D8.2 Contexts, meanings and “successful” practices of young people’s participation: a cross-national report

Shakuntala Banaji
London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE)
### D8.2

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<th>Confidential, only for members of the consortium</th>
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**Abstract**

This Deliverable reports the cross-national analyses of the ethnography, which covers cases of successful active citizenship initiatives by and for youth across the consortium countries and also highlights some of the countries’ specificities that have emerged from the data analysis in the national reports. Issues such as organisational structure of youth active citizenship organisations, ideology, goals, practices, motivations for groups and individuals, barriers to sustained participation, power, ethos and culture are all covered in this report. All national reports are included after the integrative introductory report.

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<td>V.01</td>
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<td>First draft</td>
<td>Shakuntala Banaji</td>
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<td>V.02</td>
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<td>Integration of comments sent by the other team members</td>
<td>Shakuntala Banaji</td>
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<td>V.03</td>
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<td>Final revision</td>
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**Contexts, meanings and “successful” practices of young people’s participation (Authors’ List)**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MU</td>
<td>Alena Macková &amp; Johana Kotišová</td>
<td><a href="mailto:aja.mackova@gmail.com">aja.mackova@gmail.com</a>, <a href="mailto:j.kotisova@gmail.com">j.kotisova@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UT</td>
<td>Mai Beilmann</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mai.beilmann@ut.ee">mai.beilmann@ut.ee</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSU-JENA</td>
<td>Clara Mikolajczyk</td>
<td><a href="mailto:clara.mikolajczyk@uni-jena.de">clara.mikolajczyk@uni-jena.de</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NKUA</td>
<td>Nancy Paphathanasiou</td>
<td><a href="mailto:papathanasiou@gmail.com">papathanasiou@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIBO</td>
<td>Antonella Guarino, Bruna Zani, Cinzia Albanesi, Elvira Cicognani</td>
<td><a href="mailto:antonella.guarino2@unibo.it">antonella.guarino2@unibo.it</a>, <a href="mailto:bruna.zani@unibo.it">bruna.zani@unibo.it</a>, <a href="mailto:cinzia.albanesi@unibo.it">cinzia.albanesi@unibo.it</a>, <a href="mailto:elvira.cicognani@unibo.it">elvira.cicognani@unibo.it</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UP-CIIE</td>
<td>Joana Cruz, Carla Malafaia &amp; Isabel Menezes</td>
<td><a href="mailto:joanapmcruz@gmail.com">joanapmcruz@gmail.com</a>, <a href="mailto:carla.malafaia@hotmail.com">carla.malafaia@hotmail.com</a>, <a href="mailto:imenezes@fpce.up.pt">imenezes@fpce.up.pt</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORU</td>
<td>Jasmine Ivarsson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Jasmine.Ivarsson@oru.se">Jasmine.Ivarsson@oru.se</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSE</td>
<td>Sam Mejias &amp; Shakuntala Banaji</td>
<td><a href="mailto:s.mejias@lse.ac.uk">s.mejias@lse.ac.uk</a>, <a href="mailto:s.banaji@lse.ac.uk">s.banaji@lse.ac.uk</a></td>
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Executive Summary

The following executive summary addresses the ways in which our research for WP8 was innovative as a scholarly intervention and the key aspects of findings that confirm, challenge or nuance previous studies.

The context of our study

- While areas such as the development of attitudes and values regarding citizenship and the use of scales and lists of participatory practices to measure civic and political competence and participation can be found in abundance in the European literature on youth citizenship, our exhaustive literature review (D2.1) pointed to a lack of analysis of contexts of, and motivations for, youth activism. Across our different fields and subfields of literature, we also found a dearth of studies on barriers and enablers to prolonged and significant active participation in democracy in Europe by young people and on the psychological motivations for participation and the sociological structures within ostensibly participatory youth organisations.

- Compared to the literature on youth civic culture in the United States and Canada, only a very limited number of studies systematically examine how and in which contexts certain young residents of Europe become significantly active citizens (activists) and/or play a pivotal role in shaping the strategies and cultures of youth civic initiatives, organisations and struggles. It is very rare that the relationship between different young activists within organisations and movements is discussed. There is a pressing need to understand what the active citizenship of the most dedicated young active citizens is comprised of, and whether it displays distinct characteristics compared with the activism and active citizenship of older adults, and what it would take to replicate the psychological and social conditions to motivate others to be as active. Our work therefore answers the need for more qualitative and fine-grained research to understand the connections between these factors.

Methodology and research design

- The research design and scope of WP8 goes beyond the usual methods for studying young people’s civic participation and citizenship: questionnaires, interviews and focus groups with young people – and in particular with school and university students, and online youth-centred groups – tend to dominate the research of the past decades in this sphere (please see annex to D2.1). Using ethically aware and reflexive techniques, we capture the activist lives of several groups of young Europeans who are not in educational institutions but are rather in work, out of work, in training or volunteering full time.

- Unusually for work in the tradition of youth ethnography, where lone researchers go into the field in a particular subculture or town, workplace or village, our thirteen interlinked case studies were all selected based on a co-ordinated and extended prior survey of the wide field of youth citizenship initiatives in each of the partner countries (See Del 8.1). We included

  - Explicitly social or political action groups, networks and organisations for young people (for instance volunteering or charity work, NGOs, social enterprises, youth political arms of parties, grassroots horizontal social movements)
- The scouts and religious youth groups
- Youth arts and cultural hubs with civic or participatory programmes
- Dissident groups acting against poverty, racism, inequality, sexism and injustice
- Youth associations including those with a pan-European focus, and local youth clubs and sports networks (e.g. government and local council institutions, bringing together disadvantaged youth to play sport, or to create music)
- Youth run spaces which facilitate events on LGBTQ and women’s issues
- Student networks, students unions, campus political groups

- We made the innovative decision to undertake extended ethnographies of youth activism meeting the criteria for normatively democratic successful active citizenship. Our researchers’ presence in the field of youth active citizenship in each country over a period of months, and extended interactions with activist youth citizens allowed us to include both digital and offline practices and venues of youth active citizenship.

- Such a wide survey and set of interlinked ethnographies of youth participation has only been undertaken in rare cases such as MyPlace: Memory, Youth, Political Legacy And Civic Engagement funded under the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme. Unlike MyPlace where the focus was on youth activism for and against political populism/far right activism and the ways in which history, memories and aspirations for the future are incorporated into these frameworks, our work’s broader remit for social and psychological factors affecting youth active citizenship yielded an enormous range of initiatives.

- Where many other studies tend to focus on self-reporting of feelings, our trusted-outsider and participant observer status allowed us to examine affective and material relationships amongst young activists, between 'hyperactivists' and more peripheral sympathetic young citizens and between generations of active citizens in a different kinds of initiatives.

**Our substantive findings and contribution**

**On democratic civic practices**

- Our survey of the field of youth active citizenship initiatives yielded more than fifty significant practices common across many of the organisations and which defined their view of active citizenship and European citizenship. These included offline and online actions, mundane discussions, meetings and note-taking as well as dramatic, theatrical and spectacular events to bring other young people to the cause or organisation.

- Examined in relation to previous research on the issue of civic practices, analysing our discussions of civic practices with young activists across the different European cases highlighted a series of fresh findings
  - practices that are considered new and creative by some organisations (e.g. Use of Social media, or Viral videos) are considered run-of-the-mill and boring by others;
  - face-to-face group activities have not been supplanted by social media or digital connection amongst youth activists
certain practices are resource intensive in terms of time and personnel (e.g. weekend workshops, awaydays, week-long stalls and events)

- the traditions of civic activism including the types of activities undertaken in each of our countries is more or less influenced by political histories in those countries – contrast the emphasis on depoliticization of civic culture in Estonia and Czech Republic, for instance with the emphasis on the implicitly political nature of civic activism in the UK and Greece. Occupying public space and demonstrating was at the heart of the actions of the youth activists we followed in the UK and Greece, and was more common even in Portugal, with far fewer occurrences in Estonia.

- The ethnographic work we did contextualises these practices and getting a sense of how original, how widespread, how ideologically motivated and how sustainable their use by different sorts of youth initiatives and networks is.

**On Europe**

- Successful youth active citizenship organisations (and their members) in Europe think of the EU in very different ways, showing the tensions between the way in which the European Union wants to be and the way it is actually affectively present or absent in young European citizens lives. These can be divided into positive, negative and neutral:
  - **Neutral**
    - As a geographical location and an economic union, which is relevant to them only because they are affected by funding schemes.
    - As irrelevant to them.
    - As peripheral to them as an organisation but still relevant to their individual members, who may want to travel to volunteer, or study.
  - **Positive**
    - As an important and necessary part of their work because they want to connect with youth, youth workers, and other civil society organisations across Europe without borders.
    - As a political entity that positively impacts the laws governing their work and identities in their own region, area, city, country or town.
    - As an aspect of political education which all civic-minded citizens should know about and have an opinion on.
    - As a cultural and social entity that gives young people in their country more options and gives their own work an international feeling
  - **Negative**
    - As a political entity that negatively affects the laws governing their work in their own region, area, city, country or town.
    - As a political ‘hot potato’ that divides young people which they’d rather not take a position on.
    - As something that is alienating, undemocratic, and has harmed their country.
    - As a neoliberal structure driving the privatisation of services in their country

- The closer the connection of the networks or initiatives to the European level, the less explicitly ad hoc their activist practices appear to be, and the more streamlined and professionalised the ways in which events are imagined, promoted and coordinated.
Two of the initiatives we chose across 13 cases in the eight countries (MLMS My Life My Say in the UK, and AGE Association of European Youth) in Italy were explicitly engaged with issues over Europe or connected to the European Union over issues of youth citizenship, while another two, Radio Imaginaria and Prendiparte were peripherally associated through project work. None of these initiatives engaged in the sort of spontaneous public actions and engagement through leafletting, street theatre, non-conformist spectacle, irony and sarcasm or diatribe that were so visible in the day to day work of groups such as Momentum, Cidade+ and Greenpeace Jugend.

**Contra this,** spontaneous actions of the young people in these groups tended to focus either on the local level and dimension or on the national/international one rather than being couched in terms of European identities. These phenomena might be attributed to a perception on the part of many young activists across our cases of the need for a particular professionalised bureaucratic identity for youth who appeal to the European Union as a political structure for funding or legal frameworks. But it also speaks to the wide-spread view of the European Union as distant from their everyday lives and concerns.

### On ideology and action

- Certain actions reinforce certain ideologies and vice versa. Sources of funding and looking for funding clearly influences choices and political trajectories. Much time is spent fund-raising/branding. This is explicit in Greenpeace Youth Germany where they are informally prevented from illegal activism over the environment, unlike the older adult organization, and MLMS who is very committed to being included by parliamentarians, and therefore does not protest openly, unlike Momentum which is used to being abused and accused in the mainstream media, and participates openly in anti-government satire or anti-austerity protests. DDAcademia’s funding is more secure than other organisations we observed, and this allows for a greater sense of comfort amongst members when taking on long-term action, or changing direction; but the pot is limited, so the number of key activists remains low.

- Contrary to the literature that suggests young people in Europe today are a post-ideological generation interested only in particular single issues, ideology and definition of active citizenship of an organisation or initiative is more inviting to citizens who already have an inclination towards that ‘type’ of politics/ideology. The more highly non-conformist politically progressive (left wing) activist groups had larger clusters of members who were young active citizens believing in social justice, equality, and human rights. Perhaps ironically, they also had more members from educated middle-class backgrounds. The more politically conformist, professionalised, capitalism-friendly civic groups were also the ones which had more diverse memberships and constituents including more ethnic minorities, refugees and local working class youth.

### On definitions and types of active citizenship

- In contrast to a significant number of previous studies which identify two types of citizenship – for instance active versus passive or to label most young people as either politically disaffected and apathetic or as highly creative citizens with DIY civic practices, we found evidence of a range of types of active young citizen, from those who are progressive, non-conformist and always active, to those who are conformist, civic-minded and somewhat democratically active, and those who are generally stand-by citizens, willing to become active in moments of high drama but not otherwise taking the initiative. Historic events
in the UK around the Brexit vote might account for the particular consensus amongst activist youth in the UK that young people are a critical and politically alert generation. In discussions with and observations of young activist citizens, we encountered evidence of a wider typology of youth citizenship from the entirely disenfranchised and lacking in resources, through those who want nothing to do with politics but are happy to get on with their lives, to the those who genuinely reject the current political system and take up with right-wing nationalist or populist groupings as studied by MyPlace.

- Our work nuances previous literature on Active Citizenship by finding competing versions or definitions of active citizenship. Some of the ways in which we categorised these differences are:
  - Ignoring political parties and institutional democracy – building ‘volunteer spirit’ and ‘social entrepreneurship’ for individual success
  - Rebuilding trust in democracy and political parties by trying to democratise them
  - Tackling ‘huge’ issues such as sexual freedom, gender rights and environmental degradation collectively
  - Embodying democracy in local rules and practices through heated debate versus copying adult political structures and practices taken-for-granted to be democratic
  - Optimism and critique of current society versus optimism about current society
  - Changing institutions and structures versus improving individual skills and opportunities

**On democracy and norms**

- Many of the initiatives in our cases mimic adult institutional processes when it comes to democracy. Literature which views citizenship as a learning process and young people as apprentices might be inclined to see this as an unquestioned sign of political and civic maturity. We suggest that it is not necessarily something to be celebrated since there is a problematic lack of imagination and creativity in many adult governmental structures, and serious democratic deficit in others. Attitudes to enacting democracy are also part and parcel of the ideological framing of the different young active citizen initiatives in our sample. Democratic processes take time – and in some cases lots of time. This is the sort of time that many groups and initiatives want to short-circuit in pursuit of some other goal or higher purpose (the aims of the organisation “action seen as better than discussion”).

- Democratic processes also involve disagreement, debate and persuasion, and the ability of some members to accept that another view might hold sway. In some cases representative democracy (a vote, by representatives, which ends with one specific view as a winner) is used as a short cut to conclude a debate rather than finding a more innovative way to understand minority perspectives and account for them.

**On generational political and civic action**

- Conventional wisdom on political socialisation and civic learning from a variety of sources in our literature review suggests that the young learn from the old, that older adults scaffold younger ones into particular forms of political action and citizenship. Some of our case studies, particularly with conformist-democratic organisations and initiatives, support this view, and show that older adolescents support younger ones, older adults mentor young people, and political and civic skills are passed down through generations. In fact when there is a lack of renewal, an organisation has to pause. However, we also
have evidence of the following from our non-conformist/critical active citizenship organisations:

- Adults and older young people learning from and getting political and ideas from critically active youth
- Older adults socialised in one mode of political participation/justice having to unlearn and relearn modes of democracy with and from young people
- Socialisation as rightwing or leftwing ideologically changing over the life-course through circumstances and experiences
- Younger activists spreading new modes and tools of civic action

- State of the art surveys (WP4, Survey research in WP2 lit review) suggest that there is some disparity between the active citizenship of older adults and younger people – often termed a ‘democratic deficit’/ ‘participation deficit’. Evidence from our ethnographic work, from discussions with youth activists, and with supporters and peripheral members of successful active citizen initiatives suggests that we can both challenge and understand this ‘deficit’ in several ways which should force policy-makers and politicians as well as educators and scholars to see it in a far different light:

  - Older adults (30-80) tend to over-report their active citizenship and civic participation, claiming to have done more things than they actually have, and in a more sustained way than they do – just going to work every day is not ‘active citizenship’
  - Younger adults (15-30), on the other hand, tend to under-report their civic contributions because they are uncertain of the terminology used or uncertain of the impact reporting will have, and to be more wary of highlighting their political contribution – voting is fetishized and other forms of participation (from demonstrating to occupying public space) are viewed with ambivalence even within youth organisations
  - Young people often feel less efficacious than older adults precisely because some of them cannot vote and they do not see their other actions – such as demonstrating – represented fairly or positively in mainstream media
  - Older people who are really genuinely active in a sustained manner in civic participation organisations are as few and far between as younger people, and tend to be so by virtue of already having the financial means to be so: democratic participation is not always available to those who have to work all the time to make a living
  - Civic and political institutions/groups are heavily biased against youth entry and can be both patronising and boring for young people with little confidence

- Much has been written about ‘youth voice’ in the state of the art, and in general it is favoured as a way of including young people’s concerns. There are also a few critical studies. Our study finds, with these critical accounts, that ‘instrumentalising youth voice’ is a very problematic aspect of adult civil society – invite youth to speak if they happen to be saying what you want them to say.
  - Critical and idealist political young people are often patronised, told to ‘grow up’, ‘live in the real world’ etc.
  - Working class and lower-literacy groups of young people are barely included on or offline, and their opinions are unheard
  - Young women particularly sometimes feel discriminated against. They speak about hearing the burden of mainstream media opprobrium with regard to their political activism.
Youth civic organisations themselves are not safe spaces for all youth to express all ideas – in fact there are tensions about how to run meetings and events, how to organise, which actions to take, who will lead, how to speak to the press, who is a representative, and much more. Younger youth tend to defer to the ideas of older youth, while themselves doing much of the work. Nevertheless, the opinions and ideas emerging from these debates tend to be more ‘authentic’ of particular demographics of youth than the ones which are expressed by adult civic organisations speaking on behalf of youth.

**On power and participation**

While multiple other studies have examined power and power relations amongst political elites and amongst the masses from different theoretical perspectives, these perspectives are frequently down-played in the literature on youth citizenship that tends to see youth participation as an unquestioned good, and participation as a monolithic norm. Power plays a significant role at every level of European youth activism. We observed this through studying power relations.

- Power relations within the initiatives/organisations/groups are sometimes obvious – Charismatic leaders; two or three paid staff versus many volunteers; older teacher figures-younger learners – and sometimes hidden.
- Gender, race and class play a significant role in our observed power relations. Across all the initiatives, there is a predominance of educated white men in higher positions, despite efforts to rebalance gender roles/race in several cases. Across several of the power relations may be characterized by a private and a public face which have some overlaps but which are also substantially different.
- The making of key strategic decisions is often in the hands of those who a) are paid or b) who work the hardest, while devolved democracy is practiced strongly by around a quarter of our 13 initiatives with all decisions voted on by the whole collective including fringe members rather than by a representative group within these.

These power relations link to wider social power relations and influence individuals’ active citizenship. This can be seen in the relationship between who can afford to volunteer lots of time – who has the income or social support at home and through their personal networks to allow them not to do paid work for extensive periods of time.

**On motivation**

It is almost a given of the state of the art in disciplines from psychology to political science and sociology in dealing with political participation and civic activity that actions should be grounded in rational, objective and altruistic motives, information-seeking, and trust in current political structures. Emotion is frequently eschewed as leading to bias and to populism. While our work suggests that certain types of emotion and particularly emotions that short-circuit criticality in favour of nationalism are indeed to be feared, we also contest the subsumption of all emotion with the notion of irrational or biased behavior. Subjective context, self-fulfilment and emotion were as central to young European citizens’ activism as rational debate and prior political knowledge or information. Fun, creativity, intimacy, caring, friendship and affectionate flirtation between members played a major role in bonding the groups together and motivating sustained attendance at meetings and events.
Similarly, a desire to escape from a feeling of despair or frustration at the political status quo through action motivated others to join groups; and anger at injustice and inequality in the realms of gender, race, class or other protected characteristics was a powerful motivator across the different groups.

- **Young people in all the initiatives we observed were emotionally engaged and committed at different levels and in different dimensions of their organization’s work:**
  - Some were totally committed and present intellectually, physically and affectively on a daily basis and through all crises and negotiations, to the extent that they became very tired, or even burnt out, and could not continue in their roles and thus had to step back, or even to cut themselves off from the organisation/group/initiative/network completely.
  - Others were friends of the activists, willing to do what they were asked, and to make up the numbers at events, to ask questions, but would not turn up if they had other things to do.
  - Sometimes these ‘standby activists’ would become long-term committed activists through familiarity, affection, and because a practical suggestion of theirs was taken up immediately, and they were given responsibility for fulfilling it.
  - Key current events such as parades, the passing of new laws, campaigns over equality, elections, referenda, all clearly had a motivational outcome for individual young citizens and for groups. However, those who put in the most work during these times, were also the ones who could be negatively affected when the outcome was negative or not as they campaigned for.

**On burnout and self-care**

- Activist literature of the 1970s and particularly literature that emanated from the European and US-based feminist movements began to mention the notion of self-care and the unequal burdens that political movements placed on women as both activists and domestic carers. However, references to these issues were few and far between, and often did not make it into the mainstream of political science literature with its ideal citizen. Consequently the notion of the unattached decontextualized activist or active citizen who takes on political and civic roles without compromising their position as an earner, a carer or a healthy individual has persisted. Systematic self-care and careful rotation of responsibility was not a feature of most of the youth civic organisations we studies except where there had been a significant impact from feminist and LGBTQ politics. In fact, several of the groups exerted a form of ‘radical self-exploitation’ on the members who were most passionate about a cause, regardless of low pay or no pay, and sometimes regardless of gender. Older volunteers commented on this, but also participated in this. Younger volunteers, while less prone to illness, were also struggling with other pressures such as passing exams and relating to parents.

- There are very few studies that make the connection between activism and health. Taking active citizenship seriously in a long-term, cross-sectional and sustained manner can have health implications in the current sociocultural and political environment in Europe. **Burn out was common among young activists, who were frequent sufferers from what had been thought of as a corporate occupational hazard. The relaxed informality that characterized the most democratic structures and the strength of long-term moral commitment, solidarity and bonding, were also features that prevented young members from complaining about long hours of work, doing multiple jobs, and emotional strain of holding together divergent viewpoints or struggling with campaign responsibility until they experienced...**
complete physical and mental exhaustion, became ill, were evidently suffering from stress or needed to find a source of income to support them.

**On the tools of active citizen organisations**

- There has been much written in the state of the art on the digital turn in youth activism and the ways in which social media has changed priorities, strategies and practices, making it easier for young people to participate. There have also been some critiques of this view that cite the high costs of technology and data, the digital skills gap between youth, and issues of surveillance and privacy. Contrary to a major shift in organisational practices, what we witnessed during our project was a domestication and incorporation of digital technologies and platforms alongside longstanding tools so that the major tools of organisational use looked as below:
  - **Human labour** – the voluntary or low paid labour of young people – was evidently the foremost tool of active citizenship;
  - **Space** was second in significance as a motivator, support and framing for all youth civic action.
  - **Human relationships** – which include in particular pedagogic, affective and cross-generational relationships, as well as relations of support, love, esteem, trust, management, organisation, privacy, and respect are a third tool.
  - **Communicative media** such as email, pens and paper, and also particularly banners, flags, placards, posters, flyers, stickers, graffiti and newsletters are very common.
  - **Mainstream media** such as radio, television and newspaper coverage is highly coveted.
  - **New media tools** such as Mobile phones, digital cameras, WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, Skype, Websites, You Tube and other viral media tools are used as subsidiary to meetings and face-to-face events
  - **Data management systems** for collecting and storing participants’ data are also increasingly common

**On impact and practitioner contribution**

- Our ethnographies of youth active citizenship were not only innovative in a scholarly context but also had practical implications and impact. Our findings filled a much-needed gap in research for many youth civic and political organisations, who themselves did not have research about
  - the connections between gender and their leadership/organisational structure
  - the kinds of young citizens in supporting roles in their organisations
  - the impact of lack of paid positions on the class/race profile of an organisation
  - burn out and hyperactivism
  - funding and ideology
  - or about which supporters could potentially be activated by changes to the structure of the initiative
  - and the toll of constantly being online and available for their most active members.

- After hearing about our observations of their interactions, several organisations mentioned that it had helped them to reflect on their own strengths and weaknesses in regard to democracy and sustainability. During key informant interviews several hyperactive young citizens identified ways in which they could work in more sustainable ways, or in which their previous ways of working and environmental factors had contributed to their low energy and exhaustion.
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1. Introduction and Methods

Shakuntala Banaji, LSE

1.1 Connections to other work packages

Our extensive scientific review of the literature on youth participation and active citizenship in Europe for WP2 (Deliverable 2.1) revealed that there are chasms between different understandings of citizenship, youth trajectories in political participation, and European identity. In terms of methods utilized to study and understand young people’s relationships with citizen action and civic identities, ethnographies have only been undertaken in a small minority of studies, and most of those are not specifically linked to Europe or EU citizens. Our literature review also suggested a lack of analysis of internal and external motivations and barriers to active participation in democracy in Europe, and the need for more qualitative and fine-grained work to understand the connections between these factors. Such qualitative work has been partially undertaken already in our project through focus groups with a cross-national selection of school students in WP6, which found, among other issues, that

\[ \text{ambivalence seems to be what best describes the students’ attitudes toward the EU: while the majority of them tend to agree that belonging to the EU is a good thing (e.g., bringing them easier travelling and mobility, granting stability and security to their countries), they relate the EU with a lot of bureaucracy, opaque decisions and patronising relationships with the member states. In addition, students show themselves quite critical of the foundations of the European project, less grounded on solidarity values and more attached to economic mandates. The refugees’ crisis also raised vigorous discussions about the ways in which the EU is tackling this issue and the imbalanced responsibilities across countries. [Deliverable 6.2]} \]

However, in WP8, our planned research design and scope was went beyond interviews and focus groups with young people in schools and largely focusing on teaching, education and text-books as WP6 was, to include both digital and offline practices and venues of youth citizenship as well as affective and material relationships between young activists; it was thus highly innovative and also filling a much-needed gap for many organisations. It allowed young people who are already active citizens in successful youth citizenship initiatives to reflect on their ongoing experiences in the process of data generation and to become, to an extent, co-creators of the narrative about active citizenship and about the positionality of their organisation or initiative.

Our work for WP3, with Policy-makers and adult stakeholders informed our study via its conclusion that quantitative studies and policy papers usually tend to aim at a one-size fits all solution for youth – but that actually being with young people gives a very different picture of citizenship. Meanwhile, from WP5, our study of mainstream media interventions in the realm of youth citizenship, we gathered that youth representation in the mainstream media of the partner countries is almost uniformly stereotyped and negative. Youth voice is missing. Ideological perspectives are left unexamined and lack of trust in mainstream media or politicians is conflated with poor citizenship.
Additionally, we found that mainstream media views of Europe tend to be skewed to scepticism and blame as well as towards the positioning of the EU as either a friend or an enemy. In light of this, it was our hope – now seen to be justified – that the ethnographic work we would undertake for WP8 would give a highly experienced actively civic cohort of young people a chance to speak directly about their experiences of the role of mainstream media as well as about their active citizenship and connections to or disconnection from the EU. This in turn can be related to the broader disconnection or ambivalence found during the research for WP6.

Wave one of WP7 – our longitudinal quantitative survey of youth participation and attitudes to the EU – gave us interesting and complex data on the connections between interest, efficacy and engagement levels, the likelihood of voting and the likelihood of having authoritarian or liberal views across the countries and across demographic groups amongst youth. In light of this, we were also keen to understand how ethnographic studies can elaborate on the ways in which young people use their leisure time to participate as active citizens, and the kinds of experiences that motivate higher and more lasting levels of democratic participation, or that demotivate and/or cause despondency and burnout.

**WP8 Part 1.**

In light of all these concerns raised by existing literature and our own empirical work in other work packages, Work Package 8 asked a series of crucial questions about youth active citizenship in the European Union. The first one – What kinds of initiatives and practices constitute the youth active citizenship field across our partner countries? – was answered in its own very extended report Deliverable 8.1 [submitted to the Commission in April 2017]. For that deliverable we surveyed the following types of organisations and initiatives:

- Explicitly social or political action groups/networks/organisations for young people (e.g. volunteer or charity, NGOs, social enterprise, youth political arms, grassroots horizontal social movements)
- The scouts and religious youth groups
- Environmental organisations and movements
- Youth arts and cultural hubs with civic or participatory programmes
- Dissident groups acting against poverty, racism, inequality and injustice
- Local youth clubs and sports networks (e.g. government and local council institutions, bringing together disadvantaged youth to play sport, or to create music)
- Youth run spaces which facilitate events on LGBTQ+ and women’s issues
- Youth associations and cross-generational associations that include youth
- Student networks, students’ unions, campus political groups

**Part 2**

The second part of work package 8 built on the initial survey and cataloguing of the field by examining a cross section of youth active citizen initiatives in greater detail based on a set of jointly developed criteria defining ‘success’ in the field. Based on the criteria agreed by the partners across our consortium, we excluded groups that engaged in violent far left actions, far right activism, anti-democratic or anti-immigrant actions, and race hate because of the potential
dangers to our researchers of spending extended periods of time in such circumstances while being on a project funded by the EU about democratic citizenship.

### 1.2 Research design and methods

The first part of WP8 – which required us to survey the field of youth active citizenship with a broad view to understanding the types of initiatives and organisations engaging in the partner countries – yielded an enormous variety of youth civic practices across organisations, including but not confined to the following:

- Meetings of members and public meetings
- Demonstrations and speeches
- Petitions
- Polls
- Organisational elections, ballots and votes
- Choosing representatives and sending representatives to regional level
- Applying for a particular ‘status’ for members
- Discussion forums, Blogs and Wikis
- Offline and online counselling services
- Making and uploading films about organisational work
- Making and uploading podcasts
- Profiling key issues on the website through banners and logos
- Providing information on leaflets, stickers and offline banners
- Lobbying politicians
- Bringing members of the police or local authorities to speak to communities
- Sports tournaments for marginal youth or to bring races/ethnicities together
- Entrepreneurship and social enterprises funded by local government
- Performance poetry about key issues – particularly life narratives of LGBTQ/refugees/women
- Sit-ins and occupations of public space
- Taking unoccupied buildings and turning them into public art installations, cafes, homeless shelters and women’s refuges
- Graffiti and street art
- All-night discussions that allow everyone to speak and to draw up a manifesto together
- Taking literature, storybooks, music or art into working-class or marginal communities
- ‘Each one Teach one’ or Individuals each funding the ‘dream’ of other individuals and then ‘paying it forward’
- Donating pianos and chess boards to public spaces to bring community together
- Education in activism – teaching how to run a campaign, how to organise
- Drafting charters of ‘demands’ – particularly student-led organisations
- Buycotting products – or buying national/organic only
- Providing media training to young people – how to write alternative press releases
- Social media training and strategies

All of these are discussed in detail in Deliverable 8.1 and will be seen to arise at various points in this report.
Research questions
This element of WP8 involved extensive qualitative and ethnographic work as well as analysis and commentary with a view to contextualising these practices and getting a sense of how original, how widespread, how ideologically motivated and how sustainable the groups using them actually are. The research questions engaged by this section of the work were as follows:
1. How is active citizenship conceptualised and embedded in the everyday contexts of young people across the EU?
2. What features of these contexts and of youth participation can explain the depth and breadth of active citizenship, belonging and engagement with a cross-national entity such as the EU?
3. How does extended, ethnographic qualitative work with young people in this domain explain or challenge theoretical findings (WP2) and those emerging from quantitative studies (including our own longitudinal study for WP7) and interviews or interventions (WP6, WP9)?

Answering these questions involved looking closely at ‘successful' active citizenship initiatives across the eight partner countries.

Data collection
In the course of Months 18-30, our researchers spent extended periods of time (several hours or days per week) with the selected case study organisations and initiatives, and in particular with key individuals in those organisations, and carrying out participant observation at meetings, fairs, events, training sessions and other significant actions. This work also included the generation of action diaries and field notes, the collection of minutes, photographs and videos made by and of the organisation or network involved in active citizenship. Throughout this period, our researchers were taking notes and asking questions in interviews and during participant observations about the contexts and types of issues which most motivate specific young people in the case studies to participate in different national contexts and at global, EU, national, regional or local levels. We engaged the organisations and key informants in discussions about topics which included:

- How young people are conceptualised and included;
- How the local, national and European dimensions are significant to their understanding of citizenship;
- How expectations of active participation are set and met in the initiatives;
- The familial and generational links between particular issues of interest and styles of participation;
- The limitations and barriers to individual participation and sustained collective civic action;
- Choices around symbolic and mediated content and representation of specific instances of active participation particularly in relation to key issues such as employment, migration, racial integration, education, housing and mobility; and
• Choices around inclusion and exclusion of colleagues and fellow youth in particular initiatives, actions, and connections of sustained success to institutional support, milieu, habitus and social capital.

Ethnography and participant observation as methods offer many benefits for social science research. First, these methods allow for rich description, analytical depth, and can answer complex questions about intersecting internal (psychological) and external (sociological) factors in active citizenship (Brewer, 2000). Second, observing the practices of European youth democratic citizenship through the lived experiences of young people – for instance in relation to Estonian history with Russia, the referendum on Brexit in the UK, and the aftermath of austerity and privatization in Greece, Sweden and Germany – gives us a unique way of assessing the impact of historical processes and political decisions. Third, ethnography allows us to preserve the rights of young people in their everyday spaces by listening to and recording their voices and stories about active European citizenship in the way they wished to tell them. Following Blackman (2007) this also included the emotions that they expressed about their citizenship and their organisations/initiatives, which is an aspect missing from much quantitative sociological research on youth participation.

Analysis
Our data, then, consists of a range of field notes taken by the researchers, transcripts of brief or extended interviews with key informants who work in the organisations or who participate in events and activities or in demonstrations and protests. We also gathered photographs of organisational activities and spaces, excerpts from minutes, meeting agendas, and other paraphernalia which might prove useful. All of these have been catalogued and evaluated for their informational content and ethical permissions.

In analysing all this data in the reports which follow, we closely aligned to our research questions about European youth active citizenship. However, in order to dig down into the data and its further meanings, we also asked more specific and nuanced questions such as

• Is it possible to see within an organisation or initiative whether certain actions reinforce certain ideologies and vice versa? Particularly in regard to conceptualisations of young people, Europe and active citizenship.
• How do sources of funding influence choices and political trajectories?
• How are power relations within the initiative/organisation/group manifested – ie. in which kinds of structures, satisfaction, horizontality, voice etc.
• How do these power relations link to wider social power relations and how do these power relations influence and inflect individuals’ active citizenship?
• How are key strategic decisions in each case being made?
• Are there hierarchies of hard work with some doing most skilled and unskilled activities every day and others dipping in and out, and if so how does this affect the sustainability of the different projects?
• How are people emotionally engaged and committed at different levels and in different dimensions of the organisations’ work?

• Do negative or positive events have a motivational outcome for individual young citizens?

• Do people burn out and leave or is there an ethos of self-care and health?

• And finally, do the qualitative interviews with key informants contain evidence of connections to a citizenship typology – e.g. Amna & Eckman (2013)? Banaji (2016)?

We carried out the analysis following the method which is common to analysis of data generated through ethnography by coding the data into large chunks with ‘basic themes’ and ‘organising themes’ (Attride-Stirling, 2001) that told stories (vignettes) or specifically ‘spoke’ to the questions above and to most pressing aspects of the research questions. We kept an open mind, theoretically, not trying to force the data to fit into preconceived pathways to citizenship from the literature reviewed for WP2 and the longitudinal survey data. Nevertheless, through a form of inductive category coding and comparative coding (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) we uncovered many patterns – for instance about gender, leadership, hierarchies, hyper-activism, friendship, emotion and burnout – that confirmed, or contradicted and nuanced earlier studies, and the findings of our other empirical packages.

As systematically as possible (given the different research contexts, and different types of initiative observed in the different countries) we discuss and comment on these in the national reports. To the extent that we were also guided in our analysis of the data by as desire to develop and refine WP2’s typology of youth citizenship, we also carried out a form of what could be termed typological analysis. We were aware of the potential biases in this system, and so ensured that it was always secondary to our primary inductive coding. Our analysis uncovers many interesting insights about the relationships between different aspects of individual civic motivations, opportunities, and group practices and behaviours, and as such contributes to the qualitative study of everyday life for young people in Europe and to the study of types of, barriers to and motivations for youth citizenship.

1.3 Ethics and Reflexivity

Our ethics procedures are all clearly detailed in the Ethics report III approved by the entire consortium. For a more substantive account, we refer you to that report. However, for the sake of brevity, we recap the key information on ethical procedures here. Ethnographers must reflect on their power, and take a clear and unequivocal ethical stance with regard to their research subjects (Benedict, 2005; Boas, 1920; Dey, 1993) but are also aware of the complexity of gaining consent in observational situations where events are unfolding, new members are entering and leaving rooms, there are brief encounters with users of an organisation, initiative or network, and coming forward to name oneself as a researcher would in itself upset the balance of the events unfolding. However, nevertheless, we tried to ensure that the organisations themselves would inform their members and participants of our ongoing research, and we adhered to the highest standards with the organisations.
**Anonymity, informed consent, data protection**

In order to ensure a uniform approach to ethical issues across the consortium, in addition to the research having to pass through the ethics boards of each partner institution, LSE prepared an information sheet for each of the partner team to share with their potential case study organisations and initiatives. This information sheet contained clear information about:

- The aims, methods/assessment procedures, duration, and implication of the participation of the organization and its key members in the research;
- The nature of their participation (why the organisation was selected) and any effects (benefits, risks, conflicts of interest or discomforts) that might be involved;
- Confidentiality issues and how the research group would deal with the data collected, who would be using the data (the European Commission scientific officer, our reviewers, national and foreign universities) and the measures used to secure anonymous handling and analysis of the data (e.g. means and duration of storage, and measures used to protect the data stored; persons having the access to the data files; how the data will be treated after the completion of the research);
- Explanation of how publication (including publication on the internet) of the data of the research would not lead (either directly or indirectly) to a breach of agreed confidentiality and anonymity where this was desired by key informants; and that we would respect their naming conventions where they desired to be named and credited for their work for organisations.
- A statement about the voluntary nature of participation of individuals in our ethnography, and that they have the option of not participating at all, or not respond to any specific question/item which they do not want to respond, or withdraw from the survey within a specified time limit without stating a reason and without any negative consequences (e.g. sanction, adverse criticism, loss of privileges) for the withdrawing person (in case of minors, regardless of whether the parents have agreed) or their organisation/institution. This includes the specification of the right to have the data of the person permanently deleted from the files in case of withdrawal.
- Information on how participants have the right to know any unexpected incidental findings. Participants were informed of the procedure that the Consortium had defined to manage incidental findings.
- Information on the institution that is in charge of the research, funders, and the contact details (name, address, phone number, e-mail) of the person to be approached for any question of concern on the research and rights and the person in charge of the use of data.

Participant organisations/networks were required to read, circulate and keep the information sheet (see Appendices for an exemplary copy); a consent form signed by at least two active members of the organisation/group/social network/network/ was collected and stored securely by the researchers. Additionally, we were very aware that ‘consent’ is not in itself proof that participants have correctly understood the implications of the research. In order to make sure that the information had been explained and understood clearly, the research officer during the various
ethnographic observations and interviews asked key participants to explain in their own words how they understood the research and their involvement and what they saw as potential implications, and whether they felt pressured to give consent. The researchers proceeded with the key interview participants only if he/she correctly and fully understood the information provided.

Participant organisations/networks were informed before the study by letter that they could withdraw at any time and that there would be no adverse consequences, and that their previously collected data would only be used in aggregated form. This was reiterated at intervals during observations of organisations/networks/groups, and during biographical narrative interviews or group interviews with participants/users/activists/the core staff team. All the data is now stored on secure servers and password protected. Hard copies of any confidential material collected from Civic or political organisations or policy makers is stored by the Research Officers in locked filing cabinets to which only they have access.

In this report, and in any subsequent publications or papers arising, any active youth participants who have requested to be anonymised have been given alternative names, and identificatory details have been altered to maintain confidentiality and prevent accidental re-identification. There are no specific risks as this is not experimental or scientific testing, but we can foresee that in some situations (particularly for young migrants and refugees or those with dissident political views), participation can make them more vulnerable to surveillance or identification. In such cases we took seriously our obligation to do everything possible to minimise any dangers in participating (e.g. researchers will protect anonymity but information they provide in group settings are accessible to others; in such cases, we will ensure can choose to provide information individually and in private). Where participants are aware of any potential specific harm that could come to them inside an organisation or to an organisation or an individual's reputation or to a researcher through the discussion of sensitive topics during observations and interviews, the options to simply not speak about a topic, to withdraw from data collection, and of course to speak off the record and/or to review all the material collected was offered as a matter of course, and in several instances was taken up.

