lot with their family about their educational opportunities. What played an important role in the educational choices was an informational awareness of parents about different educational opportunities, the experience of siblings and friends, and also, in several cases, where the young people lived. The young people preferred educational institutions in those places where they have relatives (which is especially important for registration), siblings (who have studied or study at the same institutions), and friends (who can become a supportive network, i.e. people with whom they can go out or even share a flat).

The description of results on the level of higher education has started with the description of the instrumental freedoms according to the subjective perception of the young people. This is extremely important in order to understand what a young person expects society to give him or her, what options he or she sees are available to him or her in this society. This fits in with Nussbaum's ideas:

"The desire for a college education is not a brute fact of Nature but is shaped by what you think about yourself, what amount of self-esteem you are led to have by your society, what your society tells you about the opportunities that are likely to be open to you, and so on."
(Nussbaum interviewed in Pyle 1999: 244-245)

As shown in the results, young Russians are aware of bribes, fees, paid studies, and try to adapt their aspirations to such circumstances. An impressive finding is that the young people freely discuss such ways to enter higher education, and the open nature of these bribes is impressed on their consciousness. University entrance still depends on their knowledge or grades, but they are not the most important factors. There is no difference between young people from the cities or the regions, and poor or better-off youngsters with respect to their views on bribes, privileges, and private contacts, but in several cases those better-off are prepared to use fees or private contacts to enter higher educational institutions or pass exams.

It is clear from the data that young people are aware of social inequalities in the educational sector, particularly in higher education, and they accept these inequalities, or in some cases do not understand them as inequalities, and live their lives according to this reality. Socially embedded in this educational reality they do not become agents

of their goals, but adapt to the system, searching for less harmful and risky ways of getting into higher education. Instead of achieving their valued functionings of studying at the university they want, and of being adequately assessed, some young people change their preferences (valuable professions) to those which assure them a free place and to which they need to adapt. The example of some young people from the Leningrad region shows that they adapt their professional preferences to the circumstances, i.e. they choose the university where the conditions to enter are favourable (e.g., where they are given a free place).

Knowledge of foreign languages is highlighted by almost all young people from St. Petersburg. It is an advantage which can, in their opinion, help them to be promoted in future, to have a larger capability set of working and life opportunities. But what is most important is that the knowledge of foreign languages inspires them with the idea of moving abroad, at least in the case of many young people from St. Petersburg. The conversion of language as a resource can contribute to a larger capability set and may lead to different options. In contrast, the young people from the regions did not stress their competences in foreign languages at all.

In case of young people from the regions, their educational and professional opportunities are connected with moving to the large cities. But the access to specialized or higher education may also be impeded by physical or bureaucratic access. The students of specialized educational institutions describe the importance of being registered in St. Petersburg in order to get a place in this specialized educational institution (which is in St. Petersburg). Registration makes people less mobile, and dependent on the bureaucratic system. Some interviewees were lucky to have relatives in St. Petersburg who allowed them to use their flats for registration, but for many other young people registration can become a barrier to education and labour mobility. This is one more argument for a narrower capability set that young people from the regions may have if they do not have the support of relatives, friends, and siblings at the place of their studies. The capability of *'being able to choose among different educational institutions that meet the needs of the individual and are adequate to her level of knowledge'* is connected with the capabilities of *'being able to be mobile'* and *'being able to find an adequate accommodation'*. The universities have dormitories at their disposition, but as the data shows, the problem can appear at the stage of the entrance examinations.

The focus on the successive process of education and not only on the achievements leads to acknowledgement of the use of the capability approach. The focus only on the functionings could not illustrate the whole situation of freedom to

achieve. That is why the analysis has included the capabilities, focused on the freedom to achieve. The analysis has shown the inequalities in the treatment and differences in the capability sets that the young people have. The inequalities in the capability to be well-educated might impede people's promotion and development, and the educational policies should focus on conversion factors interconnected with instrumental freedoms which should enhance or expand young people's capabilities rather than limit them.

The quality of education, freedom to choose among different educational institutions, opportunity to have an adequate assessment of own knowledge, openness of the educational system define the life chances and capabilities of the person to promote, to gain new status and to lead the life she has reason to value.

3. Tackling unfreedoms in social participation

The conducted analysis of constraints and unfreedoms in education and health care that impede interviewed young people to lead “a life of genuine choice” (Sen 1996: 59) gives rise to questions whether young people are able to influence those constraints and enlarge their set of opportunities, whether they are able to take part in political and social discussions that impact their lives and whether their voices are heard and respected in Russian deliberative processes. It is important to scrutinize if young people have opportunities for civic participation in the society, and it is crucial to understand, if young people see themselves as active members of the Russian society who are able to influence decisions at local, regional and federal levels.

Throughout interviews young people indicated that in their opinion in Russia the government and authorities at different levels do not work for people's interest, rather for own profit¹¹²:

"with us the state is working, we are all working more on profit than on society. This is how to explain in common words." (Vladimir, 16, St. Petersburg, 2010, 478-480)

"They will do as THEY need, as it will be profitable for THEM. Is it right?" (Olga, 16, St. Petersburg, 2010, 573-574)

"Again, it seems that society is changing under the influence of, say, country, and of course, government. If the government behaves anyhow" (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg, 2010, 1096-1098)

"And relatively speaking, of course, yes, the law is considered in Duma: "let's make education paid, why not, we will have money, put them in the pocket, and buy a new villa, why, this is right." This kind of attitude." (Gosha, 16, St. Petersburg, 2010, 363-366)

"Thus, even if I do not go, but someone higher in rank than me goes ((*sigh*)), I do think that they will not do immediately what this person wants because they are all lazy and browned off." (Nikita, 17, Leningrad region, 2010, 680-682)

Such attitude of state towards population (work for own prosperity and profit) is expressed by young people with different socio-economic backgrounds and from different regions. Furthermore, young people feel themselves passive towards socio-political processes because these processes are realized under state control, and

¹¹² The young people's feeling that politicians only protect their own interests is also indicated in the results of Dafflon (2009).

young people cannot influence these processes. Such passivity comes from the framework created by the socio-political arrangements:

"Now the government tries to do the contrary in the way that nobody could /influence/. More often, so that they influence all." (Rustam, 17, St. Petersburg 2010, 829-830)

"Well here it is hard to say, it seems to me, you cannot influence and it is useless to influence, because it seems to me, whatever you would say, whatever you would do, all things are not taken into account, skipped." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg, 2010, 1058-1060)

"I: *Well, can you influence social and political events that take place in the country?*
Andrej: Well, in general, no." (Andrej, 15, Novgorod region, 2011, 605-607)

"so even if you write that something does not satisfy you, it is unlikely that this message will reach them " (Olga, 16, St. Petersburg, 2010, 566-567)

Young people ascertain in own inability to influence and even feel that government does not give citizens opportunity to take part in social and public life and does not allow people to have an influence on socio-political processes. In their reflections state and population are on different extremities. Young people feel that their voices are ignored, useless and powerless. They do not feel that they can be heard and their opinion can be respected by state under current conditions. That is why they rather focus on construction of the personal life rather than focusing on societal issues and justice in the society¹¹³. In this way young people become more oriented towards personal profit which is not always connected with societal good. People become tolerant to other's problems and also try to avoid responsibility:

"In my opinion, in our country, it is used to shift from sick to healthy head. And it is always wherever you look, it is everywhere." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg, 2010, 1081-1083)

"she /my friend/ is a patriot, and she believes that Russia is everything and it is possible to be developed. However, I think, she can take and develop ((laughs))" (Varvara, 18, St. Petersburg, 2010, 1181-1182)

The attitude of avoiding responsibility, when it comes to the society-related issues, was also found in other domains. For example, this attitude was observed in behavior towards environmental issues:

"We have such a thing: "If you threw, it means then someone else will clean. Nothing wrong with that." (Varvara, 18, St. Petersburg, 2010, 961-962)

¹¹³ Dafflon (2009) states that young Russians are more pessimistic about the future of the country than about their own future.

"I think that these sort of ecologists should think what kind of environment we have, and so on." (Olga, 16, St. Petersburg, 2010, 343-344)

Moreover, they socialize in the society where not all laws are complied by the citizens, and they know examples when there was no severe punishment for a failure to comply with a law:

"This summer I worked in the road construction (by relatives), and what we do there, we fill /the holes on a road/ for a year and that is all. Now, the same problem happens again with this road, the snow came down, and there are holes again." (Grisha, 16, Novgorod region, 2010, 222-224)

I: Where could you work at your age?

Grisha: I could work on the building construction, there are lots of constructions nowadays.

I: A[]

Grisha: Well, not official /constructions/.

I: Not official?

Grisha: Not official.

I: What do you parents think about this?

Grisha: "Earn your own money". It is so good that I can earn my own money." (Grisha, 16, Novgorod region, 2010, 227-234)

"Listen, in N-town there is a police station. One police station for around ten small villages. So. They have so old cars, that they cannot catch me even if I am driving this car." (Senja, 15, St. Petersburg, 2010, 394-396)¹¹⁴

"The country is free. Everybody can do whatever he or she wants." (Senja, 15, St. Petersburg, 2010, 753)

"The laws are created in order to infringe them. It is just necessary to be legally savvy." (Senja, 15, St. Petersburg, 2010, 761-762)

In general, interviewed young people could be characterized in following way: their personal motivation and interest towards life activities are conditioned by personal plan to promote in life and/or by advice of parents, siblings, peers. No one of them at the moment of interview was engaged in environmental groups; peace, regional, civic initiatives; youth associations; public discussions or rights groups. Exception might be for sports organizations where some of them were engaged in sport activities, even on a professional level (for example, Konstantin). Some young people would like to be more engaged in youth organizations in order to discover own potential (for example, Varvara), but they do not have the time, the strong wish and the support. The results of the present research confirm the results of different studies mentioned in The Strategy for state youth policy in the Russian Federation (Decree No. 1760-r of December 18, 2006): Russian youth is not interested in politics and does not take part in activities of non-profit and voluntary organizations. The findings of the present study indicate that

¹¹⁴ Senja is 15 years old, and it not allowed to drive a car in general till he attains an age of 18 years, nevertheless he drives sometimes.

one of the reasons for apolitical attitude is that young people do not believe that they will be heard and their actions can influence something.

So, many young people seem to be more oriented on personal interests and neither take part in organized forms of public and social life, nor engage in any kind of social participation¹¹⁵, nor see any individual ways to influence the existing socio-political conditions.

The reason behind this is that they do not believe that they could have an influence and also they believe that their voices will not be heard. Citizens become responsible for own life without having serious mechanisms to influence the society in general and to change socio-political processes to better ones.

Among different aspects of education that Sen stated in *Development as freedom* (1999a), Unterhalter (2003b: 11) highlights the following: "education appears as a result of capability in the guise of particular knowledge and basic educational skills that enhance participatory freedom". Acquired educational skills render people's agency more effective (Sen 1999a) and people become motivated and enhanced for participation in social life. It is also important to further understand whether school's education can prepare Russians for social participation.

The results in the part "The capability to be well-educated" (VI.2.2) showed that education at a school plays more a role of certifying, although quality of such preparations was also a subject of discussion. Further data investigations reveal that educational process at schools and in other educational institutions mentioned by young people does not encourage them for social and public participation. Educational process as presented by young people interviewed is not oriented on enhancement of their participatory freedom, rather on certification of their knowledge and preparations for exams. Vladimir highlights that school is not interested in pupils' personal and civil development, it rather focuses on preparing pupils for exams and evaluations:

"Well the school, it seems to me, the most important is to pass the exams, at the present moment, well now in the present educational program."
(Vladimir, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 174-176)

Furthermore, he doubts that at his school he can take part in decision making:

"Yes, there is a Vivat - club, but I was not invited there and besides it is not interesting, nothing gets really decided." (Vladimir, 16, St. Petersburg, 2010, 517-518)

¹¹⁵ For a detailed classification of the social and political participation see Gaiser and de Rijke (2008: 195-196).

Nina and Darina highlight that, in general, the school loses control on young people's behavior and pernicious habits¹¹⁶. Moreover, young people themselves do not often follow teachers' instructions:

"Well, they do not smoke at school, right. And they like. Well, we are at high school, we are already sixteen years old, and we are already adults. And the head teacher cannot come and say: "You know, boy, you smoke and it is bad for your health, do not smoke!" ((Laughs)) Well, this is somehow unconvincing." (Nina, 16, St. Petersburg, 2010, 606-609)

Darina compares encouragement and support that her parents had from teachers in the Soviet time with her personal and her sisters' experience. She points out that there are not so many after-school activities that could involve all children and young people, whereas only the best pupils take part in competitions and debates. At the same time state documents pay a big attention to support the talented youth (The Concept of Long-Term Socio-Economic Development ... 2008), but Darina mentions that only the very talented pupils are motivated and supported by teachers. She also highlights further that some young people engage in sport activities, dance and obtain driving license in free time, talented pupils take part in school competitions, but in her opinion, in general, policies do not focus on *all* young people, although should focus. Many young people might be talented, but their skills and talents are not obvious, and nobody is interested in discovering their talents. Activities conducted by interviewers are rather personal initiatives of parents and young people themselves than general practice of state support and encouragement.

Darina argues that the school has an enormous influence on children and young people, but nowadays it does not propose interesting activities in order to engage children and young people. Moreover, at such age it is important to motivate young people to be engaged in different activities and to discover their talents and potentials. On the example of her classmates and her young sisters' classmates, she shows that unmotivated young people are more vulnerable to be drug and alcohol abusers:

"Because now that is the way, they are in fifth grade, but kids grow up and because they are not engaged in any activities, they will be just stupidly lop about in the street. That is how ours /classmates/ are in the street, I do not know, in clubs, they drink, go out, people say that at n-school and elsewhere it seems at our school there are some drugs, something like this. From the fact that kids have nothing to do, just in this way (such ruin)." (Darina, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 969-974)

¹¹⁶ Munn (2010) points out that although a core purpose of schooling is pupils' learning, many other activities that take place in schools should not be neglected. She highlights that there are many different ways "in which schools can promote a sense of well-being" (ibid. 2010: 105).

Nevertheless, educational institutions conduct some activities in order to enhance young people's social participation. Among them there are memorial actions and events that can give rise to patriotic feelings and values among young people. Researchers (cf. Lisovskij 2000; Ivanenkov 2008) and the state documents (On the General Guarantees of children's rights in the Russian Federation 1998; The Strategy for state youth policy in the Russian Federation 2006) point out that it is necessary to strengthen young people's patriotic values. Many interviewees have stated that the practice of patriotic education should be adapted in a better way to render it more effective. For example Katya mentioned that her participation in memorial days, devoted to the Second World War, is evaluated by her as obligation which does not ignite her patriotic feelings:

"we prepare strange holidays, we have, for example, a class, and then a curator calls us or somebody like this and tells: "You know, you have to go and organize a holiday". We say: "How? We have a class", no, it is necessary to organize a holiday. And we organize the Ninth of May. Well, it is good, but it seems to me, for example, I do not see any sense to organize the Ninth of May at college. Well, I have my subjective opinion on this subject." (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 1317-1323)

Gosha highlights pretentious meaning of some events, for example, he thinks that distribution of apartments among war veterans is vain:

"The government has given apartments to survivors of siege." It is right; they have waited until 65th /anniversary/, but could have even waited until 100th when one survivor of siege remains alive in the whole Russia. "Here we gave her an apartment," and a person dies in two days." (Gosha, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 645-647)

In this example Gosha gives own ironic evaluation to describe the state practice. It seems to him that government works more on own profile, than really takes care of citizens.

Grisha from the Novgorod region takes part in the memorial days, because he respects his grandmother. At the same time he underlines that the authorities speak more about veterans, than do something for them.

It seems from the data that young people either do not feel any influence from school on their competences for public participation, or have rather negative attitude to school's events. At the same time it is highlighted by Theis (Children as Active Citizens 2008 cited Theis 2010) that people are born with certain citizen rights, but their skills for civic participation have to be fostered and learned. So young people interviewed lack a

practice to develop their citizenship competencies and a belief that their civic contribution can be assessed with respect.

The findings lead to the discussion that existed social and political structures do not take into account population's opinion, and especially young people's opinion. Young people do not feel supported and encouraged for civic participation and they do not feel that they are able to influence any processes in the country. They socialize with disbelief in own actions and influence as citizens and they feel that help and support can be expected only from close people, but not from state or authorities. It means that existing socio-political arrangements do not enhance young people's capability to take part in social and political processes and have an opportunity to influence.

At the same time, Unterhalter (2003b: 9) in her reflections on Sen's concept of capability highlights that in his version "justice is not 'done to', [...], but is 'done with' the active participation of individuals". On one hand, this entails that the society that strives for just and democratic processes should have individuals who can reflect on social and economic processes, formulate and express opinion, take part in society-related discussions and in political debates. On the other hand, justice obtained with individuals is possible only when these individual are actively engaged in the evaluation of just/unjust processes. It means that in such society, people are able freely and actively to express their political preferences, make political choices and take part in decision-making. Moreover, political and civil rights should be respected. As data shows, although young people point out some processes that should be changed or improved (for example, Varvara emphasizes the quality of food in canteen), in reality young people do not act and do not try to influence in order to achieve this change, mainly because they do not believe in efficacy of their own appeals and actions and they do not see opportunities to influence in existing political arrangements:

"/in USA/ a person can complain about any educational system, about anything she does not like, with us you even do not know where to go and complain. It means, you do not like to pass this Unified State exam, but you go and you will pass it, you do not like, let's say, someone' incompetence, but still you will perceive it, because I think it is difficult to influence" (Katya, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 1064-1068)

"Well even if I do something, then I think it will be all senseless." (Jura, 18, Leningrad region 2010, 327)

"Well, what is the point to report? Of course, we reported, but we were told: «It is time to close down this shop». But nevertheless it exists as it existed, indeed." (Varvara, 18, St. Petersburg 2010, 675-676)

"Voice, well, I do not understand how you can be heard individually in the whole country, I think it is unrealistic." (Victor, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 846-848)

It seems that young people can speak about unjust processes, reflect on consequences of such processes, but they do not feel being able to participate in public discussions, be heard, respected by state and influence unjust situations as active citizens.

