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GENERATIONAL PATTERNS OF TRANSITION (PROCESS) TO ADULTHOOD IN LITHUANIA

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SEKTION OST- UND OSTMITTELEUROPA SOZIOLOGIE: GENERATIONSWECHSEL UND GESELLSCHAFTLICHE TRANSFORMATIONEN IM EUROPÄISCHEN OST-WEST-VERGLEICH

The topic of the presentation is differences of transition to adulthood in three different generations (born in 1925-1945, in 1946-1964, and in 1965-1984) in Lithuania. The argument combines qualitative and quantitative approaches and is based on two sets of empirical data. Life-stories as a material for the study were collected in 1995, while quantitative data of different birth cohorts came from the Generations and Gender Survey conducted in Lithuania in 2007.

In the presentation I would like to focus on three issues. First, timing of transition and impact of social and historical factors on variation of its patterns in different generations. Second, variation of the sequence of 'markers' of social maturity. Third, critical evaluation of the use of *emerging adulthood* concept in the post-Soviet context.

1. Political disturbances and economic instability of 20th century were the main factors delaying leaving the parental home in Lithuania in first and third generations. The third generation, in comparison with the second one, exhibits a pattern of slightly delayed timing – they left home at their twenties.

2. The linear model of transition to adulthood is statistically significant feature of the second generation. The life-courses of the first generation exhibit more delayed and chaotic transitions to adulthood. The time of leaving parental home of third generation stands quite apart from occurrence of other signifying events in time, which tend to happen later and nearly simultaneously.

These structural patterns contradict the findings of qualitative research of life-stories revealing deeper interconnections of more general social processes and life-course events.

3. Contradictory features of the Soviet housing policy as well as social practices coping with troubled transition to adulthood provide grounds for theoretical interpretation and discussion of the concept of *emerging adulthood* and its application to the post-Soviet context.