**Trust**

Building trust with our research subjects was one of the key roles researchers undertook at the outset of WP8. We did so by spending extended periods at the outset of the research getting to know the various key members of the organisations we were researching and explaining our own backgrounds and interest in a variety of fora – i.e. to managing committees, to the democracy forum, to interns and volunteers in the organisations, at meetings and other venues. We had to ‘prove’ ourselves as both respectful of their ethos and spaces (Hodkinson, 2005), as well as knowledgeable enough about their respective causes – be these environmentalism, or getting young people into higher education, democratic participation or youth rights – to ask sensitive questions. However, we also had to ask questions in a way that challenged the key informants to reflect on their own positions within organisational hierarchy and our positions as ‘outsiders’ who were asking to be guided. Several of us have committed to explaining and disseminating the results of our project to the participant organisations and helping them to consolidate their successful strategies.
Reciprocity
In order to ‘give back’ to the research subjects, as researcher participants we asked if there were ways in which we could contribute or join in with activities. On several occasions we were asked to do this. Some of us volunteered time at events, helped out with moving things in physical spaces, stood in if someone was ill or absent, or simply provided a sympathetic ear to listen to debates and ideas that were about change or organisational issues. Time was also of the essence; and if we were patient, we generally found that most of the case study organisations, and especially the core members or founders who worked closely with us, came to trust us, and to regard us as worthy confidantes. In one or two cases, however, organisations themselves could not commit to the time required in allowing access or did not feel that our project had anything to offer them, and so withdrew from the project after a few months.

Difficulties and barriers
In addition to the withdrawal of organisations mid-way through the research, our researchers encountered many issues and complexities during the course of the ethnographies in different countries. Some were confronted by issues to do with work/life balance and timing. As researchers we also found ourselves invited to social spaces and being asked to give considerable amounts of time and emotional energy late in the evenings, which was only possible for some and not others. In social spaces we became sometimes quite close to the various factions or friendship groups within the initiatives and organisations and got a better sense of the role played by socialising and friendship in their cohesion. However, juggling these kinds of contributions with our role as researchers was not always easy. There were times when we felt we needed to pull back, and could not be expected to endorse, or show support for, every aspect of an organisation.

1.4 Cross-national findings
This section draws attention to several broad tendencies across the reports that help to answer the research questions, and sub-questions. Not every country nor every organisation is mentioned by name in each section as that would duplicate the work of the national reports; but in each section some key moments, vignettes, or examples are referenced to bring the conclusions to life.

1.4.i Europe and the EU
Successful youth active citizenship organisations and their members in Europe (selected based on a series of overlapping criteria including longevity, reach, sustainability, internal and external orientations towards democracy, innovative practices and more) think of the EU in very different ways. For the majority of our case studies, it is conceived as a geographical location and an economic union, which is relevant to them because they are affected by funding schemes. This came to the fore more particularly where direct funding was being used to further the aims of the organisation as with Erasmus+ in Greece and Sweden, particularly the networks
to which Awesome People (Sweden) belong. Our Swedish report notes that the concept of ‘EU citizenship’ is present both implicitly and explicitly in all presentations at some of Awesome People’s events. Cultural differences are described as something positive and enriching, something to explore and a part of the European community and of oneself. To feel ‘at home’ even outside the borders of one’s home country and to meet people from other nations on equal terms are seen as things to aspire to. Group discussions include an assessment of ‘authentic experiences’, and the fact that outside the European community, one is just a tourist that gets to see a limited part of another country. But in the EU and via Erasmus+ one can become a part of the visited country and get a ‘real’ experience. There are also discussions in these Swedish groups about a shared labour market, shared networks and knowledge. That you often get a job through contacts is not seen as a problem or something positive, but as something to act on. Networks are also pinpointed as an objective of the course itself. Thus, European citizenship is viewed both as a foundation for national identity and also as a vision or status to aspire to.

A secondary and also significant view of the EU is as an important and necessary part of their work because they want to connect with youth, youth workers, and other civil society organisations across Europe without borders. The freedom to move around the EU and to learn from other like-minded individuals, to present work from their particular projects and to gain skills from visiting young people was mentioned by several of our key informants. Several key informants across the case studies also mentioned the EU as a political entity that affects the laws governing their work in their own region, area, city, country or town. For instance, Colour Youth in Greece uses European directives concerning sexual orientation and gender identity policies and participates in European umbrella organisations for LGBTQ+ rights. In respect of Legal Gender Recognition, Colour Youth maintains: ‘The establishment of a third option for gender is not to identify with one of the two dominant genders (man / woman). This option can be adopted for intersex people, until they reach a position where they can choose for themselves if they wish. This has been suggested via 2048/2015 Decision of the Council of Europe.’ In the case of LGBTQ+ refugees, Colour Youth draws on the 2004/83/EC Council Directive of the European Parliament. Colour Youth understands and utilises Greece’s membership in the European Union in order to promote policies and demands for the amelioration of LGBTQ people’s status in Greece.

In several countries this use and significance given to EU directives and laws also entailed the view that the EU is an aspect of political education which all civic-minded citizens should know about and have an opinion on, taken by members at our cases in Czech Republic and Estonia for instance. However, in Germany, it became clear to us that at least in the case of Greenpeace Jugend – and even though at least three members of Greenpeace Jugend had been abroad as exchange students – interactions at a European level barely existed. Some maintained that it would be useful to have cross-European solidarity to prevent climate change, but there were no other comments on European citizenship or references to other countries in the EU.

In Sweden, and in Italy, Europe and European integration were key themes for members of Awesome People and AGE, The Association of European Youth. The issue of migration and European integration was discussed passionately by members of AGE:
M. …[S]ince you want to talk about united Europe you’re talking about integration among European peoples, you can also include integration of people who are coming to Europe. … of course it’s harder because I’ve got more in common with a German than with an Egyptian, but that doesn’t mean I can’t also try to interact with him, or in any case understand. [and in AGE] there’s a huge number of foreigners, I mean foreigners, foreigners of origin... Not of citizenship, at least, but yes, there are a great many Moroccans, Egyptians, Syrians who have joined AGE, and then we do a whole lot of projects with Mondo Insieme (World Together). … It is based on exchanges of different sorts of things, from food to customs and traditions, among different regions. We had a meeting last Tuesday. [Interview, AGE, Italy]

These topics also featured centrally in the projects of PrendiParte and Radioimmaginaria. A recent Radioimmaginaria project named Europologia, originated in the context of an event called ‘Europe of citizens’ promoted by the Italian Ministry of Labour, who invited speakers from Radioimmaginaria to discuss the meaning of European citizens from adolescents’ points of view, and to assess the level of information that adolescents have on European institutions and history. Members of Radioimmaginaria moderated the whole event by promoting the discussion among adolescents who were attending the meeting and by creating an online chat in which Italian high school students could make questions about social bilingually in English and Italian with the support of some English-speaking staff at the radio.

In the UK, My Life My Say (MLMS) also held discussions of democracy with young people in their ‘Café Europe’ series, both historically mimicking the democratic coffee house public sphere of eighteenth century Europe and also calling attention to and providing information about the links between governance in the UK and in the EU with regard to policies, laws and the like. However, in some countries such as the UK and Greece, the EU is also viewed as a political ‘hot potato’ that divides young people and which some organisations would much rather not take a position on. In the UK at the time of our ethnography the Brexit referendum affected both case study organisations in opposite ways; in one (MLMS) it was the sole driver of youth citizenship efforts, while in another (Momentum) it was strategically avoided in order to maximise political support for other citizenship efforts. In addition to neutral or positive views, we also encountered a spectrum of more hostile or uninterested ones. A significant minority of our key respondents across all the countries viewed Europe as peripheral to them as an organisation but still relevant to their individual members, who may want to travel to volunteer, or study; as irrelevant to young people in their locality or region; or as something that is alienating, undemocratic, and has harmed their country. Where the issue of the EU did not come up naturally during key informant interviews or observations we asked our respondents specifically to talk on this issue; when pressed some admitted that they rarely thought about the EU in everyday actions of their organisation, and that it was something they knew very little about.

Nevertheless, we suggest here that our ethnographies offer evidence that the EU, while not always evident in discussions, or even acknowledged explicitly, is also sometimes embedded in the ideas of some of the activist youth, or the quiet foundation of the work of others. For instance, with regard to the activists in Portugal’s Cidade+, our researcher notes that although the EU may have been absent in spontaneous discussions, many of their actions are directly
inspired by EU directives or supported by EU funding. This leads us to emphasise that in many cases aspects of EU funding and legislation could be seen as a ‘silent partner’, taken for granted, and organically integrated by active young citizens. Thus, only in drastic cases such as the vote for Brexit, do civic organisations who draw on this silent partner without acknowledging it, have to face the consequences of de-linking and withdrawal.

All in all, then, across our different case studies in the eight countries, a picture of the EU emerges as first and foremost rather peripheral or taken-for-granted. It is a geographical location, a political or economic entity, and, in so far as it can fund youth citizenship initiatives for social change and cohesion, it is useful and liked. In the case of a smaller minority of young active citizens, the EU is also drawn upon as a shared status and identity, or a common vision. Its directives provide legal frameworks for enforcing adherence to aspects of legal equity or climate justice that the young activists would struggle to get accepted otherwise.

1.4.ii Active citizenship, funding and ideology

Within the terrain of European active youth citizenship, certain ideologies reinforce certain actions and vice versa. This is not to say that some actions are taken only by the political left-wing or by the non-aligned or the political right. However, there were certain ways of running organisations with more or less internal democracy and horizontality that are characteristics associated the political traditions on which the initiatives were drawing for inspiration. National Greenpeace’s commitment to climate justice, for instance, led to an ideological positioning of all Greenpeace Jugend members in solidarity with a view of climate change as a central issue of our time. Likewise, in Momentum, a recent Labour party commitment by Jeremy Corbyn’s team to selecting at least 50 percent women candidates played a role in attitudes to gender and the types of roles women were visible in.

It became increasingly evident to us that sources of funding and looking for funding clearly influence the choices, avowed values and political trajectories of groups. Although this is not a new finding and has been discussed previously by Banaji and Buckingham (2013), our ethnography revealed how much pressure the search for funding puts on smaller organisations with critical agendas such as the environmental group Cidade+ in Portugal and the LGBTQ group Colour Youth in Greece. Additionally, the intersection of the age of the participants with the funding models of the various organisations mean that certain elements of activism are not really allowed or encouraged. This is explicit in Greenpeace Youth Germany where the young members are proscribed from illegal activism over the environment, unlike the older adult organisation, and MLMS who is very committed to being included by parliamentarians, and therefore does not protest openly. Opposite cases would be Momentum – which is used to being abused and accused in the mainstream media and participates openly in anti-austerity protests – and DDAcademia, whose funding is much more secure than other organisations we observed, which allows for a greater sense of comfort amongst members when taking on long-term action or changing direction. Momentum’s recent activist professionalisation, and its links to a resurgent Labour Party also mean that it can create more professional media products, and reach more
people, but is now beginning to take fewer political risks when an issue related to their organisation and work might compromise the Labour party.

In our Swedish case, we noted a tension between the ideology of the organisation – which is all about empowerment and the fulfilment of individual aspirations – and the power imbalance between the organisation’s main activists and the target group of somewhat disenfranchised or marginal youth. The desire to accord these young people autonomy and agency stands in marked contrast to the designation of this target group as significantly ‘vulnerable’. Further, suggesting how complex the double roles of the activists are it is possible to see that their interventions in giving young people access to the fulfilment of particular ‘dreams’ and thus making them feel ‘awesome’ have the potential to ameliorate complex societal issues, creating a symbiosis between the public sector and civic sector. However, this role of providing services between the market and the state might also be a pathway to a sort of semi-privatisation of the public sector, and generate issues related to the principles of accountability, fairness, and legal security on which the public sector has historically operated to deliver services. Likewise, ArbeiterKind in Germany, which shows little ideological interest in affecting public policy or politics with regard to inequalities in the educational and schooling system, is nevertheless very aware of and committed to assisting individuals from working class backgrounds and whose parents have no higher education.

Attitudes to enacting democracy are also part and parcel of the ideological framing of the different young active citizen initiatives in our sample. Democratic processes take time – and in some cases lots of time. This is the sort of time that many groups and initiatives want to short-circuit in pursuit of some other goal or higher purpose (the aims of the organisation). Democratic processes also involve disagreement, debate and persuasion, and the ability of some members to accept that another view might hold sway. In some cases representative democracy (a vote, by representatives, which ends with one specific view as a winner) is used as a short cut to conclude a debate rather than finding a more innovative way to understand minority perspectives and account for them. In this sense, many of the initiatives in our cases mimic adult institutional processes when it comes to democracy.

The democratic ethos of active citizenship by young people is linked to both ideological and pragmatic considerations. At an operational level, the depth and breadth of democratic practices are also dependent on whether or not there is a level of funding and staffing to enable adequate time to be taken in decision making and consultation processes. Further issues that affect the implementation of democratic practices within active citizenship initiatives may be whether members have caring roles, paid jobs, and outside commitments; whether some members get paid for their work, or taken more seriously; whether experienced members/older members consider themselves to be de facto leaders and feel their instructions should be followed by newer members/younger members; and whether the funders demand a more ‘streamlined’ and hierarchical structure that is incompatible with a horizontal organisation.

Despite the barriers, we witnessed at least one or more of these democratic practices in each of the organisations we observed, and this was very encouraging.
• Meetings in which everyone’s opinion is heard and which go on for hours.
• Checking the details and data of hundreds if not thousands or hundreds of thousands of members and getting them involved in local branches and then protecting their details from hacking or other cyber-attacks, flaming and trolling. (This can be overwhelming, but the pay off in terms of membership and activism is very rich).
• Real democracy also means resisting the urges from some within the initiative, organisation or network to centralise power and control. Decentralisation can be messy, decentralised chapters or members can speak ‘off message’ and make a movement or organisation sound less coherent. We witnessed such tensions in Greenpeace Jugend, Momentum, and even, on occasion in Colour Youth, where the organisations’ aims are strictly adhered to.
• Being democratic in day to day dealings does not get rid of relations of power and authority, it simply means acknowledging and reflecting on them. Such reflections took place in ‘away-days’ and in other informal arenas.
• Thinking of logistics can also be a matter of democracy – is this an action that is ableist or accessible to those with disabilities? Is this a safe space for those who have suffered violence or whose details and data might be vulnerable? Are people’s skills matched to the tasks they are doing? If more men put themselves forward, how can we encourage women? What are the penalties if someone gets caught in illegal action?
• Learning democracy takes time – not everyone has the same starting point. Putting on events to go slowly and educate others can be tiring for established activists, but we saw many examples of this in DDAcademia, the Idealists, Momentum, MLMS, Cidade+ and Greenpeace Jugend.

Overall, these issues did not seem to be attached as much to funding issues as they were to political traditions, values and ethos. The ideological starting points and goals of some of the organisations included a non-hierarchical approach to issues of democracy and participation. In these cases, this overrode the issue of funding. In a nutshell – a commitment to democratic processes required explicit commitment to sustain. Transparency about these processes was also variable.

1.4.iii Institutional politics and citizenship

When examining the connections between institutional or party politics and the civic sphere, a few overlapping or competing versions of active citizenship emerge from our analysis of the cases. Cases do not always fit neatly into a single type but some have competing orientations within them.

First are those that ignore political parties and institutional democratic governance and are intended to build a ‘volunteer spirit’ and ‘social entrepreneurship’ for individual and social success. Amongst the initiatives that fall into this category are AGE and PrendiParte in Italy, The Scouts in Czech Republic, Arbeiterkind in Germany and Awesome People in Sweden.

Another set of our initiatives are almost solely focused on rebuilding trust in democracy and political parties by trying to democratise them. The Idealists in Czech Republic, Momentum
and MLMS in the UK are good examples of such organisations. These groups urge a wider spectrum of the younger public to vote, and to enter party politics. Their aim is not to replicate existing party structures but to make existing party politics less elitist and to produce policies that benefit a wider network of citizens.

Further, there are those who conceive of the task of politics and civic action to be tackling major social and environmental issues such as migrant rights, sexual freedom, gender rights and environmental degradation collectively. PrendiParte, Cidade+, Greenpeace Jugend and Colour Youth in our ethnographies all express these kinds of views about democracy. They do not necessarily hold the opinion that mainstream political parties and institutional democracy are unimportant; they act on the belief that, without monitoring from citizens, mainstream political parties will not tackle these issues as a priority or speak up with as much urgency as is required by discriminated minorities.

In all of these cases there is a spectrum between trust and cautious mistrust, between optimism and critique about current democratic processes of government. For some, this entails remaining non-aligned with party politics, for others it entails optimism about current society expressed through work with local or national government and a desire to bring young people closer to official politics.

To summarise, some of the organisations we did case studies with are semi-professionalised activists, others are loosely linked to a public service ethos from the welfare state whereby they align themselves with local government to provide specific supplements to municipal services, or embedded in neoliberal practices that also negatively structure the lives of their members; yet others want to change the (unfair political) system, but with some exceptions these groups fail to do enough to include ‘excluded’ youth even at the immediate level of the organisation. Some of the most practical action to include poorer and less educated youth is observed in organisations that have little ambition to change the overall political system and express little collective sense of the way in which charitable and individual actions might undermine the notion of social justice, rights and collective action or solidarity. In developmental psychological terms, some of our researchers suggest that these members display lower levels of socio-political understanding.

Above we have discussed the ongoing tensions that we observed, and that play a role in the directions taken by the active citizenship practices in each case. These are, obviously, closely linked to the normative and normative critical definitions of active citizenship discussed in WP2, and elaborated through our fieldwork below.

1.4.iv Meanings of youth active citizenship and active European youth citizenship

Our interviews and observations across all of the cases show clear patterns in what it means to young people to be active citizens. On the one hand, young people in organisations that campaign on specific issues or are geared towards social improvement rather than overall political change mention that to them ‘giving one’s time and energy to society’ is the essence of active citizenship. Several key informants told us that they thought that active citizenship is
‘making an effort to being connected to others, trying to build up a community spirit’ (even across EU borders). Associated with both these ideas is the notion of ‘being informed on national laws and politics’ and for those with an interest in wider European politics, on ‘EU laws and policies’. As the Idealists in Czech Republic put it: ‘having a say’ in the workings of political elites, shaping public discourse, and ‘being aware of current affairs’.

A few interviewees mentioned ‘voting’; we witnessed discussions of voting and saw examples of voting within organisations – again mainly done without much thought, and with a ‘majority wins’ outcome. However, except in initiatives such as Momentum which campaign centrally around the issue of voting – ‘get the vote out’, ‘youth vote’ – this comes across as somewhat detached from their actual civic concerns.

The notion of ‘caring’ about oneself and others, and ‘fair-play’ (linked to the notion of justice, but more intrinsically motivated and individualist) was placed front and centre in the definition of civic identity given by the Czech Scouts. Their own literature defined this as

Growing up in a scout troop means having a chance to live fully. Be active and find your own place in the world. Scouting is an opportunity to develop not only yourself but also your surroundings. Scouts and Scouts are trying to create a better world by taking their own lives into their own hands.

Scouting honours all the following values:

- play fair
- work with others
- be environmentally friendly
- have a relationship with nature’ (Scout.cz)

In this same vein, members of Awesome People mentioned ‘self-fulfilment’ and ‘making people happy’ as goals relating to their active citizenship.

More specifically several key informants discussed active citizenship as an endeavour to connect issues from the private, to the local, regional, national and international level – for instance one’s own local environmental and ‘green’ practices like energy consumption or waste disposal with energy supply, education on green issues, laws and directives, the strictness of industrial emissions policy at national and EU level, and so on (Cidade+, Greenpeace Jugend). Greenpeace Jugend members mentioned ‘face-to-face non-violent direct action, information, exhibitions, lectures, flyers to inform people about current political shortcomings in dealing with environmental issues’ as elements of their group’s active citizenship. Building on this, Cidade+ members highlighted that influencing other citizens to change their behaviours is a significant aspect of active citizenship:

I think active citizenship is the capacity that we have to impact and influence those around us. Just to give an immediate example that this is what most legitimizes this, you can demand the change of people around you. Then my wife gets a bit mad at me sometimes because in the traffic I’m a bit intransigent and intolerant when I see people
throw garbage through their window... among some persecutions I have already done. (Laughs) it is something that moves me a lot. This is why I think that within our scope of influence we can influence those around us. I would say that this is the minimum required for those who want to have an active and participative citizenship. **Artur, Porto, 2017**

Members of DDAcademia felt that active citizenship is about debating modes of governance and ideas in the public sphere in a rational manner (and visiting other EU countries to do so). Members of ArbeiterKind explained active citizenship as preparing marginalised young people for the workplace and higher education. All of these definitions and understandings were compatible with the theoretically driven normative definitions of active citizenship drawn up for WP2 (see Deliverable 2.1).

The more inclusive definitions from WP2 seem to best fit what non-conformist but socially progressive\(^1\) active citizens discuss as their understanding of active citizenship. Several young activists mentioned ‘Constant criticality’ and ‘detailed evaluation’ of international, EU, national or local policies that affect people’s everyday lives – e.g. student fees, refugee centres, migration levels, media convergence, taxation, sexuality, corporate information gathering and the privatisation of social welfare. Being fully informed and educating others on social and political issues to do with human survival (climate change) and injustice was central to this type of citizenship. Further, we both observed and were explicitly told that unjust laws should be questioned (for instance on gay marriage, transgender rights, immigration) and a stand must be taken on political morality (pay rises for the rich, welfare cuts for the poor, carbon emissions) as obligatory for any active European citizen. Again, the issue of how Europe and EU nation states treat migrants and refugees came up multiple times in Italy and the UK and was mentioned in Czech Republic.

In the UK, these activists (for instance in MLMS) felt challenged by the task of connecting those who don’t normally get a say in politics and civil society with ideas and institutions and vice versa:

> Our target beneficiary is young people from underrepresented communities. It’s about giving a voice for women and ethnic minorities. Young people from different social backgrounds, from immigrant backgrounds. Giving a voice to young people from LGBT communities. Young people with disabilities. So young people who don't often have a say in decision making ‘cause young people are underrepresented but those groups are even more underrepresented. Then the question is how do you get that and then give

\(^1\) These definitions are not set in stone (see Deliverable 2.1) and non-conformity is debated as a descriptor of a type of active citizen. While conformity implies following or going along with the practices and laws of any given state or other authority at a particular time, without much questioning, there are, of course, non-conformist citizens who question even the basis for democracy, rather than using their critique to argue for stronger democracy. That is why we qualify this type in terms of ‘progressive’ ideas since we did not encounter the anti-democratic young people during these case studies. While we certainly did come across some young people whom we could regard as ‘dissident’, the style of thinking which questions and is critical of decisions and laws that are being enacted but does in the hope of increasing the democratic base and people’s civil and human rights is also not something that can be defined clearly as ‘dissident’.
those people...how do you give them a voice in a way that they would want to engage? How do you then take that [interest] and actually make it meaningful? MLMS CEO, 2017

However, in Italy, there was a complex relationship between the taking up of migrant-related issues and notions of integration. Framed less through political critiques and more through notions of integration, PrendiParte’s P.A.Z. (Progetto Accoglienza Zaccarelli) migrants’ project offers leisure and cultural activities within a reception centre for migrants and refugees. Our Italian researcher notes that ‘twice a week, members of PrendiParte meet the hosts of the centre and engage them in activities aimed to promote their understanding of the community where they live, of local and national laws and institutions relevant for migrants and to spend their free time in a constructive way.’ (Emphasis added). It is possible to see here a notion of integration as being aimed at educating migrants to conform to local Italian laws and customs.

Several young people within the initiatives we observed – particularly in Portugal, Czech Republic and the UK – suggested that critiques of neoliberal notions of citizenship (which include the idea that there is ‘only one correct way to be an active citizen’; and that one has to be a ‘good little citizen, get a job, take responsibility for oneself’) have had profound importance for them as active citizens. The young active citizens who mentioned this were not implying that one should not take responsibility for one’s own life choices. They were making the point that citizenship should be about collectively ensuring social good, compassion, and criticality by fighting against powerful interests, and not just about doing what one is told to do by the state, the media or by corporations. They held forth at length on the need to hold institutions – global and local, government and media – to account, and in this way confront, document and address power asymmetries in national politics, and also within civic organisations. Challenging abuses of power in the private sphere – domestic violence, police violence and in media, corporations, banks, governments and non-profits through creative acts of civil disobedience, media action, transparency was also seen as a key act of citizenship. Several of our young key informants were aware that these actions could be tiring and risky, and that they were not always popular with the authorities and might make them seem odd or nerdy to their fellow young people. They emphasised that being an active critical citizen and fighting for justice was not an ‘easy’ process, and that both peers and adults might view them as different or unusual for their sustained commitment.

As will be seen in the national reports, and the analysis below, our ethnographies uncovered highly divergent and even opposing views of ‘active citizenship’.

1.4.v Typologies of citizenship

In the first phase of WP8, we were very careful to include in our documentary survey of youth citizenship initiatives initiatives that contained activists from the far right and of anti-democratic persuasion. Fascinating patterns of authoritarianism, nationalism, anti-migrant action, hierarchy and a desire to secede from the EU recur in our analysis of those organisations (see deliverable 8.1). However, during our ethnographies, it was impossible to investigate the completely non-
conformist and anti-democratic, disenfranchised or entirely inactive citizens. This was due to two factors: first, the theoretical orientation of the work package which was to investigate only successful cases of active citizenship in Europe, and second, a subsequent decision taken collectively to ensure the safety of researchers by not sending them into anti-migrant, authoritarian civic organisations such as the extreme nationalists in Germany, Sweden and Estonia, or the British and Greek far right.

Nevertheless, within the organisations studied, we found evidence of a range of types of active citizens, from those who are progressive, non-conformist and always active through those who are always active and occasionally non-conformist to those who are occasionally active in conformist ways or generally stand-by citizens, willing to become active in moments of high political urgency or when called upon specifically but not otherwise taking the initiative or lead in their organisations.

These different types of citizens were more evident in clusters within particular types of group or organisation – so the ideology and definition of active citizenship of an organisation or initiative appeared to be more inviting to citizens who already had somewhat of an inclination towards that ‘type’. The more highly non-conformist politically progressive (left-wing) activist groups (Cidade+, Momentum, Idealists, Greenpeace Jugend, Colour Youth) had larger clusters of members who were young active citizens believing in social justice, equality, and human rights.

The intermediate moderately active citizens, with some non-conformist and some conformist tendencies were present in all the organisations, but clustered in the Italian initiatives, PrendiParte, AGE and Radio Immaginaria, which all followed some aspects of dutiful active citizenship in regard to political and civic education, integration, attitudes to voting, but which also questioned some of the practices of the state, for instance with regard to policies on migration. Further, PrendiParte and RadioImmaginaria demanded a lot of commitment and energy for particular projects from participants, at particular times, but did not require all of the young citizens involved to be equally involved and ambitious all of the time, thus creating space for more balanced workloads and for the young participants to calmly pursue their own goals such as work or study alongside their civic contributions.

The more politically conformist/professionalised/capitalism-friendly groups – Awesome People, MLMS, Arbeiterkind, The (Czech) Scouts – were also the ones who had more diverse memberships and constituents including, in some cases, those with lower educational capital, larger proportions of refugees and ethnic minorities, and working class youth. DD Academia in Estonia was somewhat different, due to Estonia’s own history with the USSR and its non-alignment with current European left-right political spectrums.

We also note, in looking across all of the interviews and observations, and in tracking our cases over time, that the boundaries between some of the levels of active citizenship are porous. Therefore, for WP2, we again suggest that young people do not belong permanently to a type or category such as ‘very active non-conformist and progressive’, but that at different times it is likely that they will move between more and less active versions of this type, and that at times they will become standby citizens for reasons to do with the need to recover physically and
mentally from exertion, illness, or to earn a living full time, or care for a member of the family. We also heard examples of previously inactive citizens becoming politically awoken by contact with an organisation, and of young non-conformist citizens who had previously participated in activities that might bring them into tension with the authorities, becoming more cautious and/or conformist as they were more entrenched in an organisation and responsible for other members.

1.4.vi Power within active citizenship initiatives in Europe

Our ethnographic observations emphasise that social power relations – particularly those of nation, age, social class, race, ethnicity, disability, gender and sexuality – play a major role in enabling and motivating or disabling and demotivating young people’s active citizenship. For this reason, we considered it of utmost importance to discuss power within organisational structures and the relationships of organisations to individuals.

Power relations within the initiatives we studied were sometimes obvious. In several cases, power relations took the form of charismatic leaders. We noted this very clearly in the cases of DDAcademia in Estonia, MLMS in the UK, and the Idealists in Czech Republic. In all three cases, the charismatic leader or leaders were educated and hardworking young men, with a steady stream of extremely intelligent, hardworking young women assisting, supporting and contributing to the outcomes of the initiatives. While in all these cases the notion that a woman could not have led the organisation in the same manner would have been hotly contested by the participants, it remains a fact that there is a greater gender imbalance in positions of influence even amongst the most pro-democratic activist groups we observed. For this reason, and in line with the Labour Party rules which mandate at least 50 percent women candidates, Momentum in the UK actively work to rebalance gender ratios in all influential positions. Again, however, Colour Youth, with its overt focus on issues of gender and power, was one of the only organisations which tackled these issues as part of their own programme.

Another manifestation of power relationships is that there are two or three paid staff versus several volunteers. The issue of payment versus voluntary status was also not always clear-cut in that sometimes volunteers could be from very privileged backgrounds and not have to work for a living while in other cases only older and more experienced members got paid work, or the work was paid very poorly, barely enough to live on. In yet other cases, power was played out through an older (or merely more experienced) teacher figures versus younger learners or apprentices with less political experience.

Power relations in youth civic organisations and networks are also sometimes hidden or characterised by a private and a public face. For instance, as the reports from each country will show, some organisations advertise themselves as horizontal and with direct democratic practices, while in actual fact being controlled by a small number of hardworking individuals who perform a representative function and who take increasing numbers of decisions because this is simply pragmatic or more efficient. Nevertheless, such power relations always link to wider social power relations and influence and inflect individuals’ active citizenship. This can be seen in the
relationship between who can afford to volunteer lots of time – who has the income or social support at home and through their personal networks to allow them not to do paid work – for extensive periods of time and those who cannot, between who can go to hang out in the pub or the bar after an event and who does not feel comfortable doing this or cannot afford it.

The underrepresentation of youth from religious, racial and ethnic minorities, and from working-class backgrounds in at least half of the organisations we observed is, therefore, not accidental. It is also, categorically, not a sign of the greater conservatism or lower civic and volunteering sense of these particular demographic groups, but rather demonstrates the greater barriers that these groups face when it comes to political and civic participation in European societies. Some organisations, such as ArbeiterKind, AGE, PrendiParte, MLMS and RadioImmaginaria appeared to be aware of the ways in which organisational cultures can be inclusive or exclusive when it comes to economically disadvantaged or minority ethnic youth, and all these organisations had a higher proportion of migrants, refugees and issues relating to race/migration on their agendas than most of the other organisations. In this sense, with more or less success, the structure of the organisations, their project topics, and their own doctrinal beliefs and values were aligned in order to rebalance these sets of power relations socially, and in the organisation.

Issues of mental health and disability are startling by their absence in some of the field notes and interviews. While in Colour Youth in Greece the ethos is absolutely inclusive and in DD Academia in Estonia, behind the scenes these issues are taken into consideration for their programmes, it is clear that although activists do consider mental health and disability as very serious and central issues, it was not easy to discern any overt strategic priorities in this regard in most cases. Observations suggest that depression and anxiety play a major role in activist trajectories – in ending activist careers, but also in starting them, when driven young people have to leave their jobs, or become homeless and end up as advocates for others. In Colour Youth there was a trained psychotherapist embedded in the work of the organisation because of the deep connections between psychological trauma and LGBTQ everyday life experiences. With one or two notable exceptions, physical disabilities and ableism were not addressed directly in most of the other organisations.

It is clear, of course, that confidentiality concerns quite rightly prevented some of the activists from mentioning openly the disabilities of others. However, the very fluidity and spontaneity of some protests, activist actions, and the types of venues (which were not always accessible) militated against the sustained inclusion of people identifying as disabled. Momentum did pay some attention to this issue in their use of spaces and we observed young disabled activists participating there, but they too were constrained by the availability of spaces. In other organisations we did not ask enough about this issue explicitly, and therefore cannot assert that they did not accommodate disabled activists, but observations would indicate that this is an area that could be improved by several of the initiatives we observed.

The making of key strategic decisions is often in the hands of a small committee consisting of those who work the hardest (paid or unpaid) or who have won the respect of the team because of their high levels of knowledge and commitment, while devolved democracy is practiced
strongly by around a quarter of our 13 initiatives with all decisions voted on by the whole collective including fringe members rather than by a representative group within these. Again, across all the organisations, we still saw a predominance of able bodied, white men of European descent in more high profile and prestigious positions, despite efforts to rebalance gender roles/race roles in several cases.

Age too emerged as an axis of power intersecting gender and social class in our cases. We noted that it was rare for younger young people – those under twenty – to hold particular sway in most of these organisations, although in Momentum there were two teenage females in positions of authority, and in both Momentum and RadioImmaginaria we encountered teenagers with strong commitment to the values of the organisation and giving freely of their time. RadioImmaginaria stood out because it was the only case amongst all our cases organised, run and staffed primarily by those under-18. This meant that the younger adolescents had to make many more decisions and take more responsibility than in cases where there were teams with both under and over 18s such as AGE, Scouts, and GreenPeace Jugend. In this sense, the case of RadioImmaginaria shows that it is more than possible for teenagers below 18 to share power in democratic ways, to debate highly complex political issues, to interview adults, to train each other in the use of equipment and to draw up political and civic agendas to appeal to other young people and adults. All that is needed is the infrastructure. This case, as well as the observations of the relationships that developed between younger participants and older organisation members in initiatives such as Scouts, ArbeiterKind and Awesome People, suggests to us that developmental notions of an age when young people are ‘ready’ for civic and political life have been too constrained by the structures and opportunities young people and children have in a world geared towards adults.

1.4.vii Tools of active citizenship

Increasingly, we note a tendency to highlight new media tools in organisations which are active in the civic sphere. This has been discussed elsewhere (Banaji & Buckingham, 2013), but it is worth noting that notwithstanding our digital era in which supposedly many jobs can be automated and digitised, human labour – and in particular the voluntary or low paid labour of young people – is the foremost tool of youth active citizenship in the European Union. Therefore, the assumption that simply building online forums, forms, or wikis can animate civic debate between young Europeans with little commitment of people’s time is mistaken and where it has been assumed to be true, has led to problematic situations.

Again, in the era of the digital, when a virtual public sphere for discussion (social media, online forums, chat applications) can sometimes be touted as over-taking the real public sphere, we found little evidence of a competition between these types of tools. In fact, the second most significant ‘tool’ for enabling youth activism is the availability of suitable physical meeting spaces. These might either be private (a school/college building or association after hours, a private room in a library or government building, someone’s living room) or public (parks, squares, public buildings, thoroughfares); dedicated (i.e. owned by or leased to the organization/project) or multi-purpose (shared between several civic groups).
A third aspect that we can characterise as a ‘tool’ in that it is at the heart of all the case studies we examine in the coming reports is human relationships. Human relationships in civic networks include: inter and intra-generational pedagogic, affective and intellectual relationships, as well as relations of leadership, counselling, support, love, esteem, trust, management, organisation, privacy, and respect.

As elaborated below in the section on creative practice, communicative media such as email, pens and paper, and also particularly banners, flags, placards, posters, flyers, stickers, graffiti and newsletters are very common. Mainstream media such as radio, television and newspaper coverage is highly coveted; although, in some cases, trying to avoid negative coverage takes considerable skill and effort on the part of dissident groups, and is sometimes unavoidable.

New media tools such as mobile phones, digital cameras, digital radio, WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, Skype, Websites, You Tube and other viral media tools are increasingly used, and in some cases are used at the heart of an organisation’s endeavour – as is the case with RadioImmaginaria and MLMS. These tools have gradually become domesticated (Livingstone, 1992) within the organisations and initiatives, to such an extent that communication in working groups and during events would grind to a halt without them.

You Tube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp and other messenger services are used to deliver mass or group texts and information about events and to recruit new members or inform less active members through a stream of posts and information. In DD Academia, one member manages the Facebook page, and often searches for content to put online that will not compromise the individual privacy of members, but that will also hold the attention and draw in audiences in dry spells when there is not much activity offline.

In Momentum, ArbeiterKind and the Idealists, as well as in several of the other cases, WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger and other text apps are heavily used for discussing and debating – sometimes in quite forthright and polemical ways – the strategic priorities and aims, or values of the organisation. Twitter spats or arguments can break out, and then be shut down. WhatsApp conversations can turn angry and acrimonious, although there is a level of consensus, and sometimes the ones losing an argument will simply withdraw from the arena after testing the waters and finding little support for an idea. On the other hand, for instance in AGE, activists mention that social networks are used to strengthen participation in offline activities of the organisation:

The social networks luckily have this positive aspect which adults, also in quotes here, that is, the generation prior to ours, see as non-communication, whereas in reality that’s not the way it is, I mean, you always have to find the right means, so we therefore organise ourselves online, or on WhatsApp or Facebook, it’s okay, but we also see one another (…) They work, absolutely. First there was the Facebook group, exactly, because WhatsApp, I won’t say it didn’t exist but it still wasn’t used so much, anyway not everybody had a smartphone, I’m saying, with internet. I had a phone with keys until just the other day practically, therefore I didn’t have WhatsApp. Now that everybody’s got it we use it, I’m not saying only WhatsApp, but we use it almost exclusively for communication and of
grant agreement N. 649538

course when we’re not there in person. (AGE_5, F, 23)

Social media tools are also used as a virtual record of events and as a promotional arena showcasing what organisations can achieve and what they stand for. Radim, the leader of the Czech Idealists, describes how he switched from the Young Social Democrats into the Idealists after seeing Idealists for the first time on Facebook. Wordpress blogs and traditional websites often accompany the more ubiquitous social media connections, but sometimes the content on these are not updated and are sparse compared to an adult organisation’s well-funded site.

Data management systems and online tools for collecting and storing participants’ data and for organising information are also increasingly common and significant for these organisations. Especially in the case of organisations with links to political parties or who hoped to influence mainstream politicians, having a cleaned and up to date voter and supporter list made the possibility of canvassing much easier and more efficient. Momentum in the UK provided a clear example of one such organisation.

1.4.viii Types of creative practice linked to active citizenship

Three types of creative and innovative practices emerged from our initial survey of the field (1) where an organisation or initiative itself is built around an innovative theme or topic (for instance, Awesome People, DDAcademia); (2) where an organisation or initiative’s practices demonstrate features of creativity (for instance Radio Immaginaria, Cidade +) and (3) where the organisational structure of the initiative is unusual and creative (for instance, Momentum, Colour Youth). Although they occasionally converge, these three types of creativity and innovation do not always go hand in hand – and nor are they always aimed towards richer democracy. Several of the cases we chose have a limited, minimalist, but very practical conceptions of participation through an ability to join the educated labour force ‘successfully’ or to fulfil an individual dream, while others have a more affective and compassionate conceptions of support as being about the formation of an alternative loving family/network or an alternative socialist/environmentally friendly society. Finally, there are the practices that directly try to influence mainstream party politics and policy – alternative policymaking, lobbying and pressure groups.