As has been shown in chapter “The capability to be well-educated” (VI. 2.2.), young people especially from St. Petersburg with knowledge of foreign languages and access to information on other countries, are ready to move abroad. This partially can be explained by their ideas about quality of life and respect that other countries provide to own citizens in comparison with the Russian situation. Disbelief in efficacy of own appeals, uncertainty in own ability to influence societal issues lead young people either to think about moving to ‘just’ countries that respect own citizens (as they think such countries are Western countries), or to adapt to Russian life conditions. In the latter case young people strive for a better life being passive residents. Nevertheless, there are few young people who think that each and every citizen has to influence:

“If everyone thinks it is necessary to do something on one’s behalf, of course, something will change.” (Gosha, 16, St. Petersburg 2010, 709-711)

“Well, perhaps, if there is a majority of voices, not only mine. That is it.” (Nikolai, 16, Novgorod region, 2010, 602)

But this idea is rather on the level of reflection, and not on the level of action and participation. So, overall political freedoms do not contribute to an individual freedom “being able to participate in public and social life and to have a fair share of influence” (Biggeri et al. 2006: 65). Participation as capability has been presented in the list of capabilities relevant for children constructed by Biggeri et al. (2006: 65): “being able to participate in public and social life and to have a fair share of influence and being able to receive objective information”. Conceptualized by children¹¹⁷ this capability implies particularities of children’s participation in social and public life. The current study confirms that the way, this capability is presented in the list of Biggeri et al. (2006), is more relevant for children and young people, than the way it was presented in Nussbaum’s list. Nussbaum (2000: 80) has endorsed in her list of central human capabilities, the capability on control over one’s environment which has two parts, namely political and material. From a political perspective, people should “being able to participate effectively in political choices that govern one’s life; having the right of political participation, protections of free speech and association”; from material perspective, people are “being able to hold property (both land and movable goods),

¹¹⁷ For a detailed description of this list see Chapter II.

not just formally but in terms of real opportunity; and having property rights on an equal basis with others; having the right to seek employment on an equal basis with others; having the freedom from unwarranted search and seizure” (ibid.: 80). Nussbaum’s capability refers to different life dimensions, and although the material part of the capability is without a question important for the capability analysis, the present analysis refers only to the political part of the capability, e.g. to young people’s civic participation in Russian political context. Many elements of political participation, among which could be voting at elections, writing letters to politicians, membership in a political party, signing of petitions, participation in authorized demonstration or in strikes, are age-dependent. For example, citizens acquire rights to vote or to be a member of political party¹¹⁸ by reaching a specific age (18 years old), so it means that the capability is age-related and young people till the age of 18 cannot fully take part in political choices by voting or actively engage in political parties.

That is why Nussbaum’s capability should be specified for children and young people as it has been done in the list of Biggeri et al. (2006). Based on the data analysis, the participation capability includes the above mentioned definition of Biggeri et al. (2006) “being able to participate in public and social life and to have a fair share of influence” and in the Russian context, this can be supplemented by: a) being able to be supported and encouraged for social and public participation; b) being able to be heard and respected without any age-related barrier; c) being able to be supported in learning citizen’s role.

Summary

Whereas Western literature reflects on societal forms of interaction with young people (cf. Hornstein 2008) and the challenges of young people’s participation in public decision-making and young people’s initiative (cf. Cutler 2003; Bradshaw & Mayhew 2005), the Russian researcher Omelchenko (2004: 16; my translation) highlights “the politico-economic powerlessness of young people as a social subject” in Russia. On the one hand, the results of the current study, using the capability perspective, confirm that young Russians feel powerless and uncertain about their own ability to influence the course of events. On the other hand, reasons for this could be found in the fact that

¹¹⁸ The Federal Act “On Basic Guarantees of Electoral Rights and the Right of Citizens of the Russian Federation to Participate in a Referendum” (Federal Act No. 67-FZ of June 12, 2002) states that a citizen of the Russian Federation who has attained the age of 18 years has the right to vote. Federal Act on “Political Parties” (Federal Act No. 95-FZ of July 11, 2001) states that a citizen of the Russian Federation who has attained the age of 18 years has a right to become a member of a political party.

the socio-political structures do not support young people and do not give them opportunities to engage actively in public and social life.

Although young people are recognized in state documents as potential for the development of country, and the state is interested in young people's engagement in social practices (The Concept of Long-Term Socio-Economic Development ... 2008), on the basis of the data analysis it can be concluded that young people see themselves as passive towards public and social life. Instead of learning the role of an active citizen in a democratic society and feeling encouraged to take part in social activities, young people live with a feeling of inability to change and influence things. Moreover, they do not feel encouraged to do so by their environment either. This may lead to passivity in political choices in the future and resignation concerning state choices that govern people's lives. The state documents already mention young people's low political activity and participation in public life nowadays, and are oriented towards young people's social activation (The strategy for state youth policy in the Russian Federation 2006; Concept of federal Targeted Program "Youth of Russia" for the period of 2011-2015), but it follows from the interviews nevertheless that young people do not feel they are taught to become active citizens in a democratic society nor are they supported by social arrangements in this.

This analysis may have political lesson. It is important to mention that their environment should encourage and support young people in their aspirations to become active citizens in a democratic society (cf. Bradshaw et al. 2009) and participate freely in social and political life. Moreover, people should be made the focus of policies and should command different mechanisms to influence political, social, economic processes. Among such mechanisms of influence and participation some young people could name only the right to vote. But civic and political participation should not boil down only to the right to vote, which is age-dependent. Young people should have the freedom to use different legitimate mechanisms of influence and should be able to be heard and respected by the authorities.

Conclusion

The present study has focused on evolving young Russians' capabilities and exploring inequalities in the capabilities among young people from different places of residence and with different socio-economic backgrounds. It has tried to grasp to what extent there is a gap between young people's capability sets and how social arrangements in Russia should be changed in order for this gap to be narrowed, for the capabilities to be expanded, and for equality in capabilities to be advanced.

This study is framed in the capability approach, which is new for research on the quality of life and the assessment of individual well-being in Russia. The capability approach argues that the informational basis to evaluate well-being and inequalities should be a space of functionings and capability to achieve those functionings, and not a space of income, resources or happiness (cf. Sen 1992). As Alkire (2009: 54) writes "justice requires equality in the space of capabilities", so that people "enjoy *equal* capability sets" (Alkire 2009: 34; italics in original). That means that each and everyone has access to reasonably valued functionings (Gasper 2007: 352), has set of different valued functionings and is free to decide which bundle of functionings to choose in order to lead a valuable life. Moreover, the capability approach investigates what people are able to do with resources at their disposal. It advocates an assessment of people's substantive freedoms with regard to social arrangements, and moves away from the measurement of well-being through consumption and the satisfaction of material needs (see chapter II.1).

The issue of a good life as a central issue of the capability approach means conducting a life in such a way that individuals can realize their potentials (cf. Leßmann et al. 2011). Life is manifold and complex; people make different choices and have different ideas about a valuable life (cf. Robeyns 2005b), which is why social arrangements and institutional conditions should be organized in the way that people can enjoy different valuable lifestyles and activities. But what matters is the real freedom to choose among valuable feasible options and to achieve a chosen vector of functionings. Sen (1992) argues that the improvement of people's lives could be achieved by an expansion of their substantive freedoms. In other words, "this objective real freedom and the suitable institutional conditions enabling and facilitating this freedom are considered to be the good to be advanced" (Ziegler 2010: 99). In this way, the present study in the framework of the capability approach concentrates on the real freedoms that young people actually enjoy, and takes note "of *all* the barriers" (Sen 1992: 149; italics in original), or concentrates on "the removal of various types of

unfreedom” (Sen 1999a: xii) so that young Russians have more freedom to live the kind of life they have reason to value.

The capability approach shifts attention to individuals and their lives and explores what makes people’s life good and why in some societies individuals cannot live the life they have reason to value. It gives a new perspective on young people’s lives in Russia and throws light on the inequalities that impede young people from living a successful and prosper life in Russia.

The first major finding of the present thesis is connected with inadequate social arrangements which exist both in the regions and in St. Petersburg and do not allow or create constraints to young people to achieve valuable states of health and education.

The results show that *‘being able to have good health’*, as Nussbaum (2000) puts it, depends in large part on *‘being able to receive treatment to the highest attainable grade of physical and mental health’*. Much research focuses on overweight, stress, nutrition, substance abuse, sport and their influence on people’s health, and particularly on children’s and young people’s health (for example, Currie et al. 2008). Moreover, chronic and social diseases are at the centre of the attention. The present findings show that it is necessary and inevitable to focus on social arrangements and social opportunities as instrumental freedoms, namely health care, insurance system, provision of medicaments, which exist in the country and promote the extent of freedom people can have to achieve the basic capability of *‘being able to have good health’*. In the capability perspective, health is an individual attribute of every single person (cf. Sting 2011). On the one hand, it is everyone’s responsibility to take care of their own health, but on the other hand, a condition of social justice in some core human functionings is to deliver the basic level of the capability (cf. Nussbaum 2000), and health belongs to this core human functioning. Health should not be left to people’s responsibility without any opportunities to take care of it. Many factors influence health (personal, social and environmental), and a person is not able to cope on their own with all the influences in order to maintain their health to the highest possible standard. If a person is sick, she goes to a doctor, or to a healer and she needs medicine. That is why the findings show that the capability *‘being able to have good health’* should include or be supplemented by the capability of *‘being able to receive treatment to the highest attainable grade of physical and mental health’*.

In the case of children and young people, health issues become even more important and significant. According to the data, young people do not feel able to achieve *‘being able to receive treatment to the highest attainable grade of physical and mental health’* in state polyclinics and hospitals in the places of residence explored

(see chapter VI.1.1). Young people from St. Petersburg feel even forced by doctors to have paid medical services and they are forced to buy expensive medicaments. Thus, access to high-quality health care depends on the income and resources of family and relatives as well as on their own agency, and this leads to inequalities because families have different financial, time and material opportunities. In this case, young people from poor families cannot have their diseases fully treated. This state of affairs is also found in poor families from small towns.

As was mentioned above (chapter III.1.3), the decentralization of public hospitals by transferring them to the respective local governments calls into question the ability of certain regions to support health care at a level which responds to the health needs of the population (cf. Davidova et al. 2009). The analyzed data empirically confirmed that in some parts young people's capability sets are limited in the health area, a core human domain. Postponed doctor's visits, untreated diseases – these experiences expressed by young people lead to research that probes much deeper than just health outcomes; they lead in fact to research into the real opportunities in the health arrangements of the regions. In the small towns studied, inadequate health arrangements led to serious injustice (Sen (2002b) also mentioned about this phenomenon in general). Those young people whose family and parents have enough financial, material and time resources have a larger capability set and are '*able to have different healthcare options*', which allows them to use health care services in other cities. As a result, in small towns young people's health becomes the full responsibility of their parents and themselves.

So, the government shifts responsibility not only on to the population in the domain of health (cf. Davidova et al. 2009) in general, but as the findings show, onto parents and family in the case of children and young people, or onto the young people themselves. The declared state guarantees of health care do not correlate with the real opportunities that young people have.

There is also another astonishing result that was found in the connection to health (see chapter VI.1.1.2). The analysis shows that social structure, for example the military duty in Russia, influence a lot young men's substantive freedom of '*being able to be healthy*'. In some cases young men are constrained in their agency and choose to be unhealthy, stop doing sport and other free time activities in order to escape military duty which frightens them due to its potential harassment. The social structures are not just instrumentally, but intrinsically important for human capabilities, they should enhance the capabilities, but in reality they constrain through duties that they impose

on their own citizens. This analysis also leads to reflect more on values and functionings from the capability perspective.

Functionings in the capability approach are achievements that are valued by individuals and allow them to lead a valuable life. This means that the value which individuals ascribe to their states and activities is crucial for the analysis of capabilities: “examples of value judgments are the selection of capabilities or dimensions to include (and exclude) from analysis” (Alkire 2009: 52). Thereby, the value that people ascribe to the achieved state is essential to grasp. People may value different functionings, but a call for equality of capability concerns equality of access to reasonably valued functionings (Gasper 2007: 352). Although it sounds paradoxical to choose ‘*being unhealthy*’, this becomes reasonably valued among some young men eligible for military service.

The analysis of achieved states and activities indicates that not all states and activities that young people had at the moment of assessment were what they really valued. In some cases what they valued (not to be sportive and even unhealthy in order to be discharged from the army) was valid only for a specific time period. These outcomes might also be steps in order to live a good life outside the army. Of course, ‘*being unhealthy*’ is not at all a socially desirable functioning, but it is nevertheless found in the data analysis and reflects an achievement at a specific moment of a young man’s life. So, to the notion of functioning should be added another notion of outcomes in order to distinguish between socially desirable and personally valued functioning, and any other achievement.

The subjective meaning that a person gives to his or her own actions, own states and activities might not carry a positive valuable meaning for her life all the time. As the capability approach shows, the formation of the capability set and especially the choice of a vector of functionings are under the influence of social conversion factors. People make their decisions under the pressure of other people’s opinions, social norms and practices or constraints that the system imposes. To sum up, it is important to mention two issues. Firstly, inequalities in the process should be assessed by taking into consideration the subjective meaning that people ascribe to their states and the reasons they give for it. Secondly, the interconnection of different life domains, individual values and social and public duties give a new perspective for the capability approach. In Russia military service is strongly interrelated with studies (see also chapter VI.1.1.2) and health issues for boys. The duty of military service forces some young people, at least for a time, to choose a life they do not value in general, but value for this time period. Whereas the capability approach aims on expansion of people’s capabilities and ensuring freedom to achieve valuable states and activities,

the military service (military duty), which might not be valuable activity among some young men, can then contradict with their idea about a 'good life' which is partly "a life of genuine choice, and not one in which the person is forced into a particular life" (Sen 1996: 59). Therefore, young men are in the position to choose a vector of functioning, which could be called *even* valuable for this period of life – the age when the young man can be called for the military service – 'being unhealthy', so that they can discharge from the military duty.

The discussion of "the extent of freedom" (Alkire 2009: 32) the young people have on both levels of secondary education (basic general and complete general education) shows that they value not only qualitative teaching and knowledge that can bring them to the next level of the educational system, but also the development of their personality, their skills and abilities through the educational process (see chapters VI.2.2.1 and VI.2.2.2). These values are similar for the young people from St. Petersburg and the regions as well as from poor and better-off families. No doubt young people want to be knowledgeable and skilled up to curriculum, but they also want education to enhance other abilities and knowledge which they think appropriate for their development. This correlates with the views of Ballet et al. (2010: 36) about schools which promote "technical knowledge at the expense of social skills" and of Unterhalter (2009) about the differences among the human capital theory and the capability approach. She writes that the significant contribution to the field of education from the capability approach is an emphasis on the ability to exercise critical reasoning acquired through education which enables people to live freely and fully. The young people on the level of secondary education aspire not only to particular skills and specific knowledge of subjects (mathematics, history, Russian), but to the encouragement of abilities to reflect, to debate, to develop creativeness, in other words to the "reflective capacities" (Unterhalter 2009: 215). Put differently, they value '*being able to receive the highest possible level of knowledge*' and '*being able to develop own skills, abilities and intellectual interests*'. But the problematic issue is that not all of them are able to attain it in their educational institutions. These findings can be especially important for the discussion of the content of the Unified State Exam and the preparations for this exam that have been implemented in the school program.

What is however more important is that these findings lead to the discussion of the reasons why countries and nations need to educate their citizens. Or more specifically, for what reason does Russia need to educate its own citizens? As discussed in the Introduction and Chapter I, economic determinism which is predominant in Russia (Zubarevich 2007) predetermines education to be for skills and

economic productivity. Nussbaum (2010) calls instead for education that allows to reflect, argue, debate, be respectful to other people, scrutinize policies and political actions, think in an informed way. In other words, she demands “an education for a more inclusive type of citizenship” and not “an education for profit-making” (ibid.: 7). According to young people, the culture of reflective thinking, arguing and debating is not developed at school. They also point to a lack of teaching social skills and being oriented by schools to learning only subjects that are laid down in the curriculum. The young people are in an ambiguous situation: on the one hand, they want to study more than what is prescribed in standard education and develop their abilities to think, to criticize, to reflect, but on the other hand, they adapt to the existing educational structure in order to gain promotion and receive further education. Such adaptation can lead to a situation where people do not live the life they value, and do not choose among different opportunities, but rather devote their lives to consumption and the satisfaction of material and financial needs without having real opportunities. They are not engaged in the political processes and are taught technical knowledge (although not always of high quality). This might be the reason why they are less sensitive to democratic processes and silently accept the unequal distribution of opportunities among different social classes. This is more further discussed in the next section which describes the second finding.

The second major finding is connected with young people’s adaptation to unequal conditions and disparities. These conditions leave them rather constrained to develop potentials of their own and to become equal and active members of society. Their understanding of a valuable life is formed through “previous unequal and unjust conditions” (Burchardt 2009: 9) that have been experienced by themselves, their parents and peers. The analysis of young people’s perception of instrumental freedoms shows that the formulation of plans and goals in higher education is deeply conditioned by “pre-existing inequality” (ibid.: 11), an inequality experienced by others which young people project onto themselves. Although entrance to higher education is still possible on the basis of academic achievement, i.e. good knowledge of subjects, there is substantial evidence for entrance through illegal ways. Almost all young people mention a culture of bribes, privileges, backstairs and private contacts that are used to enter into higher education. Here the question of family financial and social resources comes again into play.

Whereas young people from better-off families perceive such access to higher education as unjust and improper, though acceptable and realizable, young people from families with fewer social connections and average incomes try to adapt to the

circumstances and frame their values in order to fit this educational reality. The data reveals that some young people choose higher education which was not the most valued, but free (see chapter VI.2.2.3).

