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Human Development

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FROM STIGMATIZATION AND CONFLICT TO SOCIAL PARTICIPATION: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR PORTUGUESE YOUTH

An ethnographic case study was carried out under the EU funded project PROMISE, which aims to understand how young people's responses to the challenges they face can provide opportunities for participation and positive social change. In this case study, data were collected through participant observation and in-depth interviews to 26 Portuguese youngsters, 15 to 24 years old, engaged in educational and/or justice measures directed to young people with trajectories of school dropout, early trauma, violence and delinquency. This presentation explores the experiences of stigmatization and conflict faced by these youngsters, as well as the social practices carried out by them and by formal institutions to respond to these experiences. The preliminary analysis of the interviews evidences the youngsters' ambivalent relations with control institutions, felt both as conflictive and supportive, as well as the stigmatization processes that reinforce risk and deviance pathways. Results will be discussed regarding their implications to promote positive social participation and (re)integration of vulnerable youth.

Stigma, youth, risk, trauma, social change