The use of media tools is absolutely central to many of the creative practices that we observed. On the one hand, mainstream media coverage of actions of our youth civic groups is pursued strongly. Several of the organisations have explicit media strategies and write press releases. They train, hire or recruit volunteers who are explicitly ‘creative’ and committed to artistic and literary strategic communication. Other organisations brainstorm across activists and keep their proposed actions secret before they happen in order to prevent the police from blocking them, but they document their own actions on digital video and Twitter/Facebook. On the other hand, from street theatre, poster and banner-making to podcasts, vodcasts and social media apps, it is clear that both older and newer communications technologies can be used originally to draw attention and make an impression through active learning and participation, or have their
creative dimension ignored in favour of a ‘template’ model of activism that focuses on information transmission.

1.4.ix Friendship, emotion, politics, compassion – what motivates youth activism?

Motivations
The national reports detail the nature of motivations for participation, and some further distinguish between intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. Almost all of our interviews with key informants in the case studies touched on their motivations to be active citizens and to take a role in organisations working for political democratization, social justice or environmental justice. Providing accurate information about social and political issues and raising people’s ‘consciousness’ was a topic on which many spoke with enthusiasm and intensity. Several of our young active citizens at the heart of running organisations mentioned that they had always felt that they wanted to become involved in something bigger than themselves, or to contribute to society in some way as children and teenagers, but it was only when they encountered their organisation or initiative that they actually saw a practical way of fulfilling their commitment to social change.

Many were motivated by the gaps they perceived in current social provisions and the injustice stemming from social structures or from people’s ‘thoughtless’ behaviours. For instance, this young member of Greenpeace Jugend explains:

> what really motivates me is that I am interested in science and that is why I’m also at school. You somehow hear of global warming, what it is and what exactly is going wrong. And there are things that happen, like when one person alone takes a BMWx5 to work in the morning. It is just completely unnecessary. It doesn’t give you an advantage, instead you are too lazy and destroy the environment. {It} makes me contemplate and I just want to do something against [behaviours that contribute to global warming], even if it isn’t easy to achieve. 

Greenpeace Jugend BI_m1, 2017

Some felt that there were not enough opportunities for young people from lower income backgrounds in the current educational system. Others were motivated by their view that young people’s views and opinions are not valued or heard in mainstream media and politics. The MLMS’ CEO often pointed out in public speeches a lack of young and/or minority politicians currently and historically in Parliament, citing it as a motivation for his entry into politics at a young age:

> I’ve always been a strong advocate of young people [and] institutions reflecting the people it represents. The average age of councillors is 65 in the UK. So, I thought to myself, well why doesn’t these chambers have people that are younger [who] represent the views of the young people? So that’s why I put myself forward for it, because I had a keen interest in my local community and wanted to make sure it was represented. MLMS CEO, 2017

Fun, creativity, intimacy, caring, friendship and affectionate flirtation between members played a major role in bonding the groups together and motivating sustained attendance at meetings and events. Although civic participation is supposed to be entirely altruistic, the relationships
within organisations need to be fair, fun and fulfilling, or young people will quickly withdraw, as this young activist explains:

> The people are a really important part of keeping people engaged. Why Momentum and Take Back Control and The World Transformed are special is because, we’re trying to make politics, like, fun [laughs]. And also, inclusive and diverse. And, that makes you want to stay, because it’s somewhere that you’re happy to be with good people who are doing good things. I think for lots of people—especially who get involved in the Labour Party—drop out quite quickly, because it’s not a nice atmosphere. It’s, like… there’s a lot of hostility. It’s very… old, very male, very white. It’s very boring! [laughs]. And so even if you think you’re doing good work, there’s not… there’s no spark. Brenda, London, 2017.

Analysis of this excerpt suggests that a desire to break up the monotony of elite politics is also a major motivation for some people’s involvement.

Yet others joined political or civic organisations for the camaraderie, the sense of shared purpose. Even where this was not the motivation for joining the initiative, it was evidently an element in sustaining participation. In almost every ethnographic case, we both observed and were explicitly told about the fact that the groups of young people at the centre of the organisations consisted of friendship groups, even couples. This was the case in the Idealists, in Momentum, in Greenpeace Jugend, and in DDAcademia. In RadioImmaginaria, formed primarily of adolescents in their teens, there was a strong almost familial bond with older members; in Colour Youth, there was an even greater degree of closeness based on the often dysfunctional and unhappy natal relationships of the group members. The notion of an ‘alternative family’ was invoked to convey the sense of intimacy and loyalty that existed for these young people who had suffered from being outcast, bullied, shunned or harassed because of their sexuality and gender orientation. In most of our case studies, there was a lot of affectionate banter before and after meetings, and even when things became heated or there were disagreements, some of these could be resolved more easily because of the existing friendships.

Further, all our researchers noted an element of serendipity in the way that motivation works in the realm of active citizenship. Key current events – such as far right parades, the passing of new laws, campaigns over equality, elections, preparations for plebiscites or referenda, the murder of an immigrant – all clearly had a motivational impetus for individual young citizens and for groups of young active citizens. However, those who put in the most work during these times were also the ones who could be negatively affected when the campaign failed, the outcome was negative or not as they had hoped and campaigned for.

Hyper active citizens and burn out
Young people in all the initiatives we observed were emotionally engaged and committed at different levels and in different dimensions of their organisation’s work. Some were totally committed and present intellectually, physically and affectively on a daily basis and through all crises and negotiations. This was the case to such an extent that they became very tired. Several very active young citizens – particularly in Czech Republic, UK, Estonia and Portugal – told us that they felt they were ‘burnt out’ or were about to become ‘burnt out’. For some of these citizens, whom we can term ‘hyper-active’ citizens, this meant that despite their love of the
cause, the organisation or the people in it, they could not continue in their roles and thus had to step back, or even to cut themselves off from the organisation/group/initiative/network completely for a time, or permanently.

Others were friends of the activists, willing to do what they were asked, and to make up the numbers at events, to ask questions, but would not turn up if they had other things to do. Several of the young people we interviewed told us that prior to meeting one charismatic person in their organisation or in the overall cause, or prior to joining the initiative or organisation, they had been completely passive and taken no active interest in politics. Their citizenship had consisted of thinking about who to vote for when they came of age, and sometimes not even that. Sometimes these ‘standby activists’ would become long-term committed activists through familiarity, affection, and because a practical suggestion of theirs was taken up immediately by a group, and they were given responsibility for fulfilling it.

Another key insight arising from our ethnographic work with young citizens active in Europe is that systematic self-care and careful rotation of responsibility is not currently a feature of most of these organisations, although several are beginning to have this issue on their radar and to think about its implications for sustainability and the passing on of institutional knowledge. Some organisations such as ArbeiterKind and Momentum aspired to this, and had it in their organisation in theory, but often failed to deliver in practice. The organisations which did have this self-care and rotation of duties more fully on their agenda in a practical manner – such as Awesome People and Colour Youth – did so because they wanted to ensure the continuity of the work, space and other possibilities offered by the organisation, and wanted a flatter and more horizontal structure in which all members felt empowered to be both activists and beneficiaries. In this sense, we noted a difference between the sort of active young citizens who had themselves benefited in some way from the cause pursued by an organisation and were, in effect, ‘paying it forward’ through their active citizenship, and those who were working for a more abstract concept of politics, environmental justice or political equality.

However, in fact, several of the groups exerted a form of ‘radical self-exploitation’ on the members who were most passionate about a cause. This tended to be the case regardless of low pay or no pay. Older and/or more experienced volunteers commented on this imbalance, were aware that it could be unhealthy, but also participated in this self-exploitation. Sometimes there would be members who attended one meeting to report back to another meeting, and then went on for long hours from early in the morning to late at night in their planning of events. When they were absent, the activities would stall or not as much would get done. There appeared to be a virtuous circle effect to a certain extent, as some of these hyper-active young citizens explained to us that the more they worked, read, listened, contributed to their group or task or organisation, the more they felt that they were in solidarity, and achieving something and the better they felt about themselves and about the cause, which in turn provoked them to be more enterprising in helping and recruiting others. However, at times, as noted above, this virtuous circle became a vicious circle, in that the organisations came to depend on their time and labour and might even suffer a period of hiatus if one of them was ill and stepped back, left for another position somewhere else or took up full time paid work.
The relaxed informality and self-exploitation that characterised the most democratic structures and the strongest long-term commitment, solidarity and bonding, were also features that prevented young members from complaining about long hours of work, doing multiple jobs, and emotional strain of campaign responsibility.

Well, summer was somewhat sad in the sense that I had simply … I have had some stressful years and when I simply … I just planned that this year in June I can take a month to completely shut myself out from everything. But then I like … at times my opinion of that now that I come to the seasonal team, I just didn’t imagine that it would be so much in the end. And it is my own … not the blame, but my own initiative … /…/

We could have done it on a much smaller scale but I instantly felt that I wanted to do a lot. So, from the one side … it’s two-sided thing here that form the one side, here is demand, but I didn’t have to fulfil it exactly like that, I just put very high expectations to myself. Lotta, Tartu, 2017.

Here we are currently bombarded with a certain amount of information on a daily basis. It reaches a point when perhaps the call is for a person to want to do a lot, want to get involved in a lot stuff. Later this [attitude/life style] is not healthy and I’ve also had experiences of this throughout my life. Mateus, Porto, 2017

I have all my energy in this project that does not even give me any stability. And it is also not fair for me either. I have to change this, explore other things. The design, the web, other things. Viviana, Porto, 2017

If you have no boss and no hierarchy, and you feel your organisation needs you, and you make the decision to work very hard, and then you are needed and so you work even harder, and everyone tells you that this is a great cause, a good cause, it becomes very difficult to stop, to withdraw your labour, to limit yourself and to say no. And yet, without question, this is one of the things that these particular young people need to do in order to maintain and sustain their own ability to participate.

The significance of optimism

Significant studies of behavioural change (Bandura, 1977) and of civic participation have already discussed notions of self-efficacy (Beaumont, 2010; Banaji & Buckingham, 2013). Indeed, our own WP7 longitudinal survey suggests that there are strong connections between self-efficacy and political participation (cf. Del 7.2). While we certainly found evidence of self-efficacy in individuals and in groups we studied, of a belief in the ability of individuals and their organisations to effect change in society through their own interventions, we want to distinguish this sense of the ability to effect change from the feeling of optimism and intellectual hope that we also uncovered in the young activist groups. Almost no study to date has examined the idea of optimism as a driving factor for both individual and collective youth civic action. We found that the notion of an optimistic outlook towards society and towards the self – which encompasses not the feeling that one is able to effect change but rather the view that change is possible is embedded in and by most of the organisations and initiatives. This optimism, which persists in groups, even when individual members’ self-efficacy might be quite low, takes the form of:
• **Individually-oriented action** for young people to be trained so they can be included in the existing labour market and higher education and connected to each other through kind deeds in civil society in organisations such as Awesome People, and Arbeiterkind, Junák;
• **Collective action** for a democratic socialist society in which all are equally able to reach their potential, a wish to build efficacy in challenging those with too much political power in DDAcademia, Momentum and The Idealists;
• **Collective action** for a world without sexual and gender prejudices where people and be and love as they wish in Colour Youth;
• **Collective action** for individual behaviour and societal change on environmental issues, and much more attention to greenness and climate change on the part of Cidade+ and Greenpeace Jugend;
• **Role modelling and teaching** greater civility and connection between youth, political and civic institutions in DDAcademia, PrendiParte, MLMS and AGE; and
• **Collective action** for youth to have ‘a voice’ through alternative media production in Momentum and RadioImmaginaria.

At the heart of each of these endeavours is the notion that personal and societal change is achievable. Reading the field notes and listening to the interviews with key personnel in these initiatives it is evident that this optimistic outlook drives and motivates both their common goals and their inter-personal relationships. Thereby, knowledge and experience are not the only qualities that qualify young people for leadership. An unfailing optimism, and the ability to communicate this with others, becomes a highly desirable trait, and can fuel cohesion and sustain initiatives.

**1.4.x Politics and Civic learning: concluding thoughts on age as a factor**

Conventionally, political socialisation and civic learning theories in our literature review suggest that the young (children, and those aged 15-30) are socialised by and learn from adults, that adults – usually considered to be 25 and above scaffold younger adults (18-30) and teenagers/adolescents into particular forms of political action and citizenship. Some of our case studies, particularly with organisations and initiatives which do not work to change the political status quo, support this view, and show that older adolescents support younger ones, older adults mentor young people, and political and civic skills are passed down through generations. It is very clear in the Idealists and in Momentum that the exigencies of the economic situation mean that those in their early thirties and even in their late twenties cannot afford to put in the kind of voluntary time needed for the promotion of the socialist ideas at hand: therefore a lot of the day to day work, the social media updates, and even the training of new members, falls to much younger members, sometimes of 18-21.

In ArbeiterKind, many of the volunteer staff are themselves first generation academics, from families who traditionally did not go into higher education, and they report from their own experiences about their educational development. They thus encourage current school pupils
(aged under 17) from lower socioeconomic demographics through their personal example and can only do this because they are older (aged 19+) and have been through the system. In the Czech Scouts, it is the older youth (19+) who organise and devote time to the learning of the younger teenagers, and take responsibility for them on trips, hiking and other events. Likewise, in DDAcademia, most of the main activists are in their twenties, and have started or completed university, while several of those who attend their bouquet of events are slightly younger and may even just be leaving school. In fact, in such cases, when there is a lack of renewal of these older members, an organisation has to pause and take stock or wait for a younger member to mature and take control.

However, from observations with more critical and dissenting organisations, we also have evidence that adults and older young people learn from and get political and ideas from critically active youth who are much younger than them. In Colour Youth in Greece, the members driving discussions about genderqueerness have been 18 or under. Their knowledge in, and interest about, the issue of non-binary identities has helped some older members to find out more and become more open. In the UK Momentum events organised around the general election in 2017, we observed young people in their late teens and early twenties explaining social media campaigning and other interactive face-to-face methods of making voters commit to vote, to groups of adults in their thirties and above. Although we noticed that such education was not always well received, in fact, it was clear that there was a strong and noticeable role reversal and that those trained in an older, more formal breed of politics were having to set aside their prejudices and their demagogic views in order to learn a new kind of accessible and, dare we say it, grassroots democratic politics. In our discussions it also emerged that older adults socialised in one mode of political participation or campaign for social justice were struggling to unlearn and relearn modes of democracy with and from young people who did not have the same ideological histories and commitments.

Re-analysis of cross-national surveys (WP4 report) and Survey research (in WP2 literature review) appear to suggest that there is some disparity between the active citizenship of older adults and younger people – this has come to be known as the ‘democratic deficit’/‘participation deficit’. Evidence from our ethnographic work, however, suggests that we can understand this ‘deficit’ in several ways, which should force us to see it in a far different light. All in all, our observations suggest the following issues with regard to generational political relationships and active citizenship. On the one hand, older adults (30-80) may over-report their active citizenship and civic participation, claiming to have done more things than they actually have, and in a more sustained way than they do – just going to work every day is not ‘active citizenship’. Younger adults (15-30), on the other hand, may tend to under-report their civic contributions, and to be wary of highlighting their political contribution. Several conversations with even the most active citizens show them questioning the value of their own contributions and feeling that what they contribute is not civic enough or having the desired political effects. Institutional politics itself is something viewed with ambivalence by many younger generation Swedes, Estonians, Czechs, Portuguese and Germans, who sometimes disavow the political and civic nature of their own political and civic activities. Indeed, voting is sometimes fetishized as a marker of political interest and commitment, and other forms of participation (from voluntary youth work, to demonstrating to occupying public space) are viewed with ambivalence even within youth.
organisations. This leads to a vicious circle of under-reporting where young people often feel less efficacious than older adults precisely because some of them cannot vote and they do not see their own actions represented fairly in media. Older people who are active in a sustained manner in civic participation organisations are rare as younger committed activists; and tend to be so by virtue of already having the financial means to be so: democratic participation is not always available to those who have to work all the time to make a living.

REFERENCES


2. Czech Republic: The Idealists and the Scout centre ("Thirteen") – Alena Macková & Johana Kotišová, Masaryk University
2.1 Introduction: Cases selection and data

We conducted ethnographic research in two organisations (for an overview of data collected see Local Appendix A):

- in Idealisté.cz (Idealists.cz, The Idealists) – a left-wing political association mostly led by young people; and
- Skauti (The Czech Scout) – specifically an interesting and locally popular centre (in Brno) led by a young leader – 13th Scout centre (called “Thirteen”), HIAWATHA Brno.²

While the Idealists represents an association mostly focused on political issues, the Scout centre represents an organisation focused more on leisure time education of young people and children and on development of civic values. Both organisations are led by young people. During the data collection we were in regular contact with Radim, the chairman of the Idealists, and with his girlfriend Michaela, the council member (one of five leading persons). Michaela was the most important key informant during the ethnographic research, we were in an intensive contact via Facebook messenger and she invited us to the events and willingly informed us about the news (especially after asking).

The limits of the data collection are connected to the lack of time on both sides. The researcher was not to able to cover some activities – especially in the summer and at the beginning of autumn (we do not have so broad coverage of “hot phases” of the campaign, because we were not able to carry out observations in Prague). Also – the informants sometimes forgot to inform us about some events. The core of the association is in Prague (not in Brno). Moreover, many decisions in the association are made in the presence of just few people (see below), in unformal, often unplanned small meetings (or in private communication via SNSs) we are also unable attend to. We conducted interviews mostly with the most active members of the organisation – and with the younger ones (those members mostly “making the Idealists”).

Because the structure of the centre is more decentralised (several troops), the main challenge was to stay in contact with members. The researcher decided to focus in observations especially on the two troops of girls (because of the informant; it was also easier for a female researcher “to fit in”), most of the observations were conducted on the Glowworms, two observations were conducted on Girl Scouts and one observation on Boy Scouts. After one month of research, the former informant and leader of the Glowworms and our contact person decided to leave the troop and we lost our key informant. A young woman (18) has become a new leader and, also, a new informant of the study. The new leader is rather shy and not such proactive in communication (but helpful). On the other hand, we failed in getting access to formal organisational meetings of the centre (because of the loss of the previous key informant). (See issues of communication in the centre below.)

Changes. During the research, both organisations were in the process of change. The Idealists ran a campaign linked with the Czech parliamentary elections (autumn 2017) – and after the election, they faced a process of their redefinition (in terms of concept and aims). In the case of the Scouts centre in Brno, they faced changes in leadership (after 10 years) in the Girl Scouts. These changes are both demanding and interesting, because of the acceleration and greater visibility of some processes and issues.

² We have decided for the Scouts after they took part in a recent incident with far-right protesters; consequently to the incident, the role of Scouts and their political engagement has become broadly discussed (https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/may/05/czech-scout-on-her-viral-fame-its-important-to-fight-against-fascism).
Anonymisation and protection. Although both organisation agreed that they want to be named, we do not identify the respondents in interviews because they often spoke about relationships in organisations and about other members and, thus, identification could affect them (and their position in organisation) or other members. They are named (or identified) only in cases where it is crucial for interpretation – and in cases where they cannot be affected (e.g. in descriptive parts about organisations). In the case of the Scouts centre, our analysis focuses on young people (leaders), omitting children they are working with. Because of this, we did not take many pictures (and any videos) of them and we use the public ones on their websites instead.

2.2 Introduction – about the organisations

2.2.1 The Idealists

The Idealists.cz is a registered ‘progressivist and culturally liberal’ civic and political association that has around 120 members with social democratic orientation. It attempts to advance the values of freedom, solidarity, justice and the idea of welfare state. Its aim is – through diverse activities – to influence political and public affairs, to react to current political affairs and to have a say in key issues/factors affecting the quality of everyday life (on the discussions about aims and their revisions see below). The association was founded in 2010 after Prague municipal election in reaction to the biggest parties establishing a coalition; by that time the association was a part of the Czech Social Democratic Party (CSSD), respectively its members came from the party and from Young Social Democrats (YSD).

I joined the party [CSSD] and then I joined the YSD [Young Social Democrats], but both were somehow dead. I joined something different than where I am now. I wasn’t really happy there and what’s more, I entered a club (…) and in 2010 it was the communal election and that’s where it happened, the thing I told you about the ODS party. (…) and then what happened was that we transferred to Dienstbier to a local organisation and I switched from the YSD to the Idealists, whom I got to know through Facebook. Those YSD did nothing at all, and the Idealists at least went out to a pub. There were about three of us, formally seven, but three in reality, and we went to the pub.

To hold meetings (smiling).
Well not quite, we just met on Friday, had a chat, got to know each other and then we started to recruit members.

I got to know the guys who were already in the local organisation of the CSSD because that’s where it all started, but the Idealists in the YSD were never part of a particular club, we were simply from the whole of Prague. So more and more people were coming. Starting with three people we built up a thirty-member organisation, which was the second biggest in the YSD.

And people were coming to the Idealists in the YSD from other groups too, like from the Young Greens, so that’s where the activist underswell started. (Radim, the leader of the Idealists)

In 2013, the Idealists became more visible and publicly known because of so called “Lány coup.” After the parliamentary elections, the president, Zeman, summoned a secret meeting (in Lány) with several politicians from CSSD representing the conservative wing of the party (as opposed to the more liberal or progressive one represented by the leader of the party); Zeman intended to discuss with them the situation after the elections. This act was perceived as obvious attempt to remove Sobotka (the leader of the party), but most of the media and public rather supported Sobotka. The Idealists played quite important role in mobilizing public support for Sobotka (and liberal wing in the party) e.g. through demonstrations (later Sobotka became the prime minister).
The organisation and its members. The organisation is led by a group of five young sympathisers of social democratic ideology. Radim (26 years old) is a chairman of organisation. The Idealists are organised in two local groups – in Prague and Brno (recently rather inactive) where most of activities as well as members are concentrated in Prague. There is evidence of developed democracy within the organisation: the association is led by a gender-balanced elected board (a leader, a vice-leader, a treasurer and two board members). Local organisations vote their own spokespersons and two board members. Their mandates last two years and the elections are secret. Many members are young people below 30 – university students and graduates living in cities and bigger towns. Many members are also members of CSSD (especially the older ones). The most famous member of the Idealists is the senator Jiří Dienstbier Jr., former minister (Minister of Human Rights, Equal Opportunities and Legislation), the Deputy Chairman of CSSD, and also candidate of the party for the first direct presidential election in 2013. (For more detail about members see below.)

Activities and active citizenship. For the Idealists.cz, active citizenship means “having a say” in the steps of political elites, shaping public discourse, and being aware of current affairs (see below). The activities that the members organise (some for themselves, some for general public) range from educational seminars on social policy, urbanism, environmental issues through debates with politicians, discussions on the Czech Social Democratic Party programme to releasing the bulletin IDEA and manifests (on working conditions, welfare state and education). They cooperate with similar European associations (e.g. Le mouvement commun), with the Party of European Socialists (PES), with organisations of socialist youth (YES, IUSY), with some other Czech organisations focused on the unions (Bohemian-Moravian Confederation of Trade Unions – CMKOS, the Young Unionists),3 or with organisations focused for example on women’s rights.

Communication and presentation. The association has employed a successful media strategy due to having a qualified PR team. Social media are the most important channel, the organisation is also present in mainstream mass media (mainly through interviews with the board members).

Current situation (during the data collection). The most important issue that affected the association during the data collection was the parliamentary election in October 2017. The chairman Radim Hejduk and several other members ran as candidates of CSSD. Because Radim was at the sixth place on the ballot (in Prague), there was a chance to win a seat. Many activities

during the research of the Idealists were focused on the election and the related campaign. The election was also important because the Idealists were forced to discuss their position to and within CSSD and to continue in their activities after the major defeat of social democrats and their “disintegration”.

2.2.2 The Scouts – “Thirteen”

About Junák. The Scouts is a global movement focused on young people’s physical, mental and spiritual development. The Czech Scout movement was founded in 1911, it was banned for three times (by the Nazi and communist regimes) and it has been restored after the Velvet revolution in 1990. Junák – Czech Scouting is, with its more than 50,000 members, the largest civic organisation for children and youth in the Czech Republic. Junák is a member of the World Organisation of the Scout Movement (WOSM) and of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scout (WAGGGS). It is also a member of the organisation of adult Scouts and Guides called the International Scout and Guide Fellowship (ISGF) (Skaut.cz).

“The mission of the organisation is to encourage the development of children’s and young people’s personalities, their spiritual, moral, intellectual, social and physical skills, so that for their whole life they are prepared to be responsible towards themselves, to others, their country, nature and the whole human society in harmony with the principles established by the founders of the Scout movement.” (Skaut.cz)

About “Thirteen”. There are more than three thousand Boy and Girl Scouts in Brno as there are several centres consisting in total of 78 troops and 114 patrols (Skautibrno.cz). Stemming from several recommendations, we decided to focus our research on the Scout centre in Brno nick-named “Thirteen” centre or HIAWATHA. The centre covers 8 troops, just only four of them residing in the biggest park (Lužánky) in the centre of the Brno city (the research is focused on these troops and their leaders).

Except for the Scout centres, Brno (and Prague) also has “the Scout Institute” (www.skautskyinstitut.cz), the education centre (workshops, lectures etc.) and meeting point for Scouts.

Scouts for me … is an organisation where … what’s beautiful about it is that, first, it’s worldwide. The idea is shared by all Scouts around the world. What’s very important for me is the moral law, which is nothing new as it stems from religion, from Christianity and from chivalry. It’s nothing new or innovative invented by someone here and now. They are classic moral rules

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4 In February 2018, Radim Hejduk was candidate for deputy chairman of CSSD.
one can have but Scouting is strongly focused on self-development and maximum tolerance. It's an incredibly strong motivator for me, to be part of such a movement. (…) We teach parents, that's how it works in our group. We teach the parents what Scouting is, we explain it to them; I have relatively good relationships with the parents. (Scout, R2, female)

**History.** The centre is one of the oldest in Brno. The current situation and uniqueness of the centre is linked with an event ten years ago, when the scout leader and one of the leading persons became connected to an infamous child-abuse scandal. At the time, leading persons of the centre decided to leave it to minimise the impact of these events on the centre. Suddenly, the centre remained without older, experienced leaders and, consequently, one of the youth members of the centre was forced to take over all the responsibilities including the actual leading of the centre (and of the troops). Therefore, the centre and its leaders remain rather youthful even now (mostly in age 18-25).

That's the reason we work as a Scout centre as one community and aren't divided, as it is commonly done. That means that we are simply one group. What happened was that the previous generation that the leaders were from got into trouble, and they chose to leave. So, we lost a generation that is nowadays in their forties and the leading was passed on a guy who was then between 18-20. So, the centre was rejuvenated.

(…)

**We talked about that your centre is quite specific. Why?**

It's only my opinion, but it comes from the past events, and that, under their weight, we had to stick together and work as one group, because there was a decline in the number of children and there weren't many leaders either, and those who stayed were not many and they were quite young. They took it over and shared experiences, or tried to, and it's now growing thanks to the generation that's growing up. (Scouts, Mayor, male)

**Organisation and members.** The centre is led by young people. There are a “mayor,” two “vice-mayors,” troop leaders and several so-called “reporters” (economy, IT, a cabin administrator, an educational reporter, etc.); most of these officials is also involved in elected board of the centre (9 board members) but at the same time even other members of the centre (young leaders, guides) are actively involved in decision-making processes. Almost all members of the centre in Lužánky park are younger than 25.

**Activities.** In the centre, there are regular troops and patrols meetings – usually once a week for two hours (Tab. 1). These meetings cover scout program (physical education, sensory, didactic and sports games, handicraft, training new knowledge and skills, singing, moral education, preparation for an expedition). The leaders also organise weekend trips and excursions (often overnight) and summer camps.

**Table 2.1. Scouts – regular meetings of the troops.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Troop</th>
<th>Meeting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boy Scouts (older boys)</td>
<td>Monday (17-19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scouts (older girls)</td>
<td>Tuesday (17-19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glowworms (younger girls)</td>
<td>Wednesday (17-19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cub Scouts (younger boys)</td>
<td>Thursday (17-19)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Younger troops cover children from 6-7 years mostly to 11. Older troops cover youth from 11/12 to 15. The troops have around 15-30 members (the Glowworms as the biggest one). The troops are divided into (mostly 3) patrols referred as “the six”.

A lot of centres work autonomously. Once a month, the leaders will meet at the centre council to say what they will do or plan the event for the public and need someone to take it. And there the cooperation ends. Alternatively, they have a clubhouse together, so they talk about having to
clean it up and the like. But here I have the feeling that it is far more intertwined, that there are more connections. At least the girls 'and boys' section, which is in a cabin in Lužánky. (Scouts, R5, female)

**Current situation (during the data collection).** Ten years after the change of leadership in the centre, the centre is relatively consolidated and locally very popular (as indicated by an increase in number of children). In time of the data collection, one of the leaders (working as leader for the whole decade) has decided to leave. The two girls’ troops have got a new young leader and this situation uncovered more intensively several issues that the centre and its members are facing to (e.g. taciturnity of the centre, exchange of experiences and preparation of future leaders, lack of time, communication issues; see below).

We didn’t know many things, we didn’t know how to do many things, how to plan activities so that they were enjoyable, we didn’t know how to deal with people and so on.

(…)

I’m very close to the children, and they are to me, and the idea that the relationship should be mutual was relatively remote to me. The scouting idea was completely missing so in fact, it wasn’t really a Scout group. It could well have been any free time activity; any education was missing, or direction for future development, personal development was missing. It was a free time activity; the kids were meeting but we built it all gradually.

(Scouts, R2, female; describing the process of development of the centre and leaders)

2.3 Conceptualisations of Youth

2.3.1 Youth in the Idealists

The Idealist are rather young, (white) middle class citizens. The young generation of the Idealists have rather higher education (focus on humanities and social sciences). More members are men, men are also more active in discussions, from seven candidates in elections only two of them were women. As already mentioned above, the association is led by gender-balanced elected board, the gender is also one of the cross-sectional topic – highlighted mostly by Michaela (Miša, the board member) and Radim (the chairman). During the meeting of the association, they try to push women to speak more often and to provide them with significant voice.

During the discussion Michaela is still trying to appeal on women at the congress (there is only about 8 women) to speak (asking for next comment from woman). Michaela is evidently sad from speaking men – she mentioned “sausage party” and how it is hard to speak in front of 30 staring men. (Later is Michaela regretted it, because she was upset – thinking that their comment didn’t help). (Field notes, 2.12. Congress)

**Basic description from questionnaires at congress (N=27):**
- Average age 32.15 (Median=29.5; min. 20, max. 69, N=26)
- 6 women from 27 respondents
- 70 % working fulltime
- 7 students (out of 27)
- Except of two respondents, they all live in big city
- They do not differ in their life satisfaction from general Czech youth population (WP7 questionnaire, November 2017)
- Most of them have higher education (esp. younger ones)

\(^5\) Few members are from minorities. At the same time, they are rather from privileged educated groups of citizens.
... when I met the Idealists...there was a debate at the university where they appeared, and Radim - they impressed me: Hey, there is a group of young people, actually the social democrats, who seem to be normal. And it could be good to spend time with people with the same values, are young, have a terribly similar life experience (...) we usually have humanity education, like, then there are like there are some architects, there are engineers there, as well. Such a typical Idealist is just a man, 25, with degree from political science... (the Idealists, R5, male)

Image 2.5: The congress in 2015. Source: Facebook.

The active core of the Idealist is young, the leader of the association is 26 years old. The age is also one of the reasons why they get attention from media before the election (Image 6, 7). Radim was described by media as one the politicians from the youngest generation (also the youth and their participation was very visible topic in the Czech media).

Image 2.6-2.7: Radim running a campaign, article ‘We, the politicians from Bahnhof Facebook.’ Source: Respekt.

The most active members are those younger (under 30), although there are many older ones (members of CSSD, e.g. Jiří Dienstbier). About half of the members are also members of CSSD. It is interesting that applicants for membership in the Idealists (they are invited to the regular meetings to introduce themselves) are very young (some of them younger than 18), mostly males (some of them members of CSSD, some of them not).

The average age is around thirty. Most of us are young but not everyone is very young. The initial
group weren’t just youngsters. I’m recalling a photo from the establishing meeting of the Idealists and the people were around forty, but it’s true that it’s the number of younger members that’s growing, not the older ones. (…) 

Are the younger ones different to the older ones?
I don’t really know…They are interested in politics. It’s mainly boys, which I think is a pity. Two newcomers have just joined because they take part in debating contests; that’s done at grammar schools. They said they have been debating social matters, which led them into politics. But what will lead them to take an interest in leftist politics…

(…) Someone else told me his parents are totally right-wing, so he came to us to have someone to talk to about it.
Maybe they are looking for a place where they can talk about it without fear of being judged; back then it was interesting. Because when someone new comes to a meeting, we want them to introduce themselves. We simply want to get to know a bit about them before we let him join. We don’t mean to be elitist, but we’d like to know who we have amongst us, and the person should also know what’s going on. So that they don’t think… and when I was introducing myself at that first meeting (…) (The Idealists, R4, female)

We’ve gradually been setting up a group for the young from 15 to up to 21 or 25. There are just a few of us, maybe 6, and some of the boys are brilliant. For example, XX, that’s a really smart kid. He’s just been to the World Debating Championship, which is a similar group like the summit one, and he is ambitious and really good. So, it’s super to have someone like him in the Idealists.
We were thinking we could set up something in the same format and visit grammar schools to address young people. That’s one of the challenges, because I think we do address people through the media, but personal contact is useful because you can ask them to fill in the registration form or tell them to come to a meeting or an event. (The Idealists, R3, male)

Perception of youth and their role in the Idealists
The Idealists are aware that the younger members are the most active within the group. In comparison to the older ones (who are more connected to the party, more passive, rather talking than doing), the younger generation is perceived as more progressive, still having strength and enthusiasm. On the other hand, many members are aware that they are not able to be that active anymore (e.g. the want to have family) and that they need the younger members: “We don’t want to be leaders forever – so we need people who would be willing to invest time into it and to be honest. It must be someone who is at school, at uni, otherwise it won’t work. A thirty-year-old can’t do it, because it’d have to be a paid post.” (the Idealists, R1, male)
They want to address especially young students.

They are dropping out. In Czech politics, people under thirty are considered active young but they have almost the same problems as the older ones, maybe even worse because they are getting mortgages, starting families and so on; and to be able to be fully active and devote yourself to it, that has to happen before all this. So, to be young in politics shouldn’t mean you are around thirty but around 18. I’d like to do more now, because until now I was at grammar school. You can think, oh yes, a grammar school, but you do spend whole days there, morning till evening, five days a week and then you do a sport or art, you need some time to do other things, you are interested in public matters, so there is no time for that. Intellectually, there might be people who are capable of doing it all but they just don’t have the time.
(…) The CSSD has about 19,000 members, but only 3,000 of those are active. The rest, the majority of the member base are extremely passive. If only we could find a thousand people…
Where would you look for them? What people? What people? It’d be a great advantage if they were students because they are not dependent. They are not very much reliant on their parents or posts, they aren’t responsible for their children and nobody can blackmail them and they have a lot of time, so that would be fantastic. But unfortunately, in the current climate the young don’t tend towards social democracy – and I
totally understand it. (the Idealists, R3, male)

One of the main aim of the Idealists is to spread leftist ideas among young citizens and to involve them in politics and in decision making processes. According to the Idealists, there is a strong potential in youth (youth as progressive and idealistic), but also young people are viewed as often rather inactive and their engagement and interest in and awareness of politics as quite low. Politics is considered as 'dirty play' by the youth, and as closed to them. “And person in twenties or thirties, having enough troubles with study, living, starting family – such person doesn’t want to deal with politics, that have very bad image and that seems boring four people outside.” (from interview with Jan Bittner, source: http://student.e15.cz/q-a/od-nezajmu-opolitiku-nas-feri-privedl-k-politickemu-bulvaru-rika-sobotkuv-nejmladsi-poradce-1340319)

(...) Well, what did you motivate to do? Or why would you want it to work?
Because I have always hoped that the young ones will somehow activate and have some strength. That they can open up any subject, they are young and they have energy.

(...) Just as I see it in some young people, how they are against dirty politicians and lies, I was totally the same.

And are you still the same?
I'm not. I understand it's different. That, in fact, the interest in the policy among young people is not too great, because they do not know much and do not know how they could change (...). (the Idealists, R7, male)

Youth as topic and as target group
Although it might seem that for the Idealists young people are the prime and logical target group (as part of the same generation), they are just one of many. Simply, the Idealists deal with issues and topics that are important for them (e.g. ecology, community living, generation gap). These topics than can (secondary) attract youth (“there aren’t themes for the young but that there are themes that can be communicated to the young”). During the election campaign, the Idealists found that their topics (strong focus on social issues, see below) and Radim as a candidate attracted mostly women, and especially mothers with kids, or young people in their twenties.

Because even then there were some party members who were following us on Facebook and we knew they liked us; they were older and so we said we were not going to set up yet another youth organisation completely needlessly, so we got rid of the age limit and now we even have senior members.

(...)
Is that interesting for you in any particular way?
We don’t even want that. Or, in my opinion, we are pursuing the idea that there aren’t themes for the young but that there are themes that can be communicated to the young. For example, it seems a bit un-strategic to me if a young person only identifies digitally. That’s an agenda. In my opinion, the young have a lot of things to solve and so I think that’s why the Pirates have a young electorate, because maybe they don’t manage to convince other people who are solving the same problems. And we have the potential to handle work and housing, which I think is crucial for graduates. And I think it’s what everyone has to deal with, so, in fact…

(...) As far as I know from the statistics, I mostly appeal to older women over 50 or people over 25.

How do you actually know this?
I know this thanks to Facebook statistics, where the demography is accurate. And also some personal experience. When we were running the campaign, they responded best to me… Mums with kids or girls and boys my age, because they took it, simply, that someone younger is engaged in it. And they can be a bit critical, and even when I am a social democrat, I have never been told to go fuck myself by someone young. It's usually older guys who say “you are too young, you know fuck all”.

(the Idealists, R1, male)
So are you targeting young voters?
That's a pretty good question, because I really do not know. Statistics from Facebook and other sites show that my generation is the most visited, ie people from twenty five to thirty. This is the biggest group watching me. And it's understandable because they are the people I want to talk about.

(…)

And you have content.
Well, I have the content. Memes are sometimes cool, but it is not enough. I do not want to be a man sliding on the surface. I think it is important that "content is king". For me it is more important to be authentic than having some professional processing. (Interview with Radim Hejduk, 18. 10. 2017. Source: http://student.e15.cz/q-a/cssd-neni-tak-zkostnatela-jak-si-lide-mysli-rika-radim-hejduk-1338636)

The Idealists are successful in attracting youth (and other groups of users) on social networking sites, and on Facebook especially. Radim Hejduk became the most popular candidate of CSSD on Facebook – Radim had more fans than the prime minister Sobotka. Radim was very active before elections, creating (with help with other members) several memes and videos – mostly presenting some successful projects (the communication of both Idealists and Radim Hejduk is very positive), case studies (they often used famous videos from other countries and created Czech subtitles). Some of the content was massively spread and was seen by thousands of people (see Image 8). They uploaded these videos on his website (to bring people there.

Image 2.8: One of the most successful posts on Facebook page of Radim Hejduk was shared by 60 thousand of users. ‘What does happen, if you merge a kindergarten with a home for the elderly?’ Source: Facebook; and image 2.9: ’The super event with youth in Ostrava. I am glad that they invited me to the debate - and that there is youth, that care what is happening around them! More people like these and our country will look different.’ Source: Facebook.