Injustice in higher education, then, leads to a situation where many young people are not able to have access to higher education on the basis of knowledge, skills and capacities. Orientation to paid education and openness of bribes limit many young people from low-income families in their capability to be well-educated. As Arndt and Volkert (2009) write, corruption and bureaucratic complexity could close the access to social opportunities such as health care or education. On the evidence from the data, it is obvious that the economic limits of the family and institutional inequalities created by the educational system impede many young people from entering educational institutions they value.

The findings show that openness of bribes and fees, need of financial and material resources in order to enter higher education is impressed in the consciousness of young people (see chapter VI.2.2.3). Young people have only limited freedom to choose education and educational institutions they really value. In other words, young people adapt to the circumstances, or inequalities, and adjust their lives to these conditions.

This reflection on education and young people's educational opportunities in Russian society raises the issue of democratic processes that are happening in Russian society. By educated citizens Nussbaum (2010: 9-10) understands people who have not only been prepared for employment, but who can also think critically and reflect on what concerns them. The cultivation of these capacities is really important to keep democracy in the country alive and well (cf. Nussbaum 2010). According to the data found, young people think that in Russia everybody thinks only of their own profit, including in the first place the state. People do not feel able to change anything in education, health care, food service in canteens and in the country at large. Even if they reflect on injustice in education and the bureaucratization of different life domains, they still prefer to adapt to the situation. It is difficult to support the democratic processes in a country where citizens and especially young citizens are prepared for a life in which they pursue their own profit and that of their relatives, but not "the good of the nation" (Nussbaum 2010: 26). Young people who have been taught to think about political issues, equal rights, and justice, and judge political leaders and parties "with an informed and realistic sense of the possibilities available to them" (ibid.: 26) should support democratic processes. But it is obvious from the data that Russian young people distinguish inequalities that exist in the society, reflect on unequal access and opportunities, but they feel themselves passive and unheard members of the society. If

young people, the future or potential of the country (the term used in state documents), tend rather to adapt to unequal situations than to become active and reflexive members, then it is hard to speak about the promotion of democratic processes in Russia. But it does not mean that young Russians do not want to live in a just and democratic society, rather they do not believe that something can be changed in the present situation. That is why they prefer to think about emigration to Western countries with their developed social security system, civil and political rights and greater opportunities for work and life.

Another result is that the capability of '*being able to study and/or improve the foreign language competences*' is part of the capability sets of many young people from St. Petersburg (see chapter VI.2.2.4 and VI.2.2.5). With the achieved functioning of 'knowledge of foreign languages', young people expect to enlarge their capability of '*being able to move abroad*'. Moving abroad is associated with a better quality of life that selected Western countries have: for example, security, respect of law, and the value of education. At the same time young people from the regions are striving to move to the bigger cities in Russia for more work and study opportunities. This clearly shows that the formation of many values and aspirations for a good life depends on resources existing in the place of residence. Whereas for young people from the regions St. Petersburg is a city with many opportunities, for young people from St. Petersburg Western countries are examples of places where people can conduct a good and prosperous life.

Third major finding is connected with regional inequalities and their influence on young people's capability sets. The main findings have already been discussed above, but it is important to highlight the significant influence of regional inequalities on people's lives (see chapters VI.1.1.1 and VI.2.2.5).

The regional development is always uneven (cf. Zubarevich 2010) but its disparities have to be diminished by the enhancing of people's capabilities. The purpose of human development, which is "to enhance people's capabilities, in the present and in the future, in all areas of their life – economic, social, political and cultural" (Alkire & Deneulin 2009b: 27) could be revised to read: – the purpose of human development is to enhance people's, and particularly children's and youth's, capabilities independent from their place of residence, taking into account regional differences and cultural variety and enlarging their freedom. Regional development should take into account values that people ascribe to different states and activities, and should coordinate social, educational, and health policies not only according to economic efficiency and profits, but rather to people's valued achievements.

The findings mentioned above give an input to reflect on political and social interventions which could lead to an improvement of young people's life opportunities and chances in Russia.

Sen (1992, 1999a) argues that it is crucial to concentrate on what people are able to do and be, and to remove obstacles in people's lives so that they have more freedom to live the kind of life that they have reason to value. The capability approach evaluates policies according to their impact on people's capabilities. Nussbaum (2000) writes that politicians should think about the life opportunities of each and every citizen before thinking about economic change. This means that economic changes can be implemented only if they are likely to have positive effects on people's lives and enhance their capabilities. She emphasizes further that citizens "should be able to live with a full menu of opportunities and liberties, and thus be able to have lives that are worthy of the dignity of human beings: this political goal should constrain all economic choices" (Nussbaum 2000: 33).

The present work can serve as an input for the reflection on how to adopt opportunities and freedom aspects in Russian state policies and go beyond economic determinism. The findings have shown that the young people of this study are not always able to lead the lives they value and to make the most valuable choices due to constraints in instrumental freedoms and the influence of conversion factors. This would suggest that Russian state policies should be oriented to the removal of unfreedoms and various barriers, and should instead have as goals of development – people, especially young people. It also follows from the findings that policies should be oriented towards securing equal access to valued functionings in core life domains (education and health) for all young people regardless of their place of residence and the economic family background.

It is important to emphasize that one of the political aims should be an expansion of equality in capabilities among young people from different regions and life circumstances. The unequal global distribution of capabilities is a reason for the mobility of the population (cf. UNDP 2009). That is why policies should make more provision to enhance young people's skills and abilities which have been formed within social arrangements of their place of residence so that they can really compete with people from other regions (cf. UNDP 2009). From the findings it is evident that young people tend to move to places with more study and work opportunities, namely to big cities. That is why social and educational opportunities should be arranged in such a way that young people from different places of residence and regions of Russia could have equal capability sets in order to have equal chances in different life domains.

Moreover, the enhancement of just practices in different life domains, as well as the creation and expansion of life opportunities can lead to the decrease in the number of those young people who think about emigration or moving abroad for a better life.

The capability approach framework was adopted for this study and applied to a post-communist country. It has opened new perspectives on young people's lives, their real opportunities and freedoms in Russia. The analysis went beyond the human capital approach used in some studies on education and also beyond the description of young people's values. The study introduced a conceptual scheme in order to evaluate young people's ability to convert available resources into valuable states and activities under the influence of institutional conditions and in the framework of existing social arrangements. Moreover, it followed the principle of the human diversity of the capability approach and included representatives from groups with different socio-economic backgrounds. In the country with high regional differentiation it is important to include people from different regions and different places of residence. In this way the current study was able to shift the focus away from a discussion of financial and material resources, values and the satisfaction of needs to a discussion of young people and their real opportunities.

The young people were viewed as experts on their own lives. Their personal representations of opportunities, experience of constraints and limitations were objects for a deep analysis. The interviews conducted were only with young people and not with their parents, teachers or other significant people. In doing so, the study emphasizes young people's personal perceptions of opportunities and constraints and own opportunities to lead a valuable life. Nevertheless, the study included socio-demographic data on the parents' socio-professional background and accommodation. Besides, one of the chapters gave a close analysis of instrumental freedoms in Russia with an especially detailed view of health care and educational systems. This allowed connecting the opportunities that existed in society with real feasible options that young people highlighted in the interviews.

It is also worth mentioning that the special aspect of this study is the operationalization of the capability approach with the use of qualitative methods. The number of interviews seems to be sufficient for the close scrutiny of the opportunity and process aspects of freedom that young people have in Russia, as well as to give meaningful answers to the research questions of this study.

The methodological design of the study involved an analysis of the real opportunities and freedoms at a specific point in time, which is why the data collection was conducted only once. Such design allowed a deeper analysis of young people's

individual freedoms and understanding processes of capability formation at a specific age. Future research should expand the design of the study and carry out a longitudinal investigation. This would also account for the fact that other capability researchers acknowledge more and more the dynamic nature of the concept of capabilities (cf. Leßmann 2009; Ballet et al. 2011).

Although the design of the present study was qualitative, the system of codes elaborated in it could become the basis for the development of a quantitative study. Such triangulation would allow broadening the generalizability and enlarging the number of regions included.

In conclusion it should be underscored again that the application of the capability approach has given new perspectives on human development, well-being and equality in Russia. Societal arrangements, e.g. educational system, health care, created for young people can be investigated not only in terms of economic indicators of effectiveness, but also “in terms of their contribution to enhancing and guaranteeing the substantive freedoms of individuals” (Sen 1999a: xiii). This means that individuals, in this case young Russian citizens, become the goals of development, and their freedoms are the objects of policies to be enhanced and guaranteed. Thereby, the evaluation of social arrangements makes it possible to judge whether they enlarge or constrain citizens’ freedoms and opportunities.

In times of constant reforms of education, the health care system, the army and police, the capability approach gives a view of how to enhance and guarantee freedoms and feasible options to people in new reformed social arrangements and institutions. Such a view leads to taking into consideration each and everyone’s life. More precisely, in the case of young Russian people, the capability perspective analyses how well they realize their potentials in the Russian socio-economic and political conditions. The findings of the study show that the capability perspective extends ways of how to tackle equality issues and it focuses on the enhancement of young people’s capabilities by suggesting ways to rearrange the socio-economic and political conditions in Russia.

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Appendix 1. Transcription

The transcription rules have been adapted partially from the rules of the conversation analysis (cf. Selting et al. 1998; Atkinson & Heritage 2003) and from other qualitative sources (cf. Silverman 2009). Following symbols and characters have been used during the transcribing process:

Symbol/ character	Description
001 I	Text of the Interviewer.
002 Name	Text of the Interviewee.
[]	Interferences, overlapping contributions. Square brackets indicate the point at which a current speaker's talk is overlapped by other's talk.
(.)	Micro pause. A dot in parentheses indicates a tiny gap, probably no more than one-tenth of a second.
(2.0)	Numbers in parentheses indicate elapsed time in silence in seconds.
((P))	Pauses more than 2 seconds.
:, ::, :::	Colons indicate prolongation of a sound.
WORD	Capitals indicate especially loud pronounced words or sounds relative to the normal pronunciation in the talk.
()	Parentheses indicate the parts of the text which are not certainly heard and/or understood while transcribing the interview.
(word)	Parenthesized words are possible hearings.
(())	Double parentheses contain author's descriptions (personal notes, ambient noises).
(?)	Parts of the text which are not understandable.
)	Rupture of meaning, beginning of the new speech
((laughs))	Description of the laugh.
: "WORD"	Beginning and end of the direct speech.
N-town K-town	Due to the agreement between Interviewer and gate-keepers towns' names are encoded.
N-street, N-school, etc.	If an interviewee in his/her speech mentioned or referred to any name (for example, name of the street, of the school etc.), then this name has been encoded in the neutral form.
//	This symbol is used in the case when a direct translation from Russian is missing sense, and there is a need of additional explanation.

Appendix 2. Interview guideline

Introduction

My name is Ksenia, I have finished Saint-Petersburg State University in 2007 and now I am studying at Bielefeld University in Germany as a PhD student. I am doing a paper for my university and I am interested in young people's life in Russia. I conduct interviews with young people from Saint-Petersburg, the Leningrad region and the Novgorod region. I hope you can help me. I am doing this interview for myself so I can write my paper; I do not even know your parents. I have found you through your teachers, but I can promise you, that they will never find out what you have told me. So I ask you to be honest, when you answer my questions. The most important for me are your thoughts and opinion. Our conversation will be approximately 1 – 1,5 hours and I will give you some topics to think about.

Do you have any questions?

Меня зовут Ксения. Я закончила Санкт-Петербургский Государственный Университет в 2007 году, и теперь я аспирантка в Университете Билефельда в Германии. Я пишу научную работу для моего университета, и меня интересует жизнь российских молодых людей 15-18 лет в России. Для своего исследования я провожу интервью с молодыми людьми из Санкт-Петербурга, Ленинградской и Новгородской областей. Я надеюсь, ты сможешь мне помочь. Я провожу эти интервью только для моей работы, так как мне надо написать диссертацию, я не знаю твоих родителей, твоих друзей, и я обещаю, что они не узнают о данном интервью. Я обещаю ничего не рассказывать твоим учителям, они просто мне помогли тебя найти. Я тебя прошу отвечать честно на мои вопросы. Для меня важны все твои мысли и твоё мнение на те темы, на которые я буду тебя спрашивать. Наш разговор будет примерно 1-1,5 часа.

Есть ли у тебя вопросы?

Interview Guideline (in English and in Russian)¹

Introduction question / Biography

Could you tell me about your childhood?

- About what are you thinking (about what events) when you remember your childhood?
- What are your most bright memories from childhood?
- Could you say something more about your relationships with parents in childhood?

Расскажи мне о своём детстве.

- О чем ты думаешь (о каких событиях), когда ты вспоминаешь о детстве?
- Какие твои самые яркие воспоминания о детстве?
- Можешь немного рассказать об отношениях в детстве со своими родителями?

Accommodation

Can you describe where do you live, with whom, what are you living conditions? / Do you like the place where you live now?

- Do you have a stable accommodation? How often do you change the accommodation?
- Do you have your own room, or place for the studies or for free time?
- Is your current accommodation adequate or inadequate for your current needs (for example, for the free time, to invite friends)?²
- Describe the district where you live. What kind of social structure facilities do you have near your home (for example, school, hospital, shops, and youth clubs, church)? What social facilities are important for you and which of them do you use?

Опиши, как ты живёшь, с кем ты живёшь, твои жилищные условия? Тебе нравится то место, где ты живёшь сейчас?

- У тебя есть постоянное место проживания? Как часто ты меняешь место проживания?
- У тебя есть собственное место для выполнения домашнего задания, для проведения свободного времени?
- То место, где ты сейчас живёшь соответствует твоим потребностям (например, для отдыха, когда ты хочешь пригласить друзей)?
- Опиши район, в котором ты живёшь. Что находится рядом с твоим домом (например, школа, больница, магазины)?
- Чем из выше сказанного ты пользуешься и какие для тебя самые важные?

¹ Some of the questions have been influenced (The Saint-Petersburg integrated form of the evaluation of a child and a family (2008) or partially taken from the following studies (Witzel 2000; Anand et al. 2007; Albus et al. 2010). Such questions will be highlighted and their references will be mentioned.

² From Anand et al. (2007).

Health

How can you describe your health state at the moment?

- Do you have any problems with headaches, stomach? Does it happen that you can not sleep?
- Do you have any problems with health? If you have, do you need special medication and special services? Can you describe this to me?
- What do you think about your clothes? Are they adequate for the weather (in summer, autumn, winter and spring)?
- What do you think about your health in the future?
- Let's take an example that you could have some problems with health in the future, what will you do, who will help you?
- What do you eat? Do you like what do you eat? Is it healthy?

Как ты можешь описать состояния твоего здоровья на данный момент?

- У тебя есть головные боли, боли в животе? Случается ли так, что ты не можешь заснуть?
- У тебя есть проблемы со здоровьем? Если у тебя есть, требуется ли тебе специальное медицинское обеспечение, специальные лекарства? Ты мне можешь это описать?
- Что ты думаешь о своей одежде? Адекватна ли она для разной погоды (для лета, осени, зимы и весны)?
- Что ты думаешь о своем здоровье в будущем?
- Давай предположим, что ты можешь иметь проблемы со здоровьем в будущем, что ты будешь делать, кто тебе поможет?
- А как ты питаешься? Тебе нравится, что ты ешь? Это здоровая пища?

Security

How safe do you feel in your city and in your district?

- How safe do you feel walking alone in the area near your home during the daytime and after dark?³
- If there are any places where you do not want to be?

Насколько безопасно ты чувствуешь себя в твоём городе и в твоём районе?

- Насколько безопасно ты себя чувствуешь рядом с домом в дневное и в ночное время суток, когда ты один?
- Есть ли места в городе или в твоём районе, где ты боишься бывать один?

Expression of emotions

Can you tell me how and whom do you express your feelings?

- Can you share with someone your fears, wishes, emotions, problems? Do you trust anybody in your family/ friends?
- Do you have an emotional attachment to any member of your family?
- Do you find it easy or difficult to express feelings of love, grief, longing, gratitude and anger compared to most people of your age?⁴

³ From Anand et al. (2007).

⁴ From Anand et al. (2007).

- Have you ever had the situations of embarrassment? What did you actually feel when you had such situations? Give me examples of such situations.
- Are you sure in yourself?
- Do you have examples when you have been in a fit of anger?
- Can you share with your friends your fears, wishes, emotions, problems?
- Do you have very close to you person?
- Do you date with someone? If yes, are you free to date or do you parents restrict you in dating?
- How do you deal with the problems? Quarrels with parents; School; Friends

Расскажи мне о том, как и кому ты выражаешь свои чувства (любви, горечи, радости, сострадания)?

- Можешь ли ты поделиться с кем-нибудь своими страхами, желаниями, эмоциями, проблемами? Доверяешь ли ты кому-нибудь в своей семье? Есть ли у тебя эмоциональная привязанность к какому-нибудь члену твоей семьи?
- Как тебе кажется, ты легко можешь выразить чувства любви, печали, желаний, благодарности или злости по сравнению с другими людьми?
- У тебя когда-нибудь были ситуации, в которых ты испытывал смущение, неловкость, замешательство?
- Что ты чувствовал, когда были такие ситуации?
- Ты уверен в себе?
- Ты можешь вспомнить ситуации, когда ты испытывал чувство злости?
- Можешь ли ты поделиться со своими друзьями своими страхами, желаниями, эмоциями, проблемами?
- Есть ли близкий тебе человек?
- Ты встречаешься с кем-нибудь? Если да, то не препятствуют ли родители этому?
- Как ты решаешь возникающие проблемы? Ссоры с родителями; Школа; Друзья.

Education

Let's talk about the studies now. Could you describe how do you cope with the study program?

- How important is for you to study?
- Do you like to go to school/vocational training?
- After school (secondary specialized school) what you are going to do?
- What do you think, is it easy to receive high education in your city, in your country?

Давай поговорим об учебе. Ты справляешься со учебной программой?

- Насколько важно для тебя учиться?
- Что ты собираешься делать после школы?
- Как ты считаешь, легко ли получить высшее образование в твоём городе, в твоей стране?

