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TITLE: Young People, Place and Work: Affective Investments and Mobile Imaginaries

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This paper presents the preliminary findings of a pilot study exploring how students in the final years of high school education in a peri-urban regional town imagine their place in the labour market and invest themselves personally in the idea of work. The paper engages with theoretical debates about the role of place in the formation of youth subjectivities, as well as discussions in economic sociology about the significance of affective labour in processes of capitalist valorisation. Drawing on interviews conducted with young people, the paper identifies theoretical relationships between a classed and gendered 'local habitus', imagined mobilities, and personal investments in work and career. The results suggest that a total affective investment in work and career is part of the formation of mobile, aspirational young subjectivities, especially late modern femininities. Some narratives also indicate the ongoing significance of embeddedness in local social and labour market structures for the way that other young people imagined their futures, even when these structures have been degraded by the local consequences of changes in the global organisation of work. The paper concludes with implications for debates about contemporary youth inequalities, as well as the relationship between employment, labour, and the formation of young subjectivities.