Relationships, friendships
As mentioned above, the Idealists were created as the project of a groups of young friends. These friends (and several others) still form the core of the association (about 20 people). They often spend free time together (some of them also work together), go on vacation together, and to the pub. Some of them have also formed romantic couples (there are about 4 couples in the Idealists including Radim and Michaela). It seems difficult to 'penetrate' into the core of the group (which creates members of different categories). This is also connected to issues with communication in the Idealists:
The core is 20 friends – it is somehow growing, but it is unsustainable as the association is going bigger. Because it is mainly up to them – to Radim and those people, those 3 or 4 around him, sitting with him in the office, and Miša [Michaela] which is living with him. (the Idealist, R5, male)

Field notes, Idealists/ 28. – 29. 7. – Idearetreat
There’s a lot of fun in the car, we talk about personal things, especially about love and sexual relationships.
(...)
It is said that there is one woman in the Idealists sleeping with everyone – and also several couples, and that their formation or breakups may have implications for the functioning of the association. Now it is said that one has broken up and XX expresses curiosity about how it would resonate.
(...)
People have fun in small groups, sometimes speaking about autumn elections, but mostly about relationships and sex. I join the guitar. We sing. After that, I talk with some people just about personal things. One of them - some high-ranking young social democrat tries to bring a more political topic into the group, but no one seems to be too responsive, the politics of the conversation acts as a killer of entertainment. Only political jokes are working.

2.3.2 The Scouts - “Thirteen”

Youth in “Thirteen”

The centre is very unique, because there are no senior leaders. The centre is led by youth (under 30) and it serves for leisure-time education of youth and children (6/7+). The members of the centre are both males and females (females leading girls, males leading boys). The youngest members participating in decision-making processes and taking responsibility for children are so called ‘guides’ (15-17). On the other hand, the oldest members in the centre in Lužánky led the centre (and troops) for several years after the change we mentioned above. Most of the members are 18-25 years old, university or high school students, (lower) middle class, living in Brno (the second biggest city in Czechia, more than 400 thousands of citizens). Besides regular members, there are also many ‘external’ members (e.g. older Scouts, friends) helping the centre at, for example, summer camp for couple of days, going for trips with troops etc.6


6 One the respondents is one of the external members. She is a girlfriend of the mayor of the centre, having experiences from another centre.
Young leaders spend time with children and youth, educating them and raising new leaders (for aims and practices see below). The respondents perceive big differences between younger and older troops, between children and adolescents/youth – although the leaders also differ regarding preferences to work with younger or older groups of children/adolescents:

**You were always in charge of older boys, Scouts, not Cubs?**

Only in that year. Everyone probably prefers a different strategy. When I started to work with the little ones, I could see they listened to my every word. And they were so enthusiastic about anything. (abbreviated)

That’s the difference between the younger children. I also noticed that they are much more motivated to do anything, even simple silliness. On the other hand, the older boys are easier to talk to, with some, even about their opinions and hobbies. When you go out on a trip with them and chat, it’s less tiresome than walking with a Cub for three hours who talks about Minecraft. One more thing about the Cubs. I like that you can shape them much more. (Scouts, R3, male)

The children are perceived as more enthusiastic and open to ideas and education (e.g. easier to teach them values and ‘idea’ – see below), respectful of authority, but they are also more restive, and it is harder to keep their attention. At the same time, the older Scouts often lose their interest in puberty and it is hard to attract them to stay active. It seems there are also differences between girls and boys – boys are not so much motivated as girls (boys are more often leaving the centre if they reach their puberty), and also motivations and interest to join are stronger in case of girls (they often join with a friend, a schoolmate).³

**What do you like about that?**

Most communication with these children. Besides, I have the opportunity to direct those children into that life, their development. By the time they reach puberty, I can direct them. Of course, when they get into puberty, they can turn around and go in another direction. But now it’s possible to direct something, to offer them an attractive program, which they will like to remember them. (…) So to leave them some memories of life. What’s more than a nice thing in life. This is actually the beginning, then the Scout may give them some direction. (Scouts, R7, male)

**Friendships, relationships**

As in the case of the Idealists, friendships play very important role as motivation to stay in the association and are a very important element influencing the organisation and communication in the centre. After the change in the centre ten years ago, the stable core of the centre was created (extended by several new leaders raised during next few years). However, the inner ring of friends became rather closed to other people and to new leaders (see communication and trust issue below) – and the generation gap was re-created to some degree. Friendships seem very strong in the centre (in the core, in the troops, between several leaders and outside of the centre – with other Scouts); many friendships began after joining centre and were formed for several years, and many of them are inter-generational (e.g. among children and leaders). Several respondents mentioned they share something with other Scouts, they share similar values, experiences, life-style – and they can trust such people (see below) and they often spend their free time with other Scouts.

The best motivation is the bunch of people around the group that met when they were 12-13. We do things together outside the group too. We’ve just been to Poland, trekking in the mountains.

³ It could be caused by different leader, see below.

⁸ For example, during our observation we noticed that older girls are very often hugging.
We meet outside Scouts, which, in my opinion, is important for both members and us. (Scouts, R3, female)

…and it needs to be said that apart from the kids and all things scouting-related, such strong friendships start and grow, which is unbelievable. It’s really difficult to describe – it’s a kind of a relationship based on unbelievable sacrifices. The friendship started in dreadful conditions, we were both absolutely desperate and had to find our way to each other not to kill the other one. Unbelievable. (Scouts, R2, female)

Image 2.12: ‘Such strong friendships start and grow, which is unbelievable. (Scouts, R2, female)’ Glowworms, autumn 2017. Source: http://svetlusky.trinactka.com/.

2.4 Active Citizenship

2.4.1 The Idealists

Democracy and values
According to questionnaire data (Tab. 1 in Appendix B), the Idealists are – in comparison to general population of Czech youth (20-26 years old) – more in support of democracy, more interested in politics, have higher political efficacy (external), and are more tolerant (to refugees), and their social trust is higher (trust in other people). They also report lower alienation (from political institutions) and much lower authoritarianism. Interestingly, they perceive themselves as less able to achieve their goals than other youth – which can refer to the Idealists’ higher reflexivity, or higher personal goals.

'We are building our association on freedom, justice and solidarity' (http://idealiste.cz/).

Among the general and cross-sectional topics of the Idealists are equality and solidarity. These topics were mostly addressed in connection to work, wages and the working conditions of employees, but the Idealists address them even more broadly (for example: the chairman is focused on topic of intergenerational solidarity and quality of life of Czech seniors). Besides these topics we can identify several other promoted topics (and values connected to them) such as tolerance and issue of human rights: support of refugees, LGBT, women’s rights, fight against right-wing nationalism (and other topics as ecology or poverty). These topics are addressed especially by younger members and it is obvious that there is not a clear consensus about these topics and their importance (topics connected to more traditional topics like work are perceived as more important).

The Idealists have several specialized working groups (on Facebook) – one of them is focused on human rights.
Every year, the Idealists select one important issue as their main focal point and address it through more systematic campaign (in 2017 it was ecology and urbanism). The year 2018 should be devoted to democracy (and specifically to civic engagement, quality of democracy, participation and mobilization of citizens) because the topic is perceived as crucial (particularly in case of the youth): 'I want to deal the future of participation, how to mobilize citizens, how to create the feeling – we are part of this process. Because I expect that we will need it if Babiš will win election [note: Babiš, the leader of the populists ANO party, his party won election two months later] – it will be very important to have active and proactive discussion about democracy, because I see the situation in Poland, in Hungary, partly in Slovakia. There the discussion about democracy just stopped.' (the Idealists, R6, male)
Today we celebrate the International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biophobia. The Idealists support equal rights LGBT+ community. This year we supported the campaign for adoption by same-sex marriage. We always will be on the side of those who are discriminated because of their gender, age, skin or sexual orientation. We wish better future and equal rights to everyone. (Source: Facebook)

Anna Dumont, our member and a migration expert, describes the main outputs of the research on discrimination of minorities made by the European Agency for Fundamental Rights. There is clear need: the integration all groups of citizens and respect for human rights. (…)' (Source: Facebook)

Two answers to question: What the Idealists should focus on? Internal informal survey conducted for the Congress:

- Support all the weak groups in the society that deserve it. These are sexual minorities, women, the fight against racism, but also foreigners who are being exploited. I want to have an optimistic open society.
- No LGBT, feminism and similar marginal topics, that's the way to hell. Nothing against this, but it must not be a major topic. No refugees.

(December 17) On Saturday, there were representatives of far-right and populist parties in Prague who hate the EU and everything else. Our association took part in a demonstration against this congress. Anna Dumont gave the speech: We have to build bridges between them and not to close. We have to discuss, explain and argue. And still keep in mind that the world is not black and white. We have to learn from the kindergarten to think critically and to be able to defend our opinion. Already at elementary school, they learn to search for sources of information, verify them, and make themselves known in the media world of today's world. Reach the responsibility of the social networking sites for their content.

Dialogue, tolerance and justice, social peace. These are not just empty phrases. It is a way of not ending in the gaps of nationalism that always leads to cruel conflicts. That is why we say: For a common Europe, without fear and hate! (from the Facebook of the Idealists)
The Idealists’ repertoire of participation is very broad (Tab. 2 in Appendix B and Graph 1 in Appendix C) - they share political content online/discuss online/join political groups on Facebook, they often work for a party, contact politicians, they are also political consumers via boycotting/buying products, they donate money to political parties and social causes, they are engaged in charity work, they participate in protest events and also sign petitions. Although they participate in many different types of events (moreover they also organise their own events - mostly focused on spreading information, discussions, excursions etc.), we can identify several key features of their repertoire:

- While in case of the Czech young adults’ acts associated to institutionalised politics (parties, politicians) are less frequent, the Idealists are strongly focused on institutionalised politics (contacting politicians, worked for the party, donating money).
- The Idealists participate frequently via the internet and Facebook (spreading and creating content, discussing).
- Along with their strong focus on political institutions, the Idealists are also active regarding to social issues or charity (see below). Moreover, they employ even more unconventional (and more violent) forms of participation such as taking part in demonstration/occupation – but these actions seem less frequent (42 % of respondents from the Idealists took part in more violent political event in last year).

Focus on traditional institutions

Individual Idealists are highly interested in (and oriented towards) traditional (national) party politics (often since their childhood or adolescence). This is one of the very unique features of this association. Since they were established several years ago by a group of young social democrats, they are still personally connected to the party and most of them are focused on party politics with an aim to transform/change CSSD to more progressive and democratic party (by running and winning election as Idealists in CSSD) and to communicate issues that were not addressed by more conservative politicians in CSSD.

What’s your goal?
The main goal…When I joined the CSSD, it was after Paroubek (former leader of CSSD), so the most important aim was to cultivate the image, which did gradually change, I think. We simply want to be a social structure in a party which will influence the party’s image. And appeal directly to the public, but also have an influence within the party, and be able to have our say. Which is becoming successful, so the aims are two-fold. We would like to introduce a left-wing option that doesn’t look like Miloš Zeman. But I also aim to run for the post. Actually, the goal is to have as many Idealists as possible standing as candidates for the CSSD.

You have been talking about digging into the party’s functions and that it has to come from the bottom. How successful has it been? How has it changed in the last two years?
I’d say one of our biggest successes so far, and that’s also thanks to Jiří Dienstbier, was that we managed to make the party run a referendum inside the party to agree that the statute will include the primary election. So now thanks to us, the party has a primary election, which works poorly though. We criticised how it is run, but it doesn’t matter, the primaries are there and I think that’s one of the biggest successes in how we changed the party. (The Idealists, R1, male)

They are part of the establishment and they want to be – although the main idea of the Idealists and its position in system is challenged and questioned by many members (see below), as well as connection to several institutions. Many of the Idealists’ key members are working for governmental institutions (e.g. the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs) which provides them with opportunity to work on issues they are interested, to be in contact with key persons and institutions. On the other hand, their connection to institutions (party, Ministries, the Trade Unions) is also perceived negatively
because it disallows them to be more critical to the party, to the government and their policies.

Many of them are also, (as mentioned above), members of CSSD or YSD (Young Social Democrats) – and most of them joined these organisation at early age because they were highly interested in politics and parties. Several of them described how they differed at schools – as leftist and interested in politics – so they were looking for similar people to meet and to talk to (YSD, later the Idealists):

**Was there anything you could share with friends, if you couldn't share it at home?**
It was my hobby, I talked to those kids when I was thirteen. For example, we talked about whether our parents voted for this or that. What I think drew me to it was history, I was so much into it, millions of books, and from there it’s only a little step to politics.

**Was there anything else you took part in?**
At my elementary school there was a Mensa club, I liked that, but that was about it. Then the YSD and the last two years I attended Student Summits and the American Congress Model. We are going to have the congress in September, I really like that. I enjoy the congress much more than the summit. I attended the summit last year, I was acting as Russia and that was fun, I was the bad guy, and this year I was France, and I didn’t like that, that wasn’t controversial. (the Idealists, R3, male)

Even by media the Idealists are perceived as part of the establishment (or of the party), they are described as progressive wing in CSSD. Also, in last couple of months (and especially after defeat in election)\(^\text{10}\) the leader of the Idealists was frequently asked about future of the party (Image 18, 19).

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\(^{10}\) The election took place in October 20th-21st. And CSSD (former governmental party) got only 7.27% (even less than communists party). The leader of the Idealists got 1 153 preferential votes in Prague (the first and only elected candidate of the party got 2 322 votes).
FIELD NOTES: Idealists/ 1.5. – May 1st (International Workers' Day) at Špilberk Castle in Brno.

The event was organised by the Czech-Moravian Confederation of Trade Unions (ČMKOS), in Brno (the second largest Czech city, in the courtyard of the Špilberk castle).

(...) Idealists had stand with the banner with poll on cheap labour (and deck chair with logo). The visitors had opportunity to vote for the minimum wage height (by using coloured stickers), for the shortening of working hours (from five to four days a week).

Two young (male) Idealists (stand) and the Radim with Michaela stayed here for several hours and talked with people. The visitors mostly didn’t know nothing about Idealists, but they were quite willing to discuss about the quality of work and wages in the Czech Republic. The Idealists didn’t promote their association – they were rather focused on the topic.

(...) It is obvious they know many people from the event (ČMKOS).

16:15 - The Czech prime minister Sobotka arrived and walked around with the leader of ČMKOS Stříedula. They visited also the stand of the Idealists, they friendly talked with Radim (they asked on their poll) and they posed for cameras (spend about 10-15 minutes there). It was obvious they know Radim and they were very friendly.

The photo with the poll appeared in mainstream media: https://www.novinky.cz/domaci/436581-sobotka-chce-zvysovat-minimalni-mzdu.html

Note: The event of Idealists was held under the label #KonecLevnePrace (#EndofCheapLabour). #KonecLevnePrace is broad national campaign of ČMKOS, supported by other organisation – e.g. by the social democrats.
Focus on Facebook
The Idealists use Facebook for internal communication and organisation in thematic working groups (most of them have Facebook). Many members are very active on Facebook. According to our questionnaire (Tab. 2 in Appendix B), in the last year 69% of them created political content online, 100% of them joined social or political group, 96% discussed politics on the internet and 92% shared music or video with political content. The Idealists use their Facebook page\(^\text{11}\) for spreading information about relevant issues, spreading information about their events and about the Idealists (articles in media), for discussions, for getting feedback from people (often asking for opinions).

They use several features to attract people, to get greater visibility, impact and broader audience:

- hashtags – tagging organisations/people/places in their posts,
- asking people / other users to open interaction,
- simple videos with subtitles (to see also in cell phones without sound), they also create memes and infographic (Image 23),
- simple language and their communication is quite positive (focusing on stories, interesting case studies),
- they are also rather avoiding conflicting, negative or controversial topics.

The leader was even more active on Facebook than the Idealists’ page (in December he was followed by 22 thousand users while the Idealists’ page had 7 thousand fans).\(^\text{12}\) He shared and created videos and other content, he actively participated in discussions on his page (he was very polite, the published content was mostly positive and personalized). Radim also created public group for citizens interested in generation gap\(^\text{13}\) or led campaign ‘the Heroes of everyday life’ (Image 23).

We have also clearly signed up to the European campaign #EndTaxEvasionNow, which wants to avoid tax evasion by proposing a minimum global corporation tax rate of 25%. This is the average corporate tax in the world and we are deep below it! It is not possible to solve this problem unless it is in cooperation with other states, mainly in the European Union. 5.12. (Source: Facebook)

\(^{11}\) https://www.facebook.com/Idealistse.cz/
\(^{12}\) https://www.facebook.com/hejduk.r/
\(^{13}\) https://www.facebook.com/groups/respekt generace/
Image 2.22: The picture shared after election on the Facebook page of the Idealists. 'The democracy is ruined. What to do?'; 'To be sad and do nothing'; 'To complain about fake news'; 'To join to the Idealists?' Source: Facebook; image 2.23: In his campaign 'The heroes of everyday life', the leader of the Idealists introduced interesting people and their powerful stories. Source: Facebook; and image 2.24: 'Dear all, recently I talked a lot about cohabitations of different generations. A lot of people wrote me they like the idea of intergenerational centres – and because of these reactions I feel obliged to continue. But I cannot do it myself. So, I decided to created Facebook group “Respect among generations” – and I like to see you there. We can communicate there, and we can share tips and clever solutions. (…)'

**Non-violent, non-radical participation**

Although the Idealists participate in collective action (or they organised some – e.g. in 2013 after Lány coup) they are rather participating (as an association) in those less violent or radical. 96% of respondents participated in demonstration or strike (in last 12 months), 42% participated in more violent forms (with physical contact, police etc.), 27% participated in occupations of buildings or public spaces. During our research we noticed an obvious disagreement regarding actions which the Idealists should support or attend (and groups organisations). Some activities were perceived as more radical or controversial – members can attend them, but they cannot officially represent the Idealists (with their signs, flag, etc., because of the ‘risk of reputation’ (see R1). Some members are more radical (in their values as well) and are willing use more controversial repertoire of contention.

**You said you understand why they didn’t want to revolt.**

Well, I both do and don’t understand it. To clarify, those people are reliable because when there is an ideological issue, they take the right stance. For example, when we were organising with them…(thinking) that was against the TTIP, that transatlantic partnership. I think that works well, because the interest is identical and we wouldn’t mind being a part of the protest. But recently, as we are more and more in the media, I think it’s increasingly necessary to check what image is being formed. To be a bit pragmatic in not damaging it; some recent news was about the 1st May events, and that was that the anarchists started a fight in Prague and then our name turns up in between that, which isn’t very good for our name. There is some risk to our reputation. (The Idealists, R1, male)

In May 2017, the Idealists officially participated in protests against Andrej Babiš (the leader of the populist party ANO, the Minister) and Miloš Zeman (Czech president), they created banners (Image 28) and about 30 of them came to Wenceslas Square in Prague to express disagreement with Babiš and Zeman and their cooperation and agency regarding to the resignation of the government led by Sobotka. After the protest, several members criticized the format of the
demonstration (suggesting that it should be better organised, with program, more constructive). Participation in Prague Pride is among the Idealists’ regular activities (Image 26).

Image 2.25: The Idealists participating in protest against Babiš and Zeman. Source: Facebook; and image 26: The Idealist at Prague Pride (The Idealists for fair family), with Young Social Democrats (YSD). Source: Facebook.

Information and discussion
One of their main activities is spreading information about relevant issues and discussing about them. Their aim is to cover issues they consider to be but are not sufficiently addressed by social democrats – these issues are omitted by the party due to its conservative or due complexity or general unpopularity of these topics (e.g. LGBT, gender, the European Union). The Idealists mostly use Facebook and their website to communicate these topics, but they also organise their own events (debates, meetings with the Idealists etc.).

Do you want to enjoy the summer weekend in the middle of Prague? Are you interested in who the Idealists are and what they do? Do you want to eat and drink a bit? We invite you to a traditional picnic with Idealists, where we can talk informally about what interests you in politics and beyond.

Arrive on Saturday 15th July at 15:30 (or later, we will definitely be there until evening) to Riegrovy sady on the main sightseeing in Prague. You will know us by the red colour! (from the invitation to the event, source: Facebook)

Image 2.27-2.28: The discussion about current political situation, about the role and position of social democracy with the sociologist T. Stöckelová and the political scientist O. Císař. Source: Facebook.
Charity and community
Most members are active in charity, donating money to social cause or volunteering. Some of the Idealists also work or worked in NGOs or they have experiences with several other projects dealing with social issues/causes (e.g. Anna Dumont on migration). These engaged people bring these topics also to the Idealists – along with their know-how and expertise. Although the engagement in charity or volunteering is rather of individual nature, the members often share information about interesting projects and they invite people to engage (Image 34). Every year before the Christmas, the Idealists also collect clothes for charity (Image 32, 33).

Image 2.29-2.31: The Ideopicnic (informal meeting with Idealists) in Prague. The leader of CSSD in election, Zaorálek, at the picnic. Zaorálek used the photo from picnic as coverphoto on his Facebook page. Source: Facebook.
Image 2.32-2.33: The Idealists collect clothes.

Image 2.34: Charity for poor children and children living in asylum houses. 'Our member, Anna Dumont, participate in the project Shoeboxes: Today Sebastian brought shoebox with surprise to the school. (...) donate the shoebox.' Source: Facebook.

2.4.2 The Scouts – “Thirteen”

In case of the Scouts, their idea of the active citizenship can be seen in their values and agency as well as in education of children and younger Scouts (what they want to learn them/how should Scouts behave). The Scouts also perceived that the idea of citizenship (see below) is contained in the laws of Scouts (to be Scout=to be active citizen).

‘Growing up in a scout troop means having a chance to live fully. Be active and find your own place in the world. Scouting is an opportunity to develop not only yourself but also your surroundings. Scouts and Scouts are trying to create a better world by taking their own lives into their own hands.

Scouting honours all the following values:

- play fair
- work with others
- be environmentally friendly
- have a relationship with nature’ (Scout.cz)

In case of the Scouts, ‘active citizenship’ stems mostly from ‘caring about surroundings/people/environment/animals/community. It is very focused on the broader community and on civic acts embedded in everyday life, not on institutionalised politics. This active citizenship for them is about everydayness, about values, about self-development (with focus on soft skills) and responsibility. According to our respondents, the Scouts learn to be active and to be a good person, they learn how to take responsibility (to be a leader, to help others), they learn how to work in group/community with respect to others, they learn how to communicate (and give/get feedback) and they learn about democracy and values (see below). They learn how to be active citizens during regular and irregular meetings and trips/camps: ‘Each group meeting is a combination of playful activities and also learning activities. But even
that is done in a playful form. Ideally, the meeting should be filled with activities that support our aims.’ (Scouts, R3, male).

Although several of the Scouts in our research (but not all of them) are also interested in national (or global) politics, **their focus is rather more local, and community based.** I would like to give them a team spirit so that the boys in the ring where they go to the Scout are happy. To give them the foundation for some friendship to life. Then, to be independent, to learn how to orient in the world and in life. These are the common issues as I said before. It’s important, I’m watching a lot now, working to make the guys come together to be friends. It will come to me that today they are often unnecessarily aggressive, do not communicate together, and then aggressive moments arise. One did not agree with others because they are not able to communicate with each other, so there is automatically no need for a dispute between them. It wants to teach them to act fair. Faithfully behave, come out with others, communicate. It’s so hard to figure out some means. (Scouts, R7, male)

There are created the right values for children and adults. It’s such a virtual reality, and it’s really real. My scouting world - I, when I’m disgusted with the world, what is now, because these people are incredibly superficial or they need to solve unimportant things. So I go where those people are completely different. They are good. Not all, not always, but they are just good, and I believe in them and I believe them.

**You talked about the right values, what does that mean to you?**

It means for me - willingness. That I can rely on these people to say something to them and I do not have to check for a million times if they did or ask them "did you print the papers or not when I asked you three times?" Responsibility on both sides. Mutual tolerance. (thinks) Honesty, a lot, because ... (thinks) we have the scout law as the first point, the Scout is sincere. (Scouts, R6, female)

**Being active and a ‘good person’**

The Scouts teaches children and youth to be active citizens in the sense that they can decide about their own life and surroundings. The aim is that they learn to care and to have an interest about the world: ‘I’m an active Czech citizen, or I’m an active member of the community where I live. The active approach.’ (Scouts, R3, male)

**What should children take away from the Scouts?**

I’d like them to be prepared for life, in particular not be afraid to live, to make decisions, to stand up for their beliefs whatever they are, on any life path. To know that their decisions carry weight and that they can value themselves. That’s really important for me; I want people to be worthy in the sense that they respect each other, thanks to which they can make the world better, just simply by being who they are. That’s the most I can wish for. (Scouts, R2, female)

**So if a child leaves, not continuing to become a leader, what should he or she, as a 16-year old, take away? What do you aspire to lead the children to?**

That’s the goal of this research, what leads people...it all fits. I’d like them to be active and interested in the world around them, to be friendly and open-minded. (Scouts, R1, male)

**What should a kid take away from Scouts, in your opinion?**

The active approach to life, I think. Not to be a passive player, and that also concerns things like voting in the election. I’m an active Czech citizen, or I’m an active member of the community where I live.

(Scouts, R3, male)

Especially to be good people. That, if I screamed at them, they would think it was all right, so I do not yell at them. Just to make good people out of them. That was the case at home, that my mom's priority was to be nice to us - exactly what I wanted. So, some creativity, creativity, thinking in action, independence, and being proud of each other. (Scouts, R6, female)
To take responsibility and leadership
The youth leaders teach children and youth to participate in decision-making processes, the children are also gradually learning how to take responsibility (and to eventually become Guides or leaders): ‘Scouts have a fantastic method, which is that the younger learn from the older. The older became role-models for the younger, so the older teach the younger.’ (Scouts, R3, male)

Field notes from the last meeting before the Christmas party (Glowworms):
The girls got a clear assignment a few weeks ago. They had to prepare a performance that would combine several elements: there must be something scout, there must be a fairy tale and there must be Christmas customs. The leaders of troops do not interfere to the content of the performance, just advice.

(…)
The girls are invited work in their patrols (sixs) - to train their Christmas performance. They are in charge of young leaders of their patrols (each with 6 to 10 children). Little leaders (mostly the oldest ones in the patrols, I the age 10-11) thus lead their friends and coordinate their performances. They know what to do.

(…)
One of the adult leaders tells me that one of the young leaders (in six) has even brought the completely prepared performance printed on paper (for others). Among others, they are perceived as a great authority and listen to it.

One year, this was even our main aim. It was called member activation, and we said at the beginning of the year that the boys were passive. That they accept and ‘consume’ everything but they don’t make any effort to make the group gel well. And some only attended the events and just let things run. So we wanted them to participate more in the decisions about the programme and on the group’s activities. To make them more responsible. That was even through some games, in which they were in charge of the group for a while and had to organise things for themselves.

(…)
As for the responsibility, I haven’t thought about it very much. It was handed over to me gradually, so I didn’t really notice it. Only once I took the group over formally, did I think that I mightn’t be fully ready – but it has worked all right in the end. (Scouts, R3, male)

Emphasis on team work/community with respect to individuality
The activities are mostly focused on team work. The children and youth learn how to work in a group, how to cooperate (and do not be shy) and communicate (to speak and listen). At the same time, the leaders (and mostly females) tend to be sensitive to individuals: they know them,
they see them every (for several years), they see their development and issues they are struggling
with (the leaders have to deal with bullying, issues in families, fears etc.).

What should the Scout, who passes all this, leave at the age of 16, does not want to go, is
not the manager, what should he know?
I think s/he should have the ability to come out in a company. S/he should be able to perceive
the collective. S/he should be able to work in a collective. At the same time, however, it should
be separate. I think they can both learn. Independence and also a team spirit. Maybe it's
contradictory, but it's definitely practical. Further knowledge of the common world - the
functioning of the world.

Our project is focused on active citizenship. Do you think the Scout helped the kids to
learn the skills to be a good citizen, for example under the responsibility?
Yes. I think I have it too, I carry it in my head. In addition to what I said, I think that in a Scout
one learns to listen. But he is also the one who constructs something, he thinks. Then you have
to be able to say, describe yourself in words. Otherwise, one learns to be led and also to be a
leader. This is probably the most difficult thing to say. Yes, so it can correspond with that
citizenship. (Scouts, R7, male)

Most centres take children as a whole and do not care about individual cases. However, individual problems are solved here. Now we had a little girl in the camp who could not sleep
without my mom, because ... (nose roll) I got a cold. Because they had some family problems, her
parents divorced. She could not fall asleep and had really hysterical seizures. So we slept with her
every night, some of the leaders, in the tent. And ... (spitting) like that. (Scouts, R6, female)

Communication (intergenerational), discussion, feedback
As we found in our research at schools (WP6, focus groups with students), that Czech students
often feel that nobody listens to them and or cares about them. Such feelings were, in several
cases, linked with resignation, passivity of the students, demotivation, and alienation – in the
school and, also, on a national and supranational level. The students in focus groups mentioned
that most teachers did not really discuss issues with them and that they were not interested in
their opinions. The students often felt discouraged from expressing themselves, from
formulating their opinions and from discussing their point of view.

The situation in the centre is very different. The leaders are very open and communicative, and
they teach children and youth to communicate, to discuss, to get and give feedback. The children
are not afraid to talk with their peers or with older people (also the leaders are able to speak with
much older people - like parents) – and they know that leaders care about their opinion. On the
other hand, if the children were asked about feedback (at the end of the year the Glowworms
were asked – by play – how did they like this year, what did they dislike, etc.), they were not able
to give negative feedback because they did not want to disappoint the leaders they like. Also, to
get feedback is very sensitive topic/activity for some children and youth as well as for some
leaders (see below).

I think the Scout has given me enough to have no problem talking to older people. And a lot of
my classmates here have a lot of people at the same age as we are, and they are not able to
understand that I have a friend of mine that is 27 and it does not make me a problem.
(…) Yeah, and that's just because we were learning to do it. We need to communicate with parents.
(Scouts, R4, female)

So I was surprised that you already wanted the feedback for the Glowworms. Do they
have a problem or are they going?
Often they have because they do not want to disappoint us. So, they say they liked it. It is good to
make anonymous feedback. Or talk to them individually, that's best. I was talking to three now,
sitting on the stairs and saying, what did you enjoy, the less? But they never say, "I did not like it," they always jam.

**They do not know, do they?**

No, they just do not want to say the wrong, they say it was good, though it was not, but you see it. But when I have feedback from 30 children, it can not be captured. But when I talk to someone specifically, it's much better. Our most frequent feedback is "thermometer". That is, when they put their hands on this, I liked them somewhat moderately, so little, so much. They close their eyes at all. It's good to ask someone who did not do so much on the trip because he thinks he will not hurt the feedback. When I ask them if they liked the program, they do not want to hurt me. (Scouts, R6, female)

**Interest and taking care about others (environment, social issues, charity, locality)**

Youth and children in the organisation are explicitly encouraged to care about their surroundings. Their activities are mostly associated with the Scouts – the centre is engaged in charity and many other activities are connected to environment (cleaning some places, recycling). Also, some of the leaders are or were engaged in other activities – but again mostly in connection to other people from the scout organisation (contacts, friends). The education centre in the Brno, Scout Institute, plays very important role in their activities (place where can meet other people, to learn, to engage).

For example, last year we went to Let’s Clean XX. That’s a part of Let’s Clean Czechia; and XX is one of the neighbourhoods where one of our groups is based. So we went there to do some cleaning, because there were greater numbers of Scouts. There were retained firefighters, Scouts, and some other people, so we joined them. Previously, we discussed with the kids why it is good to recycle waste. Or we’ve done a charity collection. That was for leukaemia, and it’s window cleaning and the drivers put money into collection boxes. So we were explaining to the kids why it’s good to help in these ways.

(…)

Also, in the camp when we were helping the locals, we were pulling up old fences. We had an agreement with the forest workers about an old tree nursery where the trees have grown, so we removed the fences there. We also picked wood so the forest was cleaned up thanks to all this. And the kids loved it.

(Scouts, R3, male)

![Image 2.37: How to recycle ('recycling is cool') - in the centre. Source: Authors.](image)

**Values and democracy**

Some general values are already embedded in the ideas and laws of Scouts. The respondents noted that it is something which connects them, something they share (as community, mafia, sect) – even when they do not know each other in person (see R5). They are tolerant, supporting democracy, supporting human rights and they also teach these values younger members (children and youth) by playing, talking about history, watching documents or movies. During the last
months they addressed issues like homosexuality (document 'Keep the Baby'), refugees, NGOs, election and several historical events and some important figures in the Czech history.

Individual political participation or engagement in this area seems rather rare and random (see R5, R7) - some members are more interested in politics (watching news etc.), they vote, some of them participated in some political and protest events (connected to democratic values and their defence; see R7). At the same time, nobody is involved in some regular or long-term political or civic activity (except the respondent 5 who was on an internship in the People in Need, because she studies journalism). Activities of the members are mostly focused on the centre and on education of children or self-education (e.g. in the Scout Institute).

(About October 28th - Czech holiday) So they went to sleep, so then we started banging on the door, being a demonstration and the kids had to save the wounded Opletal.

**That's very interesting. How did you get it? Can you describe the game?**

Yeah, they're an urban game, and we just got this one on October 28, so we thought it was the demonstration, and the demonstration itself is so interesting to me for kids. We also play a game of demonstration, which is such as the violent elements that try to fight somehow, but it does not matter now.

(...) with the game it was still like we played a scene that I was injured - as Opletal. I had blood on my leg, I just looked terribly (...) Then their task was to find bandages, etc., and get caught up there by the Scouts, and then they had to go and tell us something.

**Did you explain to them the context in order to know what is behind Opletal?**

Yeah. The program was just like a lecture on October 28, and we watched movie.

(...) I always say what it would be good to learn or give them this year – at the beginning of the year we set the goals and priorities of the section. I must remember that I was around last year or last year doing a great program for the whole meeting on refugees and migration. I know the girls were also interested in the elections in America for a while.

(...) We had one meeting where we watched the movie (project One World in Schools) about Iraq, the refugees - and the girls were thinking about it. It does not seem like this, but even this you will make them think about the scout idea, even when you have a scout question in the discussion, so it is quite like that ... (Scouts, R4, female)

Maybe there's the feeling we're part of the same huge community. (...) I was two years ago at People in Need, Media Room. We sat there and did such pseudo research for them. Well, then we found out that everyone has at least leaders that they are all Scouts. This was in the media department. Šimon Panek was a Scout, their director. (...)

**How did you get to the internship?**

I always wanted to do for People in Need because I was fascinated by the work, and they were looking for the volunteers in the media department.

**How did it fascinate you? What do you think of working for People in Need?**

On the one hand, I like the connection with the fact that Šimon Panek stood behind the Velvet Revolution, so the values that bring society. Otherwise, they have a lot of missions in countries where there are war conflicts, which probably has very few non-profit in Bohemia. And it came to me very fascinating. And then that it had a good name. So I wrote them and I thought it would be a great prestige if I got there. And I did it for half a year for free, that I went there and helped them with media monitoring. Then I was there in the summer two months in the brigade. That's what I did the same, just paying for it. (Scouts, R5, female)

**Have you ever been involved in any political action? Did you ever join a demonstration or something?**

Yes, it is, here, once a year in Brno that "I block Brno."
Blockade.
Yes. How the fascists, Nazis and the streets were in the centre of the city. There I was once and it was wrong, so I have not been there since. I do not know when it was, maybe two years ago. Enough, maybe three.

That was the Maliňák that time, right?
I guess.

We then went to Moravia to block them. There was a problem with the cops. I got a baton over my back. It just happened because of the stupidity. We found ourselves in a shitty place for a while. Behind us were the anarchists.

You have nowhere to go.
There were those anarchist stalks. Against us there were those on the horses and the police officers. One could not move even there, and they did not want to let him go, they were completely outside the lefties, just like the right-wing and the cops.

You would not go into it anymore?
Yes, yes, yes. There is a lot of people going there, everybody is good - every support is good. Support is good.

Did you find it important then?
I would say yes. Certainly. I wanted to express my opinion. To disagree with someone doing a neo-Nazi march here. In addition, the youth. Same old people like me. I do not understand what is going on, and I want to express my disapproval. (Scouts, R7, male)

Politics, parties, elections

Some of the respondents are also interested in national politics, parties or elections. They think they should be interested in politics as citizens (like the students at schools in WP6) but many of them (especially the younger respondents) think they are not well informed. Their interest is rather focused (with exceptions) on their surroundings and civic engagement, not on broader political participation like it is in case of the Idealists.

I can't tell if it's in the city but in the country, I care about what's going on and who represents us. In the last year, to or three I live with an expectation of what will come; it all seems to be closely related/ hand in hand. My Dad is politically active and, in the centre, not that we discuss politics with children, but the topics do address politics. The politicians are discussing the same things as us, except they say it out loud in front of cameras and we talk about it in the centres. I am interested in politics, though I don't know if it's at our level; Scout caused that I care about the social and political dimensions. (Scouts, R1, male)

Of course I vote in the election and talk to people about who I'm going to vote for. But I think I don't do much.
I don't know, concerning the election, I was listening to a pre-election debate because I had some free time, I was going through some procrastination phase. Or I read interviews with party leaders. (Scouts, R3, male)

I do not know - the fifth or sixth day is Hus (Czech holiday in July). So we had a program at summer camp. There was an opportunity to think about his history and perhaps even what it means to us today. On the day of Czech holiday, we again had a program about Masaryk. It's always a matter of popping up a personality and telling us what we're interested in today. What qualities we could use today well, and so on. That's one thing we're dealing with.
I was also at the Scouts' meeting before the election. They solved that one member had set up a some election game for them. He had examples of undemocratic parties there - there was an allusion to Okamura (the leader of the populist party). Then there were some examples of right and left parties. I was so impressed that they were in their age, so in 15 years ...
I think he was a boy who is about 13 years old now. He's interested, he's kind of like that. Well, he made such a game. That was certainly interesting. I think there is much more to befitting these things in the older section than the younger ones.
Are your parents active (in politics)?
I do not think I actually did not follow until recently. I started to deal with it somehow in the last two years. Probably at the beginning of that adulthood.

Do you think you should be interested in such things?
Definitely yes. Today's situation in our country is such that it is worth watching. I think this should be done. I cannot say she would be carefree. When I was young, I might have come to see that everything in the world is wrong, that everything is all right. That we live in a perfectly ideal world. I was hearing about the First World War, about all the world's problems.

Do you talk about these things with someone?
More or less - not. At home we do not talk much about the family at home. Not with my friends. We have the utmost to say who we voted for. Or who are we going to vote for now in the presidential election, but that we would discuss it, not that. (Scouts, R7, male)

**Scouts and politics**

Although the Scouts is perceived as non-partisan, according to respondents it cannot be strictly apolitical because of its values (which aims to raise active citizens).

Scouts, has always been much associated with politics. So, in the sense that if he had not spoken in a public debate, neither the Nazis nor the Communists would ever cancel it. However, by stating in the statutes that people will seek to raise independent, responsible individuals who will interact with this world according to their best consciousness and conscience, no totalitarians want people to think.

(...) In 2011, in the General Assembly they agreed to be, not apolitical, but non-partisan. This means that we will not defend and preserve democratic values but will not shrink from any political party. There are people who say that we should not express anything at all. Junak said it had spoken about the war in Ukraine, the refugee crisis, and expressed the view that people should vote well in the second round of the presidential election. And a few other things where the headquarters felt it was good that it was moving the company and still wanted us to say something, so we say good. But there are people who say there's nothing to do.

(...) When you look at the Mayors and Independents (the political party), Petr Gazdík is a Scout, Honza Farský is a Scout, Vítek Rakušan is a former Scout. (Scouts, R5, female)

2.5 **The Local, National and European dimensions**

2.5.1 **The Idealists**

Although the Idealists are mostly focused on the national politics (party politics, governmental, national issues) they do not make clear borderline between national and supranational (European) level. According to data from our questionnaire, the Idealists feel higher commitment to the EU (and lower commitment to the nation) and their opinions on the EU are more positive in comparison to Czech young adults (in Appendix).