Friends, approval, recognition by peer group

- How you can describe your relationships with your friends?
- How are you treated by your classmates, by your friends? How do you want to be treated by them and how you do not want to be?
- What is your attitude to the society as a whole and how do you think what kind of the attitudes does the society have towards young people?
- Как ты можешь описать отношения с друзьями?
- Как к тебе относятся твои одноклассники, твои друзья, твоя семья? Как ты хочешь, чтобы они к тебе относились и как ты не хочешь, чтобы они к тебе относились?
- Какое твоё отношение к обществу в целом, и как ты думаешь, каково на твой взгляд отношение общества к молодым людям?

Family and social relations

How do you spend time with your parents?

- How do they take part in your studies?
- Do you remember any occasion when your parents were not interested in your life? How you can describe your relationships with other relatives?
- How do your parents support you?
- Do you have any rules in your family?
- Do your parents support you in your wishes?
- Do you parents take into account your opinion?

Как ты проводишь время со своими родителями?

- Как часто они участвуют в твоих учебных делах?
- Можешь ли ты вспомнить случаи, когда твои родители не были заинтересованы в твоей жизни, в твоей учебе?
- Как ты можешь описать отношения с родственниками?
- Как твои родители поддерживают тебя?
- У вас есть правила в семье?
- Исполняют ли родители твои желания?
- Принимают ли родители во внимание твоё мнение?

Nature and animals

What is your attitude to animals?⁵

- Do you appreciate and value plants, animals and world of nature?⁶
- Are you enjoying going to the nature?
- Does the natural environment play a big role in your life?

Какое твоё отношение к животным?

- Как ты относишься к растениям, животным и животному миру?

⁵ From Albus et al. (2010).

⁶ From Anand et al. (2007).

Free time, Membership in the organizations

Tell me about your free time, how do you spend your free time?

- Do you want to make something in you free time that now you can not because you do not have such opportunities?
- Do you have any after-school facilities? (sport, dancing, courses on the foreign languages)?
- Are you a member of some organizations? (sport club, political youth organization, dancing group, theatre group, etc.)? Let's imagine that you are, what kind of organizations you could be a member and why?

Расскажи, как ты проводишь своё свободное время?

- Хочешь ли ты заниматься чем-то в свободное время, на что у тебя сейчас нету возможностей?
- Ты посещаешь какие-нибудь кружки? (спорт, танцы, курсы иностранного языка)
- Расскажи, как ты проводишь своё свободное время?
- Хочешь ли ты заниматься чем-то в свободное время, на что у тебя сейчас нету возможностей?
- Ты посещаешь какие-нибудь кружки? (спорт, танцы, курсы иностранного языка)

Control over One's Environment

- What do you think how can you influence on political and social process in you district, in your city, in you country?
- How free are you to make decisions in your choice of education, of the future work, in your life?
- What do you think about the changes in the life? What does it mean for you to have changes?
- Как ты считаешь, можешь ли ты влиять на политические и социальные процессы в твоём районе, в твоём городе, в твоей стране?
- Насколько ты свободен в выборе дальнейшего обучения, работы, своей жизни?
- Ты боишься перемен в жизни? Что для тебя означают перемены в жизни?

Future

How do you see your life in the future?⁷ What would you like to achieve by the time you are 30-40 years old?⁸ Do you have a clear plan of how you would like your life to be?⁹

- Do you have everything in the life that you wish or you would like to change something?¹⁰
- Do you think that you can change these things in your life?¹¹
- What would you inspire to do if you had all opportunities in the life?

⁷ From Albus et al. (2010).

⁸ From Witzel (2000).

⁹ From Anand et al. (2007).

¹⁰ From Albus et al. (2010).

¹¹ From Albus et al. (2010).

- How often, if at all, do you evaluate how do you lead your life and where are you going in life?¹²
- To what kind of events or things are you looking forward in the future?
- Now, you are at the age of 16-18, the age of the choice of the profession, of way of living. What do you think about the transition into adulthood, working life? Do you have any fears towards it?
- What is the most important for you in your future life? Can you achieve it?

Как ты видишь свою жизнь в будущем? Чего ты хочешь достигнуть к возрасту 30-40 лет? У тебя есть ясный план на будущее?

- Есть ли у тебя в жизни всё, что ты желаешь или ты хочешь поменять что-то?
- А можешь ли ты поменять эти вещи сам?
- Чем бы ты хотел заниматься, если бы у тебя были все возможности для выполнения?
- Как часто, если вообще, ты оцениваешь то, как проходит твоя жизнь и куда ты идёшь?
- Каких событий или чего ты боишься в будущем?
- Сейчас ты в возрасте выбора профессии, образа жизни. А ты думаешь о переходе во взрослую жизнь? У тебя есть страхи к этому?
- Что для тебя самое главное и важное в твоей будущей жизни? Можешь ли ты этого достичь?

¹² From Anand et al. (2007).

Short questionnaire:

Young people's socio-demographic characteristics:

- 1) Sex;
- 2) Age;
- 3) Education;
- 4) The structure of the family;
- 5) Parent's occupation
 - a) mother,
 - b) father;
- 6) Living conditions
 - a) room in the shared flat, flat, house, other;
 - b) the access to the heating, water, gas.

Социально-демографические характеристики молодых людей:

- 1) Пол;
- 2) Возраст;
- 3) Образование;
- 4) Структура семьи;
- 5) Трудовое положение родителей:
 - a) матери,
 - b) отца;
- 6) Жилищные условия:
 - a) комната в коммунальной квартире; квартира; дом;
 - b) другое доступ к отоплению, воде и газу.

Appendix 3. Interview participants

Name	Age	Region	Education	Parents' professional occupation	Accommodation
Gosha	16	Saint Petersburg	Specialized secondary school	Mother does not work Father died	Two-room flat (lives with mother and brother)
Katya	18	Saint Petersburg	Specialized secondary school	Mother - teacher Father - driver	Two-room flat (lives with grandmother)
Nina	16	Saint Petersburg	School	Mother - accountant Father - driver	Shared three-room flat with a single woman (lives with parents)
Olga	16	Saint Petersburg	Specialized secondary school	Mother does not work, housewife Father – driving instructor	Three-room flat (lives with parents and grandmother)
Rustam	17	Saint Petersburg	Specialized secondary school	No information was given about mother's and father's professional occupation, but they work	Three-room flat (lives with parents and sister)
Senja	15	Saint Petersburg	Vocational school	Mother - teacher Father has been deprived of parental rights	Shared flat with other families (lives with mother in a room)
Varvara	18	Saint Petersburg	Specialized secondary school	Mother – kindergarten teacher and cleaning woman Father pays alimony	Three-room flat (lives with mother, grandmother and sister)
Victor	16	Saint Petersburg	School	Mother lives in another country Father has a plumbing company Parents are divorced	Three-room flat (lives with grandmother and her friend, father, brother, sister, mother)
Vladimir	16	Saint Petersburg	School	Mother cook's assistant Father – carpenter Parents are divorced	Three-room flat (lives with mother and grandmother), one room is leased to another family
Darina	18	Leningrad region	School	Mother – factory worker Father – factory worker	Two-room flat (lives with parents, three sisters)
Jura	18	Leningrad region	School	Mother – kindergarten teacher Father - doctor	Two-room flat (lives with parents)
Konstantin	17	Leningrad region	School	Mother died Father - operator	One-room flat (lives with father)
Nikita	17	Leningrad region	School	Mother - administrator Father - manager	Two-room flat (lives with parents)
Pavel	17	Leningrad region	School	Mother - accountant Father – head of construction department	Two-room flat, moving to a new flat (lives with parents and brother)
Regina	18	Leningrad region	School	Mother – general manager in a shop Father – locomotive driver's assistant	Two-room flat (lives with parents and brother)

Andrej	15	Novgorod region	School	Mother works in a factory Father - driver	Five-room flat (lives with parents)
Grisha	16	Novgorod region	School	Mother – deputy director in a shop Father works on railway	Private house with five rooms (lives with parents and sister)
Nikolai	16	Novgorod region	School	Mother – shop assistant Father - long-distance lorry driver	Private house with two rooms with a heating stove and water from a stand-pipe (lives with parents, sister and brother)

Appendix 4. Translations

Andrej, 15, Novgorod region		
123-127	<p><i>I: Ну а вообще, как ты считаешь, вот если бы ты захотел бы поступить в университет, не знаю там, допустим, Новгород или Санкт-Петербурге, тебе было бы легко или нет?</i></p> <p>Andrej: Я так думаю, нет.</p> <p><i>I: Почему нет?</i></p> <p>Andrej: Ну там спрос больше я так думаю, спрашивают больше, чем нас тут.</p>	<p><i>I: Well and in general, how do you think if you wanted to attend a university, I do not know, let us assume, in Novgorod or St. Petersburg, would it be easy or not for you?</i></p> <p>Andrej: I think, not /easy/.</p> <p><i>I: Why not /easy/?</i></p> <p>Andrej: Well the admission requirements are higher there, I think so, they require more, more than we are required here.</p>
131-134	<p>Andrej: Да, тут они как бы меньше дают.</p> <p><i>I: Чем [те знания]</i></p> <p>Andrej: Да, чем в крупном городе. Чем больше город тем, я так думаю, что знаний больше дают.</p>	<p>Andrej: Yes, here they give us less, it seems.</p> <p><i>I: Than [that knowledge]</i></p> <p>Andrej: Yes, than in the big city. Bigger the city, I think so, they give more knowledge.</p>
151-152	<p>Нет, там просто, как бы класс наш расходится, а с другими как-то учиться не очень. Если бы остался класс наш, и я бы остался, а так все расходятся.</p>	<p>No, it is simple, our class /classmates/ leave the school, and with others I do not want somehow to study. If our class remained, I would remain, but all leave the school.</p>
513-516	<p>Ну да, ну они как бы долго все делают. Некоторые вот, я вот говорю, был у хирурга, берет, справку даёт и шоб я шел к своему врачу, хотя он должен был написать всю справку, отправляет к другому врачу, а там врач говорит: "А че он ко мне отправил?" Писать не хотят или там что-нибудь такое.</p>	<p>Well, well they do all so long. Some of them here, I have already told, I have been at the surgeon, he gives a referral, in order that I go to my doctor, although he should have written the health certificate, but he sends to another doctor, and that doctor tells: "And why did he send to me?" Do not want to write or something in this way.</p>
521-522	<p>Ну я бы врачей, конечно, побольше. А то у нас тут, например, вот детский хирург тут умер и нету сейчас.</p>	<p>Well, of course, I would like to have more doctors. We have here, for example, that the children's surgeon died and there is no another one now.</p>
522	<p>ну взрослый проверяет и в Новгород отправляет, всем ехать</p>	<p>well, the adult doctor checks and sends to Novgorod, sends all there to go</p>
526	<p>Да. Я вот знаю, что кожный вроде, что он тоже по некоторым дням приезжает, его нету.</p>	<p>Yes. I know that it seems that a dermatologist comes on some days too, there is no dermatologist as well.</p>
605-607	<p><i>I: Ну а ты можешь влиять на социально-политические события, которые в стране происходят?</i></p> <p>Andrej: Ну так в общем нет.</p>	<p><i>I: Well, can you influence social and political events that take place in the country?</i></p> <p>Andrej: Well, in general, no.</p>
631-632	<p>Да. Ну вот папа, где жил, у них значит, если в армию не сходил, значит трус и такое вот, так что ((смеется)). Надо отслужить, чтобы потом никаких было.</p>	<p>Yes, for example, my father, the place where he lived, it meant that if you do not go to army, then you are a quitter, and so on ((laughs)). It is necessary to do military service, so that it will not be anything /in this way/.</p>

Darina, 18, Leningrad region		
10-11	Люблю этот город, мне нравится здесь вот жить, но в дальнейшем я собираюсь уехать в Питер и уехать насовсем отсюда.	I love this town, I like to live here, but in future I am going to move to St. Petersburg and to move off from here forever.
12	Потому что здесь ни работы, ничего по моему мнению не найти.	Because here work, anything in my opinion can not be found.
146-152	Darina: Я хочу, так как я закончила художественную школу достаточно хорошо, почти на отлично, я хочу вообще в архитектурный университет. На архитектурный факультет, ну туда поступить крайне сложно. Там при вступительных экзаменах нужно сдавать такие предметы, которые я не знаю, что это даже такое. Как например, начертательная геометрия, а репетиторов по этому предмету не найти. <i>И: Не найти в П-городе или вообще трудно найти?</i> Darina: Вообще трудно найти, но в П-городе таких вообще нет.	Darina: I want, as I finished artistic school with a good grade, almost perfect, I want to join the architectural university, at the Faculty of architecture. Well, but it is extremely difficult to get the university acceptance there. For being admitted it is necessary to know subjects that I do not know what they even are. Such as descriptive geometry, and it is impossible to find private teachers for this subject. <i>I: Is it impossible to find in P-town or in general?</i> Darina: It is in general difficult to find, but there are no such teachers at all in P-town.
169-173	((P)) Я считаю, что если есть деньги, то легко. А если вот, допустим, сейчас вот поступать, я сомневаюсь, что я поступлю на бесплатный факультет, это я не знаю, это будет что-то какое чудо там, заоблачное, хотя не скажу, что я плохо учусь. Вот а на платное, ну у родителей не будет достаточно таких средств, чтобы просто обеспечивать и меня, и сестру на платном.	((P)) I mean that if there is money, it is easy. And if now, let us assume, now I have to enter, I doubt that I will enter on free place at the faculty, I do not know, it will be something like a miracle, something transcendental, though I will not tell that I study badly. That is the way, while on paid /place/, well, my parents will not have enough means in order to simply support both me and the sister on the paid form of education.
214-216	но нормальную работу с нормальной зарплатой и то есть как бы с обеспечением, чего можно найти только в Питере как бы ближайшее. А в П-городе я не знаю.	but a normal work with a normal salary and so to say with [social] security can be found only in St. Petersburg as the nearest. And in P-town I do not know.
231-233	А так вот сходить даже некуда. Мы вот как-то недели две назад просто с другом решили сходить погулять. За два часа, наверное, обошли вдоль и поперек весь город. Негде гулять. Вот просто даже прогуляться негде.	And there is even no place to walk. We went for a walk somehow simply with a friend two weeks ago. In two hours, probably, we walked far and wide the whole town. There is no place to walk. There is simply even no place to walk.
236-238	[Ну она исчерпаема]. Очень действительно быстро исчерпалось. Постоянно одно и то же, наворачивать круги по площади.	[Well it is exhaustible]. Really it became very quickly exhaustible. Constantly all the time the same, to make circles on the area.
284-286	Потому что полностью напрочь отбили желание учиться. Вот им тупо главное дать материал и все. А интересно тебе, не интересно, понял ты, не понял, их уже не касается	Because they discourage completely from studies. They follow mainly the curriculum unthinkingly. And it is not their business, if you are interested, you are not interested, if you

	никак.	understood, you did not understand.
479-498	<p>Darina: У меня сестра лежала в больнице, а мама не имела возможности их навестить, вот так вот. [...] Я поехала к ним, мама меня отпустила спокойно как бы на один день, папа сначала, конечно, волновался: „Как она одна поедет, я ее одну не пущу“. Ну поехала одна. Но езжу я исключительно на электричке на экспрессе, на другом транспорте ни за что. То есть если, конечно, не будет экспресса, я могу поехать на обычной электричке, но и то как-то главное, чтобы там были мои знакомые, чтобы я со знакомыми ехала.</p> <p><i>I: А почему ты не можешь ехать на другом транспорте, на автобусах, например?</i></p> <p>Darina: [...] А ездить на автобусах, которые куда-то в аварии там какие-то попадают, я не хочу. [...]</p> <p><i>I: А обычные электрички?</i></p> <p>Darina: Обычные, ну просто в последнее время, насколько я знаю, в обычных электричках, во-первых, мало народу, а во-вторых, больше такие люди ездят, то есть как бы не очень безопасно ездить на этих электричках в позднее время. Днем-то чего я поеду туда и обратно, я могу вечером на экспрессе поехать или утром (?).</p>	<p>Darina: My sisters were in the hospital /in Saint Petersburg/, and my mother was not able to visit them. ... I went to see them, my mother let me easily go for one day, my father firstly, of course, worried: "How does she go alone? I will not let her go alone". Well I travelled alone. But I only use the express-train, any other transport not at any price. Unless, of course, there will not be express-train, I can take an ordinary train, but somehow the main thing is that there are my friends around, so that I am travelling with friends.</p> <p><i>I: And why can't you take any other public transport, a bus, for example?</i></p> <p>Darina: ... A ride on the buses, which have somewhere an accident, I do not want [...]</p> <p><i>I: And the ordinary train?</i></p> <p>Darina: Simply, well, recently, as far as I know in the ordinary trains, firstly, there are few people, and secondly, there are more kind of people, so that it is not very safe to take those trains late in the night. During the day - then what, I'm going back and forth, I can take express-train in the evening or in the morning to go (?)</p>
514-521	<p>пошла к невропатологу, она мне выписала кучу лекарств, таблеток каких-то, прогревание назначила. Я на прогревание ходила, а таблетки я так и не пропила, у меня не было денег вообще на них. Потому что в прошлом году папа работал на другой работе, мама не работала. Ну как бы средств практически не было, папе зарплату вообще не платили, задержки были очень сильные. Мы жили с бабушкой, и так были на полном обеспечении у бабушки, я уже не могла у бабушки еще на таблетки деньги тратить. Как бы так и не пролечилась. В этом году проходила медосмотр, ну, конечно, невролог на меня поругалась, но штамп поставила, что медосмотр пройден.</p>	<p>I went to the neuropathologist, she prescribed me a heap of medicaments, sort of pills, she prescribed the warming up. I went on warming up, and I did not take all pills, I had no money in general on them. Because last year the father worked at another work, mother did not work. Well, practically there was not any financial means, the salary was not even paid to father at all, delays were very strong. We lived with the grandmother and so we were completely supported by the grandmother, I could not anymore spend money on pills while living by the grandmother. So I did not treat properly. This year I have passed the medical examination, well, of course, the neurologist swore on me, but has put a stamp that the medical examination is passed.</p>
831-832	<p>вот получить высшее образование не для того, чтобы оно было, а для того, чтобы получить достойную работу с достойной зарплатой</p>	<p>I want to graduate in order not just to graduate, but in order to get a decent job with a worthy salary</p>

855-859	Сестра, больше ей возможностей поступить, потому что у меня три сестры младшие, у всех у них астма, у двоих из них инвалидность. Та сестра, которая вместе со мной сейчас поступать будет, у нее тоже инвалидность, и в связи с этим у нее есть кое-какие-то льготы, и она тут же может куда-то поступить, и ей больше возможностей, во-первых.	The sister has more opportunities to be admitted to the university because I have three younger sisters, all of them have asthma, two of them are disabled. That sister who is going to be admitted together with me, she is also disabled, and in this connection she has some privileges, she can get acceptance somewhere right away, and she has more opportunities, firstly.
871-873	У меня уже на двух листочках выписано: на одном листочке колледжи, на втором университеты. Просто нужно взяться и узнать, что туда надо при поступлении туда, какие документы подавать.	I have got already written out on two leaflets: on one leaflet it is written out colleges, on the second universities. It is just necessary to take up and to learn what is necessary for the entrance, what documents to submit.
889-891	Вот, а больше, есть такое, что учителя ругаются: „Вот зачем вы шли в десятый класс? вот зачем вы шли? вот лучше бы шли в путягу. Вот такие сякие“. Постоянно гнобление.	That is the way, and more, it happens that teachers swear: “Why did you enter the tenth class? Why did you enter? It would be better, if you entered the vocational school. So-and-so“. Constant humiliation.
945-946	Вот. В Петербурге заочно. От Питера в этом самом, то нашей то ли в четвертой школе, то ли в колледже нашем какой-то есть.	That is the way. In Petersburg by correspondence. From St. Petersburg in this, either at our school, at n-school, or in college there is a kind of.
969-974	Потому что сейчас вот, допустим, они в пятом классе, но дети взрослеют и оттого, что они ничем не заняты, они будут просто тупо на улице. Вот как наши все на улице, там не знаю, в клубах, пьют, гуляют там, говорят, что в первой в школе, еще где-то и вроде бы у нас где-то в классах младших кто-то какие-то наркотики, там еще чего-то. От того, что детям нечем заняться, просто вот такой себя (губят такого).	Because now that is the way, they are in fifth grade, but kids grow up and because they are not engaged in any activities, they will be just stupidly lop about on the street. That is how ours /classmates/ are in the street, I do not know, in clubs, they drink, go out, people say that at n-school and elsewhere it seems at our school there are some drugs, something like this. From the fact that kids have nothing to do, just in this way (such ruin).
998-999	Активности больше бы добавила, да, и, может, школа вот какое-то влияние имеет. Даже не может, а имеет влияние.	I would add more activities and, perhaps, the school has some kind of influence. Even can not, but has the influence.
1002-1005	Насколько я знаю, раньше было много всяких кружков, там еще чего-то в школе, чего) детей заинтересовывали чем. Сейчас у нас в школе вот, чего-то не знаю такого. Ну вот есть какие-то спортивные только разве что и все. Ну и вроде бы танцевальные вроде бы там, там ну и то опять же не все.	As far as I know, there were many hobby groups, something else at school that) they made children interested in something. Now at school here, I do not know something in this way. Well, there are some sports groups only, but this is all. Well and it seems there are dancing groups, although not all of them.

Gosha, 16, Saint Petersburg		
41-44	И, конечно, не все, вот у меня были знакомые, которые, например, из школ наших, тем более российских, преподаватели ещё, у которых есть свои какие-то принципы, что-то какие-то убеждения, например, моего знакомого вообще выгнали выперли из-за непл(о)плохой шевелюры.	And, of course, not all, I had acquaintances whom, for example, from our schools, especially Russian, the teachers who still have own principles, some beliefs, for example, one of my acquaintances was turned out of school because of a bad haircut.
151-154	Ну да и, конечно, то что школа, конечно, она не дает такого большого такого уж, ну как сказать, ну не настолько профессиональные как бы) они не могут развить человека настолько (?это действительно может быть).	Well and, of course, the school, of course, does not give such big, well how to tell, well not so professional as though) they cannot develop the person thus much (?it can actually be).
230-234	Просто не было желание, не было стимула, что либо делать, потому что старался, старался, а потом когда проходила какая-то проверка, что-то типа домашнего задания, что-то типа. Приходишь, да ладно ничего там, остальные люди-то ничего не делают, я и ладно, тогда просто как будто этого и не было, забыть. И смысл что-либо делать он пропал.	Simply I did not have any desire, any incentive to do something, because I tried, tried, and then when we had a test, something such as homework's check, in this way, you come and you see that other people do nothing. It means, it is fine, it was a miracle, and I need just to forget it. And the sense to do something /homework/ disappeared.
241-242	Ну конечно, важно, потому что без образования особо никуда не денешься. Конечно, можно деться, но полностью того, чего можно достичь, (это не будет без образования).	Well certainly, it is important, because without education there is nothing you can do. Certainly, you can do something, but to reach completely what could be reached, (it will not be possible without education).
250-252	А знаете опять же, коснемся слегка армии, это да, потому что) На самом деле да, зарубежная армия смотришь, как уже у них хорошо, как хочется туда пойти. А в нашу русскую: „О, да ну её на фиг“. Да, у себя в казарме страшнее, чем на войне ((смеется)).	And you know, let's speak slightly concerning the army, yes, because) Actually yes, the foreign army you look, how good it is, I would like to go there. And in our Russian army: „Oh, swear about the army“. Yes, at own barracks is more scaring, than in the war ((laughs)).
257-258	Да. От нее есть защита, это либо быть, учиться на дневном отделении какого-либо учебного заведения, либо отсрочка по здоровью.	Yes. From it there is a protection, either to be, to study on a full-time tuition of any educational institution, or the deferment by the health state.
258-262	Поэтому как раз вот кружки и временно перестал посещать. Потому что когда ещё в школе начали спрашивать уже в конце средней школы: „А посещаете какие-нибудь кружки?“ И специально говоришь, хоть ты и занимаешься, я, например, на курсы ходил и поэтому говоришь: „Нет, я никуда не хожу, я больной, у меня все болит, я вообще чуть ли не инвалид“.	Therefore I have just ceased to visit /hobby and sports/ groups temporarily. Because when I have been asked already at the end of secondary school: „Do you visit any groups?“ And you tell specially, though you visit, for example, I visited courses, and therefore I told: „No, I do not go anywhere, I am completely ill, all hurt me, I am almost a disabled person“.

271-275	ты поступил, да, ты учишься. Но дело все в том, что большинство питерских вузов, преподаватели, чтобы сдать какой-нибудь там зачет, написать диплом, нужно очень хорошее финансовое положение. Да с этим сталкиваешься, и что, да, чаще всего преподаватель просто говорит: "А я не приму". Вот сдавайте ему 1000 на зачет, и тогда "я вам выдам и будете писать".	you entered, you did, and, you are studying. But the point is that the majority of St. Petersburg's higher education institutions, the lecturers, in order to pass any test, to write a diploma work, it is necessary to have a very good financial situation. Yes, you face this and the fact that more often the lecturer simply says: "I will not accept". You need to give him 1000 /roubles/, and then "I will give you /a test/ and you will write".
334-341	<i>И: То есть это одна из уловок как вытащить деньги?</i> Darina: А это как сказать. Врачи это у нас все государственные, вот у нас у всех есть медицинские страховые полисы, то есть Вы не платите. То есть вы приходите к врачу все бесплатно, там вы приходите в его приемные часы, занимаете очередь и так далее. Да, а дело в том, да, врачи у нас назначают, конечно, большинство этих новых выпускников: „ну возьмите вот эти лекарства“, которые там 3 таблетки там стоят тысячу рублей, в общем когда лекарства очень большие, - „потом обследование пройдите, инновационные технологии, чтобы все точно было“.	<i>I: So, is it one of the tricks how to pull out money?</i> Darina: Well, how to tell. In this country the doctors are all state, all of us have medical insurances, that means that YOU do not pay. It means that you come to a doctor, and everything is for free, you come within his opening hours, stand in a queue and so on. Yes, and the point is that, doctors, of course, the majority of them are these new graduate, they prescribe: „well, take here these medicaments“, while three pills cost one thousand rubles, generally, when medicaments are very high, - „then pass the examination, innovative technologies so that everything could be accurately measured“.
363-366	И собственно говоря, конечно, да, вот рассматривается закон в Думе: „вот давайте сделаем обучение платным, почему бы и нет, сострожем денег, положим в карман, купим себе новую дачу, зачем, правильно вот“. Такая какая-то позиция.	And relatively speaking, of course, yes, the law is considered in Duma: "let's make education paid, why not, we will have money, put them in the pocket, and buy a new villa, why, this is right." This kind of attitude.
441-442	Знаете, понятие деликатесов тоже отличается, потому что какой-то (циклоп) он ничего, он ползет, бери его, ешь, нет, конечно, нет.	You know, the concept of delicacies differs as well, because any insect that creeps (Cyclops), take it, eat it, but no, of course, no.
453-455	Конечно, на продуктах слегка можно и сэкономить, конечно, же это не ресторан, можно там чего-то такое низкопробное, чего-нибудь такое чисто средненькой, можно и пониже. Как бы знаете, что-нибудь просто закинуть в желудок и, образно говоря, схомячить.	Certainly, it is possible to slightly save on products, of course, it is not a restaurant, it is possible something such low-standard there, something such average, it is possible even lower. You know something simply to throw in a stomach and, figuratively, to dash off /to hamster/.
645-647	„Правительство дало там этим блокадникам квартиру“. Правильно, уже подождали пока 65, еще когда 100 лет один блокадник останется на всю Россию: „Вот мы ему дали квартиру“, а человек через два дня и померет.	"The government has given apartments to survivors of siege. "It is right; they have waited until 65 th /anniversary/, but could have even waited until 100 th when one survivor of siege remains alive in the whole Russia. "Here we gave her an apartment," and a person dies in two

		days.
709-711	Как бы если каждый посчитает нужным чего-то сделать от себя, то, конечно, что-то изменится.	If everyone thinks it is necessary to do something on one's behalf, of course, something will change.
819-821	Семья не знаю даже. Как дальше пойдет, потому что то у нас в стране этих юристов много, то экономистов, а этих там технических профессий, у нас там фрезеровщиков, конечно, у нас там мало, там инженеров, но с другой стороны, кому нужны инженеры без квалификации?	Family, I do not even know. How it will go further, because in our country there are lots of these lawyers, economists, and these technical professions, but there are not enough of milling-machine operators, of course, or engineers here, but on the other hand who needs the engineers without qualification?

Grisha, 16, Novgorod region

65-71	I: Ну а как ты считаешь, у тебя есть хорошая возможность туда поступить? Grisha: Да. I: Почему? Grisha: Ну как бы это мне будет, потому что отец работает на железной дороге, как бы в Питере легче будет поступить. I: Это учитывают? Grisha: Да ...	I: <i>What do you think, do you have an opportunity to be admitted there?</i> Grisha: Yes. I: <i>Why?</i> Grisha: Because my father works on the railway, that is why it will be easy to get admitted at university in St. Petersburg. I: <i>Do they take it into account?</i> Grisha: Yes.
222-224	вот я даже сам этим летом работал, по связям у родственников работал на дороге, и то, что мы делаем, заливаем это на год и все. Вот сейчас опять снег сошел- опять ямы.	This summer I worked in the road construction (by relatives), and what we do there, we fill /the holes on a road/ for a year and that is all. Now, the same problem happens again with this road, the snow came down, and there are holes again.
227-232	I: <i>А кем ты мог пойти работать?</i> Grisha: Ну как бы это работать, ну на стройку можно пойти, строек много сейчас. I: <i>А?</i> Grisha: Так, неофициальных. I: <i>Неофициальных?</i> Grisha: Неофициальных. I: <i>А как к этому относятся родители?</i> Grisha: "Зарабатывай сам уже". Ну как бы хорошо, что могу сам зарабатывать.	I: <i>Where could you work at your age?</i> Grisha: I could work on the building construction, there are lots of constructions nowadays. I: <i>А?</i> Grisha: Well, not official /constructions/. I: <i>Not official?</i> Grisha: Not official. I: <i>What do you parents think about this?</i> Grisha: "Earn your own money". It is so good that I can earn my own money.

Jura, 18, Leningrad region

56	Ну предложение поступило, направление дали.	An offer was made, a referral was given.
58	Ну это произошло как-то совсем случайно ((смеётся)), как-то.	Well it occurred somehow absolutely accidentally ((laughs)), somehow.
58-60	Ну, не знаю, какое время было, просто уже собирался домой, ну после уроков, мне сказали зайти к	Well, I do not know what the time was, I was going already to go simply home, well after lessons, I

	директору, и там сидел начальник, и предложили мне поступить.	was told to come to the director, and the chief sat there, and suggested me to pass exams.
71-72	Ну мне здесь сказали, что это ну факультет прикладной математики, ну с математикой вроде дружу. Ну.	Well it was told me here that it is the faculty of applied mathematics, well it seems that I am on friendly terms with the mathematics. Well.
115-118	[Ну я хотел сначала] в Лесгафта, ну это тоже в Питере, тоже направление мне туда дадут, ну я тоже буду туда пробовать, но если я поступлю в МЧС, то я в МЧС пойду, если не поступлю в МЧС, то буду ещё куда-нибудь пробовать. Ну попробую все равно куда-нибудь.	[Well I wanted at first] in the Lesgaft University, well it is also in St. Petersburg, I will be given a referral there as well, well I will also try there but if I get admitted to /the university of/ the Ministry of Emergency Situations, I will go to /the university of/ the Ministry of Emergency Situations, if I do not get admitted at /the university of/ the Ministry of Emergency Situations, still I will try somewhere else. Well I will try anyway somewhere.
327	Ну даже если я чего-нибудь сделаю, то мне кажется, это будет без толку всё.	Well even if I do something, then I think it will be all senseless.
349-350	[Там мне кажется], что вот на прикладную математику, если я поступлю, то через какое-то время можно перейти на другой факультет.	[There it seems to me] that if I enter the applied mathematics, after a while it is possible to change to another faculty.
344-345	<i>I: А как потом будешь это использовать?</i> Jura: Ну там направят.	<i>I: And how will you use it then?</i> Jura: Well they will direct then.
351-353	<i>I: Аа:, так а почему ты не можешь сразу на какой-то свой поступить, который тебе нравится?</i> Jura: Ну, дали пока сюда.	<i>I: Aa: so why can't you enter at once at that /university/ which you like more?</i> Jura: Well, they gave so far to this one.
362-363	<i>I: Ну то есть можно сказать, что у тебя в принципе есть, вот ты поступаешь, у тебя есть такой ясный план, чем ты будешь заниматься в будущем?</i> Jura: Ну пока нет.	<i>I: Well is it possible to tell, that you have in principle, you get a university acceptance), you have such a clear plan, what will you do in the future?</i> Jura: Well so far I do not have.
394-396	<i>I: Тебе комфортнее здесь или тебе все-таки больше больше хочется в большой город?</i> Jura: Ну это местами. Когда хочется в большой, а когда устанешь от большого, хочется в маленький.	<i>I: Is it comfortable to you here or do you want still to the big city?</i> Jura: Here and there. Sometimes I want to a big city, and when I feel tired from the big city, I want to a small.