The Idealists are highly interested in international affairs and European politics, political parties, and policies. Very often they talked about (or shared on Facebook) interesting cases (good practices), studies/events from various European countries, they also very often mentioned situation in the UK (Momentum, Corbyn) referring to social democracy and social democratic parties and their crisis in the Europe (they feel as part of the European social democratic family; Image 38, 39)

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I think what the Idealists do in Czechia, that it's something that just needs to be done in the whole of Europe, it's not just a thing typical for the CSSD, and that's what it is, because in the meantime, Momentum just got into England. I do not know if you know what it is, Momentum is actually a similar association as the Idealists, and they actually have promoted Corbyn, and that's something very similar. I just see in other countries, in the Netherlands there is now a Positive Left, it is named and different as the left has started to change altogether, because this spectrum will look different in 5 years, that social democracy almost disappears in Europe, the traditional social democracy that has been here since the last century, lost in France, the Netherlands this year, can be expected in Germany as well. It can also be expected in the Czech Republic, so there must be some change. And these platforms can bring that change. (the Idealists, R6, male)

Regarding topics, for the Idealists – though not for all of them – the EU seems to be one the most important topics to address. At one of the regular meeting of the association in Prague, several members argued that the Idealists should be even more pro-European (or that their attitude should be more communicated). CSSD is not dealing with EU so much and there is space for the Idealists to focus on that (as necessity for social democracy). For them it is natural to perceive themselves/Czechia as part of the Europe/EU (they are often travelling, one of the key person is living in Belgium) and often they did not make distinction between the national and European level – the European level (issues, policies) seems rather as natural part of life (national and European levels as interconnected). On the other hand, the locality or the local level seem rather weak in the Idealists' activities. It can be caused by the concentration of the members in Prague. Although in recent years the local organisation in Brno tried to address some local issues, the activity of the local organisation did not last long time (last year they were inactive). The Prague centre of the association is focusing mostly on the national level of politics and on general issues (as housing, cooperating with national stakeholders etc.) and their events and their activities (participation in some event) are located in the capital city.

How did you get working for the Labour Party?
I got to it because an Idealist XX, in the last and previous election, that was still under Ed Miliband, when he was standing against Cameron, got there because a man from Ipswich who has a flat in Prague and is one of his Facebook friends found the YSD, he asked if he'd like to go there and that's how the co-operation started.

That means that it’s always 4 people to help with their door-to-door campaign. And he offered that this year again and even managed to arrange that the YSD paid my air fare. So I’d just passed my school leaving exams and 2 days later I flew to Britain for 5 days in Ipswich. It was fine, and something completely different. (the Idealists, R3, male)

It is said that the Czechs do not like the European Union. A year ago, trust in a common European project in our country was historically the lowest at 37%. But the disillusionment can be felt in the neighbourhood - in far more "euro-optimistic" - Germany, where I visited the conference this weekend. Together with my Belgian friend, we conducted an interactive workshop on how to change social democracy. But maybe that is another time, that's another debate ... :)

Back to Europe: one crucial difference between the Czechs and the Germans was visible, which motivated me quite a lot. Even sceptical Germans would never leave the EU like the British. I appreciated their idealistic desire to change Europe from inside. Because if we opted for exit, we would lose the guarantee of peaceful coexistence, a significant part of the investment, which can often be invisible, but beneficial.

So what about Europe? Of course, its sense must be felt by everyone in order to be viable in the
future. We should not only look at GDP figures that we do not even look at. The quality of life is also important. As Czechs, we would need a stronger voice in the EU - to deal with issues such as wages, food quality or meaningful education. In short, we have to offer the EU a bit differently.

But that does not work out of the fight. Believe me, we really do not have to be alone in this country. Just as we do, people feel both east and west of our borders. (10.4. 2017, Facebook post of Radim Hejduk)

The EU goes into the experiment: Spanish Barcelona, Dutch Utrecht and Finnish Helsinki should improve the income of their poorest people over the next two years. In each city, the thousands of households with the lowest earnings will be selected randomly. How it will end? 😊 (6.6. 2017, Facebook post of Radim Hejduk)

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2.5.2 The Scouts - “Thirteen”

Since the Scout is a large and international association, the centre is naturally part of it:

(…) the centres are grouped under a region, which is about 16 or 17 centres. Their leaders meet regularly every four months and they manage the region. There is a kind of a pyramid, but on the other…

The cooperation is quite strong in the region and I know a lot of the people personally. It’s not

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that we’d be calling each other every evening but if need be, we can discuss options at those meetings. The cooperation is sufficient.

**What is usually solved at this level?**

There is some formal programme needed for the organisation, where budget, finances and so on is discussed. And then it is more…the region has a supportive role. There are no groups or educational units, where there are most members, so it is methodology support for group leaders, seminars or organising events and so on.

**So there are also some social events?**

There are races in Junák. So on the regional level, that’s the first round, then it is region (he means bigger region here - Southmoravian) and then the republic. The same is organised by members in the individual centres, so it is one of these competitions or seminars; I’m trying to think what else. It depends who is in charge in the particular region. Us, our region (he means Brno), is the largest Junák region and it is behind the environmental centre in the river valley Kaprálův mlýn. The region got a massive EU grant, and it is based on the number of members, so we are quite active. Compared to that, Kutná hora region has 500 members, we have about 300, so they are not so ambitious there.

**That must be a great sense of responsibility if you are not just a member of an independent group or association, but you are a part of this huge whole…**

Definitely, but we all call ourselves by our first names in the organisation, whether they are eighty or a kid. If we know each other by sight we call ourselves informally by the first name. The responsibility, when you know the people, isn’t as terrifying as in any other multi-level society or group. I don’t notice it any more that the responsibility should be bigger; or I’m actually enjoying it but someone else might not. It must depend on a specific person. (Scouts, R1, male)

Thus, the centre and its members have external support in their activities. Moreover, they have support for meeting Scouts from other centres. At the same time, the centre in Brno is relatively closed and mostly the younger members of the centre are trying to be more active on international level, to get foreign experiences and meet foreign people. As we already mentioned, the Scout is by our respondents perceived as a strong community. Although for some of them the community is based on the centre and its members, others (young girls) perceive the community as broader (and international), more virtual community of shared interest, aims and values (to make world better place). In this sense there seems to be different visions of citizenship regards to different levels. In the first place, there is strong focus on locality (and region) and on narrow community (neighbourhood). Many activities of the centre are concentrated and focused on surroundings (children and youth should take care about their surroundings):

We once signed up for…It was about choosing a location in your surroundings and trying to improve it or beautify it. We wanted to build a seating area in Planýrka but it’s never been finished. I do think though that if the kids have an opportunity to do something locally…it’s most obvious at school, for example in the school parliament. You can instigate changes – like a five-minute longer lunch break because they don’t have enough time otherwise. Or they change something in their neighbourhood. Clean up a spring, or later they can try something more global. (the Scouts, R3, male)

Although the values/attitudes (connected to active citizenship) we mentioned above are quite general (widely applicable), and while several of respondents are interested also in national affairs/issues or international ones, the focus on other levels than locality very depends on individuals. Especially the female respondents admitted that the centre should be more open to broad cooperation or activities – on the other hand, the male respondents spoke about discomfort, fear and worries linked with such openness and they also mentioned their inability to accept feedback properly, to be open to changes:
I've never been to a foreign meeting. They were like that, but it never made me into plans. Or I did not want to. I'm not completely extrovert. Not that I do not like it, I would like to go there, sometimes. However, it has not worked out yet. As for courses, I know I have to go there. Maybe it's because I have to, I really do not know. Now I'm going to the leadership course where I should go. I think I want to go there, I would say. I delayed it for a long time, because it never really did. I do not know, maybe I've been looking for excuses why it does not matter or I really do not care. I do not know.

You do not want to do it?
Maybe I do not want to, I do not know. However, I do not have a bad experience, for example, from a test. I remember it now, it was perfect action. (Scouts, R7, male)

Particularly the females and female young leaders are more active on national or international levels and they bring such topics (like immigrants, human rights) to the centre (to speak about them with children and youth). They admitted there are many options (offered by the Scout) how to engage on national or international level, but many of them do not take the chance. Such engagement is also very time demanding (parents' support is needed).

All the activities you do are related to the Scouts?
Not at all. Not all of them. Now I'm going to the one medical course, that's under the tourist section, but I'll go because I need it for the leadership test. These are actually two weekends in November. That's the Scout. But there are actions when I travel a lot, not in the Scouts. Most of the time I'm coming with my scouts‘ friends. Maybe now I will go to Slovenia in November or I travel lot in the holidays. Much of the activity is thanks the Scout, yes.

These (Scouts) are people from your centre?
Just outside. My people are not so much active in my resort. But I go to school where we have 9 Scouts in the classroom, which is a lot. I usually hear one or two Scouts at school. So, I have a lot of friends there. I also take part in national events, where I meet people. Now I was - in fact, my first trip was to Poland in summer. I did not know who I was going with, because there was no one in my neighbourhood that would attract him, so I told one of my friends who could not, but he likes to travel. At Obrok - this is an event for 1500 Scouts, one of the largest in the Czech Republic - to ask if someone wants to go to Poland with me. I thought it funny, but he really asked there, and there really was a friend who had gone to Poland with me. We're friends now.

Are these things what makes you feel like you share with people from Scouts? Do they have similar…?
Yes, I think a lot. I was influenced by those people I met. This is a set of individualities. Everyone is absolutely amazing. Everyone is from another corner of the Republic. (Scouts, R6, female)
2.6 Organisational Issues and individual citizenship

2.6.1 The Idealists

Aims of the association

During our observation we witnessed an obvious tension regarding aims and activities of the Idealists. Although the internal pressure seemed lower in the spring/summer 2017, it accelerated with election in autumn. This internal conflict is embedded in differences between the two dominant groups or wings in the Idealists – and this conflict was articulated also at the Congress in December. Several members of the Idealists are connected to CSSD and many of them see the Idealist as group seeking for revision of the party (it was also the most often articulated aim by leading persons or members of the core of the Idealists in spring 2017). At the same time, several people are not connected to the party and they tend to be more critical to their activities and they would like to see the Idealists as strictly independent group.

The Congress of the Idealists (after election and big defeat of CSSD) revealed that the tendency toward the independence (from CSSD)\(^{16}\) is much stronger than the leaders expected. This tendency was probably reinforced even by the election defeat (no sense to focus on the party in decline). Several younger members of the Idealists asked for redefinition of the aims and conception – some of them speaking about independent association, some of them thinking about establishing party in the future. Although this redefinition was crucial point in the program of the Congress, they did not reach clear consensus about the future of the association - they decided to wait to the congress of the party in February 2018 (several members seemed unhappy about such decision).

Image 2.42: Discussion at the Congress. Míša is writing notes; and image 2.43: Notes from the discussion about the aims and future of the Idealists. “How are we going to meet our objectives? Back-door - establishing party; creating cadres and networks; creating discourse; preparation of topics; new members; lobby group of socdem movement which is not afraid of the conflict; communicate - new methods in public space (online, offline, in streets); to reform CSSD - new people; to protect socdem values; through

\(^{16}\) E.g. several members did not agree with Radim and his candidacy (CSSD) in the election.
local level; to create coalition potential; movement; open events (…)

We don’t want to create a real party that will actually be left-wing liberal, any other social democracy that will be a real social democracy and will not have national socialist tendencies like the present CSSD. (…) We want the idealists social democracy to be the dominant one we actually imagine. Well, just change the CSSD basically. (the Idealists, R5, male)

Did it change - the idea - of what the Idealists should do? For you?
It's never been too clear to me. I do not even know. He was so unclear about the aim, or it was unclear at first, whether it would be a tool to create some group of people - cadre, which was, in my view, the original idea of a cadre of personnel as well as a program, an idea of an infrastructure. (…)
It seemed to me to me as an emancipatory movement that will later be politically active when those people get older, get the experience and somehow more legitimate, or, as I say, more credible, some actors who can change things. And I had a little idea that it would grow somewhat, the club, and so on.
It is connected to the fact that the original one, in fact it still has some history, a member that I do not even know very much, they were in those clubs or party. Those people, with those old structures, and thus they are not able to put together some dynamics, like the Pirates or something like the Greens, they are socially very anchored, the old, it has no dynamics. (…)
So you’d better see Idealists in the ideal state that they would be separated from the Social Democracy, they would not be so tied to those ...
Yes, it would be a separate, but I do not know how to do it ... (the Idealists, R8, male)

But the Idealists did not know what they were doing for two years, then they were afraid to spread, they were not structured, and nowhere was it, but for two years we waited and then set up here, but it started out somehow, social democracy (…) there were x topics on facebook, which I do not even understand (…)
It’s unreadable for you ..
Well, for me. I also have a problem orienting myself. I would have to read everything or want to say anything. (I do not even know how to interpret them myself. It is top down. Two people do it, because all the other don’t care - which is also the fundamental problem now. (the Idealists, R7, male)

What’s your ambition?
We don’t even invite the party to lead a dialogue. That’s an interesting question.

Have you ever discussed it?
We always try. I’m going to give an example. In the primaries the board issued a statement about how the primaries will be run and that there would be equal participation of male and female candidates. But once it came to the primaries, this was suddenly changed by some other ruling, at which moment we stood up and asked why they were doing this. First, we sent the chairman a letter, we got no reply, so we set up a debate and invited Tejc, Dienstbier and Škromach. That’s how we are trying to cultivate the party so that it is truly democratic, so that was an example of how we do it.

You mentioned people were writing to you suggesting you become an independent party.
What were the arguments against it?
The pressure to become an independent party isn’t so strong. (the Idealists, R4, female)

Members’ (dis)satisfaction and communication issues
Despite the current missing consensus on the future of the Idealists, most members at the Congress were generally satisfied with the association, its activities and their engagement in the Idealists (Tab. 4 in Appendix B). Although the Idealists tries to focus on the quality of discussion (with clear rules), they are not able to ensure real dialogue in a bigger group. The members are often not willing to follow given rules of the discussion (e.g. time for their speech)/ or moderators are not able to require following the rules. They are often not able to react to each
other – they are rather focusing on presenting their own standpoint without any real aim for reaching a consensus or without listening actually to their peers in the debate. The debate itself and conclusions and decisions are then carried by only few individuals representing the core of the association and the broader, non-productive discussion serves often just as an empty form without actual impact on the association.

How did you actually see the debate, two hours or an hour talking about what ideas the club should do, what should be its role?
I did not really understand it. To be honest, when we talked to those people, I saw that it was somehow what we were going to do, and that the kind of debate here is what should happen - it is needless. These are just those people who are very much connected with the old ones, so they are very passive, and that is why they are just such chitchat for me. They make an excuse, something is planned - and you know that they will not do nothing.

(…)
This association is full of individualistic leftists, so it is a terrible problem to unite them in the debate over something. It's complicated, I think it's pointless and does not make sense. On the other hand, what works in this society is your individual activity in relation to the communication of a topic, Hejduk's campaign is in this typical. (...) People have about fifty opinions on key strategic themes. Just nonsense. (the Idealists, R8, male)

Half of the respondents had – sometimes or often – a feeling, that “there was no real dialogue and that discussions led nowhere.” At the same time, all of them agreed that “there was consensus” (27% sometimes; 73% often). 6 of them (24%) had sometimes or often feeling that they are alone in their perception of some issues (according to an observation, a clear consensus about issue of migration or some issues regarding to human rights is missing – and so is its salience for the Idealists). (Tab. 4 in Appendix B)

Apart from the association’s aims and conception, the communication issue became another articulated and addressed at the Congress. The Idealists struggle with communication on several levels:

- **Top-down communication in the association**
- **Horizontal communication among members**
- **Horizontal communication toward new members and people interested in membership**

**Top-down communication** from the leading persons to the members was the most crucial issue addressed in the questionnaire for the Congress (see below). Many members are not satisfied with the communication activity and spread of the information within the association. They feel that they do not know what is happening in the association, how decisions are made, how the content on the social networking sites is created (which topics are addressed and how). They can feel excluded if they are not in the core of the association.

**Horizontal communication among members.** Several members are not satisfied with intensity of communication (and meetings, relationships) among the members. Those members that are not in the core of the association would like to be in more intensive contact with members, to have regular unformal meeting, to talk. They also discussed about other communication platform than Facebook groups (more open forum, more friendly and inclusive for new people).

**Horizontal communication toward new members and people interested in membership**

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17 Top-down communication with members is based mostly on emails.
is rather poor. Although the Idealists had in previous months dozens of people interested in membership, they were not able to manage their interest effectively (e.g. there were people waiting for the confirmation of the membership or for information). The people interested in membership have an obligation to visit at least two events made by the Idealists, to introduce themselves (at regular meeting) and to ask for membership (to fill the form at website). The leading persons also try to involve new people in discussion at the regular meeting, but this is where the communication usually ends. If these people do not have friends in the association, it is hard for them to engage in the group and in activities (they remain on the edge).

**Do you think it should be more about people?**

Multiple levels of communication, multiple levels of communication. Those, those young people in their fifteen, who would do something, they need some basic information about how to get involved. Give them what they need. Not that I will take them to the meeting and they hear how we deal with the CSSD (...). There are irrelevant things. Prague is really dealing with an extremely high policy and addresses the extremely high level of these issues. They deal with extremely complicated things and feel that everyone knows about it all, and that is the most crucial thing. They get tangled in the bubble and then show up on people. (the Idealists, R7, male)

**Organisation and decision-making process**

Although the Idealists emphasize the horizontal democratic processes in the association, many decisions are made (or pre-made) by several people from the core. We use the word “core” and not leaders, board/council: though the Idealists have formal structures, there are unformal relationships that are more important than the current position of a person. Regarding to formal structures, there is board of the association (5 persons), and two boards of two local organisations (Prague, Brno) with spokesmen as leaders. The two local boards are personally interconnected with the association’s main board (Miša is member in Prague, Andrea is member in Brno – and both are board members of the association). This interconnection is confusing especially in case of Prague because of the geographic overlap (the centre in Prague) and it can lead to greater dependence on the centre of the association and confusion about the organisation (e.g. board members of the association are leading meetings of the local organisation).

In practice, there is the core of the Idealists consisted of board members (of the Idealists and from the Prague), original members and their friends. These core members (about 20 people) often meet each other, they work together, or they are friends/partners. As we already mentioned above, it is hard to became part of this core which is in the centre of the decision-making process (unformal communication on everyday base).

**Is it so even for those coming from different regions? Is it transparent to them? Do they agree with your beliefs?**

Yes, we are very transparent and if by any chance we are not, someone always raises their hand and says: “Hey, hey”; and when we aren’t transparent, it isn’t deliberate. It’s one of the core unwritten values of the group, it is important for us to be transparent. We have the board as formal leadership, which is important in the moments when we need to be able to decide quickly, because it isn’t practically possible to call all members; so that’s why we have the board. But we’d be very happy if we didn’t have to control the members at all, which happens for example when an ordinary member comes and says: “I’m going to organise a debate”, and he or she does it. And what’s good is that every two years we have a convention where the board is changed. (the Idealists, R4, female)

It is strongly interconnected. There is a structure at the national level, at the level of Prague, so Prague with the whole of the Republic is totally merging. I am a speaker, and Misa is also in the council under me and at the same time over me (...). We just talk or write - three people (...) (the Idealists, R5, male)
It is important to me that there is some formal structure here, and there is some informal too. (…) Still, the old guard, the people who founded it, from the YSD (…) were still familiar with the organisation (…) it's still like knowing that they are the ones who are well-known. And that you've been there for a long time, and that you're actually involved in some kind of core, so maybe being part of the core is more important then to have some post. (…) but those three, then there are those who were from the beginning, but they dropped, it is also interesting that the people will cool down in time, and at least (…) (…) And now it was really hard to get into it at first. 

For you?
But at the beginning, I remember coming, I'm going to a meeting - now there people have some jokes they only understood and they just could see that they know each other, they work together, some go together for the evening, they work in the club… (…) so the word sect is as harsh as it may be, or it sounds like a grudge, but in a way it's true that as you come in, you have to find how it works and become a member (…) (The Idealists, R5, male)

The members of the Idealists admitted that the interconnection between local and national structures is not working well. They also discussed (at the Congress) the possibility to cancel local organisations, but it seemed inappropriate strategy for the expansion of the future association. Unintended centralization of structures and communication (connected also to member base, events or communicated topics, cooperation with organisation – with strong focus on Prague) probably also influenced the situation in the local organisation in Brno, which practically did not work in recent months (they did not have any events and members became inactive).

The Congress of the Idealists (2.12. 2017) - Field notes
The next point of the program is the functioning of local organisations, in the regions. Local organisations are actually two, Prague and Brno. Brno does not work. In addition, they appear to have failed to fulfil the obligations written in the statutes of the association (several meetings per year). Brno is completely passive. Cancel? According to the statutes, it should be cancelled.

Representative from Brno - There were 3-4 people at the informal meeting. Nobody motivated. People and potential lost. There situation in Brno is different - not possible to cooperate with CSSD as in Prague (corrupted). No sense to focus on the party. They don't have the support and background like Prague (no job at Ministries, no place to meet, etc.). Everything is in Prague. 

Míša: We organise events in the regions, concentration in Prague is not a goal

Other members are talking about whether to concentrate on the regions as well. Some are inclined to cancel the local organisation, others argue that if the organisation wants to grow, they need regions.

Radim and Míša are rather inclined to cancel. There is evident animosity - from Míša toward the spokesman from Brno. He (the spokesman from Brno) is also very critical toward to association, as misunderstood, aggrieved. He is against the connection with party and blames core members from clientelism, that they exchange their jobs at Ministries for the opportunity to be critical toward system and party.

Others argue that structures need - but not working?
Double leadership in Prague is also solved. Does Prague need local organisation when it is as well as Prague?

Representatives from Brno: they made mistakes, failed to mobilize and keep people. The debate then comes to a halt in the situation in Brno. Míša is in a dispute with a spokesman from Brno, who claims he has not fulfilled his duties. He defends that communication with the leaders did not work (e.g. he required a list of members in Brno, etc.). The dispute became more personal (later it continues with a stormy exchange). Most people do not follow him because, as it turns out later, most of the situation in Brno had no idea.
Centralization and engagement of the members

As well as in the unformal decision-making process, in engagement of the members the activity takes place mostly within the core of the association. Radim, Miša and several other members (mostly younger people engaged in some working groups) from the core are the most active people in the association. Obviously, they are not able to share their tasks and they try to have control over all activities in the association (often leading to exhaustion, see below). At the same time, as several members admitted, nobody wants to take responsibility or to take some leading role (they will rather just talk), to spend so much time by working for the Idealists. They admitted that there quite passive people (older members from CSSD) which are just chitchatting at the meetings, criticising and doing nothing for the association - and the most important and active role in the association play Radim, Miša and several people around.

Well, we will grow, and now it's all about it, you know, we're gonna have to, because Radim and those people - like the three four people around him sitting in his office, and Miša his partner. He was two weeks old in China, and he just had to do the whole Facebook, so XX seemed to have access and did it for him, but when it was important, he called him like that in China, so that she it's actually a bit of his fault with Radim, he's just dealing with a lot of things, he's not like he's self-centered, but he's just active and hardworking. Well, let's grow and that means that the structure will need to work really like it, like that, not that there is a Prague council here, and that is the whole Republican one, let's say that and our Prague is just as long as the extended hand of the overall leadership, because it is interwoven with the Miša. (The Idealists, R5, male)

I have never been the leader of any activity. That allowed me to be involved in everything, but not to spend one hundred percent of the time, to surrender myself, I was always in those - I do not know what I call it - the coordination and analytical structures of those activities. I've never been a leader anywhere.
And that's because you want it?
This is about the inner motivation or the feeling of yourself. It's about the fact that I do not feel like a leader, although now I think I'm older, but I'm growing up (...
I have a feeling that there is some growth in that, as you grow up, you have to gain experience, and so, that is a certain determinant of that permissiveness, I feel like we are. It will come to me that sometimes someone is born, it has it inside, it is given by some forces what your parents do, they see the patterns, or it just has inside of them, does it regardless of any socio-economic background, it is profiled by the environment, and so, it is such a humble bit, it is such a dose of those motives. (the Idealists, R8, male)

2.6.2 The Scouts - “Thirteen”

Aims and organisation - open discussion
In comparison to the Idealists, the centre “Thirteen” has less members and they can include them in the decision-making process more efficiently. Although there is an executive board of the centre (9 members), all members participate (or can) in regular meetings of the centre (once a month, in the evening after regular meeting of the troops). They attend also smaller meetings of the troops (leaders, Guides etc.) and once a year they have intensive two days meeting focused on the evaluation of the year and plans for the next one. Last meeting took place at the beginning of September 2017 (about 20 members participated – leaders, past leaders, advisors), before the beginning of the school year. Except of the feedback from summer camps (July) and exchange of experience and report of the economy of the centre, strong attention was payed to future goals and conceptual long-term issues, priorities of the centre. As well as the

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18 Miša is often in the role of the „bad cop“, pushing on formal rules, asking people to do something.
Idealists, the Scouts also formed different working groups – members responsible for key issues. At every next meeting of the centre they followed these issues and mapped the progress (the progress was rather small; several working groups were not able to meet due to lack of time). These priorities for future year are following:

- revision of websites (some of them already changed)
- stabilization of the member base (the control about members in different troops in cooperation with educational reporters)
- communication with parents and public (not priority yet, lack of time)
- the Rovers - engagement and events for the older members
- strengthening of the board
- support for the troops, education, information

All these priorities are linked with deeper cooperation of the members, support and exchange of experiences.

**Did you discuss any conceptual points?**

Last year we defined the priorities of the centre. The direction for the following three years. It was about 6 areas, to stabilise the member base, to communicate with the public, maintaining the centre board; and teams of about 3-4 people were established for each of the priorities to supervise the development throughout the year. Because we had often planned things at the beginning of the year but easily either forgot about them or didn’t find the time.

A year has passed, and we reviewed them, and we realised that we need to add a very important point: not to try to doing things that we aren’t competent for.

(…)

This year, we should start a system of educational reporters. That’s two or three people who have different educational roles. The groups can consult about behavioural problems with them, and it’s up to the group and the consultant how they will work together.

(…)

We reviewed the priorities and got a more realistic estimate of what’s manageable and what’s not.

(Scouts, R3, male)

Another important conceptual feature affecting the organisation of the centre is the national umbrella organisation - Junák. It provides many tools regarding different courses and events for members, different useful tools for controlling quality of activities (e.g. questionnaires for evaluation of summer camps to compare them with another camps):

We met on Friday between five or six; some were late, so the program had to be changed, because some were missing…Camp feedback takes place when the group or the camp meets up. They talk about what worked and what didn’t work, and there is methodological support from Junák. It’s called quality control and it’s quite an interesting thing. It’s a questionnaire in our information system divided into several sections, like education or technical support, and child safety, and each has separate points that are evaluated.

(Scouts, R3, male)

The courses are a fantastic thing; the system that Scouting has developed is incredible. In my opinion the courses are great, perhaps not all of them. I think it’s fantastic that someone can afford to do that for us. No other organisation has that, worked out in so much detail. It is well thought out, the conferences respond to what is needed, so it’s all very well done.

(Scouts, R2, female)

At the same time, the centre has also obligations to Junák (the national umbrella organisation) regarding to rules and administration:
There is always external quality control set by the hierarchy, in inverted commas, because a Scout cannot do anything at random. It’s all backed up by paperwork. (Scouts, R2, female)

**Negotiations and differences among members (“it depends on people”)**
The members vary regarding their activities and perception of different aspects of their activities as well as in perceived importance of their activities. Especially during trips of different troops, the leaders are confronted with different behaviour of other leaders and face the differences in their attitudes toward the children and adolescents. Sometimes these differences are discussed during meetings, sometimes they are not.

We have an agreement, or rules, that everyone has to follow. And also an agreement that you can never go against someone else’s decision. (Scouts, R2, female)

The leaders and their approaches are very unique (though several of them admitted they often follow patterns of their previous leader). Female leaders, for example, seem to be more focused on discussion and feedback (teaching young girls to get feedback), on scouting values (idea), and they are more sensitive to issues in the groups and individuals (as bullying, family issues). One of the female leaders is also educational reporter helping other leaders with educational issues.

It can be any decision that you come to in a situation when you see a conflict and have to make a decision. But someone observing it from outside can have a completely different opinion, perhaps an even better one, but it doesn’t have to be. It’s all very sensitive, or a particular approach to children might be sensitive. Sometimes the limits have to be carefully considered, as in what’s too much. I personally have a very strong relationship with the children but there are borders I wouldn’t cross because it’s not appropriate. There are others who base their relationship on physical contact, which for me is something to consider seriously, to do or not. (Scouts, R2, female)

**Exchange of experiences and feedback**
One of the crucial difference among leaders is their ability to confront their behaviour and routines with behaviour and routines of others. We already mentioned that the leaders differ in their openness beyond the borders of the centre (to go abroad, to participate in national event of the Scouts) – this is strongly connected to the overall openness in the evaluation of their activity, getting feedback from others and to change own routines. On the other hand, they know their limits and they admitted that they should be/trying to be more open, to learn something new, to evolve more:

**What about getting stuck in a rut, does one not have the tendency to do so?**
There are several solutions that can be used or that I use. Firstly, there are younger board members to whom I give enough space, because if they come up with something new and I make too many comments about it, it’d not move forward. So, I’m more open to their ideas. It’s not a problem any more for me but it used to be, I’d reject it out of hand before they even tried it out.

**Was that because you understood everything better?**
Not really, rather - it was strange because it’s not how I’d ever done it. That’s a completely wrong attitude. I learnt to change such a way of thinking. I discovered some experience sharing between groups, completely unrelated to the centre. A friend called a meeting in Brno that had participants from, for example, Břeclav. So we were sharing experiences about anything that interested us. It was completely unrestricted. A bit of chaos but I took away many new ideas. Tips for doing things differently or better.

Of course, if you go on a trip with another group, that’s perhaps the best because you can observe the group in action. You see how they interact with the children. You see how they have planned the programme. Another source of inspiration is the Internet. (Scouts, R3, male)

Educational and experiential courses. No one ever went from the centre until now and it was
such a big bubble. They have never been to such events and we are trying to scramble it.

(…)

The centre was pretty much in such a bubble, but we're going somewhere. XX also has a lot of contacts ... (Scouts, R4, female)

If I did not get involved in the actions of other centres, so the leadership has a completely different meaning for me. Now I'm very inspired by the events, the way others do. I try to look at them, even if they are just starting a meeting or talking to their children talking to their parents. It gives me a lot.

(Scouts, R6, female)

**Communication issue and distrust**

As well as the Idealists, the Scout centre faces some communication issues. There seems to be some barriers among different members and among groups. The most visible is the communication gap between older leaders and younger ones, between male older leaders and younger females. The female leaders seem more open to communication and according to males, the female leaders are often discussing issues they (males) would not even discuss (they rather made decision than to discuss everything).

I think the centre still has serious communication issues, which I really mind, really…

**Between the adults?**

It’s killing me, because lots of things don’t work. Often because problems are needlessly created. Instead of working on what’s relevant, we discuss trivialities… (Scouts, R2, female)

Some leaders are more closed regarding to cooperation with others or transmission of their responsibilities to another people (Guides, potential new leaders):

They often do not want to let go. They’re afraid they’re the little ear that they cannot handle it, so she's holding that. (Scouts, R5, female)

Then I have heard from many sources that it is difficult to lead with them - that many people do not want to do it. That's why a lot of people are leaving, so that patrol is not being transferred. They are very close friends and they are very strong or how to say. (Scouts, R6, female)

Older leaders are also struggling in giving confidence to younger or new leaders:

At first it was somewhat strange, but I've been there for a couple of years. We had such a complicated period when the centre council did not trust me in many things. Now I must say that this has begun to improve.

**That was when you got in?**

Yes. When I got in, I had things there that I can finish. They did not believe me that much. Now it is starting to settle. Now I get closer to them, they too to me, and I have no problem with it, to say something.

(…)

**You talked about some mistrust. But if you do not want that, of course you do not have to talk about it.**

Cool. We had such a problem there when I and XX led me in that transitional period. We were not even one for ourselves. We were not very satisfied with the last boys camp. There was some quarrel between the camp leader and XX. I also wondered how some of the things the camp leader was doing. That's why we said we would go to our own camp next year. But the problem arose because the Centre Council did not believe we could handle it. There was a problem in the boys' section, because no one expected it and was not ready for it. From today's point of view, this was partly our fault.

Even so, it comes to me that there was a certain lack of trust in me - but I understand. I was a young leader. (Scouts, R7, male)
These communication and trust issues (although they admitted they also made several mistakes in their first years as leaders) are crucial for educating and rising new leaders. During the observation, the situation in girls' troops accelerated and there were not enough leaders to lead two troops (more than 50 children and adolescents), because three older leaders left at the same time. Both troops are newly led by 18-year-old girl (not official leader yet) with two Guides.\textsuperscript{19} In the autumn, one older female leader (originally from different centre) joined the troops to help and to stay in the centre.

2.7 Commonalities - motivation and demotivation in Scout centre and in the Idealists

**Funding**

Both Czech associations are dependent on membership fees (and donations). Because of the number of members and minimal expenses, the Idealists are in good financial situation (they use transparent account: https://www.fio.cz/ib2/transparent?a=2400720604) and they also decided (at the Congress) to even lower membership fees for several groups of their members (seniors, students, parents on parental leave and other groups), although there was not overall support for this step in the association (especially older members voted against lower fees). The Scout centre struggles with finances, because they have higher expenses (for the summer camps, for trips with children, equipment etc.) and lower revenues (e.g. they organised daily summer camps for children in Brno to earn money). The Scouts also admitted that many parents really do not know how the organisation is financed and that it is not payed for taking care about the children. The lack of finances is partly compensated by volunteering and help of members, their friends or partners, and parents (for example helping at summer camps). The young Scouts also admitted they are not able to have some summer jobs or part-time jobs as their peers to earn some money for their needs (scouting as time-consuming - see below).

**People and friends**

One of the key long-term motivation for staying in the centre or in the Idealists are friends and relationships built in the association (Tab. 5 in Appendix B). In both cases, we witness quite strong community holding the association (at some level) united and working. In case of the Idealists, central relationships were formed before the foundation of the Idealists, but several relationships were formed around this core of the association. In case of the Scouts, they formed their friendships in the centre (in their patrols, in their troops) as they did not know each other before joining centre (eventually, the members the centre or other Scouts are their most close friends, partners or roommates). These friendships often keep the people in the association in times of crises:

In the centre, it is so that the patrols are different each year, and these people are not always together here. (...) When a person has a crisis period that he no longer wants to be a Scout, when he has a burnout syndrome, which happens to everyone, the friends keep him there. But if he does not, he does not have his age category, so it's harder and the people like to leave

**Have you ever wanted to leave?**

Many times. Especially when I was 14, when someone started to have a different view of the world than to have fun with scouting, going to the forest, etc. He wants to be in the city, be on Facebook, take photos. The year that I led the Girls Scout because it did not fill me at all, I did

\textsuperscript{19} Although these girls love their centre, they were very unsatisfied with the situation. According to them, they have no choice that to take responsibility and to lead the troops, although they had feeling they are not prepared to do that and they had different plans (e.g. the leader has final exams). It is interesting that this transition of leadership in the troops was differently interpreted by different members (viz communication issue). The male leaders have feeling that young girls wanted to lead troops and they wanted to lead them without help of the leaving leaders (these leaders are still engaged in activities and in the board of the centre).
not know why I was there at all. I felt like I was totally not used there. But then, when I started to lead Glowworms, and especially now after the course I finished this year, I am incredibly excited and see the huge potential. (Scouts, R6, female)

Each association gives its members the feeling of the **shared identity**. In case of the centre in shared values with other Scouts in the centre, region, nation, Europe; in case of the Idealist shared values and political attitudes with other members (in the country, where social democracy is perceived rather negative, as conservative and falling power in society) or with social democratic movements in the Europe. Both associations provide their members with opportunities to meet new people (If I did not go to Scout, I do not know so many people, R4, female) and to get new experiences thanks to the contacts/association (e.g. travelling abroad). Quite interesting role have the Scout institute in Brno as place where Scouts can meet:

Every Tuesday, once a month, there is a breakfast for everyone to come by.

**Breakfast for who?**

On Facebook, there is an "Scout Breakfast from 7am to 10pm" event and you can come and it's fine. You know there's a lot of action Scouts from Brno and you can talk. It's nice.

**Do you ever go there?**

Yes, it works well. And every time I come in, I'll meet someone there, which is fine. It's beautiful to connect those people, they suddenly have a place. Normally you will meet at events that are regular, but this way you can come there whenever and always meet someone there. (Scouts, R5, female)

Or we can also help. Maybe if I do not have anyone to go with me for a trip or if I need to get a scout club or I need to bring food to some action because we would otherwise die of starvation, I would just call my friend Scout to do it for me because sometimes in a similar situation. It just does. Scouts are very helpful, it does not seem like it, but I was here before you came. There was just one Scout at the next table. We started to talk and I'm sure that if I asked him now to know I did something, he would do it. Even though he does not know me at all. (Scouts, R6, female)

**Importance and impact**

Another key motivation is the impact and importance of their activities (e.g. the importance of issue in case of the Idealists, Tab. 5 in Appendix B). In case of the Scouts, this motivation is crucial and very visible – it is connected to the children and adolescents, to the impact on their lives, their education. In the case of the Idealists, this motivation connected to the impact is rather short-term because they have more active periods with higher impact (demonstration of support after putsch in Lány, campaign period) and rather passive periods of latency. In both cases the activities of other members are stimulating and motivating:

The group is…we have…so there is a controversy, or an event, and everyone calls everyone or messages and discusses what’s up, what we are going to do. And then there are periods when nothing is going on and nobody wants to do anything, which frustrates me, but it's just normal. I say to myself I can’t get so frustrated by it, so…

(...) we were disgusted by it but I also think that if something like this happens, it becomes more dynamic and there is a potential for change.

(...) I think it can mobilise people to do something or to join the Idealists, or to think more about it. Anything that puts things in motion seems good to me. (The Idealists, R4, female)

But what makes me feel more meaningful is the fact that you are really involved - and as a top of civic activism, I perceive party politics [being member of the party]. Maybe it’s irrational, at a time when it does not make sense. At the time of emptying that old political concept it does not make sense. I see in it the top of civic activism and the possibility of changing things. Like those old concepts. (the Idealists, R8, male)
Responsibility and sacrificing oneself
The sense of responsibility keeps both associations and their members active. In case of the Idealists, it is connected to the activity of the core, and in case of the centre to activities of the several leaders. We witnessed the feeling “we must do it, because nobody else do it - or nobody can make it.” This feeling is linked to the postponement in transition of the leadership in case of several Scouts. In cases of both associations, this feeling has its consequences in overloading of several key members and overestimation of own capacities or capabilities. The Scouts also feel big responsibility towards children and adolescents in their patrols. They do not want to disappoint them:

Have you ever had any intention to drop everything and leave?
Many times. We had a great advantage, or I had a great advantage: for 9 years out of those 10 I’ve been leading the group with XX who is the leader you have seen. She is the reason I stayed even in the most difficult situations, because I knew that if I’d left, she’d have stayed and vice versa – if she’d left, I’d have stayed.
…and it needs to be said that apart from the kids and all things scouting-related, such strong friendships start and grow, which is unbelievable. It’s really difficult to describe – it’s a kind of a relationship based on unbelievable sacrifices. The friendship started in dreadful conditions, we were both absolutely desperate and had to find our way to each other not to kill the other one. Unbelievable.
(…)
All my previous leaders quit after a year; always after a year, and then they left. It was an inner struggle for me, to prove that you can do it. I loved doing it from the very beginning; I love it so much that's hard to believe. Even though I think some of the things weren't worth it, maybe sometimes it was unnecessarily harsh. (Scouts, R2, female)

Self-development and part of their everyday life
The last of the key identified motivations for the engagement is rather retrospective – it emerged in time and it is connected to the benefits which participation in associations gives them. In case of the core of the Idealists and in case of all members of the centre, the participation in association became part of their everyday lives and in several cases it changed their lives dramatically, it changed or formed their values and skills. The membership in the association taught them several useful skills which positively influence their quality of life in other areas (e.g. communication, organisation skills).