Katya, 18, Pskov region – Saint Petersburg

63-65	у нас в городе гуманитарных вузов как таковых нет, у нас там медицинский, технический. Ну и был один гуманитарный вуз, связан, например, с социологией, с психологией, ну мне это как бы не совсем нравится и не совсем близко	There are no higher educational institutions of the humanities in our town, we have there medical, technical. Well also there was one higher educational institution of the humanities, which is connected, for example, with sociology, with psychology, well it is not absolutely what I like and is not absolutely
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		close to me.
70-74	поэтому здесь очень много возможностей и в плане учебы, и вообще как бы даже, что касается будущей профессии, то есть намного проще найти, например, работу даже после института или вот во время учебы, чем, например, у нас дома там. То есть там никогда, да, то есть там да с языками не очень.	therefore here there are a lot of possibilities and concerning the studies, and in general even apparently concerning the future profession, that means it is much simpler to find, for example, work even after institute or during the studies, than, for example, at home with us. That never happens there /small towns/ and, yes it is not so good with languages there /small towns/.
80-82	я бы, наверное, все равно любимыми бы путями добралась до Питера.	I would, probably, reach St. Petersburg anyway.
93-96	У нас учится мальчик на юрфаке, ну потому что у него мама судья у нас там в городе, ну в основном все прошли либо льготно, либо ну вот девочка одна учится, подружка моя, меде, в Павлова.	I know a boy who studies on the faculty of law, because his mum is a judge in our hometown, well generally all entered either on favourable terms, or well one girl, she is my friend, she studies in the medical university, in Pavlov.
96-98	Ну трудно в том плане, даже, когда ты приезжаешь, трудно поступить, потому что сначала берут из Ленинграда, берут из Ленобласти, ну а только потом уже, допустим, приезжих берут.	Well it is difficult, even in terms that when you come, it is difficult to be admitted, because at first they accept /people/ from Leningrad, accept /people/ from the Leningrad region, well but only then, let us assume, they accept not locals.
99-100	ну на самом деле это было ужасно и воспоминание ужасное особенно от Герцена	well actually it was awful and the memory is also awful, especially about Herzen University
109-111	если вы найдете, допустим, спонсоров, которые смогли бы вам оплатить учебу, мы вас возьмем, а если нет, то нет	if you find, let us assume, sponsors who could pay for your studies, we will take you, and if not, we will not
116-118	так как я целенаправленно хотела на языки, я решила, что буду так и заниматься, поэтому пошла в колледж. Вот. Поэтому в этом году буду еще раз пробовать поступать.	as I purposefully wanted the languages, I decided that I will do it, therefore I went to college. That is the way. That is why this year I will try to enter once more time.
120-122	В России получить легко, потому что здесь (1.0), ну мне кажется здесь во всех вузах э:: всё играет вот материальная сторона. То есть если у тебя есть спонсоры, или у тебя есть какие-то вот материальные средства, то тебе легко поступить.	In Russia it is easy to receive /higher education/, because here (1.0), well, it seems to me, here in all higher education institutions m:: the wealth plays a role only. That means, if you have sponsors, or you have financial resources, it is easy for you to enter.
122-124	А если ты приезжаешь сам со своими знаниями, то это (?не) вообще сложно. Мне кажется, что здесь ценятся даже не столь знания, а вот сколько материальная сторона.	If you come with your own knowledge, (? not) it is difficult in general. It seems to me that the knowledge is not so appreciated as the wealth.
126-127	Да, потому что вот с кем ты начинаешь разговаривать, кто учится на бюджете, да, спрашиваешь, мало баллов у ребят, кто после ЕГЭ. Ну объясняют так: либо папа там кем-	Yes, because with whomever I start to speak, who studies on the budget-based place, and I ask, the guys have few points, those who passed the Unified State Exam. Well they explain so: either the father works

	то работает, либо мама замкафедры, либо еще что-нибудь такое.	somewhere, or the mother is a head of department, or something in this way.
131-133	просто там нету возможностей, если приехать с языками, то, наверное, единственное место это будет школа.	simply there are no opportunities there, if to come with languages, probably, the unique place will be a school.
133-135	Но так как это не центр, то есть небольшой, несильно большой город, то, естественно, например, в плане материальном особенно молодым специалистам и трудновато работу будет найти, и мало оплачивают.	But as it is not a centre, it means, it is small, not so big city, for sure, for example, financially especially to young specialists it will be difficult to find a work, and it is not enough paid.
135-137	А в Питере намного удобнее, здесь можно и переводчиком, и в садиках, и переводами текстов заниматься, то есть больше возможностей.	And in St. Petersburg it is much more convenient, here it is possible [to work] also as translator, and in the kindergartens, and to translate the texts, it means there are more possibilities.
141-144	Ну мне кажется, что для многих важно не столь вот знания, которые они получают, сколько важен диплом. То есть у многих, когда интересуешься, спрашивают, кто в СПбГУ, в МГУ там, в МГИМО учится, очень важен сам конкретно диплом, то есть даже если он купленный.	Well it seems to me that for many it is important not so much the knowledge they receive, rather the diploma. When you ask those who study at the St. Petersburg State University, at the Moscow State University, for example, at the MGIMO university, the diploma itself is very important, even if it was bought.
145-147	А вот чтобы сидеть и прям учиться, учиться на этот диплом, то как бы не сильно много таких вот студентов, по крайней мере насколько я знаю.	And exactly to sit and to study, to study in order to get the diploma, there are not so much such students, at least as far as I know.
149-152	Ну вот так. Ну вот сколько даже сталкивались, допустим, в институте, очень обидно было, когда у ребят, допустим, триста баллов было набрано по ЕГЭ, то есть все на сто, они не могут пройти туда. А те у кого за два экзамена только-только сто двадцать набирается, их спокойно берут.	Well this is how it is. Well, how many times I even faced the situations, let us assume, at institute, it was very offensive, when the guys had, let us assume, three hundred points at the Unified State Exam, that means one hundred /percent/, but they cannot enter there. And those, who had for two exams just only one hundred twenty /points/, they are accepted without any problems.
157-160	Нет, ну мне вообще кажется, что там вузы хорошие, потому что ну там с экономикой намного лучше. Ну вообще, мне кажется, европейские страны они больше расположены для обучения, чем, допустим, у нас.	No, well in general it seems to me that the institutions of higher education are good there because it is much better there with the economy. Well in general, it seems to me, the European countries, they are more disposed to the education, than, let us assume, with us.
495-497	И я учила там тоже до двух до трех ночи, и очень много задавали в первом семестре, и я спала вообще, наверное, последний месяц я спала четыре-пять часов, постоянно, естественно, один только выходной и чтобы уснуть и	And I studied till two or three o'clock at night, and we had a huge homework in the first semester, and I slept in general, probably, the last month I slept four-five hours a day, constantly, of course, there was only one day off, and in order to fall

	там и валерьянку пила и успокоительные таблетки.	asleep I took both a valerian and sedatives.
516-518	И оттого, что ты морально, ты физически устаешь, ты приползаешь домой и хочется просто лечь спать, но ты понимаешь, что надо делать уроки, ты садишься делать уроки и, естественно, у тебя все раскалывается, все везде болит.	And because you morally, you physically are tired, you come crawling at home and it would be desirable to go to bed simply, but you understand that it is necessary to do homework, you sit down to do homework and, of course, everything breaks up, everything hurts everywhere.
539-542	но когда я приехала сюда, мне впервые в жизни поняла, что бывают такие моменты, когда на здоровье времени нет. Просто нет, некогда сходить элементарно к врачу, потому что что ты понимаешь, пропустишь сейчас, потом да, потом ты этого не догонишь.	but when I arrived here, for the first time in my life I understood that there are such moments when there is no time for health. Simply there is no time, there is no time to visit simply a doctor because you understand, if you miss now, then yes, then you will not catch up with it.
570-572	И поэтому начинаешь задумываться, надо ли вообще сидеть здесь, чтобы получить этот диплом. Только если уехать за границу и там там мне кажется это ценится больше.	And consequently you start to reflect, whether it is necessary to stay in general here to get this diploma. Only if to go abroad, there, it is more appreciated, it seems to me.
593-595	так как к врачу времени не было сходить, я занималась самолечением и в результате заболела так, что целый месяц сидела дома и у меня температура всегда была 37,5 и она никогда не сбивалась, да, было неприятно, конечно.	as there was no time to go to the doctor, I practiced self-treatment and as a result I became ill in the way that the whole month I was at home and I always had a temperature 37,5 degrees and it never got off and, it was unpleasant, certainly.
598-600	либо там скажут: “Ну вы идите, но платно“. Когда я ходила к хирургу наблюдаться, я всегда ходила только платно. Бесплатно было не попасть никак.	or they might tell: “Well you can, but for paid medical service“. When I went to the surgeon to be examined, I always went only for paid medical service. It was impossible to get a free medical service.
604-606	лучше, мне кажется, либо где-то в частные клиники записаться и отдать больше денег, чем ты будешь ходить в обыкновенную поликлинику, тратить свое время и не факт, что ты попадешь и ты больше, наверное, заработаешь там болезней, чем здесь так.	It is better, it seems to me, to have an appointment somewhere in private clinics and pay more money, than you will go to an ordinary polyclinic, spend your time and there is no evidence that you will get an appointment and you will gain, probably, more diseases there, than here.
611-614	В целом отрицательное мнение, потому что опять же мне кажется, что проблема исходит из образования и проблема исходит из, наверное, от нашего правительства. Так как дипломы многие купленные, то, естественно, идут такие же врачи, которые не способны там действительно как-то серьезно определить болезнь.	In whole I have a negative opinion because it seems to me that the problem proceeds from the education and the problem proceeds, probably, from our government. As many diplomas are bought, then, of course, the doctors, who are not capable to define an illness seriously, are graduated.
617-619	Или, например: “А у нас неприемные часы“. То есть тебе	Or, for example: “These are not our opening hours“. It means, if you feel

	плохо, ты можешь умирать, но у них неприемные часы. То есть вот так вот.	bad, you can die, but they are not opened now. This is how it is.
661-663	То есть как бы сейчас все рассчитано на то, что в вузы нужно идти платно. И все открыто говорят о цене, все открыто говорят, что да платно, да столько-то стоит примерное поступление.	Notably, now everything is meant in the way that it is necessary to go to the higher education institutions for a fee. And all speak openly about the price, all speak openly, that yes it is for a fee and the approximate entrance costs so much.
666-668	Ну если, допустим, в СПбГУ есть и на факультет иная, например, где-то полгода надо отдать 120 тысяч и понятно, что мало кто может это оплатить.	Well, let us assume, if at St. Petersburg State University on the faculty of foreign languages, for example, one should pay 120 thousand for half a year, it is clear that very few people can pay it.
953	Я не хочу просто здесь остваться вообще.	I do not want simply to stay here at all.
972-974	Нет, но когда мы приезжали, обязательно говорили, что либо документ, удостоверяющий лич) временную прописку, либо документ, удостоверяющий, что там соседи или кто-то там согласен о том, чтобы ты тут проживал.	No, but when we came, they said obligatory, that either a document certifying pers) a temporary registration, or the document certifying that the neighbours or someone there agrees that you live here.
964-965	я знаю, что в некоторых вузах могут отчислить из-за этого, если ты не имеешь прописки	I know that in some higher education institutions they can expel if you do not have the registration
975-978	если кто-то приезжает из более влиятельных, там выселяют в другую квартиру с третьего этажа на девятый этаж, то есть он мне писал и говорил, что вот такая и такая проблема, говорит	if someone from more influential family comes, they move /a poorer/ from the apartment on the third floor to another on the ninth floor, so he wrote to me and told that such problem exists.
1058-1060	Ну тут сложно сказать, мне кажется, не повлияешь и бесполезно на это влиять, потому что, мне кажется, все что бы ты там не говорил, что бы ты не делал, это все либо как-то пропускается мимо ушей	Well here it is hard to say, it seems to me, you cannot influence and it is useless to influence, because it seems to me, whatever you would say, whatever you would do, all things are not taken into account, skipped.
1064-1068	/в Америке/ на какую-то образовательную систему, на то, что ему не нравится, он может подать заявление, то у нас по-моему ты даже не можешь, не знаешь куда идти и пожаловаться на это. То есть тебе не нравится это ЕГЭ сдавать, но ты пойдешь и будешь его сдавать, тебе не нравится, допустим, некомпетентность кого-то, ты все равно это будешь воспринимать, потому что у нас, мне кажется, тяжело повлиять	/in USA/ a person can complain about any educational system, about anything she does not like, with us you even do not know where to go and complain. It means, you do not like to pass this Unified State exam, but you go and you'll pass it, you do not like, let's say, someone' incompetence, but still you will perceive it, because I think it is difficult to influence
1081-1083	А у нас по-моему в стране, так принято переключивать с больной головы на здоровую. И это постоянно, где не посмотри, это есть везде.	In my opinion, in our country, it is used to shift from sick to healthy head. And it is always wherever you look, it is everywhere.
1096-1098	опять же общество меняется,	Again, it seems that society is

	кажется, под влиянием, допустим, страны, естественно, правительства. Если правительство ведет себя как попало	changing under the influence of, say, country, and of course, government. If the government behaves anyhow
1125-1126	поэтому я так целенаправлено шла на языки и была очень рада то, что у меня к этому склонности есть и желание	therefore I chose purposefully the languages and I was very glad that I have the gift for languages and also the desire
1279-1286	Мне кажется основная проблема в принципе, что касается нашей страны, не знаю возможно просто я идеализирую европейские страны, но понятное дело, что там все лучше да, в плане экономике и всего, но я бы, наверное, основные проблемы, мне кажется, это образование, это медицина, то есть как бы профессии, которые действительно были раньше и хорошими, то есть это военная сфера, сейчас они не оцениваются, они сейчас как бы в принципе, ну как они нужны, но когда ты приходишь у тебя, допустим, диплом учителя, тебя, конечно, возьмут в какую-то школу, но это не будет, это не будет по достоинству оценено.	It seems to me that the main problem in principle as to our country, I do not know, probably I simply idealize the European countries. But it is clear that there everything is better yes concerning economy and everything. but I would, probably, /name/ the main problems, it seem to me, there are education, medicine, the professions which were earlier really good, it is the military sphere. now they are not appreciated, they are now in principle, well they are necessary, but when you come, let us assume, and you have the diploma of teacher, you will be employed, of course, in any school, but it will not, it will not be appreciated at true value.
1296-1299	Ну не знаю, мне кажется, наверное, проблема еще в том, что вот такие профессии, вообще как бы медицину я бы, например, немного бы пересмотрела, потому что нету какого-то такого уверенности, что если что-то случится, ты обратишься, допустим, в медицинский куда-то центр и тебе обязательно помогут.	Well I do not know, it seems to me, most likely, that the problem is, that such professions, in general I would reconsider, for example, the medicine because there is no such confidence, that if something happens, it seems to me, that you will address, let us assume, somewhere in the medical centre and you surely get help.
1137-1139	Я понимаю, что потом я хочу, допустим, там в будущем уехать там куда-то, то, естественно, надо сейчас как можно больше сил, средств, стараний положить на это, чтобы уехать.	I understand that later on I want, let us assume, in the future to leave for somewhere. That is why, naturally, it is necessary to exert as much as possible forces, means, efforts in order to leave.
1317-1323	мы готовим какие-то праздники непонятные какие, мы сидим, допустим, на уроке, а нам звонит, допустим, куратор или еще кто-то и говорит: "Вы знаете, вам надо идти и праздник делать", мы говорим: "Как? У нас урок", а нет, праздник надо делать. И мы делаем Девятое мая. Это все хорошо, но мне кажется, что) я, например, не вижу смысла в принципе делать Девятое мая, например, у нас в колледже. У меня просто как бы свое субъективное мнение на эту тему.	we prepare strange holidays, we have, for example, a class, and then a curator calls us or somebody like this and tells: "You know, you have to go and organize a holiday". We say: "How? We have a class", no, it is necessary to organize a holiday. And we organize the Ninth of May. Well, it is good, but it seems to me, for example, I do not see any sense to organize the Ninth of May at college. Well, I have my subjective opinion on this subject.

Konstantin, 17, Leningrad region		
28-29	Да, друзей много, ну вот собираюсь поступать в спортивный вуз вместе с одноклассником. У меня одноклассники поступают в один вуз.	Yes, there are a lot of friends, well I am going to apply for sports university together with the schoolmate. My schoolmates apply for the same institution of higher education.
34-35	В Лесгафта в Питере вот постараюсь, либо в Пушкине в Аграрный, ну это на крайний вариант.	I will try in Lesgaft /university/ in St. Petersburg, or in Pushkin in Agrarian /university/, well it is the last option.
37	Брат учился в Аграрном, я как-то, не знаю, в Аграрный не очень хочу, спортом.	The brother studied in Agrarian /university/, I do not know somehow, I do not want in Agrarian /university/ so much, /I want/ more sports.
39-40	Поступить не очень легко, так как я учусь не очень (просто). А там если соберу там эти справочки, то, может, и поступлю.	To get the approval for admission is not so easy as I study not so (simply). And if I collect these certificates, then, perhaps, I will be accepted.
61	Хочется учиться там, жить не знаю как бы.	I want to study there, but to live I do not know so to say.
78-82	((вздыхает)) Это все будет, если я не поступлю, там уже и армия. Вот. Ну медкомиссию я как бы прошел ((смеется)), вот, пока восемнадцати нету. Исполнится только в июне, поэтому сказали, что если не поступишь, то в промежуток от пятнадцатого, от первого до пятнадцатое июля тебя могут забрать ((смеется)). Я им: „Если заберете, то дам справочку“.	((sighs)) This all will happen, if I do not enter /to the higher education/, then the army. Well. Well I have passed a medical examination ((laughs)), that's right, I am not eighteen years old still. I will be eighteen in June; therefore they told that if you do not enter, then in an interval from the fifteenth, from July first to July fifteenth, you can be called up for military service ((laughs)). I said to them: "If you call me up, I will give a certificate".
123-124	Поэтому надо догонять их ((вздыхает)) в этом стремлении к учебе.	Therefore it is necessary to catch up with them ((sighs)) in this aspiration for studies.
352	Вернуться, конечно, захочется, другой вопрос вернусь ли я ((ухмылка)).	To return, of course, I want, but another question is if I return ((grin)).
359-361	Ну не знаю, там учитываются те факторы, которые вот учеба твоя, не только учитывается твоя учеба же, экзамены, что ты делал для общества, то есть участвовал там где-нибудь в общественной жизни. Вот так вот как бы.	Well I do not know, those factors are taken into account, which are your studies, but not only your studies are considered or exams, but what you have done for the society, it means, if you have taken part somewhere in the social life. That is the way.
380-381	То есть грудная клетка хорошо развита, а легкие нет. Показало ЕКГ или как оно там ((смеется)), поэтому надо бегать, бегать мне. На велосипеде езжу на огород.	That is, the chest is well developed, and the lungs are not. ECG revealed or how it is ((laughs)) that I need to run, to run. I ride on the bike to the garden.