The best motivation is the bunch of people around the group that met when they were 12-13. We do things together outside the group too. We’ve just been to Poland, trekking in the mountains. We meet outside Scouts, which, in my opinion, is important for both members and us. Apart from that I get satisfaction from seeing that a programme I've planned moved the boys forward…not that it changed them but opened a new perspective. So passing a bit of me onto them, passing my experience onto the younger ones.
(…)
And the last thing – I was able to practise what Scouting gave me and taught me. Because I realised that if I hadn't been in Scouts, I can't really tell what I'd have done instead. I'd have probably found something similar, but I learnt so much. I even found some temporary jobs, or just now my scout friend and me are setting up a business. We have so many contacts thanks to that. And I don't know, I simply think it's given me so much, and I want to return it to the kids. (Scouts, R3, male)

Lack of time and lack of personal capacities
As mentioned above, due the sense of responsibility, several members are overloading all the time. The activities in the association are very time-consuming - for Scouts on every-day base, for the Idealists there are more intensive periods like election campaign. It has consequences and impact on other areas of their lives - e.g. the young Scouts have no time for part-time
job and school; several Idealists are dealing with their issues while they are in a job; it can also affect partner relationships. **They admitted they are looking for solutions how to cope with this overloading** – by setting boundaries (e.g. Radim from Idealists does not want to deal with politics at the weekends), by focusing on their capabilities more, by delegating:

**How much time does it take?**
Every two weeks, this is something bigger, every day to do a bit of it. Well, of course, such actions. Which is perhaps the reason why people are not as active as you want to be when you’re five at work. And now, somewhere in the evening, engage yourself - that is, of course, a big problem. I think I think it is very important to be active at the same time, and at the same time do not get mad. I said that right from the start I set a limit.

**And that’s where?**
Where is the border? Do not overdo it? Well, at the moment when it makes me feel bad when I'm going somewhere - and I say, I'd just like to be at home at home, have tea and open a book, or watch some stupid things not related to politics...(the Idealists, R5, male)

**Demotivation and burnout**
Although several youths are looking for strategies how to prevent their overload, many of them admitted they experienced demotivation or even burnout. The demotivation embedded in perception of political situation in the Czech Republic and inability to influence the situation properly (and small impact or actual inactivity of the association) was identified among the Idealists:

Sometimes people have the feeling of hopelessness that it does not matter when they see how the CSSD has something like Facebook on our Facebook, stop the migration, stop terrorism, and see where the refugees go there ... so you say you want to vomit and you want wait for it, sit down on the plane and go somewhere (...) but then you say "no", it's worth, at least something ... (the Idealists, R5, male)

**Several members experienced burnout because of the long-term overload** and almost every respondent talked about the long-term inability to be active on a high level. Many of them also talked about the future slowdown in their activities because they still perceive this overload as something that should be temporary (although it is lasting for longer time). When we met with Radim from the Idealists and his team in campaign few days before election, he was completely exhausted, he struggled with motivation to talk to people, to run a contact campaign. He was looking forward to the election, to the end of the campaign. At the same time, one hour later he admitted he will run campaign for the vice-chairman of the Czech Social Democratic Party (election in February 2018) and he will run campaign in regions. Although several respondents experienced burnout or exhaustion, they stayed in the association and some of them were/are looking for personal coping strategies (mentioned above) or long-term strategies suitable for the organisation. The members of the centre realized that the situation in which some members hold several functions and have too many duties in the centre is not sustainable anymore and they split the responsibilities among more members (it is also one of the reasons why the older leaders left):

The leader's role is taken very seriously; it’s one of the most demanding roles one can have because you are really responsible for the children. People in the centre are like, if you do a lot, you should manage even more; and not like, ok, slow down because you aren’t coping. 

**(...)**

**How do others manage it elsewhere? Are the centres larger, so are there more people who share different duties?**
Partly, and I also think that it’s a little unusual here. Many of the functions devolve to one person. Mine was the most demanding one: I was leading two groups, a camp, a day camp that was
running side to side with the camp, that was fantastic, and I was a deputy head of the centre, and I was training the instructors which I had to prepare for. So that was five things I was all dealing with at the same time. I thought I’d die, I really thought it’d kill me. [Emphasis added]

(...) Is that something that has changed in those ten years?
A lot. We didn’t work with people in the past. Firstly, we did try but we didn’t know how to do it, and secondly, in my opinion, it took us really long to realise that we need to train people below us. (Scout, R2, female)

That sometimes, people are too keen to agree to do things but later don’t find the time to do them. And the same applies to the centre. That sometimes we agree to do certain things but we don’t have the capacity, and someone could have said right at the beginning: “Hang on, we might not be able to do that.”

(...) So I feel this was our biggest conceptual error caused by combining different functions. Because people often overestimate themselves, take on too many things but can’t manage to do them. That’s a common problem of all Scouts, that they are all too keen. They’d love to do a lot of things but then they find out they really can’t. (Scouts, R3, male)

The Idealists are trying to engage active younger people (students) with enough time for participation (compared to members in thirties, with jobs, starting families).

How do you manage it time-wise, that must be quite a problem?
That’s why we need to talk on Sunday. Until recently, I had a different problem, I was somehow burnt out. Which also meant that I wasn’t active.

Because of work?
Because of everything. My job is closely linked to politics, so when something happens in politics, it concerns me too, and I am not very cynical. In short, if something happens, if I don’t like something, I can’t just keep cool about it. So that’s why I was so burnt out, but now it’s better. I also think the election will give me a kick. But time-wise, we all do it in our free time, right.

So that’s why it’d be good to have young people who might have more time and can also be good at setting things in motion?
That would certainly be good. That’s what we have to work on. We don’t want to be leaders forever and so we need people who would be willing to invest time into it and to be honest. It has to be someone who is at school, at uni, otherwise it won’t work. A thirty-year-old can’t do it, because it’d have to be a paid post. (the Idealists, R1, male)

Other topics

Impulses to join the association, to participate
We identified several impulses or motivations to engage or to join the association. In case of the Scout centre the motive for joining the association was often connected to parents (when the members were children, parents knew Scouts) or it was accidental (e.g. they walked through the park during recruitment of new members). The respondents were not able to identify key moment in which they decided to stay in the centre and became leaders, because it developed gradually (they realized they want to stay in their 15-16). One respondent described her decision to become leader as a pubertal decision. Although she was not so engaged in scouting and though she did not have any experience with leadership at the time (and she wanted to leave the centre), she decided to prove she was able handle it (as a challenge):

Somehow, my scouting career was quite complicated, shall we say, rather unusual. I started as a Brownie, which is how it works here, then I was a girl Scout and then I led a patrol. And when I was 16 or 17, I really wanted to quit but there was this affair…the leadership was replaced and
XX became the centre leader, which was an impulse for me, because the girl Scouts were dissipating, so I stayed and have been the leader for 10 years.

Was there a link between the intention to leave and the way it was organised?
I didn’t enjoy it; until the age of 17 I wasn’t a particularly good Scout. It needs to be said that our leadership wasn’t particularly good, or to be accurate, there was none. I was a stranger to the idea of Scouting, I didn’t really get it and attended the meetings out of habit. My peers had left but I only became a Scout when I started to lead, so…

(…)
I had to start from scratch as someone who’d had no experience and who was probably the last person who should be doing it. I started something I didn’t understand and have been developing it for 10 years. It wasn’t until after 5 years when I could actually say I was doing it fairly well and stopped making elementary mistakes. (Scouts, R2, female)

In the case of the Idealists, we can distinguish three main motives for engagement. The first one is quite accidental:

…I came to the Idealists with my friend who took me to one of the events to find a boyfriend…
(…)
I went, that was about two years ago, and up till then I had been a political virgin, and I made that clear. That I had a political opinion, I followed political events but I’d never found anywhere appropriate to talk about it, where I could learn something about it, ask questions and not be seen as a nerd. So the Idealists became the space where I gradually started to see what politics meant in Czechia. What social democracy means, how ministries and government work, and what state the party is in. (the Idealists, R4, female)

The second one is connected to the high interest in politics and leftist politics. The members were looking for people sharing their values. Although they were mostly interested in politics from their childhood or early adolescence, some of them influenced by their family:

Can you tell me a little about the history? How did you get to the party and to the Idealists?
I joined the party when I was 19. My Dad has been a long-time social democrat so it runs in the family. Also my Grandad, ideologically. So it wasn’t hard for me to identify with it.
(…)
I also started university at the age of 19. I started economics and public organisation at the University of Economics, which is a right-wing extreme, so it was a motivation for me to define myself, but I don’t really know. We have always talked politics in the family so it was never for me somehow…Simply, like some families talk ice-hockey or football, so it was not really hard at all for me. I joined the party and then I joined the YSD, but both were somehow dead. I joined something different than where I am now. I wasn’t really happy there and what’s more, I entered a club (…) (the Idealists, R1, male)

On the other hand, not all of them seem to be strongly influenced by their parents, family, peers or environment in schools. They were just looking for some people also interested in politics to discuss with them and to share their unusual hobby:

You waited to be 15 so that you could start to be involved. Where does that come from, from your family?
No, not in my family. The only one who was interested in politics, was my Grandad. He was in the National Socialist party around 1945 and he was the one who was renewing it in ’89. But my parents don’t care about politics at all and if I didn’t make them, they wouldn’t even vote in the election. I have been interested in it since I was kid. In 2006, I was nine. That was the time
of that tense campaign, Paroubek against Topolánek. And I was nine and I started to collect election flyers and read them, because it captured my interest. It was like looking into the shop window but later I felt I tend towards social democracy. But it might be more irrational than rational, if you want to know why, but it all built up from little pieces and I have always had a leftist way of thinking, so as a result I tend towards social democracy.

Was there anything you could share with friends, if you couldn’t share it at home?
It was my hobby, I talked to those kids when I was thirteen. For example, we talked about whether our parents voted for this or that. What I think drew me to it was history, I was so much into it, millions of books, and from there it’s only a little step to politics. (the Idealists, R3, male)

The last interesting motivation is a utilitarian one. One member of the Idealists admitted he got engaged at the university because he wanted to get experiences for his CV.

It all happened in the third year of college. There I realized that I could do something about career or study, especially in our social sciences, that is not quite easy on the labour market, so I realized it was important to do something extra. (...)
my political engagement has strengthened my career. It was an opportunity to do something else. This association really combines, it is unique in the Czech context. (...) It was also pragmatic. You felt like you had to do something good, because you could write it somewhere. This also applies to my student engagement. (the Idealists, R8, male)

2.8 Conclusion

In our research we focused on two very different associations representing different types of the active citizenship – yet, we found several key similarities regarding the individual citizenship of members.

Partly due to their history, the Idealists are interconnected with high-level politics but also with unions, and thus they are able to exercise their influence on decision-making processes – and on decision-makers in Czechia. The combination of developed democracy within the organisation and efficient media strategy (with focus on equality also regarding to membership) makes the initiative successful at several different levels. The Idealists, as “progressivist and culturally liberal” civic association (originally founded as platform strongly connected to the Czech Social Democratic Party) with around 120 members is trying to influence political and public affairs through a broad repertoire of (collective) action and through employing tools which are both conventional (elections, face-to-face campaigns) and innovative (strong focus on social media tools as memes, videos, infographics), both constructive (cooperation with organisation as trade unions, candidacy) and protest-based (demonstration), both focusing on spreading information/education of citizens (sharing information, organising debates with experts, writing articles) and direct actions (petitions), both embedded in institutionalized politics and civic engagement (charity). The Idealists are permanently active politically progressive activist group focusing on the politics especially at the national level. However, the European Union is one of the often-addressed topics because it affects the laws and affairs on the national level. The Idealists are strongly pro-European, they are highly interested in European affairs and many of the Idealists have experiences with cooperation with political associations, organisation or parties (or their members) abroad.

The Scout centre “Thirteen” and its members represent quite different patterns of active citizenship. Its success lies in the long-term popularity of the centre and on the fact that this centre is completely led only by young people educating and caring about dozens of children and adolescence, based on volunteering (still keeping most of the members engaged and motivated).
Compared to the Idealists, the Scouts are not oriented toward national and institutionalized politics, their activities are oriented toward community and development of civic values and soft-skills (including critical thinking, responsibility, political knowledge etc.). Their active citizenship is also embedded in everyday life (Bakardjieva, 2009) through their community, in their life styles through small-scale activities located in their neighbourhood and through participation in community life. The active citizenship in case of the Scouts is present in scouting laws, in scouting values (to care, to interest, to help, to protect, to take responsibility) and it seems to be very close to the conservative and classical definition of the active citizenship as presented in the report on WP2, with the emphasis on the responsibility of the citizens (to be informed) and participating in (local) communities. Nevertheless, in case of the several members their sense of community is much broader thanks to supranational character of the scout movement, support of the movement, opportunities it gives (events, courses, contacts) and due the sense of shared identity.

As mentioned, despite the differences in activities of the members of the two associations, there are several key similarities. The members are mostly young educated middle class people living in large cities, mostly supported by their families (or partners) in their activities (past and present). Surprisingly, many of our respondents are rather introverts (this applies especially on the Scouts), though in the Idealists – despite their effort to balance gender etc.21 – we could describe many members as extroverted white males (active in discussions). Although both associations (not paid, based on volunteering) have clear hierarchy and well-developed democracy, we witness that many of their activities are based on informal rules, relationships, everyday meetings (or communication) of few people, routines and friendships that also works as long-term motivations. At the same time, it also comes with certain limits such as with certain isolation of the core of the organisations (more visible in the case of the Idealists as much larger organisation), with communication issues (communication gap between the core and other members, new members), or with lower ability to motivate members external the core to engage (in case of the Idealists as much more bigger associations). This is to some degree linked with the core members’ tendency for self-exploitation intertwined (in case of the Idealists) with inability to delegate tasks to other, passive members, or with trust issues (in case of the Scouts). So, key powers keeping the key members engaged despite of long-term overload are the informal relationships in the associations, solidarity and responsibility and friendships – which also keep these cores of the associations more closed (especially in the case of the Idealists).

21 Even Radim as leader of the Idealists is not so extrovert or dominant. He was also criticised by several members he is weak leader.
References

WP6 Report: Representation of the EU and youth active EU citizenship in educational contexts.
Local Appendix A (Czech Republic)

Collected data

In the case of Idealists, data were collected in period from end of March 2017 to December 2017.

- 13 observations (covering regular meetings of the group, unformal meetings, events) – field notes, photos.
- 8 interviews (about 2 hours per interview): interviews were conducted (except one respondent) with younger participants (18-26), covering both leading persons and regular members (only one female).
- 27 paper questionnaires collected at the congress (2.12. 2017): the questionnaire was short version of the main project questionnaire (WP7) with focus on participation and attitudes, complemented by set of question on quality of participation in the Idealists.
- Data from online questionnaires (N=19) conducted before congress (November 2017), by leading persons, with focus on topics and ideas.
- Analysis of media coverage (key word “Idealists”, TV/print/online media) – 35 articles + 2 videos (April-December).
- Analysis of Facebook communication (April-December) – public Facebook page of Idealists, Facebook page of the leader, Instagram.
- Several documents provided by members (minutes from regular meetings), public documents and articles from website, leaflets and magazines.

In case of Scout centre, data were collected in period from June 2017 to December 2017:

- 8 observations (covering regular meetings of the troops) – field notes, photos.
- 7 interviews (about 2 hours per interview): all respondents (except one) was younger than 25 (two were younger than 20); 3 males and 4 females; covering leaders (formal and unformal, see below) of the troops and leaders of the centre (covering both long-time leaders and new ones).
- Several documents provided by the leader (minutes from organisational meetings).
- Data from websites of the group (e.g. public information about events, members, photos).

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22 The informed consent was signed at the beginning of the April, at the regular meeting of the group.
23 Both in case of the Idealists and the Scouts, researcher was participating in their activities and all of them knew, she is researcher. The role in the Scout was event more active because she helped with the children.
24 The interviews were unstructured, mostly focused on position of a participant in the organisation, her/his history, perception of the organisation (aims, effectiveness, satisfaction) and communication, recent activities, other political activities and brief biography.
25 Data were collected through database Anopress IT (https://www.anopress.cz/) – a provider of professional media monitoring.
Local Appendix B (Czech Republic)

Tab. 1: Political attitudes – comparison of the Idealists and Czech young adults (N=441, 2017).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Idealists</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Young adults</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>19.02</td>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media in democracy</td>
<td>4.78</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>11.93</td>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritarianism</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>74.93</td>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alienation</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>50.35</td>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>63.55</td>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political efficacy</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>34.66</td>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerance – refugees</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>66.69</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social trust</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.11</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SelfEfficacy</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>7.78</td>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Paper questionnaires from the Idealists were collected on December 2nd. Data from young adults were collected in November, by using CAPI and CAWI and quota sampling.

All of the variables (except in the case of political interest) indicating attitudes used a response scale ranging from ‘strongly disagree’ (1) to ‘strongly agree’ (5). The scores were computed with averaged items.

**Democracy.** Support for democracy was measured by an item ‘Democracy is the best system of government that I know.’

**Media in democracy.** The role of the media in democracy was assessed by an item ‘Media (e.g.; TV, newspaper, websites) should have the right to criticize politicians and the government.’

**Alienation** was measured by 4 items. Two of them addressed the EU level of government, the other two the national level – on both levels, one item addressed personal and one item institutional alienation, with higher scoring referring to a higher level of alienation.

**Political interest** was measured by 4 items: ‘How interested are you in politics?’, ‘How interested are you in what is going on in society?’, ‘How interested are you in European Union related topics?’ and ‘How interested are you in national politics?’

**Political efficacy** was measured by 4 items: ‘I feel that I have a pretty good understanding of important societal issues’, ‘I consider myself capable to become engaged in societal issues’, ‘I think that by working together, young people can change things for the better’; and ‘By working together, young people are able to influence the decisions which are made by government.’

**Authoritarianism** was measured by 3 items: ‘Instead of needing civil rights and freedoms our country needs one thing only: law and order’, ‘Obedying and respecting authority are the most important values that we should teach our children’, and ‘Our country needs a strong government that will ensure social order and move us in the right direction’.

**Tolerance** was measures by 3 items: ‘I feel that refugees should have the right to maintain their traditions and cultural heritage’, ‘I feel that our government does not do enough to help refugees’, ‘I feel that our country has enough economic problems and that is why we cannot afford to help refugees’.

**Social trust** was measured by one item: ‘I feel that most people can be trusted.’

**SelfEfficacy** was measured by 5 items: ‘I can always solve difficult problems if I try hard enough’, ‘I am certain that I can accomplish my goals’, ‘I am confident that I can deal efficiently with unexpected events’, ‘When I am confronted with a problem, I can find several solutions’, ‘I can handle whatever comes my way.’

Tab. 2: Frequency of participation (only citizens active in last 12 months) – comparison of Idealists and Czech young adults (N=440, 2017).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Idealists</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Young adults</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Signed a petition</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>19.88</td>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taken part in a demonstration or strike</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>8.27</td>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boycotted or bought certain products</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worn a badge, ribbon or a t-shirt</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteered or worked for a social cause</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participated in a concert or a charity event</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Donated money to a social cause 2.45 .95 1.75 .74 13.84 p<.01
Shared news or music or videos 2.71 1.00 1.92 .84 17.08 p<.01
Discussed social or political issues on the internet 2.92 1.04 2.08 .92 15.80 p<.01
Participated in an internet-based protest or boycott 2.11 .90 1.64 .92 3.46 .07
Joined a social or political group on Facebook 2.58 1.07 1.86 .83 14.75 p<.01
Painted or stuck political messages or graffiti 1.75 .96 1.67 .78 0.03 .86
Taken part in an occupation of a building or a public space 1 .00 1.6 .55 8.75 .01
Taken part in a political event where there was a physical confrontation with political opponents or with the police 1.33 .65 1.31 .60 .01 .93
Worked for a political party or a political candidate 2.81 1.17 1.83 .86 8.60 p<.01
Contacted a politician or public official 2.22 1.06 1.72 .94 2.70 .11
Donated money to support the work of a political group or organisation 2.24 .89 1.75 .79 3.45 .07
Created political content online (e.g., video, webpage, post in a blog). 2.22 1.00 1.88 .89 1.13 .30

Note: Paper questionnaires from the Idealists were collected on December 2nd. Data from young adults were collected in November, by using CAPI and CAWI and quota sampling.

Tab. 3: Attitudes to EU – comparison of the Idealists and Czech young adults (N=441, 2017).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude to EU</th>
<th>Idealists</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Young adults</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to EU</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>6.48</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to the nation</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>8.92</td>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>View - EU</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>31.21</td>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Paper questionnaires from the Idealists were collected on December 2nd. Data from young adults were collected in November, by using CAPI and CAWI and quota sampling.

Tab. 4: The Idealists – the members’ satisfaction with participation in the association (questionnaire, N=26).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How often have you…</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Felt that there were a variety of points of view being discussed.</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thought that there was no real dialogue and that discussions led nowhere.</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observed conflicting opinions that brought up new ways of perceiving the issues.</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt that there was consensus.</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt that you are alone in your perception of some issues.</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt that some members were excluded.</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seen real and/or everyday life problems being the focus of discussion.</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt that participation was very important to you.</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In general, how much are you satisfied with your participation in Idealists? 6.50 1.94 26
In general, how much are you satisfied with the functioning of Idealists? 7.04 1.48 26

Note: The respondents answered at the scale from 1 to 5 (1=not at all, 5=all the time), in case of general satisfaction at the scale from 1 to 10.

Tab. 5: The Idealists - motivation for participation in the association (questionnaire, N=26).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I enjoy participation in Idealists, because…</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std.</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
We are dealing issues important to me.  4.50  .58  26
There are people that are close to me  4.54  .71  26
We can make change together.  4.23  .65  26
I can express my opinions.  4.04  .77  26
I can meet people with same opinions.  4.54  .51  26
We discuss crucial issues in our society.  4.62  .57  26
I can participate in events which I would not have access to.  3.85  1.01  26
I can meet people I would not otherwise meet.  4.31  .88  26
I can see impact of our activities.  3.69  .88  26

Note: The respondents answered at the scale from 1 to 5 (1=totally disagree, 5= totally agree).
Local Appendix C (Czech Republic)

Graphs from survey collected at the Congress of the Idealists

Graph 1: Participation – comparison of Idealists and Czech young adults (N=440, 2017).

Note: Paper questionnaires from the Idealists were collected on December 2nd. Data from young adults were collected in November, by using CAPI and CAWI and quota sampling.
3. Estonia: DD Academy – Mai Beilmann, University of Tartu
3.1 Introduction

The Foundation for Science and Liberal Arts Domus Dorpatensis was founded in 2002 by Alexander von Rücker (professor at Bonn University), Jenik Radon (professor at Columbia University), and Nils Hollberg (president of the Society for the Restoration of Baltic Historical Buildings). DD Akadeemia (DD Academy in English; DD stands for Domus Dorpatensis) is a non-profit program which aims to inspire young people to direct their attention towards solving societal issues and defending an open society. To support young people in their goals, DD Academy provides extensive training and practical experiences in a safe environment. The building of Domus Dorpatensis plays a significant role in the story of the organisation. The oldest part of the stone house was built before 1755 and from 1849 to the World War II the house belonged to the Baltic German family von Rücker. After Estonia regained its independence, the estate was returned to the von Rücker family. Since 2002, the building belongs to the Foundation Domus Dorpatensis as the founding capital of the organisation. From the very beginning, foundation has aimed to enhance young people’s active civic participation in the society. The foundation is led by board and council (latter being formed of rather influential people, incl. university professors, former ministers, vice mayors of Tartu or partner towns, etc.). However, the program of DD Academy is managed, shaped and created by the young people themselves.

The organisation is one of a kind in Estonia and according to the information available from the organisation itself, it is one of a kind in the world. Of course, there are many other youth development programs, but what makes DD Academy unique is its organisational form as social enterprise (that at least partly funds its own youth development program). DD Academy is a program of The Foundation for Science and Liberal Arts Domus Dorpatensis, which gets its income from renting out the guest apartments and seminar rooms; the money from these economic activities is invested in the youth development program.

DD Academy has experimented with several different formats to engage young people in making changes in society. First, they hired young project managers who initiated their (mainly social or cultural) projects. After the current leader of the organisation became the CEO of the organisation in his early twenties, the next stage (from about 2010) was the formation of teams of young people who organised different projects and events. Some of the youth initiatives that were born in DD Academy during that time have grown to large-scale civic projects (incl. Youth Leadership Portal and Youth Leadership School, TEDx Tartu, Week of Estonian Civil Society, Festival of Thinking, etc.). In 2015 the program of DD Academy was reorganised again with the aim of creating an even better personal development program for young people. However, some aspects have remained the same over time. There has been strong emphasis on civic involvement of young people and the focus on learning by doing, participation, encouragement, and getting access to the networks of likeminded active young people who in turn, encourage each other to initiate their own projects to make a change in local communities, in their school/university, in the whole country, etc. throughout the different phases of the organisation. All DD Academy programs have been built in a way that enables young people to gain experiences and build up their self-confidence step-by-step. The basis for their programs is and has been practical experience, which is supported via training and a network of like-minded people.

Participants of the current program gather for 13 weekend sessions from October to June. Most of the sessions last for two days (Saturday and Sunday) but a couple of sessions (the first and the last) start on Fridays. Throughout the long and exhausting days, which start at 10 or 11 o’clock in the morning and last into the very early hours, participants get information and discuss about different topics, which centre around four main modules – changing the world (involves developing the skills that may prove useful for bringing the change along, e.g. communication skills, public speaking, team work, leadership skills), self-development, understanding the world, and defending the open society. In between the sessions participants have to do homework,
some of these being individual and some group assignments. Assignments vary from reading a book chapter on political philosophy to internships in third sector organisations. The program is targeted primarily at those young people who have no previous experiences with active civic participation. The participants are mostly university students; however, there are no strict age limits or education requirements and **motivation is considered the most important requirement to participate.** DD Academy attracts young people mainly from Tartu and surrounding municipalities (however, young people from all over the world are welcomed). Besides organising the youth development program, DD Academy team organises annual youth conference called ‘School of Change’ and publishes a web-magazine for young people who are interested in societal issues and creating a change.

DD Academy is led by young people and the program is managed, shaped and created by the young people for young people. There is a team of active young people (mainly university students) who lead and manage the program. DD Academy is rather small organisation at the moment: there are about 35 young participants and about 10 to 12 young people who organise the program.

I probably do not exaggerate by claiming that the team and participants felt rather flattered by the fact that they had caught researchers’ attention and selected for the ethnographic case study. The ethnography had been going on for half a year, when one team member confided me after the interview that having a researcher around, observing their team, and interviewing him makes him feel as kind of VIP. He admitted, that coming from the remote rural area, he would have not believed just a couple of years ago that anyone would be interested in interviewing him. Therefore, my visits to the organisation obviously had a motivational effect on some team members, reassuring them that they are doing something important.

I started my ethnography in DD Academy in April 2017. I regularly visited DD team’s weekly meetings, took part of several weekend sessions together with the participants, attended ‘School of Change’ in June, was present at the ‘Development Festival’ (the series of extremely long team meetings in June), and went along for a couple of late night social gatherings with the team. Altogether, my ethnographic data includes field notes from 31 observations (usually these observations took pretty much the whole day), 8 long recorded ethnographic interviews, notes from several short interviews, and data from organisation’s website and Facebook page. By the time I announced at the team meeting in late November 2017 that I will not be attending any further meetings, I was not only feeling as somewhat belonging to the group but I was also perceived something similar to a fellow team member since several members of the seasonal team told me that they were so used to me being there that they would miss my presence at their team meetings. It should not be surprising as I was treated as a fellow team member from the beginning and was even asked to share bits of my personal life at the beginning of the meetings just as the team members.

17:52. Lennart arrives; to start off, Norman asks everyone to talk about the highlights of their week; everyone talking and laughing (pretty much over each other); I am asked to speak as well. [Field notes, DD Academy team meeting on 5 April 2017 starting at 5.45 p.m. at the Domus Dorpatensis HUB]

Being received not as a researcher but rather as a fellow member of the organisation was somewhat disturbing from the beginning. However, our main similarity was not about young academic studying other young academics as one could think because, unlike me, most of the team members and participants did not see their future in academic world. The problem was that we had much more in common. I very soon realised that even though I introduced myself as a researcher, the team was rather well aware of my projects as a youth activist not very many years ago. Furthermore, I knew several older team members before because of these projects or some joint activities for youth leaders in the past. Therefore, I found myself in the problematic position with some older team members seeing me as their former colleague and fellow and some younger team members looking at me as a youth activist form the previous generation and
maybe even someone to look up to (at least that is how it felt when they proudly informed me that they have read my articles on youth issues in newspapers). It sometimes put me in a difficult position because I felt that the team members confide in me a bit too much, forgetting that I am researcher, and telling me things that one would confide to a trusted friend. For example, I could never make the interview with the organisation’s leader publicly available in its full length because it probably would result in organisation falling apart as some board members would finally find out how the organisation and different relationships in it actually functions.

3.2 Conceptualisations of Youth

The alumni of the program are expected to ‘really start changing the world’ and ‘actually start actively solving the world’s problems’ (DD Academy’s webpage). Therefore, concerning the young people’s ability to participate in politics or civil society, the team of DD Academy clearly do not have any doubt that young people are very much capable to be civically and politically active. However, this shared belief is salient and not discussed. I witnessed no discussions about even considering the possibility that young people could be somehow less able to participate in the society than older people. I believe that it has much to do with the young age and life stage of the team members – being civically active young people themselves, being young and being civically active are both something very self-evident for them. The young people, whom they are targeting their program, are practically their peers.

DD Academy is quite often regarded as a student organisation. This categorisation is not completely wrong as majority of the team members and participants are university students in their early and mid-twenties, and their communication is targeted mainly at students. However, it is definitely not a regular student organisation as they welcome young people, who are not university students, as well. In practice, high school or vocational school students, and working young people can join the program as the most important criteria for participation is not a student status, but being interested in societal issues, motivation, and willingness to take part of the whole program.

The current participants are predominantly undergraduate students but there are also some graduate students (including one or two PhD students) and working young people. The disciplines are quite varied – from social sciences to genetics and computer sciences. Some members of the organising team pointed out that last year psychology students formed the most numerous disciplinary group but this year’s program is particularly popular among IT students. The gender balance is quite good: more than one third of the participants are boys although there are more girls than boys in Estonian higher education. Although young people are considered as the target group, there is no actual age limit for participation. Most of the participants are in their early twenties but there are also couple of older participants in their late twenties or early thirties, and couple of younger participants who are younger than twenty. The age differences show off in big group discussions – couple of older and more experienced participants (in their early thirties) tend to be more talkative. However, this does not mean that all younger participants sit still and only listen– some younger participants are very prone to ask questions and express their opinions.
DD Academy declares on their webpage that their program is for university students. In practice they also accept young people who are not university students.

As pointed out, there are only few participants who are working and not studying. This may seem a bit elitist in the international context but one has to take into account that studying at the university is not something elitist in Estonian context. The majority of Estonian young people...
(about 70%) attend the academic track of upper secondary education, and upper secondary education programmes in Estonian vocational schools retain links with both academic and general education to keep open avenues, formally, at least, to higher education. There are no tuition fees in Estonian language tertiary education, and stipends and scholarships are made available for students from families with low incomes. As a result, majority of young people go to universities after graduating a high school. It does not mean that there are no groups of young people, who are excluded from higher education – it is definitely more difficult to find sufficient means (either in the form of finances, time, or personalised help) to attend the university for young people growing up in economically disadvantaged families, teenaged mothers, young people with learning difficulties or other disabilities, to name a few. However, it does mean that the student body in Estonia is diverse, and it is rather common that young people from economically disadvantaged families, remote rural areas, or national minorities study at the universities.

The diversity of Estonian student body is well reflected in the composition of participants of DD Academy. Although they are predominately university students, most of them do not come from particularly affluent families. There are participants who grew up in remote rural communities and poorer parts of the towns. A big proportion of team members and participants are working to fund their studies because otherwise they cannot afford to cover their living costs. The social origins of the participants were not publicly discussed and the topic of participants’ material situation only came up at couple of team meetings, when it was discussed whether it is okay if the participants have to visit third sector organisations outside Tartu. The verdict was that it is not okay because it would put participants with less means in disadvantageous position, indicating that the program is targeted to young people regardless of their financial situation.

The team members and participants are predominately ethnic Estonians. However, it is definitely not because young people with different ethnic background would not be welcomed. Quite contrary, it is obvious from the discussions I have overheard that the team members are very open-minded when it comes to all kind of diversity. The lack of participants with ethnically different background is rather a result of the ethnic homogeneity of the surrounding population. The attitude towards ethnic minorities is best exemplified by the only participant with the Russian background. This young man is a valued member of the group and he is not treated any differently.

Quite by accident, I later find out that one of the team members has some Asian roots from her father’s side. She spoke about her Asian ancestors at one evening gathering, and the other team members listened and asked questions with warm curiosity. Therefore, different ethnic background was considered something interesting, even though it was not discussed much on day to day basis.

I am aware that among the DD Academy’s former participants have also been young men with a disability. However, due to confidentiality issues I do not know much of this case, except the fact that the syndrome, which made him lose his mental stability occasionally, was not considered a reason not to let him participate.

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3.2.1 The Team
DD Academy is led by a young man in his late twenties to whom we have given the pseudonym Norman. I have known him for years and he was my first contact in DD Academy and the one who allowed me to do ethnographic case study in DD Academy after he had consulted with the other team members. When I started my case study in April 2017, there were eight young people in the team: Elise, Hugo, Ingrid, Iris, Lennart, Lea, Nora, and Vanessa (+ Norman). The structure of the organisation and the team membership changed a little bit in June, when two new structures were created – so called development team was formed of the remaining old team members, and the so called seasonal team was formed of new team members. At that time Ingrid and Iris left the organisation and five young people, former participants of the program – Ines, Ingmar, Lotta, Linda, and Nele – joined the team.

The team members of DD Academy are predominately either undergraduate or postgraduate university students (or former students who have graduated lately). With one exception, they are in their twenties. During my ethnography, there were ten young women and four young men in the team (there was some variation because of some members leaving and new members joining the team in summer). Several of them also either held full time or part time jobs (e.g. teacher, editor of the newspaper, entrepreneur, clerk).

The following paragraphs about team members are based on my conversations and interviews with them, on the information they provide about themselves on their webpage, and

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27 All names of DD Academy personnel have been changed for the purposes of confidentiality and anonymity.
introductions of themselves that are put on the walls of their office (along with the introductions of every single participant).

Norman is a central figure in DD Academy. It seems that no matter with whom you speak, you end up hearing something that Norman has said or done or planned or what Norman thinks about something. He has led DD Academy for about seven or eight years and formed the organisation by his image as I will show in coming sections. He is also the institutional memory of the organisation because he has seen the previous formats of DD Academy programs. He is one of the few people who are also legally bound to the organisation.

Vanessa is another member who has been in the organisation for several years and can remember the developments in the organisation during the last decade. She is also one of the few people who are employed by the organisation – she takes care of the economic activities of the organisation as her job and contributes to the youth program on a voluntary basis. Vanessa, who came to Estonia from one Western European country as an exchange student, started to work for Domus Dorpatensis and remained in Estonia, also organises another youth project in cooperation with her former home country.

Nora joined DD Academy several years ago as a participant. The program of DD Academy was very different back then. There was a system of different youth teams, which organised events concentrated around some topic. Nora started as a team member, and later was a leader of the youth group which organised open political debates. Now she has been in the team organising DD Academy’s new program for some years. Lea is another team member who joined the organisation as a participant back in time when there was the system of youth teams. She participated in the group led by Nora. Next year she participated in DD Academy’s reformed program and after completing it, stayed as a team member.

Ingmar’s career in DD Academy started similarly to Nora’s. He joined the organisation several years ago and was first member and later leader of one youth group. However, in some point he left the organisation. Last year he returned as a participant of the DD Academy’s reformed program and after completing it, became a team member and chief organiser of the next ‘School of Change’.

Other members of the team have had shorter careers in the organisation. Elise, Hugo, Ingrid, and Iris participated in DD Academy’s current program and after completing the program, remained in DD Academy as team members. Ines, Lotta, Linda, and Nele all joined DD Academy’s program as participants in 2016. They completed the program in June 2017 and remained in the organisation as new team members. Lennart is an exception – he has not taken part of the program as a participant; he was asked to join the team by Norman, and Lennart agreed because he thought that it was a worthwhile challenge.

The social background of the team members is similar to that of the participants. Any of them do not come from particularly affluent of influential family. Quite contrary, several of them grew up either in remote rural communities or in big apartment blocks, which were built in Soviet time to accommodate workers and which are nowadays known as areas from where people usually move away as soon as they can afford it. Most of them had a payed job outside DD Academy because they did not have means to afford studying and volunteering otherwise. Therefore, they are quite regular young people if we consider their social background and not their civic activities.
3.2.2 Active Civic Participation before DD Academy

The ‘activist careers’ of team members are rather different, varying from being extremely active already before joining the DD Academy to total passivity before becoming active in DD Academy.

Unsurprisingly, Norman was very active already before joining Domus Dorpatensis and his active participation in several youth organisations was actually a reason why he was invited to Domus Dorpatensis. Ines and Linda have been civically active since high school when they both were active members of student council. Their careers as active students continued when they pursued their studies at the university. Lotta started even earlier and founded her first youth NGO already when she was in 7th or 8th grade. She says that she was an active student throughout her school years and represented her school a lot. As a university student she has worked and volunteered for many different culture organisations.

‘I was in seventh or eighth grade back then – I thought we needed some kind of a great non-profit organisation to do things – well, it was a small village in [...] county, a small place, [...] rural municipality – so how could you be more active there, to make youths more active. And then it was the youths of [...] rural municipality [...]. And so we created it, this was my first experience with non-profits and the like ... there were societal issues there, for instance, we did a joint party with youths with a mental disability to draw attention to something, to show that there are different kinds of people, so maybe this was my first experience...' [Lotta, interview in October 2017]

Lennart, on the other hand, says that he detested activists throughout his school years: ‘They seemed to me such pompous toadies.’ He became active at the university or as he put it himself: ‘I sort of fretted myself into an activist at university.’ After he became disappointed in the university, he has been active member of student organisations of his discipline, faculty, and university. Ingmar too did not think much of civic involvement in high school. In an article published in ‘Good Citizen’ (a magazine published by Network of Estonian Nonprofit Organizations), Ingmar has written that when he was 16, nothing could have predicted what an active citizen he will become in his twenties. Somewhat similarly to Lennart and Ingmar, Nele became active in the university when she joined the student organisation of her discipline. However, she has always been interested in societal issues and she knew already in high school that she wanted to study something related to society. She says that she was more interested in societal issues than her course-mates at university.

Lea was never a member of any organisations prior DD Academy. She says that she was not much interested in civic and political issues throughout her schoolyears, though she was actively participating in all kind of cultural activities. She started to think more about civic and political issues at the university. Hugo was also not active at all before joining DD Academy and he
preferred spending time on his own. He had only thought that it would be interesting to know how these active people do became active, how did they started or what was their first step.

‘Before I came to Domus, I went to school and then I stayed at home. As there were not many extracurricular activities and if I wanted to, I always kept thinking of the people who are activists – where they began or what the first step is in getting your life going. But ... I had not come up with an actual answer to this and I kept thinking that I would talk to people and see what happens.’ [Hugo, interview in November 2017]

3.2.3 Finding DD Academy

There seem to be two main ways how team members and participants have found out about DD Academy – internet and the word of mouth. Ines, for example, found DD Academy from the internet. She did some background research and decided to apply for participation. It seemed like a perfect program for self-development. Nele became aware of DD Academy when she was tagged to DD Academy’s campaign in Facebook by a friend. Nele found the organisation interesting and applied for. She says that this was actually a rather random thing to do and she was rather sceptical towards whole thing at the beginning. She says that despite the very low expectations she ended up with gaining experiences she did not even imagine or expect.