Nikita, 17, Leningrad region		
129-130	<i>И: Ну а ты сам хочешь поступать в высшее учебное заведение?</i> Nikita: Ну если дадут, то да.	<i>I: Well, do you want yourself to be admitted into an institution of a higher education?</i> Nikita: Well if they give, then yes.
145	Здесь уже все знакомо, надо куда-то ехать, хотя бы в Питер.	Everything here is already familiar, it is necessary to go somewhere, at least to St. Petersburg.
225-226	Ну на данный момент я уже там не был полгода в нашей больнице и пока живу. Радуюсь.	Well at present I have not been there already half a year in our hospital and so far I am alive. I am happy.
230-232	Тут же сколько могли спасти двух человек, и двух человек этих не спасли из-за варчешных ошибок, как мне кажется.	Right there, how many people could be saved, two people, and two people were not saved due to the doctor's mistakes, as it seems to me.
250	Да, к лору мы ездили и <i>((кашляет))</i> в этом году мы последний раз поедим к главному.	Yes, we went to the ENT specialist and <i>((coughs))</i> this year we go for the last time to the eye doctor.
406-408	Вот но тем не менее все равно смотрите: те, кто посещает курсы, они платные, семьдесят процентов учеников поступает.	But nevertheless look: those who attend the courses, the courses are paid, seventy percent of pupils enter.
513-514	<i>((кашляет))</i> Ну потому здесь тебе уже все знакомо, все знаешь, а хочется новых эмоций <i>((смеется))</i> .	<i>((coughs))</i> Well therefore here everything is already familiar to you, you know everything, and you want new emotions <i>((laughs))</i> .
549-552	Nikita: Ну вот кинотеатр да обновить, чтобы побыстрее новые премьеры выходили. <i>И: У вас не так быстро, как в Петербурге?</i> Nikita: Ну да, у нас не так быстро как в Петербурге. В Петербурге уже посмотрят, только к нам придет.	Nikita: Well to renovate the cinema, yes, in order that new movies are quicker released. <i>I: Is it not so quick as in Petersburg?</i> Nikita: Well, with us it is not so quick as in Petersburg. In Petersburg they have already watched, then it comes to us only.
553-559	<i>И: Ну а допустим, все эти дискотеки, развлечения, это достаточно?</i> Nikita: Ну дискотек как-то да, одна дискотека у нас там за городом, другая в городе и третья тупо, чтобы посидеть, пивка попить. <i>И: То есть у тебя уже в каждом месте свои занятия?</i> Nikita: Да <i>((смеется))</i> . <i>И: Не надоедает?</i> Nikita: Так вот именно вот это и напрягает в маленьком городке.	<i>I: Well let us assume, all these discos, entertainments, are they enough?</i> Nikita: Well discos somehow yes, one disco is with us there out of town, another one in town and the third one is stupidly to sit, to drink beer. <i>I: That means, you have already in every place your own activities?</i> Nikita: Yes <i>((laughs))</i> . <i>I: Does it bother?</i> Nikita: This is what exactly bothers in a small town.
680-682	Так, если даже не я пойду, а кто-то повыше меня в звании <i>((вздыхает))</i> , я думаю не сразу сделают того то, что хочет этот человек, который к ним приходил, потому что они там все обленившиеся, зажравшиеся.	Thus, even if I do not go, but someone higher in rank than me goes <i>((sigh))</i> , I do think that they will not do immediately what this person wants because they are all lazy and browned off.
746-747	Ну тогда кто меня тут держит-то, если не родители <i>((смеется))</i> .	Well then who holds me here, if not parents <i>((laughs))</i> .
749	Ну друзья все в Питере учатся.	Well all friends study in St. Petersburg.

Nikolai, 16, Saint Petersburg		
34	Потому что сейчас без образования сейчас никуда не возможно поступить.	Because it is impossible to be admitted somewhere without education nowadays.
244-245	Ну там большой город, там, конечно, можно побольше заработать, чем тут, поэтому туда и надо ехать.	It is a big city there, of course, it is possible to earn more there, that is why it is necessary to go there.
376-378	Сейчас я перед этим годом поставил себе условия, то, что этот год нужно нормально проучиться, то что, аттестат нужно нормальный получить, иначе никуда не поступлю. Ну вот. Поставил себе условия и почти выполнил.	Before the beginning of this year I made myself a condition, that this year I should study well in order to get a good certificate /on general education/, otherwise I cannot be admitted anywhere. That's it. So I made a condition and I almost fulfilled it.
602	Нет, ну может быть, если конечно большинство голосов ещё кроме моего. Вот так.	Well, perhaps, if there is a majority of voices, not only mine. That is it.

Nina, 16, Saint Petersburg		
116-118	<i>((смеётся))</i> Там очень много народу, очень много мамочек с детьми, что знаете, бывает такое, что приедешь туда здоровая обследоваться, а уезжаешь оттуда уже простуженной и зараженной чем-то. Как бы.	<i>((laughs))</i> There are too much people there, there are a lot of mummies with children that you know, it happens, that you come there healthy in order to be examined, and you leave from there already chilled and infected with something. However.
376-379	Очень важно. Я просто ну на данный момент не вижу другого способа выбиться в люди и достичь каких-то успехов. Ну в профессиональном смысле, карьеры. Потому что все-таки образование это очень важно сейчас. Хочу поступить в университет.	It is very important. At the moment I simply do not see another way to make one's way in the world and to reach some success. Well in professional sense, in terms of career. Because after all the education is very important now. I want to enter the university.
381-382	Да, в СПбГУ на факультет журналистики, очень очень хочу и ну не вижу другого способа кроме как учиться.	Yes, at St. Petersburg State University at the faculty of Journalism, I want very, very much, and I do not see another way except to study.
401-403	У нас и образование, и как большинство куплено. У нас очень трудно, допустим, сейчас вот в одиннадцатом классе, я ну вот я общаюсь там есть уже люди, которые уже зачислены на филологический факультет, допустим.	The education as well as the majority /of other things/ is bought in this country. It is very difficult here /in Russia/, let us assume, now in the eleventh class, I communicate with people who are already enrolled on the faculty of philology, let us assume.
406-409	Вот но тем не менее все равно смотрите: те, кто посещает курсы, они платные, семьдесят процентов учеников поступает. Вот ну все равно понятно, что если вы платите какие-то деньги университетам за	Nevertheless, look: those who visit the courses, they are paid, seventy percent of pupils get acceptance. Well it is quite clear that if you pay any money to universities for these courses, you are known already by

	эти курсы, вас знают уже преподаватели.	lecturers.
412-414	Ну вообще есть, конечно, но это то, что я хочу. Понимаете, можно другой вариант взять, когда вступной, а можно рассматривать это как то, чем хочешь в жизни заниматься.	Well in general there are /other alternatives/, of course, but this is what I want. Try to understand, one can take other option for the entrance, while it is possible to consider it as something you want to do in life.
414-415	Ведь профессия должна приносить не только деньги, но еще и удовольствие.	After all the profession should bring not only money, but also pleasure.
606-609	Ну они же не курят в стенах школы, правильно. И они как бы. Ну и мы старшие классы, нам уже по шестнадцать есть, и мы так уже взрослые люди. И к нам не может придти завуч и сказать: „Знаешь, мальчик, ты куришь и это плохо для твоего здоровья, не кури!“ ((смеётся)) Ну это как-то неубедительно.	Well, they do not smoke at school, right. And they like. Well, we are at high school, we are already sixteen years old, and we are already adults. And the head teacher cannot come and say: "You know, boy, you smoke and it is bad for your health, do not smoke!" ((Laughs)) Well, this is somehow unconvincing.
639-640	У нас перемена в колледже десять минут, но при этом нужно успеть добежать из одного корпуса до другого.	Our break in the college is ten minutes, whereas it is necessary to get from one building to another in time.
693-696	нас в школе очень маленькие перемены, ну по крайней мере для меня маленькие, мне вот лично мне не хватит двадцати- тридцати минут для того, чтобы нормально поесть. Для меня это очень мало. Вот и я не питаюсь ну как бы правильно. Вот эти перекусы школьные мне не очень нравятся.	at school we have very small breaks, well at least for me they are small, twenty – thirty minutes are not sufficient for me personally in order to eat normally. For me it is not enough. That is why I do not eat properly. I do not like these school snacks.
741-742	отдых это тоже очень важно, когда человек может себе позволить уехать куда-нибудь расслабиться там, это тоже очень сильно поднимает тонус.	the rest is very important as well, when a person allows oneself to leave for somewhere to relax somewhere there, it lifts very strongly the vigour.
771-774	Как бы там высокий уровень жизни населения, там хорошее здравоохранение, там у каждого есть машина, дом, работа, там нету таких огромных мегаполисов, где давка и бешеный ритм жизни, там маленький, очень красивый, прикольный (уклад).	As though there is a high standard of living of the population there, good health care, there everyone has a car, a house, a work, there are no such huge megalopolises, where there is a crush and a mad rhythm of life, there is very beautiful, cool (lifestyle).
779-781	Ну вот говорю же, хочу поступить на факультет журналистики, там есть обмены и я рассчитываю участвовать в обменах и думаю, что можно будет как-нибудь зацепиться, наверное, если участвуешь в обменах, в стажировках.	Well, as I have said, I want to study at the faculty of Journalism, there are /student/ exchanges there and I expect to participate in /these/ exchanges and I think that it will be possible to catch /some opportunities/ somehow, probably, if you participate in exchanges, in trainings.
784-785	потому что ну там, правда, проще, там законы лучше действуют, там больше обращают внимание на людей, (не то, что тут)	because well there it is, indeed, simpler, laws function better there, it is paid attention to people, (rather than here)

885-886	Боюсь, того что не знаю, насколько верно выбор профессии ну и непонятно, что дальше.	I am afraid, that I do not know, to what extent is the choice of profession right, well and it is unclear what is further.
990-995	Мне кажется, не зависит от страны, где живет человек амбициозный, это от человека зависит. Можно жить в стране, где все преподносят на блюдечке с голубой каемочкой, но при это не иметь желаниа дотянуться до блюдечка и достать его. Вот. Я считаю, что от страны это не зависит, зависит от человека, от того, насколько он способен и того, насколько он ленив, возможно, насколько он имеет находит общий язык с другими людьми, насколько он хочет какой-то цели добиться.	It seems to me, it does not depend on the country where an ambitious person lives, it depends on the person. It is possible to live in the country where all is handed on a silver platter, but without a desire to reach a saucer and to get it. That is the way. I think it does not depend on the country, it depends on the person, on his abilities and whether he is lazy, it is possible, that also whether she finds a common language with other people, whether she wants to achieve any goal.

Olga, 16, Saint Petersburg

197-200	На бюджетную, но нам сказали то, что очень мало шансов поскольку после колледжа. Только если кто-то отчислится сам с бюджета, будет место, то тогда можно. А так шансов нет, нам сказали.	/I want/ on a free budget-based place, but they told us that there are few chances because /we are/ after college. Only if someone leaves a budget-based place voluntarily, then there will be a place, then it is possible /to be admitted on a free place/. But indeed there are no chances, as they told us.
208-209	Ну а также у нас всё покупается, поэтому даже если что-то где-то будет трудно, купить это как бы тоже легко ((смеётся)).	Well, and also everything could be bought here, therefore even if something somewhere is difficult, to buy will be also easily, so to say ((laughs)).
252-253	в школе меня очень учителя многие не любили, вот заваливали меня и всё такое	at school many teachers did not like me, they failed me and so on
343-344	мне кажется, что это экологи вот эти всякие должны думать, какая у нас окружающая среда, там и все такое	I think that these sort of ecologists should think what kind of environment we have, and so on
566-567	поэтому даже если что-то куда-то писать, вот что-то не устраивает, да вряд ли до них это дойдет	so even if you write that something does not satisfy you, it is unlikely that this message will reach them
573-574	Они сделают так, как ИМ надо, как ИМ это будет выгодней. Правильно же?	They will do as THEY need, as it will be profitable for THEM. Is it right?

Pavel, 17, Leningrad region

48	Ну я еще не решил, думаю, если я не поступлю туда, куда хочу, то я пойду в армию.	Well I have not decided yet, I think, if I do not get the admission approval for what I want, I will go to the army.
63-64	сейчас кто бедный, кто богатый, то есть вот так вот. То есть не каждому дано поступить в это высшее. То есть вот так вот.	Now one is poor, another one is rich, that is how it is. It means that not everyone is enabled to enter higher education. This is how it is.
75-77	Не родители это нормально	No, the parents take it normally, but

	относятся, но они мне в принципе и посоветовали, так как до одиннадцатого класса я даже и не знал, куда я буду поступать. То есть у меня даже ни малейших выборов не было.	they in principle advised to me, because till the eleventh class I even did not know, where I will study. That means that I did not even have any slightest options.
97	Pavel: Нет, проблем сюда ездить не было, а обратно уезжать были, конечно. <i>I: Почему?</i> Pavel: Ну например придешь на станцию на автобус, ну зима, помню была, холодно, приходишь на автобус и тут говорят, что автобуса не будет. Ну и как добираться до дома? <i>((смеется))</i>	Pavel: No, there was not a problem to arrive at school, but there was, of course, a problem to go back at home. <i>I: Why?</i> Pavel: For example, in winter you wait for a bus at the bus station, and then they say, that the bus does not come. So how then should I go back home?
122-124	Только здесь хожу, в Питере я не езжу на дополнительные. Ну здесь я хожу на русский, обществознание и математика, которая при поступлении нужна. Три предмета.	I attend courses here, I do not go to St. Petersburg for additional /courses/. Well here I attend courses of Russian, social sciences and mathematics which are necessary for the university admission examination. Three subjects.
294	Поэтому сейчас учителя, конечно, закопошились, как бы что у них у детей у всех двойки, они не преподают вот, сдадут дети срез на два и спросят сразу у них.	Therefore now, of course, the teachers became anxious, that their pupils have a bad progress, they do not teach here, if children pass badly a test, they /the teachers/ will be asked at once why.
294-296	главу муниципального совета как бы спросят, „а как это так у вас все дети учатся на два и имеют знания тоже на два, может у вас преподаватели такие?“	the head of municipal council will be asked, „and how is it so, that all children have a bad progress and also have a bad knowledge, probably the problem is in the teachers?“
376-378	<i>I: Ну а допустим, если у тебя будет возможность в Питере остаться, ты останешься?</i> Pavel: Не знаю, конечно, может быть останусь, наверное.	<i>I: Well, let's us assume, if you have a possibility to stay in St. Petersburg, will you stay?</i> Pavel: I do not know, of course, perhaps, I stay, probably.
382-385	Ну как бы друзья, они, например, ходят в клубы, веселятся, а мы тут сидим там вдвоем в этом К-поселке, и нам просто) мы уже не можем, мы уж прям хотим прям сейчас свалить туда и все как бы. ... А мы дома сидим каждую среду.	Well friends, they, for example, kind of go to clubs, have fun, while we sit here together in this K-town, and to us it is simple) we cannot anymore, we want directly now to make away there and that is kind of all. ... While we are at home every Wednesday.
451-454	Ну в К-поселке как бы есть куда приходишь, тебе дают справку о том, что болеешь там чем-то, может даже пропишут какие-нибудь лекарства, посоветуют. Ну потом просто со справкой приходишь в школу, и говоришь: „Вот мне выписали справку и я болел“. И все. В принципе вот так вот.	Well in K-town there is a place where you come, you are given the health certificate that you are sick with something, they can even prescribe any medicaments, they might advise. Well then you come simply with the certificate at school, and you tell: "This is a health certificate which has been written to me and I was ill". And that is all. In principle this is how it is.
462	Да, ну в К-городе нету специалистов по зубам, а здесь есть.	Yes, well in K-town there are no dentists, while in P-town there are.

642-644	Он /отец/ мне говорит: “Если ты не будешь учиться, то ты пойдешь в армию”. То есть он мне это уже сказал, он за меня деньги не будет платить.	He /father/ tells me: “If you do not study, you will go to army”. That is what he has already told me, he will not pay money for me.
660-662	Вот именно он мне и говорит то, что: “Если ты сейчас поступишь, то я буду за тебя спокоен, а если ты не поступишь, то просто у тебя вся жизнь как ну обламается”. То есть большинство, кто идет в армию, после армии идут работать, а не идут поступать.	It is him who also says me that: “If you enter now /to the higher education/, I will not worry for you, and if you do not enter, your whole life simply breaks off”. That is, the majority who goes to army, after army works, instead of entering /to the higher education/.

Regina, 18, Leningrad region		
82-84	Естественно, раньше думала, что тяжело, что очень ну возникали иногда конфликты с учителями, было тяжело понять друг друга, тем более, подстроиться под каждого преподавателя тоже нелегко.	Naturally, I thought earlier that it is difficult, there were sometimes conflicts with the teachers, it was difficult to understand each other, and especially, it was too hard to adapt to each teacher.
87-89	М: (тяж) м:, ну, как достойное образование, именно, когда человек знает, таких людей по моему в России очень мало. Есть те, которые учатся и выходят бездарями, с красными дипломом, за деньги и таких множество.	M: (diff) m:, well the adequate education, just when a person knows, such people, in my opinion, in Russia are very few. There are those who study and graduate as botchers, with the red diploma, for money and such people are numerous.
91-93	когда заканчивали одиннадцатый класс, мы поступали все вместе, и многие хотели сюда поступать, именно в Питер	when we finished the eleventh class, we entered all together, and many wanted to enter here, exactly in St. Petersburg
96-99	я собиралась совершенно в другой институт, в железнодорожный, потому что у меня папа на железной дороге работает, ну и я как бы была на открытых дверях, не один раз, узнавала очень много, мне понравился он	I planned absolutely to another institute, to railway /institute/ because my daddy works at the railway, well and I have been on open doors, more than once, I have learned a lot, I liked it
99-100	но получилось всё так спонтанно, мне школа посоветовала именно на мой факультет, на мою кафедру пойти	but everything turned out so spontaneously, the school advised me to go on my faculty, on my department
100-102	Ну и выбора не осталось: во-первых, там как бы на бюджет ((смеётся)), я думаю, выбирать здесь не приходится, и::, ну не знаю, захотелось, передумала.	Well there was no choice: firstly, it is a budget-based ((laughs)), I think, there is no choice here, and:: well I do not know, wanted, changed my mind.
128-130	Regina: ... у меня есть где жить. И: У кого-то из родственников? Regina: Я снимать скорее всего буду.	Regina: ... I have where to live. I: By relatives? Regina: Most likely I will rent.
130-132	Ну у меня родственники тоже есть в Петербурге, я стремлюсь только туда, я в любом случае туда перееду, я в П-городе не останусь ни за что ((усмехается)).	Well I also have relatives in Petersburg, I crave only for [St. Petersburg], I will move there in any case, I will not stay in P-town, no way ((grins)).
135-137	но здесь перспектив на будущее	but here there are no perspectives

	вообще никаких нету, НУ Я ТАК СЧИТАЮ. Тем более, если получаешь, получаю высшее образование, то здесь заработок ну:: очень маленький	on the future in general, I THINK SO. If you get, if I get higher education, here the earnings well:: are very small
143-145	у нас в П-городе аудитором быть, я даже не знаю, мне кажется, вообще таких людей нет в нашем городе. А в Петербурге получ) и зарплата очень высокая и престиж.	with us in P-town to be an auditor, I even do not know, it seems to me, in general there are no such people in our town. And in Petersburg it seems) both salary and prestige are very high.
150-151	Ну, в П-городе остаться хотят, ну::, не знаю, процентов, может пять, ну из всех моих знакомых, вот в возрасте там плюс-минус два года.	In N-town a wish to stay m:: have probably five percent of all my acquaintances at the age plus minus two years.
154-155	Потому что это мегаполис, потому что там больше перспектив, больше выбора профессии, там учеба и, ну, это основное.	Because it is the megalopolis, because there are more perspectives there, bigger choice of professions, the studies are also there, well, this is basic.
155-156	Что здесь просто, ну здесь отдыхать приезжать, отдыхать к родственникам.	What is easier here is for example to come to rest, take a rest with relatives.
464-469	Ну вот лично мне не нравится наша больница, хоть, она по-моему и районная больница, я всегда в Питерскую езжу с самого детства ..., и брату моему тоже все время все прививки все это делается в Питере, нашей больнице я не доверяю вообще, потому что у нас грязная, очень грязная и роддом у нас очень грязный, все дети оттуда выходят с какими-нибудь аллергиями и тому подобное.	Well I personally do not like our hospital, though it is a district hospital, I go always in St. Petersburg's hospital since my childhood ..., and my brother goes there all the time, all vaccinations were done for him in St. Petersburg. Our hospital, I do not trust it at all, because we have dirty, very dirty /hospital/ and maternity hospital we have is very dirty, all the kids come from it with some allergies and something like this.
471-472	Ну какие-то мелкие если заболевания, естественно, я прохожу все здесь, когда ничего страшного нету.	Well if I have any small diseases, of course, I treat everything here, when it is not about anything terrible.
541-544	А так, мне кажется пока маленькие, вот до 18 лет, как бы здесь абсолютно есть все. Особенно летом здесь просто шикарно, П-городе окружен нереальным количеством озер, рек, где можно отдыхать, ну прекрасно в общем.	And so, it seems to me while /we are/ small, till 18 years, as though here there is absolutely everything. Especially in summer here it is simply splendid, P-town is surrounded by unreal number of lakes, rivers where it is possible to have rest, well it is perfect generally.
572-574	просто я хотела поступить в другой университет, но сейчас практически поступить нелюбителям бесплатно невозможно, а стоимость очень не маленькая	I simply wanted to enter another university, but now practically to the groups not entitled to a benefit to get higher education is impossible, while the cost is very high.
574-576	Куда я хотела поступить, там стоимость очень большая, то есть на бюджет туда попасть практически нереально, тем более без знакомых, которые где-нибудь там стоят высоко.	Where I wanted to be admitted /to a university/, the cost is very high; it is almost unreal to get a free budget-based place there, especially without acquaintances who hold a high position.