‘A course mate of mine actually found it for me. Domus ran a recruitment campaign on Facebook and it was, like, ‘tag a friend’ or something and my friend tagged me and I was like, oh, that's interesting, why not, I'll sign up. So it was pretty much accidental actually, a coincidence. /…/ To be fair, then I didn’t really have any hopes, I came here very sceptical at first.’ [Nele, interview in November 2017]

However, despite the growing importance of the internet, many team members have found DD Academy through word of mouth, because they know someone who was member before or because someone suggested that this might be something for them. Lea, for example, was brought to DD Academy by Nora. Nora joined the organisation a year before and next autumn she invited Lea to join her team. Lea did not know much about DD Academy before. Hugo applied for participation in the program after the convincing by his tutor at the university. Similarly to Nele, he was rather sceptical at first but ended up with finding totally new qualities of himself.

Linda was aware of the existence of DD Academy for a while before joining it. She says that Academy is quite well known among civically active people and she had the impression that there are lot of interesting people organising different events. When she saw the campaign, it did not take long to decide that she wants to apply. Similarly, Lotta heard about the DD Academy several years before joining it. Someone mentioned it to her as an organisation that might be interesting to her. She had also heard some statements by Norman and Lennart and she liked these. Therefore, she did the background research about the program after moving to Tartu. However, she was too busy with different projects back then to join another organisation. Last autumn it was finally time to apply for joining DD program and it was not only the good recommendations from other active young people that brought Lotta to DD Academy. The cause of the organisation can also be important for young people who look for an organisation to join. The program was attractive to Lotta because:

‘I've always had the feeling that I want to make the world a better place and I want to improve some kind of a system. That I don't want to just keep working on the consequences of something, I don't want to keep doing tiny projects. I want to start from a system and look at how it's built and understand how I can make one system or another actually function more efficiently. My expectation was, well, I felt that I have this crazy ambition and I'm environmentally and socially sensitive, I care a lot about what's taking place around me, how people live and how others see them. And then I was, well, what it said was – change the world, although I don't know how, yet – this phrase fascinated me and when I read the website where it
also talked about Popper’s philosophy – that no ideology can be dominant because the world is so complex.’ [Lotta, interview in October 2017]

Most of the current team members have been participants of one or another DD Academy’s program. At some point they grew away from participant status and joined the team. Some of them took the decision that they want to stay at DD Academy as a team member on their own; others were convinced or encouraged by former team members. Ines is an example of a team member who offered her work to the team. She got the idea to join the team after one conference she participated in outside Estonia – after that event she just had so many ideas how to improve the program. She adds that another motivation to join the team was that at some point she also got afraid of what she would do after she graduated from the program as a participant because the program had become such an important part of her life.

Linda, on the other hand, had doubts before joining the team because it seemed such a big commitment. However, after Lotta wrote to her, asking whether she was thinking about joining the team, Linda decided to go for it. Lea was encouraged by Nora to join. Lea says that she herself was not so sure at first, but looking back, she is very happy that she let Nora convince her. Lea is not the only one who has been encouraged by Nora. Nele spoke about joining the team with Lea and Nora first but then did not apply after all because she was afraid of the responsibility. She was uncertain of her future and was not sure whether she could meet their expectations. However, when Norman wrote to her and asked whether she had thought about joining the team, she applied after all.

Norman seems to be rather good at convincing others to join DD Academy. Hugo says that Norman simply talked him in. Hugo had his doubts, he was thinking about going abroad for a while, but looking back he is content that he let Norman convince him to join the team because he believes that he has gained a lot personally from being part of the DD team. He adds that it is good for the personal development to do the things that seem somewhat frightening at first.

Lennart is the only team member who did not start as a participant but was invited by Norman to join the team. Motivated by the opportunity to solve interesting problems, he did so. He knew that the program of the DD Academy is still like a canvas and when he joins the team, he can participate in creation of this program. Another motivation for Lennart was that DD Academy has a certain quality standard. Lennart about his motivation to join the team:

‘Well, in a sense, we have this, you know, setting a standard that isn’t exactly low. There are all kinds of student associations and youth associations here and they usually tend to be, you know, pretty mediocre in how they think and how they are run, and so on.’ [Lennart, interview in November 2017]

Therefore, Lennart joined DD Academy because he was sure that in this organisation he would not be the only one who is interested in having some quality standard.

3.2.4 Choosing the Participants
The DD Academy program is officially targeted primarily at those young people who have no previous experiences with active participation. However, it does not actually say much about the actual choice of participants. There is a question about the ideal participant of the program and the team admits quite openly that in most cases there are not much overlap between the ideal member of the program and the people they chose to participate in the program. That does not mean that they are not pleased with their participants or consider them somehow inferior to the ideal. Quite contrary, many participants are in many ways overqualified for the program.

Lennart explains that the main debate is around the question whether participants of the program should have already done something civic or should still be ‘green’. Lennart believes that it is more difficult to make a program for people who have already been active in different organisations and organised and experienced different things because their experiences are very different and it is very challenging to tailor a program to fit all their diverse needs because it
would be boring for them to listen and discuss things where they already have massive experience. It is easier with the ‘green ones’ because everything you tell them is new for them. Lennart believes that their program should be much more complex to be useful for people who are already experienced in civic organisations.

‘I think we actually don’t know because there’s this... Well, one of the main debates, of course, is whether they should be people who have already done something or experienced something, or whether they should be green. And I think this year’s experience also shows that it’s – how should I put it? Well, if people are a few years older and have done something, been to places, and experienced things then if they come to this program then they don’t have equal levels of experience, some have worked a lot on one thing and others have worked a lot on others and then in these matters where they are already better than others, they become bored.’ [Lennart, interview in November 2017]

Norman agrees that they have not quite figured out yet who would be the ideal participant of their program. He says that strategically correct answer is that they look for the participants who have great potential to do things in the future and who are able to demonstrate that they can think with their own heads. However, according to Norman, the current situation is rather other way around and there are participants who have demonstrated that they are able to do things but have not showed yet whether they can think as well. Norman explains that people who want to join their program are usually those who have already done something and their actual target group is not interested in their program for different reasons. Norman admits that there is a dilemma which is very difficult to solve because if they did the right thing and chose only the participants who had not done anything civic before, their program would lose popularity due to declining ‘cool and popular people who do cool things’. It would make it more difficult to prove that they actually have a good program. Therefore, the current strategy is to take some who have already been very active along with some who have been more passive and hope that those who have been more passive so far become also somewhat more active.

Well, this has been an important issue that has not yet been answered. ‘The right answer’, the strategically correct answer, is that we choose people according to their great potential in the future, their ability to do things, and they have a proven past experience – let’s say that they don’t have to be shown yet what they can do, but they should have shown that they can think. So, we are looking for people who can think and have potential to do things. But actually, it’s the other way around. We often accept people who can do things but have not yet demonstrated the capacity to think. And this dissonant has always been there because those people, who want to join our program, are those who have done things. And those people, who would be the most appropriate target group, are those people, who do not want to come to our program, and secondly, it often happens that we do not want to accept them for different reasons. And here we always have had this dissonant and it is very difficult to solve, because if we take that route, which is like right, then our program would automatically lose its popularity, because we wouldn’t accept the cool and nice and popular people who do cool things, but we would accept those people who haven’t done anything and are unlikely to do anything in the near future, which means that it would be much more difficult to prove to someone that we have a good program. /…/ In this sense, this dissonant has been inscribed here, and I do not have a good solution for it, except that we accept both types of participants and we balance these things together. [Norman, interview in November 2017]

However, it is not very urgent to fix the selection criteria for participants at the moment as there are not too many candidates. Therefore, the task of choosing participants has been made rather easy for the team as they only have to rule out people who demonstrate at the groupinterview that they would not fit in (because of their extremist worldview or inability to work together with others, for example).

‘But then the main selection is actually already made by the participants or candidates themselves, meaning those who decide not to run. Because if you consider that we get 35 participants and 60 candidates, give or take a few, then it is absurd to talk about selection in this sense, because there
are some people who have some obvious red flags who we rule out, and then there are some people in whose case we have to give it some thought and then maybe there’s some people in whose case we do actually have to make the difficult decision that, well, we’d really like to but there’s no more room. So I’d say that the first reaction from the people themselves is simply so strong that it makes things easy for us. If we had 500 candidates each year, well, then we could definitely start thinking about how good the selection has been and so on, but right now, it maybe just isn’t so important. [Lennart, interview in November 2017]

3.3 Active Citizenship

The mission of the DD Academy is ‘to help students become changemakers who protect the open society wherever they are in the world’ (webpage of DD Academy). This is done mainly by carrying out a development program for young people. The program lasts for 8 months and is completely free of charge for the participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Timeline</th>
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<tr>
<td>1st Weekend</td>
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<td>OCTOBER</td>
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**Figure 3.6. DD Academy's program timeline on their webpage**

There are 12 weekend sessions from October to June and a lot of independent work between the weekends. Participants are expected to take part all 12 weekend sessions. There is no way of taking part of only some parts of the program and participants are warned that the program is so intense that it is not possible to be an active member of some student organisation at the same time. Indeed, having spent few full weekend sessions with the participants, I can confirm that the workload felt really intense and I felt exhausted after these sessions despite the fact that I rather observed the situations than participated in discussions and groupworks and I most certainly skipped all the hometasks assigned to participants. Furthermore, I had hardly any time for short interviews with participants or team members as they always had something to do during the sessions and the breaks between different activities were extremely short (often only 1–5 minutes).

The program consists of four big courses. Each course consists of several smaller parts or blocks. ‘Changing the World’ is the biggest course and it aims to develop skills needed for changing things in the society: communication, public speaking, teamwork, and leadership. This course includes block of ‘Organisational Practice’, which involves working with different organisations throughout the year and studying and solving the problems they are facing. ‘Developing Yourself’ is a course inspired by the idea that it is not possible to change anything in the world without understanding oneself. Therefore, this course is dedicated to self-awareness and self development and involves self-management, techniques of mental well-being, and learning about one own strengths and talents. Course called ‘Understanding the World’ focuses on questions such as ‘Why something is happening?’ or ‘How to understand any situation better?’
This course involves debating, discussing, and argumenting, analysing and modelling the systems we live in, avoiding the biggest thinking mistakes, and learning to find trustworthy information. A course ‘Defending Open Society’ is about setting a goal to know what direction to change the world. This course involves reading and working through Karl Popper’s book ‘The Open Society and Its Enemies’, learning about different theories about the society, and discussing the necessity of difficult conversations (with people with different perspectives than your own).

Sessions are carried out by the team members. In spring 2017, each of them had either their course or a block of the bigger course to conduct, which meant deciding about the content of their course/block, choosing the methods, preparing the materials, designing hometasks, giving feedback to participants, and organising the workshops during the weekend session. When I started my ethnography in DD Academy, it was quite difficult to follow, which block is part of which course as it seemed that Lennart is teaching almost all courses. I was told later in the interviews with the team members that the situation got a bit out of hand in spring 2017 as the workload of Lennart grew a bit too big and the responsibilities were not divided equally among the team members. To avoid the same thing happening again, the structure was changed in summer 2017 and from autumn every member of the seasonal team was responsible for one big course – Lotta for ‘Changing the World’, Ines for ‘Developing Yourself’, Linda for ‘Understanding the World’, and Nele for ‘The Open Society and Its Enemies’. Furthermore, each of them was assigned a mentor from the team of previous season to work together and consult with. Therefore, Norman became a mentor for Nele, Elise for Lotta, Lea for Ines, and Lennart for Linda.

The weekend sessions of DD Academy are rather impressive – 35 young people gather on Saturday morning to spend whole weekend in a seminar room to discuss about either societal issues or engage in self-development tasks. The very first session that I visit (April 22 and 23, 2017), for example, starts with the panel discussion (moderated by Hugo) with volunteering participants sharing their experiences with voicing their opinion publicly. Panel discussion is followed by the small group discussions on the same topic. Next activity is organised by Lennart and it about modelling the different institutional systems (e.g., education, media, local governments, science) around us. Small groups present what they have found out so far about the institutions they have been studying. Later this day, participants also have to come to terms with a creative task, debating, and some further small group discussions. Next day starts in an unusual environment as team members and participants visit SPARK Maker Lab to build some headphones from paper cups. This activity serves the purpose to break the routine. However,
the rest of the day follows usual pattern with the workshop by Lennart, communication training by Lea, and lot of group discussions.

The program ends with the ‘School of Change’ in June. This is a youth conference, which is organised by the DD Academy team, but it is not meant only for the participants of DD Academy. The target group of ‘School of Change’ are young people who are interested in bringing positive change in the society and it attracts civically active young people all over Estonia. There were around 150 participants, among them mainly young people from different youth organisations.

In 2017, the first day of the conference was dedicated to challenges of Estonia, the second to Europe, and the third to world. The whole event is guided by the idea that the Estonia, Europe, and world in general face different problems and it is about time to find some solutions.

12:14. Nora gives Norman the word. Applause. Norman walks to the front, speaking to the microphone. A young man from somewhere in the hall cuts in. Norman responds and continues talking about how the world is out of joint and gives examples of things that are wrong in the world. Norman talks about his theory that for things not to be wrong in the world, you must continuously act and take responsibility. [DD School of Change, 9 June 2017 starting at 11.30 a.m. at Tartu Health Care College]
The list of key speakers is impressive, including Kersti Kaljulaid, President of Estonia, Alar Karis, Auditor General of Republic Estonia, and Erika Ilves, space entrepreneur, to name a few. The event is partly in English due to the guest speakers from other countries. Program also includes workshops organised by youth organisations.

Figure 3.10. Some of the key speakers at ‘School of Change’ – from left to right: Nora announcing the next speaker – Kersti Kaljulaid, President of Estonia; Erika Ilves, space entrepreneur; and Jeannette Gusko from Change.org (Germany)
While the program lasts from October to June for participants, the team works throughout the year as they also have to prepare the program and manage the application process. The application form consists of questions about candidate’s previous experience in civic participation and motivation for participation. Applying is managed through DD Academy’s webpage. There is pre-application period in May and June for those potential participants who know already in spring that they want to be part of the program next season. The main application period is in August and early September. After receiving the applications, all applicants are invited to a group interview in September. Participants are selected by early October. Unfortunately, I missed the opportunity to observe the selection process and interviews as I stayed away from DD Academy because of other tasks. Therefore, my information about the selection of new participants is based only on webmaterials and conversations with team members and participants.

However, I had a lot of opportunities to witness team meetings. In spring 2017, DD Academy’s team had weekly meetings in their HUB. The meetings were led by Norman and usually the whole team – Elise, Ingrid, Iris, Lennart, Lea, Nora, Hugo, and Vanessa – were present. The organisation of the next weekend session was always the main topic, with few exceptions in June, when organisation of the ‘School of Change’ became the main focus of the team. Therefore, the meeting were filled with lot of organisational issues (including planning who makes sure that there are enough postits for the next session, who and when does the printing, who is responsible for preparing coffee and snacks for participants or bringing necessary materials to the seminar room in cases then session took place outside the building of Domus Dorpatensis). However, the problems with participants (e.g., what to do with the participants who are not fully committed and skip the weekend sessions), communication of upcoming events, and cooperation with other organisations were also discussed.

The most impressive team meeting took place in June. Team members call this massive team meeting ‘Development Festival’. It lasts for a week (weekend included) and it basically means that the whole team – including both the old team members, who carried ot the second season of DD Academy, and the new team members, who would be responsible for carrying out the third season – sits in their HUB seminar room for six days and goes through all the pros and cons of their program and reorganises the parts of the program, which are not functioning as well as they would wish. After the ‘Development Festival’, all team members go home to work on their courses during the summer. The team gathers for a similar meeting again in the August to discuss the results of their individual work on coursesdevelopment and fix the program for the next year.
3.4 Communication and Reaching out for Young People
Communication and reaching out for target groups is important part of DD Academy’s activities. Their webpage and Facebook page are important part of their everyday communication practices and the main channels to provide up to date information to potential participants. Both are maintained by Norman and I witnessed him sometimes struggling to find something to publish on the Academy’s Facebook feed in the middle of the season as it is important to keep the feed alive, on the one hand, and they do not want to compromise their participants’ privacy, on the other:

14:15. Norman and Nora are still sitting in HUB at the desks and chat on different topics (Netflix, career choices of someone they both know, IQ-tests, DD program). Kaisa enters the room at half past three. She heads for ‘Bunker’ [tiny seminar room] having heard that Hugo and Linda have private conversation at the big seminar room. We can hear the voices of Hugo and Linda through the closed door but not the content of their talk. Norman and Nora are both doing something in their respective laptops. Suddenly, Norman shows to Nora a newsstory about the animal shelters with a cat picture from his computer and asks for her opinion, whether it would be okay to share this on Academy’s Facebook page. We ironically discuss the benefits of cat pictures on Facebook feed. The newsstory with a cat picture finds its way to Academy’s Facebook feed with an appeal that if you need a brake from changing the world systematically it is perfectly okay to do something very specific for a change by helping some homeless animal.

[An hour before DD Academy team meeting on 27 October 2017 starting at 15.00 p.m. at the Domus Dorpatensis HUB]
Actually, cat photo on DD Academy’s Facebook page is an exception to the rule. They usually avoid images that could be labeled cute. Most of their newsfeed is filled with information about events organised by other youth, student, or civic organisations and ideas for socially or environmentally more sustainable ways of living. Most of the Academy’s Facebook feed is therefore rather impersonal, using public materials. The same notion applies when it comes to sharing information about DD Academy and its activities – even when the (former) participants are seen on images, the images are often processed so that you cannot recognize the individual people. It is more common to find quotes and faces of famous people with DD Academy’s touch on their Facebook feed (or in their other promotional materials) than their participants.
Although DD Academy has its own stylistic pattern, which they use on their webpage, promotional materials (e.g., posters), and Facebook feed, they play around a lot with different themes and eras. Some of their promotional materials are clearly hinting to the academic traditions dating back to ancient Greece, whereas others reflect Norman’s fascination of the space era.

Whereas most of the promotional materials of DD Academy are rather impersonal and do not feature the participants of the programme, there is one exception. On their webpage they have a section with former participants sharing why they liked the program and what they gained from their participation.
3.5 The Philosophical Background
The term ‘active citizenship’ is not in an active use in DD Academia. They rather talk about creating a change in a society and reshaping institutions. In Norman’s view, the purpose of DD Academy is that there are enough people in society who understand that political institutions can be reshaped in order to adapt with changes and in the end, there are two reasons for reshaping institutions – to protect the individual and allow the development of society and culture. Development at the cost of individuals is not acceptable.

‘In short, the purpose is that there were enough individuals at all times who understand that it is necessary to do that. Political institutions need to adapt with changes. And not only that they understand that but that they were actually able to bring on changes in very different institutions – in EU institutions as well as in People’s Republic of China and Brazil and wherever, in Iceland.’ [Norman, interview in November 2017]

According to Norman, such changes that do not sacrifice the individual or repress effective active citizenship can only take place in an open society, and the definition of open society brings us to the ‘spiritual father’ of DD Academy. Indeed, one of the central figures in DD Academy has never showed up at any meeting or even of DD Academy (among other reasons, because he died before the organisation was even founded) but he is constant topic of the conversations as the father of the philosophical foundations of DD Academy. This man is Karl Popper with his ideas of open society. Popper’s influential work on political philosophy The Open Society and its Enemies (1945) is compulsory reading for all the participants. In this book Popper criticises theories of teleological historicism and defends the merits of open society and liberal democracy. Popper warns that different political philosophies since Plato hold dangerous tendencies toward totalitarian ideology and suggests that liberal democracy is the only form of government allowing institutional change without violence and terror. Norman shares those ideas. Indeed, Popper’s fame and status in DD Academy has lot to do with the personal preferences of young CEO and one of the founders. The office staff of Domus Dorpatensis joke that Alexander von Rücker...
(one of the founders of foundation Domus Dorpatensis) and Norman are both ‘Popper’s men’. As one of the founders and the current CEO are both strongly influenced by Popper’s philosophy and the life in the organisation revolves around the young CEO, there is no wonder that the ideas of Karl Popper have gained such a prominent role in the program of DD Academy.

That does not mean that Popper’s philosophy is somehow imposed on other team members. They genuinely seem to support the same ideas. Lotta even suggests that the congruity of her own beliefs with the ideas of Popper and philosophical foundations of DD Academy has attracted her to join the organisation and remain there because so far she has not come across any other organisation with witch ideology would be so close to her own ideas and understandings. Lotta says in an interview that she just loves the idea of the organisation which says that ‘their main point is, their ideology is, there is no more ideologies in principles, no dominant one, that is something sufficiently crazy and and good to have more of’ [Lotta, interview in October 2017].

The member most critical towards Popper’s theories is probably Lennart, who admits that there may be holes in the philosophical concept of the open society, though they have not looked for those. He admits that he has not read The Open Society and its Enemies himself but he is aware that Popper’s other ideas have been criticised a lot and therefore they cannot be sure that there are no ‘holes that you can fly a plane through’. He presumes that they should study Popper’s ideas more thoroughly in some point but at the moment he cannot see enough time for that in any foreseeable future.

‘The way it is now – that there’s these 30 or so participants and some sessions over some weekends and homework in between, and the way the program is composed, I think all this will be kept, unless we find some holes in this philosophy of the open society that are definitely there but we haven’t just looked for them, then it would be pointless. And the philosophy itself is an important issue in itself – like when will we actually study and criticise this thing enough to be assured that it’s a good philosophy that Popper actually ... well, I haven’t actually read the book in question but some other ideas that Popper had can be quite easily criticised. I just wrote three pages in Philosophy of Science about why classificationism is rubbish. At least in the way how Popper put it ... so who knows, maybe this philosophy of the open society also has some holes that you can fly a plane through.’ [Lennart, interview in November 2017]

Therefore, it remains somewhat questionable how thoroughly the team is acquainted with Popper’s ideas. It is most probable that it would be fair to say that team relies on the words of Popper’s prophet – that is Norman’s interpretation of Popper’s ideas. What is clear is that in one sense the organisation follows the idea of open society thoroughly – they respect the plurality of thought and ideologies and there is no political ideology dominating the discussions, even not the liberal democracy which Popper favoured. Although, it is never discussed, which political ideology individual team members or participants prefer, I am quite sure that they are not all voting for the same party and there are supporters of almost all political parties in Estonian parliament with one notable exception. I am rather sure that there are no supporters of Conservative People’s Party of Estonia (representing National conservatism) as the members of this party are often used as an example when it is discussed, which kind of people would reject or jeopardise the idea of open society. Therefore, the DD Academy most definitely rejects right wing populism or well, any kind of populism no matter whether it is coming from left or right.

Actually, the traditional Western left–right political divide is not the best way to explain the political attitudes in postcommunist countries, including in Estonia. The Estonian political scientist Kats Kivistik and her colleagues suggest that people in postcommunist countries tend not to interpret politics through this left–right lens, and instead, that politics is seen mainly through the contradictions between liberal and authoritarian worldviews28,29,30. Therefore, the

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support for liberal democracy among the team members and participants of DD Academy does not necessarily mean the rejection of social democracy and welfare state. It only means that they are against all kinds of authoritarian regimes that undermine individuals’ free will and try to impose ‘the one and only’ or ‘the right’ worldview on citizens.

Taking into account that political divides are interpreted differently in postcommunist countries, helps to make sense of an observation that despite it is never really said out loudly, the support for social democracy and welfare state seems to be quite strong in DD Academy. It is probably most obvious in relation to the rights of all kind of minorities and strong support for equal rights. I witnessed a couple of discussions about the citizen’s rights of the members of the Estonian Russian speaking minority, who lack both Estonian and Russian citizenship. Lennart in particular speaks a lot in favour of giving more citizens’ rights to these people, which in an Estonian context sounds almost an extremely leftwing idea. Lennart’s ideas, of course, reflect his personal ideas and are not the official position of the DD Academy, but the fact that his monologues in support of minorities without citizenship are not strongly opposed demonstrates the more general support for the equal rights of minorities amongst DD cadres.

The strong support for the plurality of thought and rejection of many mainstream ideas are maybe best reflected in the choice of DD Academy’s guest speakers. Although they try to bring in really high profile and famous speakers to their ‘School of Change’ to be attractive to young people, the choice of less famous speakers probably tells us more about the philosopohical and political preferences of the organisation. Politologist Alar Kilp, who was speaking at the second day of ‘School of Change’, for example, managed to question the importance of national identity, the secularisation, and applying economic logic in education within an hour and a half.

10:10. Lea introduces the next speaker – the political scientist Alar Kilp. Applause. To the applause of the audience, Alar Kilp walks up and asks Lea how the slide remote works. Kilp begins speaking about how to present European problems to different audiences, pacing up and down the front of the hall, and gesticulating. Sporadic laughter. The audience listens in silence. Kilp talks about populism, the migration crisis, the increasing importance of national identity, the domination of loud statements over arguments, liberalism on the defence, the securitisation of Islam, the construction of reality, cultural Christianity, secular state, value judgements, and about how not all problems are completely solvable. The audience listens in silence, broken by sporadic bouts of laughter. The photographer in the headscarf walks around taking pictures. Ingmar, Nora, and other organisers are quietly moving in and out of the hall as needed. 10:59. Loud noise drawing the attention of the speaker as well as the entire audience: all heads turn to the back row where a young woman’s folding desk has fallen over along with her cup, phone, notebook, and everything else. After momentary silence, the presenter continues his talk. The young woman is quietly picking up her things. Alar Kilp talks about value judgements, sense of security, liberalism, fantasies concerning education, the impossibility of a non-value based education, the inversion of economic logic in education, the proliferation of digital competence at the expense of the development of other competences, knowledge and critical thought. [DD World-Changers School, 10 June 2017 starting at 9.30 a.m. at Tartu Health Care College, ‘Europe Day’]

The guest speaker’s condemnation of applying an economic logic in absolutely every sphere of life (including in education and science) accords well with DD Academy’s central understanding that if any religious, political, or economic dogma becomes too dominant, it subordinates people and institutions to its logic and strips the individuals from their free will, rights, and liberties.

3.6 The Local, National, European and Global Dimensions

The activities of DD Academy are currently concentrated around Tartu, though their program attracts young people from other regions of Estonia (such as the capital, Tallinn). Nonetheless,

29 Freire, A., & Kivistik, K. (2016). Regime transition, value conflicts and the left-right divide at the mass level: The Baltic States and Southern Europe compared. Communist and Post-Communist Studies, 49(4), 293-311.
the content of their activities are not Estonia-centred at all. The main ideas and values of the program and the skills that participants learn should be transferrable to other context as well, at least at the context of other democratic countries. One of the organisation’s leading ideas that the changes in the society can happen at very different levels, is maybe best illustrated through the conference called ‘School of Change’ – a three day youth event that DD Academy organises in June. The first day of the conference is dedicated to problems and solutions in Estonia, the second day to problems and solutions in Europe and EU, and the third day to the challenges at the global level. The Europe Day in 2017 started with humorous hints to Brexit.

10:00. Norman turns the lights off in the hall; the only light is from screens and light leaking from the edges of the blinds. The screens show a comical music video of the Brexit. Laughter. Lea walks up to the front, swaying to the rhythm of the music. [DD School of Change, 10 June 2017 starting at 9.30 a.m. at Tartu Health Care College, beginning of ‘Europe Day’]

However, the more serious topics followed and the problems, which EU is facing, were discussed before the noon and possibility of European Republic in the afternoon.

14:42. Lea asks the speaker Veiko Spolitis from Latvia to step up; he will be talking about the European Republic. The screen behind the speaker shows the history of European national borders starting from the Middle Ages. The participants listen in silence; some are examining the map of Europe on the wall, some are taking notes. /…/ 15:28. A young man from the second row asks a question that begins with a detour into the history of the United States. Spolitis responds that a civil war will definitely not be necessary for founding a European Federation. Spolitis talks about the developments in Europe and outside influences over the past few decades. 15:31. A young man from the second to last row asks about the influence of Donald Trump on Europe. Spolitis responds that Donald Trump is the first American president in a long time who not only does not understand external relations but also shows it. Spolitis talks about possible developments and how it is difficult to predict anything before the German elections. 15:34. A young man from the front row asks about the possibility of creating a federation without it resulting in the decline of national cultures. Spolitis responds by discussing the examples of Switzerland and Canada and the artificial construction of nation states. 15:39. The same young man has a follow-up question regarding smaller national groups inside larger entities, such as Catalonia or Scotland. Spolitis responds that from time to time, prosperity and other practical issues can outweigh the questions of identity and sovereignty. 15:44. A young man from the second row remarks that people’s expectations towards the EU are conflicting: they want an EU with a smaller influence that would solve more problems. Spolitis talks about people’s attitudes towards local politicians. At the back of the hall, the organisers walk between the control panel and the lobby. 15:49. A young man from the second to last row asks about how the EU should be reformed: should more decision-making power be given to the member states or Brussels. Spolitis talks about the extreme importance of member state-level decision-making power, how not every kind of policy is worth making jointly and what the states need is joint foreign and defence policy. 15:54. A young man from the front row asks a follow-up question regarding the necessity of joint EU activities. Spolitis recounts things that the EU should do jointly and which areas should be jointly reformed in the fields of defence and foreign policy and digital market policy. [DD School of Change, 10 June 2017 starting at 9.30 a.m. at Tartu Health Care College, afternoon of ‘Europe Day’]

31 Video shown at the 'School of Change' can be found on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mEY_wR_ZIZE.
Despite the fact that EU is a rather prominent topic at the ‘School of Change’, it receives much less (not to say that at all) attention throughout the DD Academy’s everyday activities. I do not witness any cases of directly EU related topics being discussed at team meetings or weekend sessions. Of course, there are some (often funny or ironical) remarks about political events in other European countries (e.g., elections in France and Germany, political turbulence in Catalonia) but these are only random and incidental flashes and not planned in agendas of meetings or workshops. At the same time, I cannot rule out the possibility that EU gained some more attention during the sessions I was not present. However, my impressions from my observations is that, from the one hand, the young people in DD Academy support the EU and consider it important (or why otherwise dedicate the whole day of ‘School of Change’ to Europe?), but on the other hand, they do not want to restrict the content of their program with one geographical area. Indeed, despite the fact that current activities of DD Academy are rather local, their ambition is not so much even European, but rather global. When I ask about the future of the DD Academy, then the team members start automatically to talk about expansion to other places. In their view, at some point in the future the program should have a global reach and it should be possible to take part of the DD Academy’s program in different countries all over the globe. However, the team members have very different ideas when, where and how fast the program should go to other countries. Nevertheless, they all share the idea that their program holds a potential to go big.

‘Well, I hope that they will arrive at Brazil and Hong Kong. These examples are used as a joke at the moment, but at the same time, I hope that this will happen. I see that there is potential to become a really big thing.’ [Nele, interview in November 2017]

Norman is probably the most idealistic and grandiose, dreaming about project teams organising their program in five continents and the first programs in other countries starting in the not too distant future. Other team members are no less enthusiastic, but nevertheless have a somewhat more realistic timeframe for the desired expansion plan.

‘I would be happy to see that it would expand to other places. It can’t be done hastily; I don’t believe that it would be very logical that oaky, now from the next year we have ten other places in Europe – that would be too quick.’ [Ines, interview in November 2017]

Hugo and Lea consider a realistic next step to be to open more programs in Estonia, for example an English language program in Tartu. Linda is talking about opening another program in Tallinn or somewhere nearby. However, she also emphasises her belief that this kind of program is much needed in contemporary society and that it would be good if more people had a chance to learn how to bring on positive changes in society.

‘And I actually feel that the society currently really needs something like this. And the people who have gone through the program also really see that the society requires improvement. If this way of thinking spreads, that you can manage, you can do it and you will do it, and it isn’t just..."
something Tartu-centric, I think it will be really great if DD can do it.’ [Linda, interview in November 2017]

Hugo admits that going to other countries would be logistical nightmare. Even if they opened another program in Riga, which is not so far away, they would face the problem that they do not have people who have completed the program, are fluent in Latvian, and would be ready to leave their life in Tartu and live in Riga for a year. Despite those difficulties, he thinks that it would be ‘awesome’ if there could be one program of DD Academy in every single European country one day.

Lennart is again probably the most sceptical about the high speed of the expansion plans. He claims that they are not yet ready for expansion because their program is still too raw and needs further development before importing it on other places. Lennart believes that the development of the program is still in the very beginning and they have long way to go to create the best possible program. Furthermore, Lennart says that expansion to other locations creates the myriad of different problems. Because all of that, he thinks that it is too early to speak about expansion to other countries.

‘I would take it easy. Norman had this idea for a while that you could calculate something, how many participants or graduates we should have, in other words, how many graduates and participants we should have each year and how many programs. It actually can’t be calculated, that’s nonsense because he doesn’t know, he can never know, it’s not the type of thing you can know I would simply say that let’s keep doing this and if we feel that it has reached the level where we aren’t rewriting a quarter of the program each summer, if we only change, like, five to ten per cent, then it’s doable, although ten per cent is already pushing it a bit, then we could start copying it in some other places. But this will come with a tonne of problems, we actually can’t even imagine how crazy difficult this expansion would be. And if we finally can do, can run two programs in different places then we’ll try with five, then with ten and then with fifty. This will take ten years, or fifty years or a hundred years, well, it will take as long as it has to. In my opinion, then, there’s really no point in setting these kind of visions because it’s an endless game, you don’t actually reach a state where the game is over, where someone’s won, where we have, like, reached a kind of state and there we are now. This moment will, well, it’s all pretty theoretical when this moment could come, or if it could come at all. So we should instead take the resources that we have, do the best possible program or programs using these resources at any given point in time, depending on the resources we have at hand, and invest some of the resources into getting more resources to do more and better program.’ [Lennart, interview in November 2017]

However, all the team members are well aware that their ideas may not be warmly welcomed all over the world and they can do their program in Estonia so freely because they live in a democratic country. Several team members suggest that their program would most probably be banned in a country less democratic than Estonia. This thought is not very surprising if we consider that their ‘Bible’ – Popper’s The Open Society and its Enemies was not published in Russia until 1992, which means that if the parents of the team members and participants would have read Popper’s book and discussed it publicly in their youth twenty seven years ago, it would have been illegal act in Estonia that was back then part of Soviet Union.

‘He [Norman] answered once something like he wouldn’t do it in China right away, there we would be put in prison at once.’ [Ines, interview in November 2017]

‘For me it is very interesting to think how the main point of DD Academy would survive in different situations and all over the world up to that – like Norman once said jokingly that he had an idea that there should be a small module of physical self-defence, how to defend yourself physically – and I believe that if you take DD Academy to, for example, Russia, sorry, or to some tense areas, it is actually relevant that we have some self-defence module.’ [Lotta, interview in October 2017]
'I don’t think that we would be let into China. Oh yeah, what rights and open society, we would be put in prison there.' [Lennart, interview in November 2017]

‘Because well, what we do in principle is that we talk about open society but the democracy is strong and in good condition in Estonia, but if we go to Turkey with our program when how should we modify our concept of open society – in order to make it useful for them, we need to modify our presentation. Or when we go to a country where it is dangerous to be the defender of open society, once again, how should our program reflect that and this that we have to find … like to open the first program there, we have to find out all that and it is rather difficult.’ [Hugo, interview in November 2017]

Most of these problems with different destinations are said with at least some self-irony reflecting that the team does not think that they have to face such problems any time soon. It is nice to play around with the thought of expansion but they are well aware that as long as there have not been any attempts to open another program nearby, it is really only the glass bead game. Therefore, the possible destinations, that are mentioned in interviews, should not be taken too seriously as these reflect better the authority of Norman than the actual ideas for expansions. As Norman has once or twice ironically mentioned possible problems starting similar program in Russia or China, the examples he used are repeated again and again by the rest of the team.

3.7 Organisational Issues and Individual Citizenship
The whole team of DD Academy is deeply emotionally engaged and fully committed to the organisation and its goals. I was actually surprised to find out how dedicated these young people are to their cause and how much time and effort they put in to make ‘the best possible program in the world’. Throughout the program season from October to June, they have long team meetings every week, and then there are also weekend sessions which they have to prepare, and feedback to give for participants’ homework, international conference to organise and a web magazine for active young people to publish. However, the most incredible indication of their dedication is a week they call ‘Development Festival’. During this week (weekend included) in June the whole team gathers every day from early morning till late at night to discuss program related issues. They go through every minor detail that needs improvement in their program and agree on what changes have to be done in next year’s program. After that week they all go home and work individually on their tasks and in August they meet again for another week to polish the program.

3.7.1 Workloads and motivation
This kind of planning and execution would be a lot of work even for paid employees, but all the team members do this all on voluntary basis and some even enjoy that. Ines says that she enjoys
how all the details of the program are thoroughly discussed among the team members because everybody is so interested to make the program as good as possible.

‘It is so nice to see that you have a whole group of people who bother to sit a whole week in some airless room and discuss it all day long on that topic … I see that people put their soul into it and this just gives so much energy.’ [Ines, interview in November 2017]

And it is not only their marathon-meetings that Ines (and not only Ines) enjoys but also rest of the meetings in DD Academy throughout the year.

In general, meetings can be awfully boring but if I see that we gather and do things then it is exactly like everybody is putting their heart into it, nobody isn’t lost in her laptop or Facebook or discussing some nonsense, everybody is like … This gives … I get like energy from it, it never takes my energy away. [Ines, interview in November 2017]

One explanation for why Ines and other team members are happy to put so much time and effort into DD Academy is provided by Lotta. She thinks that her generation believes that it is important to do things they believe in as you become what you do. Therefore, it is important to her that her ‘job’ is something what is really fulfilling for her, no matter whether she gets payed for it or not.

‘I feel like for the new generation, it is pretty important to be able to do something that gives me – that what I’m doing day by day is me. That it’s not something separate, what I’m doing every day is something I want to do. It’s my job.’ [Lotta, interview in October 2017]

Norman believes that by and large, there is balance between motivation and workload in DD Academy. However, no matter how much you enjoy your commitment and how important voluntary work is for you, human beings are designed so that they need some rest once in a while. While spending time in DD Academy and witnessing how much time and effort team members invest in their program, I constantly found myself being worried that they take way too much on their plate and burnout is inevitable consequence. As it seemed such a prominent theme for me, I asked about possible burnout and self-care in every single interview with the team members. The experiences were very different despite the fact that all team members admitted that the workload is very intense. Some team members saw it as their own choice and they even somewhat enjoyed their tight schedule at least as long as their life goes on the same way and there are no unexpected changes that would break the fragile balance between the different spheres of their lives.

Hugo admits that a couple of years ago he would not have believed that he could be happy with his current workload. However, at the moment he feels content with his busy schedule. He says that his workload has increased gradually and he has the feeling that maybe in some point it will be impossible to increase it further and he is somewhat afraid of it. He compares his time with the balloon that goes bigger and bigger until it breaks in some point. However, Hugo is fairly sure that the balloon will not break if his life will follow its current path. The problems will occur if some conflict or setback would destroy his well-balanced system.