Rustam, 17, Saint Petersburg		
203	А в школе нас вообще не учили, преподаватели только говорили о том, что у них маленькая зарплата и всё.	And at school they did not teach us at all, teachers only complained that they have a small salary and that was all.
245	Ну есть такие учреждения и институты, где нужно проплатить	Well, there are such institutions and institutes where it is necessary to pay
220	Я в школе вообще ни одно слово не выучил, потому что не учили нас толком.	At school I did not learn any word /in English/, because they did not teach us properly.
246	есть, где нужно знать	there are places, where it is necessary to know
252-253	Учиться, ну я понимаю, конечно, что без учебы ничего не достичь в этой жизни. Вот поэтому пытаюсь учиться. Вот.	To study, well I understand, of course, that without studies nothing could be reached in this life. Therefore I try to study. That's the way.
373	во:т и как бы отец тоже говорит, что: "Зачем тебе год терять в армии? Лучше учись"	and as the father says that: "Why will you loose one year in army, it is better if you study"
373-375	Ну если что, как бы там я вот проходил недавно осмотр в том году, и в этом вот в сентябре нужно будет пойти, вот, у меня есть как бы отсрочка, вот по состоянию здоровья.	Well, if anything happens, I passed recently a medical examination that year, and it is necessary to pass in September, here, I have a deferment by the health state.
375-377	У меня там сотрясение мозга было, у меня гастрит вот, в неврологическом диспансере я состою на учете так что.	I had a concussion, I have gastritis well, I am registered in a neurologic clinic, so.
813-815	Ну как бы, как бы не было, я пытаюсь сначала советоваться как бы с родителями. Вот. Все-таки как никак родители знают, что мне лучше как бы, что для меня будет лучше.	Well, whatever happens, I try to seek advice at first from parents. That's the way. After all parents know somehow what is better for me, what will be better for me.
829-830	сейчас правительство пытается так сделать, чтобы наоборот, никто как бы не мог. Чаще всего, чтобы они сами влияли на всё	Now the government tries to do to the contrary in the way that nobody could /influence/. More often, so that they influence all.
850-851	Как бы человек в таком возрасте ещё не определился, чего он хочет достичь в жизни.	Apparently, the person at such age has not defined yet what he wants to achieve in the life.
853-855	Я думаю, человек решает для себя чего он хочет сто процентов лет в двадцать пять уже. Он ТОЧНО должен по крайней мере знать, что он и чего он хочет достичь в жизни.	I think, the person makes up one's mind about what she wants for hundred percent at 25 years. She PRECISELY should know at least what she wants to achieve in the life.
861-867	Не ну в принципе, конечно, я бы лично сделал так, чтобы дети хорошо учились как бы, чтобы их преподаватели для начала учили в школах. Потому что есть такие школы, где не учат. Как бы там любят просто поговорить, поругать детей, а учить их ничему не учат. Вот, для начала я бы сделал так, чтобы все преподаватели как бы	No, well in principle, of course, I would personally make in the way that the children studied well, and that their teachers taught them at school, for a start. Because there are such schools where they do not each. There they like to talk, to simply scold the children, but to teach, they teach nothing. That is why, for a start, I would make so that

	были именно хорошие, чтобы все преподавали нормально, чтобы дети знали предмет, который им преподаёт учитель. Потому что во многом это зависит от того, КАК учитель представит этот предмет. Вот.	all teachers were good, that all teachers taught normally, that the children knew a subject which is taught by a teacher. Because in many respects it depends on HOW a teacher introduces this subject. That is the way.
874-875	Ну конечно же есть такой страх, что будет дальше. Как бы я пока не решил, не определился для себя, чем я буду заниматься.	Well, certainly there is such a fear what will be next. Apparently I have not decided yet, I did not define for myself, what I will do.
875-876	Вот я не знаю. Но вот думаю, а чем вот мне заняться.	Well I do not know. But I think about what I should do /in the life/.

Senja, 18, Saint Petersburg

394-396	короче в N-поселке у нас там ментовка. Там где-то на станций десять, на поселков десять. Ну вот. У них такие старые машины, что они меня и на узике не могут догнать.	Listen, in N-town there is a police station. One police station for around ten small villages. So. They have so old cars, that they cannot catch me even if I am driving this car.
753	Страна свободная. Чего кто хочет, то и делает.	The country is free. Everybody can do whatever he or she wants.
761-762	Ну законы созданы для того, чтобы их нарушать. И надо быть юридически подкованным.	The laws are created in order to infringe them. It is just necessary to be legally savvy.

Varvara, 18, Saint Petersburg

214-215	Сложно, достаточно сложно, потому что в основном сейчас везде принимают или по блату, или за большие деньги.	It is difficult, rather difficult, because generally everywhere the entrance is realized now either by backstairs influence, or for big money.
256-259	Слишком много нагрузки, слишком много. И это как внеклассное деятельность, внеклассная работа, и её тоже достаточно много, и эта практика, и ещё домашние задания большие, то просто иногда ложишься спать в четыре часа утра, а то бывает и в восемь, а вставать тебе в девять или в десять.	It is too much workload, it is too much. There are out-of-class activities, out-of-class work, too much of out-of-class work, and this practice, and even more, homework is big, so simply sometimes I go to bed at four o'clock in the morning, and it happens that at eight o'clock, while I have to wake up nine or at ten o'clock.
488-491	Допустим, даже колледж, медсестра, мне кажется, должна быть шесть дней в неделю и до такого часа, до какого мы учимся. У нас же медсестра бывает, сколько там, три-четыре дня в неделю и с 10 часов, хотя учеба начинается с 9 и до буквально двух, до часу. И если простите тебе плохо, куда ты должен обратиться?	Let's say even in the college, it seems to me that a nurse should be there six days per week and till the last hour we are studying. We have a nurse who appears, how many, three-four days per week and from 10 o'clock though the study program begins at 9 o'clock with us and literally till two, till one o'clock. And, I am sorry to say, if you feel sick, to whom should you address?
492-494	В поликлиниках опять же это вообще что-то с чем-то. Детские поликлиники еще более менее за тобой следят, а во взрослых на тебя просто напроосто плюют. И	In polyclinics once more it is in general something with something. Children's polyclinics take care of you more or less, while in adults' polyclinics they simply spit upon you.

	будь тебе плохо, на тебя просто люди) врачи просто пройдут тебя мимо и ничего не скажут, ничего не сделают.	If you feel bad, the people simply the doctors simply will pass you by and will tell nothing, will make nothing.
507-508	Все достаточно очень сложно и поэтому. В редких случаях мне приходится так делать, идти к восьми часам в поликлинику.	Everything is rather very difficult and consequently. In rare cases I should do in this way - go to polyclinic at eight o'clock.
510-511	Есть возможность пойти к частному врачу. Да, порой я лучше схожу к частному врачу, чем я пойду в нашу поликлинику.	There is a possibility to go to the private doctor. Yes, sometimes I would even go to the private doctor, than I go to our polyclinic.
521-522	Да там, да тем же самым людям на органы, которые этим занимаются, да ((смеется)), поэтому я боюсь как-то ходить.	Yes there, and to the same people on human organs which are engaged in this and ((laughs)), therefore I am afraid to go somehow.
531	Да, потому что кому это нужно кроме меня самой. Только мне.	Yes, because to whom it is necessary except me. Only to me.
672-673	На первом курсе мы нашли в салате, извиняюсь, не к столу будет сказано, блоху, в салате.	At the first year we found in a salad, sorry to say, it should not be said during a meal, a flea, in a salad.
675-676	Ну а что толку сообщать? Мы, конечно, сообщили, но нам сказали: „Пора прикрывать эту лавочку“. Но тем не менее всё как было, так и есть.	Well, what is the point to report? Of course, we reported, but it was told to us: „It is time to close down this shop“. But nevertheless it exists as it existed, indeed.
678-680	Естественно, я купила на прошлой неделе булочку с сыром и грибами, думала всё будет хорошо, но буквально на следующий день, я почувствовала себя плохо и это оказалось отравление.	Naturally, I bought last week a roll with cheese and mushrooms, I thought everything will be good, but straight way the next day, I felt unwell and it turned out the poisoning.
961-962	У нас есть такое понятие: “А выбросил, значит, кто-то другой уберет, ну что тут такого”.	We have such a thing: "If you threw, it means then someone else will clean. Nothing wrong with that."
1181-1182	/моя подруга/ она патриот и она считает, что Россия это все и ее можно развивать как-то. Но я считаю, пусть берет и развивает ((смеется))	/my friend/ she is a patriot, and she believes that Russia is everything and it is possible to be developed. However, I think, she can take and develop ((laughs))

Victor, 16, Saint Petersburg		
193-203	Ну вот в прошлом году конкурс аттестатов был, я взялся за ум, чтобы остаться в школе. А в этом году как-то даже особого желания нет в этой школе, как-то тут надоело очень. Все учителя говорят на каждом уроке, нас 34 человека в итоге получилось в классе, да, и как бы это больше лимита, приходится платить какой-то штраф, и из-за этого каким-то учителям ну по слухам урезали зарплату, что-то типа такого. Ну какая-то сложная система. И многие учителя за это нас всех ненавидят, говорят, что “Воот, вас слишком много, надо бы	Well, last year, it was a competition of school certificates /academic progress/, I decided to study hard in order to stay in /this/school. But this year, I do not have any particular desire /to be/ at this school, somehow I feel very tired. Every teacher reminds us every time that we are 34 people in one class, yes. As it exceeds the limit, the school has to pay a fee, and because of this, well, there is a rumour that wages of some teachers got cut, something like that. Well, it is a complex system. And many teachers hate us for this and say "Well, there

	выгнать к одиннадцатому классу". В общем, вот так вот не скрывают, что надо выгнать половину. Абсолютно, вот так и говорят. Ну да, сегодня особенно, математичка вообще взбесилась, ну вот математичка она просто виновник, она как-то говорит всем как раз, что вот, вас бы не помешало всех выгнать.	are so much extra pupils in the class, it would be necessary to kick away some of you till the eleventh form." In general, they do not hide that it is necessary to kick away a half. Absolutely, that's how they say. Well, today especially, mathematician has been mad, she is just a guilty person, she tells everyone just that it would be a good idea to kick away all of us.
222-225	А, ну вот там, где не засчет государства, там очень дорого, мои родители не потерпят, плюс у меня брат будет ещё учиться в вузе, то есть (папа мой это не потянет). Ну там сложно на бюджетное поступить, там олимпиады надо проходить. Не знаю, вряд ли у меня получится.	And, well, if the education is not financed by the state, it is very expensive, my parents will not finance it, plus my brother will study at the university (too much for my dad). Well, it is difficult to be accepted on a budget place, it is important to take part in competitions. I do not know, it is unlikely I manage it.
250-251	Один год всего остался доучиться. Ну не знаю, если половина друзей ещё уйдут, то я тоже уйду.	I need only one year more to finish my studies. I do not know, if half of my friends leave this school, I'll leave as well.
565-571	Victor: Я планировал лечь в больницу, но это как раз для того, чтобы нашли у меня какое-то заболевание, я там пролежал, чтобы легче откосить от армии. Ну, правда, один друг мой украл уже мой способ, лег, опередил меня, ну я все равно думаю, так сделаю. <i>I: То есть на будущее, ты уже думаешь заранее, как если что откосить от армии?</i> Victor: Ну да, надо как-то резерв какой-нибудь иметь. <i>I: То есть армия для тебя это то?</i> Victor: Это конец жизни, да. Не хочу.	Victor: I was planning to go to the hospital, but it's just in order to find some diseases. I was there to be easier discharged from the army. Well, it is true, a friend of mine has already stole my idea. He did the same, stayed in the hospital. Well, I still think I will do so. <i>I: That is for the future, you have to think ahead, right? How to be discharged from the army?</i> Victor: Well, yes, I must have a backup. <i>I: What is the army for you?[]</i> Victor: This is the end of the life, yes. I do not want it.
846-848	Голос, ну как, ну не понимаю, как можно индивидуально быть услышанным, на целую страну, по моему нереально.	Voice, well, I do not understand how you can be heard individually in the whole country, I think it is unrealistic.

Vladimir, 16, Saint Petersburg		
146-148	Хотя как бы считается, что это мне нужны эти знания, но ну все равно это не интересно во многом очень.	Though it is considered that I need this knowledge, but well it is not interesting to some extent.
153-155	В колледж я бы не хотел, потому что в школе уже как бы устоявшаяся компания, мои друзья, с ними я хочу уж закончить школу и продолжать с ними контактировать.	I do not want to go to the college, because at school there is already an established company, my friends, with them I want to complete the school and to continue to contact with them.
155-156	ну может я что-то и хотел бы изменить, но это уже как бы невозможно по определению	well, perhaps, I would like to change something, but it is impossible by definition

165-166	это обществознание и физкультура, потому что именно на этих предметах можно себя проявить и там интересно послушать	they are social science and physical culture because during these classes it is possible to show up and it is interesting to listen
167-170	та учительница она ко мне хорошо относилась, в том смысле что считала, что у меня есть способности и поэтому я даже учил как бы алгебру и геометрию, а с этого года мне снова стало скучно	that teacher treated me kindly, in the sense that she considered that I have abilities and consequently I even learned algebra and geometry, but from this year it became again boring for me
174-176	Вот ну школа, мне кажется, это самое главное сдать экзамены на данный, ну сейчас в нынешней образовательной программе.	Well the school, it seems to me, the most important is to pass the exams, at the present moment, well now in the present educational program.
371	Ну мне, как бы всё познается в сравнение, могло быть и хуже. Так что я нормально вроде живу, учусь, одет, так что всё нормально.	Well to me, it looks like everything is learned in comparison, it could be even worse. So, it seems that I live in the normal way, I study, I am dressed, so everything is normal.
478-480	у нас государство работает, у нас всё работает больше на выгоду, чем на общество. То есть если так общими словами говорить.	with us the state is working, we are all working more on profit than on society. This is how to explain in common words.
517-518	Да, есть Виват-клуб, но меня туда не приглашали и тоже не интересно, там реально ничего не решается.	Yes, there is a Vivat - club, but I was not invited there and besides it is not interesting, nothing gets really decided.
545-546	Ну к сорока годам, ну если всё сложится, то я стану актером и буду жить, наверное, бедно, скорей всего, потому что актер очень не благодарная профессия.	Well by forty years, well if everything succeeds, I will become an actor and I will live in poverty, probably, most likely, because the actor is very ungrateful profession.
555	Да, так я всю жизнь живу в бедности, так что не привыкать.	I live anyway the whole life in poverty, I do not need to get accustomed again to this.
550-552	Ну да можно, конечно, там шоу-бизнес, все дела, может на телевидении, ну да если так, то тогда, конечно, всё будет хорошо, будет много денег и так далее.	Well it is possible, of course, show business, this is it, perhaps on television, well if so, then, of course, everything will be good, there will be a lot of money and so on.
559-560	Ну, конечно, хотелось бы лучше жить, но я как бы нормально, я осознаю и понимаю, что скорее всего лучше и не будет (?).	Well, of course, I would like to live better, but I am fine, I am aware and I understand that most likely it will not be better (?).
690-693	ну с другой стороны как бы наша жизнь она вся на контрастах и те, кто живут во Франции, для них это сразу нормально, они не чувствуют себя прям счастливыми от того, что там пользуются собственной комнатой и папа и мама есть	well, on the other hand our life, the whole life is on the contrasts and those who live in France, for them from the very first days it is normal, they do not feel directly happy that they use own room and have father and mother, for example