The fragile balance between different spheres of their lives can be also destroyed by participants themselves if they voluntarily do much more than expected because they have very high expectations for themselves. Lotta admits that sometimes it is sad not to have a proper vacation but she just cannot help it to give her maximum:

‘Well, summer was somewhat sad in the sense that I had simply … I have had some stressful years and when I simply … I just planned that this year in June I can take a month to completely shut myself out from everything. But then I like … at times my opinion of that now that I come to the seasonal team, I just didn’t imagined that it would be so much in the end. And it is my own … not the blame, but my own initiative … /…/ We could have done it in much smaller scale but I instantly felt that I want to do a lot. So from the one side … it’s two-sided thing here that form the one side, here is demand, but I didn’t have to fulfil it exactly like that, I just put very high expectations to myself.’ [Lotta, interview in October 2017]
However, a few team members have now faced the realisation that they have to make some changes in their life to avoid burnout. After contributing to the program for several months and working in paid employment at the same time, Linda decided to quit her job because doing both was too demanding. At the time of the interview in November, Nele still continued working in paid employment, but she told me that she also plans to quit her job starting from January because she has too much on her plate. She admitted that she had already experienced burnout in this autumn because working, studying and volunteering for DD Academy was just too much to carry. Nele said that she is somewhat afraid of the future because she is not sure how she will manage to find time for her work, studies, and DD Academy and she is not completely sure what the cost will be if she goes on with all her activities. She is determined to graduate and is now thinking about quitting her job. Quitting DD Academy in the middle of the season is not an option: ‘If you have taken the responsibility, then you have to deal with it.’

Lennart is probably the most concerned about possible burnout and he is not only thinking about his own health but about other team members’ health and welfare as well. Several team members say that they have consulted with Lennart or that Lennart has told them to take care of themselves and to say ‘no’ more often. Mental health issues are obviously important to Lennart. Ironically enough, he almost burned out last spring despite his awareness (or maybe he is so concerned about others because he has experienced the consequences of overload personally). His workload in DD Academy increased somehow very smoothly and subtly throughout the last year until he carried out about half of the program. Lennart said that this was a bit too much considering that he also has his MA studies, start up enterprise and other obligations, and he was rather ‘overcooked’ in spring.

Lennart says that it is very important to work as a team and support each other to avoid burnout of every single individual team member:

> We have been warning that they very clearly have to work as a team in that sense. So okay, they get like, well they get help from the development team – everyone from their so-called partner, but very clearly, they also have to support each other; especially after this first weekend when I went to their meeting, I gave them this message that they cannot afford them, well like some kind of flutter. You have taken this responsibility and you have to be honest with each other, when you don’t manage and help each other when it’s needed, because it’s not like solo … It’s not possible to do it when you solo. [Lennart, interview in November 2017]

The program is very intense for participants as well. Ines recalls her experiences as a participant last year and says that it was even more intense as a participant:

> It is easy to think that if I didn’t have my studies, then it wouldn’t be intensive at all. But, unfortunately, I have other activities as well and then maybe it was sometimes difficult to choose what is more important and whether I can do it all. That maybe … well, from one hand it is that you actually give twelve weekends away. It is like expected from a student that you either work or study but then you have to do it some other time and plan, which is actually quite hard sometimes. /…/ And all these preparatory tasks and follow-up activities, which all took their time … /…/ The nature of the whole program was actually very intense and then you sometimes start to think that maybe I took a bit too big bite from that pie. It may seem too hard but in the end you think that ah, it wasn’t so bad – I managed to do everything what needed to be done. [Ines, interview in November 2017]

Nele, on the other hand, is convinced that her workload is bigger as a team member than it was last year as a participant because there was less responsibility last year: as a participant you only lose yourself if you do not prepare properly for the weekend sessions but as a team member you are responsible to make sure that you have prepared your part of the session so that participants can take maximum out of it.

All interviewed team members consider the support from the rest of the team extremely important to cope with their doubts and deal with unexpected setbacks. According to Nele, the
support from other team members is crucial for keeping up despite the time pressure and her own doubts about her competence.

‘Well, this work in summer was very intense of course and well, the most challenging part is exactly this preparation, this actually takes a lot of commitment and free time.’ [Nele, interview in November 2017]

Nele said that the crucial period of preparation was hardest for her and without the support of the rest of the team, particularly Norman, she could not endure. Others have faced hard times as well. Ines recalls the time when she fell so ill in early fall that she was unable to steer her workshop because she had no voice. The whole team supported her: Norman advised how to rearrange the workshop and homework, Hugo advised in other matters, and the whole team did their best to console her. Ines concludes that the support that one gets from every single member of seasonal team and development team is huge and she likes that though she has one contact person in the development team, she actually knows that she can talk to any member of the development team and ask for help.

Another thing that Ines appreciates in DD team is that they can be very honest with each other and they are able to give other team members critical feedback without the whole team falling apart because in the end they all know that they share the same goal to make the program even better. It does not mean that there were no personal preferences from which person to seek help from. Lotta says that she has usually turned to the members of development team: she has talked to Lennart then she has some issues and wrote to Norman about her ideas, but she has the closest cooperation with Elise. She describes Elise and herself as dynamic duo and mentions that Elise is also the one who warns her from straining herself.

‘And Elise said that she has a feeling that I sometimes little bit … that I have too high expectations for myself. Elise said that if I did only the half of it what I want to do, it would be excellent already.’ [Lotta, interview in October 2017]

In the end, the team members are not only support but also source of motivation and inspiration as they have become friends. Lea says that to her, DD Academy means first and foremost the other team members.

But in general I really like our dynamics and jokes and that … I like to do things like that. I have realised that no matter where I will be in the future, it is important for me that I had – that I had like my own tasks – but that I could do something together with other people. And yes … and exactly that it seems to me that we don’t have some hidden conflicts. [Lea, interview in November 2017]

Besides other team members, the program itself is motivational and inspirational for team members. They give the program a credit for being great source of self-development for them. Linda, for example, believes that the program of DD Academy gives young people – whether participant or team member – courage to actually do something: ‘Not that you dream all the time but you never start with it.’ Nele goes even further by suggesting that program is good for self-confidence:

I think that the self-confidence is maybe one thing that I’ve got from here, this is it, I’ve always considered myself a reserved person who doesn’t like perform or say her opinion out loud, but here I realised that no, actually I like it. [Nele, interview in November 2017]

Hugo’s experience has been rather similar. He has always considered himself an introvert but discovered in DD Academy that he actually enjoyed being around lot of people, intense communication, and even leading discussions. Before Academy he used to think that ‘talking is crap’. However, the self-development can also be reflected in putting one’s own actions in a wider context. Ines says that the participation in the program made her think more about what kind of civic action is actually useful. She has done different things on a voluntary basis and she has liked it a lot, when she sees that she did something useful, but before the DD Academy she
did not analyse so much whether her actions are beneficial not only to her but also to other people. This, however, is one of the main ideas that DD Academy aims to teach to young people who want to change the world – you should think before you act.

3.7.2 Charismatic Leaders

After spending some time at the team meetings is seems that in the context of DD Academy team this last word of wisdom could be rephrased – you should think like Norman before you act or you should listen to Norman before you act. The team meetings I attended from April till June look very much the same: Norman sets the agenda and does most of the talking, others comment a little, and sometimes there is an argument between Norman and Lennart. It seems that no one except Lennart ever disagrees with Norman and when Lennart challenges Norman, then everyone else sits silently. However, this does not mean that the team meetings are held in uncomfortable or unfriendly manner. Quite the contrary, there are constant jokes (including lot of friendly jokes on Norman) and laughter and nobody seem to be bothered that some people do not say much. It is rather that team members do not question Norman’s ideas because they genuinely agree with these and not because they would not dare to disagree.

The pattern of the team meetings changes in June during the ‘Development Festival’ when five new members join the team and a couple of old team members have left. The new team members, who have just completed the DD Academy program, are way more talkative and argumentative than the older team members. Therefore, Norman and Lennart cannot do such a big part of the talking anymore, although these two still dominate the room and the discussion. It even seems that the rivalry between Norman and Lennart grows stronger the longer they stay in the same room together. The arguments between Norman and Lennart get rather heated during the ‘Development Festival’ and at one moment, their discussion gets so irritating to Norman that he actually needs to take a break to calm down.

15:18. Norman continues with the meeting. He allows Lennart to stay lying town on the couch in case he ‘does not disturb other kids’. Norman speaks about system of courses and baseline modules. People start speaking at the same time. Ingmar walks around with his laptop. Norman speaks. People speak in turns. Lennart lie town on the couch. 15:28. Vanessa arrives, whispers something to Lea, and leaves again. Lotta speaks. Norman takes over and draws schema on the whiteboard at the same time. 15:32. Lea’s phone starts ringing. Lea jumps on her feet and leaves the room. Norman asks Lennart not to raise his hand, but simply to speak. Lennart tells what would be an alternative structure of the program to the one proposed by Norman. Norman comments. Dialoge between Lennart and Norman. 15:42. Ingmar asks a question. Norman speaks; Lennart comments. Norman asks him to shut up for a moment and proposes a small brake. The team members stand up and stretch; Nora speaks something. Norman sits and stares a computer. Others are quiet and head towards the kitchen. 15:44. Lea returns and announces that Vanessa said that Norman is needed in the office. Quiet dialoge between Lea and Norman. Others talk at the same time. Norman scans the computer for couple of more seconds and then leaves the room; he returns soon and continues to stare his computer. Ingmar sits on the window of the hall with his computer; Lea commutes between the hall and seminarroom. 15:46. Norman
sais that they will continue in a moment but he must settle one thing first. Lotta and Linda are whispering and lathing together. Others sit in silence and stare their phones, laptops, or notebooks. Norman leaves the room. 15:48. Norman returns. Linda appologises that she must leave for a while, but she would return later. She has to attend the stipend awarding ceremony. Others joke about the order of priorities. Laughter. Norman appologises that his threshold for pain has became very low, Lennart gets under his skin very easily, and he must sometimes take time out not to attack Lennart. Lennart raises his eyes from laptop’s screen and says that it is okay. Others nod and smile supportingly. Norman continues to explain in front of the whiteboard, how he understands the system of modules and how the systems of modules have been working for first two years. [Fieldnotes from DD Academy’s Development Festival on June 14, 2017 in HUB of Domus Doprantensis; Elise, Hugo, Ines, Ingmar, Lea, Lennart, Linda, Lotta, Nele, and Norman are present; Vanessa is missing because she is needed in the office]

Another confrontation of Norman and Lennart is an inevitability that everyone expects because they both are very determined and argumentative and they both have lot of leadership experience despite their young age. In short, they can both best be described as charismatic leaders. And two charismatic leaders may sometimes be somewhat too much for one small meeting room even then these leaders are good friends and like to work together.

Lennart says that it can look weird to witness the communication between him and Norman since they have worked together before and they understand each other without saying everything out loud. He admits that he is more impatient, whereas Norman is more cautious and wants to spare other team members from their heated disputes. Norman, on the other hand, says that he does not like conflicts at all and Lennart is the only person with whom he bothers to argue. Nevertheless, despite that he knew beforehand that there will be arguing from Lennart’s side, Norman decided to invite him to the team because he believed (and still believes) that Lennart has lot to offer.

![Figure 3.20. Norman standing in front alone at the ‘School of Change’ in June 2017 (left) and Lennart (in blue shirt) captured in the audience at the ‘School of Change’ in June 2017 (right)](image)

Indeed, Norman and Lennart seem to be something like trademarks or poster boys of DD Academy and then you ask anything from team members or participants, sooner or later they will tell you something related to Norman and Lennart. It is particularly evident during the weekend sessions in May when one can see that the participants listen to Lennart and Norman as if they are gurus, while other team members seem not to have such a high appreciation of participants. That puts other team members in a weird position between shared admiration and jealousy. Lea says that to her as a beginner it was comforting to know that there are experienced people like Norman and Lennart in the team. However, in the context of one informal gathering one team member admits that the popularity of Norman and Lennart makes her sometimes ask whether she is not cool enough to be equally popular among the participants. The popularity of Norman and Lennart can also put a quite heavy pressure on other team members, as there is a push to be like them. Nele, for example, says that they have very big shoes...
to fill, referring to Lennart and Norman. On the other hand, Nele is happy to carry out Norman’s vision about the program because she believes that he knows what he is doing. I am not the only one who has noticed that several team members tend to compare themselves with Norman or Lennart and look up to them as some kind of idols. Lotta says that she feels that her teammates compare themselves too much with Norman and Lennart. Lotta says that Norman and Lennart are undeniably good speakers but this does not mean that others should aim to be like them. Lotta is convinced that it is contra productive to compare oneself with others and everybody have their own strengths what can make them good speaker or good leader.

‘And what I also think is, it’s like, there’s still this kind of vibe, I feel like that my team mates also compare themselves to Norman and Lennart a bit too much. It’s just so strong. And it’s not only my team mates but ... well, simply put, some people that I talk to, people who have had some contact with either Norman or Lennart, they will often say that I would like to do things like them but I can’t. Whereas I am always trying to stress that yeah, Norman and Lennart are, without a doubt, great presenters and they talk really well and what they say is really meaningful and they are themselves, but the point is, everyone can have good presentation skills, good substance, and good subjects. They can achieve the same kind of output; they will just do things differently. So I’ve tried to tell everyone not to compare themselves to them. Like, if you want to be like them ... if you want to have this kind of impact and strength then you need to find what’s inside you, what you can give. You also have some strengths, this is why we are analysing them right now, like what are the strengths you want to use to reach people.’ [Lotta, interview in October 2017]

At least one team member has reached a similar conclusion and decided that there is more than one way to be a leader. Hugo admits that at the beginning of this season, when he became the leader of the seasonal team, he had this question in his head whether he should be Norman or not because everybody, who heard that he is the new leader, told him that he has enormous shoes to fill. Of course, the ultimate answer to this question was that no, he cannot be Norman, he has to be Hugo, but it is telling that he had this question at all. Now Hugo considers Norman as his mentor and Norman has made his best from his side to send the clear signs that Hugo is the boss of the seasonal team.

That does not mean that Norman would be ready to leave DD Academy entirely in someone else’s hands any time soon. Norman says that the answer to the question how long he will stay in Domus Dorpatensis depends on whether one considers the organisation itself or the goals of the organisation as an ultimate goal. He admits that it would probably be good for the organisation as such if he would leave in some not very distant future but he cannot leave because he considers the mission of the organisation more important than the organisation itself. He thinks that organisation should not be the purpose and the mission of the organisation should not be sacrificed in sake of the development of organisation.

‘I understand that affairs with truly social mission should function like Catholic Church that you don’t change the pope all the time. So that everything is settled in terms of the goal. If that is really settled, then you cannot flutter all the time. If you flutter, then you actually don’t do anything. You only move things little bit to this side and you move things to that side.’ [Norman, interview in November 2017]

Norman’s leadership and decision-making style is well described by Lennart who suggests that knowing Norman it is totally possible that one day he will singlehandedly decide that the whole program must be rearranged and in that case, the whole DD Academy probably would be rearranged with not much consultation with other team members. Norman admits that the fundamental changes in Domus Dorpatensis have resulted mainly from his belief that this is a right thing to do.

‘Practically I have thought in those moments, of course, that we have discussed it all together with other people and we have reached this decision together. And it has been like that usually,
but I’m also forceful. So, I don’t know – if I were not so forceful, I don’t know whether we had reached the same point.’ [Norman, interview in November 2017]

Norman admits that he can be very convincing but he hopes that it was not only his orator skills that made others support his proposals for changes in organisation but they also saw the need for change. He is visibly proud of some decisions he has adopted. For example, Norman says that he has been telling since he became the CEO of Domus Dorpatensis that Domus cannot choose its activities according to the available funding.

‘Instead we should have our strategy, we rely on that, and based on that we should do our own thing and say what we want to do and then find that money and not the other way around. I started with that that our thing has to be effective and elaborate and systemic and strategic and overlap with what we want to achieve.’ [Norman, interview in November 2017]

Norman explains that they have actually declined solid funding for a project because of a strategic decision that this particular project did not help to achieve the purposes of the organisation and that despite the fact that the donor was very interested and lobbied to go on with the project. Norman claims that all the big changes in Domus Dorpatensis have been very strategic and departed from the belief that these changes are necessary to better achieve the main goal of the organisation to develop the society and culture and protect the individual. He does not claim that their current program is enough to achieve their main goal but he believes that it is a step in a right direction.

3.7.3 Fame and Future

DD Academy is ambitious in its goals and plans for future. It is much less clear what is the current state of the program – does it need just some fine-tuning or a radical makeover? The wider standing and fame of DD Academy is another matter where the opinions of different team members depart. Linda, for example, believes that the program is quite well known, at least among civically active young people who are prospective participants of the program. Ines, on the other hand, believes that DD Academy is not very well known at all: ‘If you tell your parents, for example, that Domus Dorpatensis’ Academy, it doesn’t say anything.’ Nele admits that even she herself did not know almost anything about DD Academy before becoming a participant in the program. She thinks that DD Academy is primarily known in third sector but not in the wider society.

Lea agrees with Ines and Nele: ‘It seems to me that nobody knows anything about us [laughter]. Really, I think that people in Tartu who are already in some organisations – maybe they have heard about us.’ The wider public knows nothing about their activities. Lea adds that it is somewhat sad, on the one hand, because it would be nice to have the reputation of a well-known and ‘cool’ organisation, but on the other hand, she thinks that maybe fame could be counterproductive for their goals because the ideas of open society may have polarising effect and it may not be positive at all to attract too much attention.

Norman is of the opinion that Domus Dorpatensis as an organisation is not well known in Estonia, though some of their events and some people (like him and some others) have sometimes been very visible. Norman says that it has been a conscious choice to direct all communication about DD Academy to students who are their primary target group. He believes that DD Academy is rather well-known among the students or at least as known as they need it to be. The whole organisation of Domus Dorpatensis is well-known among the third sector organisations.

‘Most of the organisations know us and they can’t imagine what we are doing exactly, they know that we do something with youth and democracy and something like that, but they can’t imagine it exactly and that has been somewhat deliberate.’ [Norman, interview in November 2017]

In Norman’s view, they should not be more famous because the more widely they are known; the easier it is to attack them and question their goals and actions. It is quite enough that they are well-known in circles of important institutions (e.g., ministries, councillor of justice office).
However, one must bear in mind that Estonia is a small country and it is not very difficult at all for an organisation to get into contact with high-ranking officials and politicians.

**3.7.4 Future of DD Academy and Individual Team Members**

Most of the interviewed team members hope that they will have a chance to be part of DD Academy for a longer period. However, not all of them are certain that they are able to actually commit themselves over a longer period on the voluntary basis. Linda is thinking about going abroad for a while. Nele says that her future is so uncertain that she cannot say how long she can remain part of DD Academy. It depends on whether she will continue her studies in Estonia or abroad. On the one hand, she would like to remain in DD Academy, but on the other hand, she thinks that she should go on with her life. Several other team members share similar doubts and questions concerning the difficulty of finding possibilities for finding resources for intensive voluntary work over a longer period of time.

‘I think little bit longer here for certain reasons. I actually can give you a quick answer that I actually would like to be part of DD Academy’s endeavours for as long as possible. But there are some buts – I wouldn’t go into detail with these – but for me, DD Academy and Domus Dorpatensis is so far closest to this kind of organisation and mode and idea what I would like to do, where to work or something like that. I’m talking all the time from the perspective of working. If in some point it would be possible to great some jobs here, then it would be awesome, but yes …’ [Lotta, interview in October 2017]

Hugo admits that his future prospects in DD Academy are a very topical question for him because he has thought about it a lot lately. There is a choice to make between his activities in DD Academy on the one hand and his studies and possible professional career on the other hand. Hugo is reluctant to leave DD Academy because he believes in its goals and its chances to go big.

‘I imagine it about like that if I will someday read from Wikipedia about the DD Academy and there are those founding members, and then there is that one founding member, well he left after third year, for example. And then all the people read and think what he missed out. It is as if you read about Apple that somebody left in first year, and I think like why.’ [Hugo, interview in November 2017]

Lennart takes the whole question on the level of the organisation and emphasises that it is unthinkable to produce high quality programs over the longer term only on a voluntary basis. He thinks that it is crucial to find additional resources to boost the development of the program. He cannot see much point developing the program as they are doing at the moment on a voluntary basis, and he dreams of more professionalised approach. He has also told Norman this, and warned him that he will leave if additional resources are not found. Lennart is very well aware of his worth and qualifications and says that anyone can develop semi-professional program, there is no need that he must be involved in that. The conflict is at least partly explained by the fact that Lennart and Norman have very different relationship with money.

‘He [Norman] has such a weird relationship with the money that he considers it somehow secondary importance, but unfortunately, if you want to make not only the best program of the world but the best possible program, you just cannot make such program at no cost, it’s not possible.’ [Lennart, interview in November 2017]

Lennart believes that the development team should not work on the voluntary basis. ‘Okay, I carry on voluntarily there because I have to but actually it should be paid and it should be possible to dedicate yourself on it as a job.’ Lennart adds that if the development is done on an unpaid voluntary basis, it will never be as sound and fruitful as it could be because volunteers just do not have enough time for it. ‘We just cannot afford to buy our own time and dedication.’ Linda’s remarks support Lennart’s standpoint. Linda says that not everybody is able to quit their job as she did to fully commit to voluntary work. Therefore, some kind of pay or benefit would
be useful because working for such an intense program means that one has to make rather radical changes in his/her life.

‘I think ... maybe for me the thing is that I could quit my job, but some others maybe don’t have this option – so some kind of financial support could perhaps be increased. Okay, it is voluntary work and it’s great, but I would actually have to make pretty extreme changes in my entire life to make it manageable. I managed it, but many others perhaps simply wouldn’t be able to live on their savings only. It’s a noble cause you are doing all this for, but this material side could maybe be supported a bit more.’ [Linda, interview in November 2017]

Finding some reasonable solution for a contradiction between extremely intense workload and full commitment, on the one hand, and unpaid voluntary work on the other hand, is all the more crucial as the program is far from being complete at the moment as Norman admits: ‘Well, in principle, all parts of the program are incomplete at the moment.’ He says that every single session of the program can be improved and can be improved endlessly. However, in some point one has to decide that enough is enough and this particular part is good enough. He regards courses on Popper's philosophy and social theory as the ones which need developing most urgently at the moment.

Hugo compares complete program and the current state of affairs with the parallel between a complete person and a skeleton – the shape should be about the same but looking at the skeleton you cannot say anything about the hair or the eyes of the person. Hugo believes that their skeleton is good and Karl Popper’s ideas of open society will remain the centrepiece of the program but lot of refinement is needed to make this program work in different contexts.

Nele, on the other hand, finds the program quite complete already: ‘For me, it is all so complete already, we are doing such a fine-tuning here like how to make some methods or how these materials could be summarised or how to add or remove something, but it seems to me that it is so in place in general and so elaborate that we need to add something. And I also can’t see that we should remove something.’ [Nele, interview in November 2017]

3.8 Conclusion

DD Academy (along with Domus Dorpatensis) is probably one of the most successful youth organisations in Estonia in terms of sustainability, although some members of the board and the CEO perhaps would not appreciate being called a ‘youth organisation’. There are two main reasons that allow considering DD Academy a success. First, unlike most of the youth organisations, Domus Dorpatensis has financial resources that allow DD Academy to make strategic decisions and develop their program as the team desires and not as some donors tell them to do. The presence of financial resources is also a source of sustainability because unlike many other youth organisations DD Academy does not have to worry that they cannot go on with their program next year if they are not successful with applying for project funding. Secondly, the organisation has gone through some rather radical changes for a couple of time during the last decade, which means that the organisation can adapt with the changes both inside the organisation as well as in surrounding environment and competition of other youth organisations. Furthermore, DD Academy is a kind of landmark in the field of youth organisations in Tartu and it attracts participants from other youth and student organisations because it is considered ‘cool’ among civicly active young people.

That does not mean that DD Academy functions absolutely smoothly, and that there are no problems to be solved. It is fairly certain that DD Academy would not pass ‘the bus test’ – if Norman were to be hit by a bus, the organisation would be in a very bad state and it is not sure how long the rest of the team would be able to keep the program running because the whole organisation is leader-centred. Norman himself is the first person to point out DD Academy’s problems in passing ‘the bus test’.

Another ongoing issue is the funding of labour that goes into running the program. Despite the fact that DD Academy is in a better position than most of the other youth organisations, one
cannot say either that there are enough resources for long-term development of the program. The whole program functions currently on a voluntary basis and it may not be optimal solution in the long run. Indeed, the current team members are thoroughly dedicated to the program but several of them admit that it is difficult to find time for Academy because of other obligations (school, job) and they are not sure whether they can contribute to DD Academy over a longer period of time either because of risk of burnout or just because of need to find a job that also pays the rent. Some team members mention that they would love to work for DD Academy if there were paid jobs because in that case they did not have to choose between passion and wallet. According to Lennart (and I tend to agree with him on this), it would be crucial to bring in more resources to further develop the program because it is too much to expect that the best program in the world is created purely by team of enthusiasts on voluntary basis. If the development of the program is taken seriously, it sooner or later raises the question of the need to pay for professional consultants or licences of some methods or tests, for example. Additional resources are also needed to meet the ambitious plan of DD Academy being exported to other places, and by resources I mean not only money but also human resources. Opening another program in some other town in Estonia alone would mean that there would be another team in another town, which is not constantly supervised by program developers. That in turn means that it would be much more difficult to ensure the quality of the program. This problem would be multiplied if another program were to be opened in another country in another cultural and language context. That does not mean that importing the program would be stupid or ill-fated idea – it means that it simply needs a lot of resources and program development to reach that aim.

Concerning the civicly active young people in DD Academy and typology of youth active citizenship presented at WP2, it is possible to identify different types of active citizenship among the team members and participants of DD Academy. It is highly probable that at least some of the participants are generally active in conformist ways – participation in a youth organisation apart from their studies is part of playing by the rules for them. They are dedicated participants and they fit in nicely because they adopt the rules of the Academy quickly. However, they are not particularly proactive and they are not civicly active outside the student organisations. Most of the team members and participants can be classified as generally active in pro-democratic, anti-authoritarian and non-conformist ways – they are open for discussion and often question ways in which society currently works. Many of them have topics that are particularly close to their hearts (e.g., environment, gender equality, mental health issues, diminishing rural communities) and they are rather active also outside DD Academy by being members of other youth, student, or civic organisations, signing petitions and inviting other people to sign, critically discussing social and political issues in social media, making speeches, initiate petitions, campaigns, and projects, encourage other people do get involved and become civicly active, and mentor other young active citizens.

The group you do not find in DD Academy is generally active in anti-democratic and authoritarian ways as these types of young people would contradict the core values of the organisation. Democratic values, human rights, and dignity of every single human being are so important for the organisation that it is hard to imagine how young person, who thinks that some groups are somehow better or more worthy than others, could fit in.
It is rather sweet how convinced the team members and participants are that DD Academy is something extraordinary and they are part of something bigger. Members of most of the organisations believe that they are somehow unique, of course, but having spent several months in DD Academy I would say that this belief is particularly strong in that organisation. The team members do not tire of repeating that you cannot get similar experiences and similar sets of skills from any other program. During the ‘Development Festival’ in June and hearing how the team members discuss that no one else ever came on idea to teach young people about social change and political philosophy, I found myself sometimes tempted to say that ‘Do you realise yourself that what you’re preparing here is a BA curricula in social sciences with some extra courses on self-development?’ I did not and they most probably would not have believed me either. Only Norman told me later that he saw me smiling ironically while typing. Indeed, it seems that more experienced members of the team (Norman, Lennart, Hugo, Elise, Lea) are more aware that the program is far from being complete and that not all its parts are not completely unique, while younger members are more eager to believe that the program already is the best program in the world or at least quite close to it. And that brings us back to the questions of funding and sustainability – it seems that despite Norman’s idea that one can form a team from the participants of the last season and this team is well prepared to organise the program of the next season, may not work in the long run because somewhat more experience may be needed to develop the program further. At least that is the standpoint what Lennart advocates.

How unique DD Academy’s new program is or how big an impact it will have is yet to be seen. It is only the third year of their current program and it is too early to say what has been the impact on the participants and whether this impact has a lasting effect. The team members, who have just completed the program, are overly positive about it and express the belief that this program can change young people’s lives and bring the changes along. The more experienced team members are more prudent, admitting that it would take years to find out whether the program actually has the desired effect. Furthermore, it would be very difficult to assess the success of the program because as Norman puts it – a successful defender of the open society can also be a person who stops some stupid amendment of the law that would hinder the civic liberties of people. However, nobody is ever going to write a book about the actions of this person and the rest of the world will never know how much that person did do defend the open society. Therefore, it may well be that we will never hear anything about the most successful graduates of DD Academy.
4. Germany: Greenpeace Jugend and ArbeiterKind – Clara Mikolajczyk, University of Jena
4.1 Introduction

After mapping the field of youth citizenship and participation initiatives for WP8.1, we decided to opt for two organisations ArbeiterKind and Greenpeace Jugend. Both operate nationwide, and are fairly typical of youth active citizenship in Germany, but focus themselves on very different main topics. ArbeiterKind focuses on the social and educational sector and Greenpeace Jugend aims at intervening in international and national debates over environmental questions and political relationships. Greenpeace Jugend conveys their topics through creative activities around global warming and environmental sustainability.

4.1.1 Greenpeace/ Greenpeace Jugend

Greenpeace is an international environmental organisation that operates by way of direct nonviolent actions to draw attention to the protection of nature and justice for all living creatures. Greenpeace was founded in 1971 in Vancouver, Canada. Greenpeace Germany was established nine years later, in 1980, so it can be considered to be a fairly longstanding organisation, nationally. In general Greenpeace acts on four different levels (local, regional, national and international). On each level they have contact persons who are connected to groups both on vertical and horizontal levels. Greenpeace represents what might be called a traditional non-governmental organisation. Greenpeace Jugend is a subgroup of Greenpeace Germany, which itself is a subgroup of International Greenpeace, and focuses on both younger children up to age 14 and youth up to 18 years.

Customarily, Greenpeace has quite an effective media strategy. On the one hand they use media for gaining attention in public, on the other hand media are used to inform their members about current events (e.g. their webpage, Facebook, platform just for members, twitter, RSS feeds). Greenpeace considers active citizenship through face-to-face non-violent direct actions, information, exhibitions, lectures, flyers to inform people about current political shortcomings in dealing with environmental issues. They work on topics such as energy, climate and climate change, biodiversity (forest, seas) and agriculture (genetic engineering / pesticides) and, if possible, all other current topics. According to the principles of Greenpeace, they act non-violently, are independent from political parties and internationally oriented. Greenpeace Jugend in Jena have their “office” in which they meet each week in the same building as The Green Party. However, the direction of influence is not clear (i.e. whether Green Peace influences the Green Party or vice versa) and we suggest, rather, that Greenpeace Germany inspires all German Parties in some ways – especially in terms of election policies. All these considerations are valid not just for the national and international level but also for the local level which we observed.

Additional to the aims and main activities given by Greenpeace Germany and Greenpeace international, the local group formulated the goals of recruiting new members as well as planning new actions to gain as much as possible attention by people in the city.

Immediately to gather members. So that we are more young people, so that they are able to change something and so they aren’t so ignorant and keep on throwing their plastic waste everywhere. That they gain a view for the important topics. #00:07:33-7# AI_f1

On one hand it is a nice way to meet friends, and people with similar views, concerning the environment as well as having a deeper exchange and communication than just partying. And one can do events. I nearly always find it great to publicly show up interesting facts. Precisely in the youth group there are a lot of possibilities to use creative methods. Once we used chalk as an

32 Ziele auf die Gruppe bezogen „Momentan Mitglieder zu sammeln. Damit wir mehr sind und viele junge Leute, dass sie da sind, um etwas zu ändern und ihnen es nicht so am Arsch vorbei gehen soll und sie weiter ihr Plastikzeug irgendwo hin schmeißen.“ (Af_1. Zeilen 137-139)
4.1.2 ArbeiterKind

ArbeiterKind was founded in 2006 and is a rather large (6000 members) association in Germany. They support pupils who aim to study at university and are, in this respect, educational pioneers in their family, meaning that their parents have no academic background. ArbeiterKind offers them contacts to other older students who were in the same situation. Besides mentoring, ArbeiterKind gets in touch with schools and offers information for pupils. It has frequently been discussed in the media in recent years. Among others factors, this can be explained by partners and members who raised awareness about ArbeiterKind and showed the necessity to get active in that subject. ArbeiterKind shows rising numbers of members, which include known deputies (e.g. Sigmar Gabriel, Foreign Minister) and the regulars’ tables in many cities. A regulars’ table is a common tradition in Germany. Groups with a mutual interest but also friends meet regularly (e.g. once a week, once a month) at for example a pub or café. Regulars’ table are diverse, some are structured and more obligatory; others don’t work on a subject and take the regulars’ table as an occasion to meet friends regularly. The content of regular tables is very different and is depending on the group, for example some meet to discuss political subjects, or exchange certain information and others just meet their friends.

ArbeiterKind operates on the national, regional and local level. Most of the volunteer staff are themselves first generation academic (with families who traditionally did not go into higher education), and report from their own experiences about their educational development. They thus encourage current pupils through their personal example. Members take part in school events and encourage students through their educational history. They organise information events and assist would-be young employees at universities or at trade fairs. Their aim is to get students involved, to share experiences and to raise awareness about social injustices connected to educational inequality. Their work is considered to be active citizenship because it supports pupils on their way from the start of their studies to the successful end. At the same time, it draws attention to social and educational inequality and injustice.

The first contact with both groups was built via email. It was explained what the project and the work package contained and how an observation could be performed. In a second step a meeting was arranged where more information to each group was presented. This meeting was also used to introduce the observer and to give space for questions from the group members. After the members agreed with the observation, the ethnographical research started.

In case of the Greenpeace Jugend observation, the members were perceived as quite sceptical at the beginning of the research. For this reason, the group was asked about a feedback concerning the observation after the first meetings. By asking the Greenpeace Jugend for their opinion, the group started being less sceptical and started to perceive the observation as more normal. Furthermore, at the beginning of every meeting there was time to have small conversation about their everyday life. It was noticeably, that the atmosphere between the group and the researcher became more positive and relaxed over the time. However, the researcher always was recognised as someone who didn’t belong to the inner circle of Greenpeace Jugend. On one hand this could be seen as an aspect of age. The researcher was clearly older than the Greenpeace members. On
the other hand, the researcher did not participate while making notes and observing and was therefore acting differently from the Greenpeace Jugend.

In comparison to Greenpeace Jugend, ArbeiterKind was perceived as less sceptical concerning the ethnographical research. From the beginning ArbeiterKind were questioning the method and wanted to learn more about the project and the concept of ethnographical research. This (critical) interest was also related to their academic background, hence some members were familiar with participating observations from their own academic studies. In contrast to Greenpeace Jugend, the researcher was more integrated into the group. For example, group members asked on the researcher’s opinion and as everyone was writing notes, the note making of the researcher didn’t attracted as much attention compared to the Greenpeace meetings. Neither Greenpeace Jugend nor ArbeiterKind received a compensation or any other kind of benefit for the observation. Concerning the interviews, Greenpeace Jugend was offered something to drink at the café where the interview took place. Both ArbeiterKind and Greenpeace Jugend got the opportunity to receive the results from WP 9 after finishing the work package.

4.2 Conceptualisations of Youth

4.2.1 Greenpeace

The Greenpeace Jugend group we observed was founded in 2014 by six young members with German citizenship, with an age range from 16-18 years. Many members from the youth group change to the adult group after they turn 18 years. Some stay a bit longer. During the period of our observation, three of these founder members were still active in this group (two members 17 years old and one 18 years old). The group as we observed it was comprised in total of ten members (two male members) whose degree of taking part in their weekly meetings varied. All in all, there were at least two members of the group who showed up on each meeting. Except for two members, the other members attended two high schools in town. One school specialises in natural science and the other school is a comprehensive school that is well known for their alternative conceptualisations of learning and teaching. We interviewed five members of the group after one month of observations. Based on these interviews we know more about their social backgrounds. Almost every member comes from a high SES (middle class) backgrounds, with both parents being highly educated for instance, as medical doctors or psychologists. Furthermore, asking about their future plans, all except one interviewee plans on applying for university after high school. Therefore, we consider the Greenpeace Jugend group to be quite homogenous with regard to their social background and age.

The group is organised via grassroots democracy by their members and members are all equal. An exception is made for one member who takes responsibility for the key of the meeting room and also received further information from the national Greenpeace group. Furthermore, they also have connections to the Greenpeace group which is organised by grownups in the same city, with members starting from age 18. Once a month they have a joint meeting of both groups. Sometimes members of the adult group join Greenpeace Jugend meetings, for supporting them, especially for realising actions. During our observation we noticed that all members acted politely, helpfully and friendly towards each other. They paid particular attention on the well-being of each member, e.g. when our research started, they met and discussed how they felt about the upcoming research. Both, the observations and the interviews revealed that most of the girls were friends at school and met in their leisure time, as did the boys. There was less interconnection between the female and male adolescents outside the Greenpeace meetings.
My best friend [name] just asked me if I wanted to come with him because my interests went into that sort of direction anyway. He somehow found the group and once I just went along with him. B1_m1 #00:02:22-3#34

There are lists that hang out in the school with organisations that could use your help for one day. One year I helped paint a fence. And once there was the possibility of going to [environmental NGO]. It was quite a long day, we had to be there for eight hours or something like that. We drew some banners and did a demonstration on the same day. It was publicity for the Anti-Coal-Groups and they also advertised the [environmental youth organisation], which didn't exist yet. The organisation was supposed to be founded by adults first of all. So [Other group member], who is still in the group, and I thought: “Hey, that sounds cool, let’s go there.” and we asked [Other group member] and went there together and we co-founded the group. So the day of volunteering with the adults was the reason for being in the group. AI_f1 #00:02:03-4#35

I: Okay. Are you all friends with each other? #00:15:08-2
B: I wouldn’t necessarily say that, but we get along with each other and I think we are more like superficial friends. AI_f1 #00:15:14-8#36

4.2.2 ArbeiterKind

In our case study, the group (a regulars’ table) consisted exclusively of students and former students from the local university and is the only ArbeiterKind group in that federal state. We accompanied ArbeiterKind when they started to plan a one-day event with workshops and trainings for career starters. Hence, we need to keep in mind that we might have observed a particularly goal-oriented period of this group.

At the beginning of our ethnographic research (April 2017), ArbeiterKind consisted of nine members and by half-time (July 2017) of the observation there were seven. During our last weeks of ethnographic research (October 2017), there were five members left. However, it should be mentioned that several new members attended the group after the career starter event in (October 2017), see below. The ArbeiterKind members are between 23 – 31 years old, with only one male member. All of them were German citizens, with one holding a dual citizenship. The period of their membership varied between five years and five months.

Through our ethnographic research we observed that there were at least two persons in the group, who took the main responsibility, mainly in structural questions e.g. organising events or writing protocols. These two members were also the only ones who had access to the email account of the group. Regarding this fact, it appeared that they had more management responsibilities, compared to the other members. During the time of observation, it was also

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34 Also eigentlich ist es so, dass mein bester Freund, also [Name] mich gefragt hat, ob ich nicht einfach mitkommen will, weil ich in die Richtung auch schon interessiert war. Der hatte das entdeckt und da bin ich dann einfach einmal mitgekommen. #00:02:22-3#

35 Da gibt es, da hängen immer so Listen aus mit Organisationen und da hat man dann einen Tag Einsatz, wo man da helfen kann und da habe ich dann mal ein Jahr einen Zaun gestrichen. Dann gab es auch einmal die Möglichkeit bei [Umweltorganisation] dabei zu sein. Das war dann ein ziemlich langer Tag, acht Stunden oder so. Da haben wir Banner gemalt und eine richtige Demonstration gemacht. Als Werbung für die Antikoelleke und da haben die Werbung gemacht für die [Umweltjugendorganisation], die es aber noch nicht gab. Die sollte erst gegründet werden von Erwachsenen. Und da haben [Name anderes Gruppenmitglied] und ich, die ja jetzt auch noch in der Gruppe ist, gedacht: „He, ja das ist doch cool, lass uns da mal hin gehen.“ und haben dann noch [Name anderes Gruppenmitglied] [gefragt] und sind dann dahin zusammen hingegangen. Und haben sozusagen die Gruppe mitgegründet, also es war so der Aufhänger, das wir mit den Erwachsenen die Aktion mitgemacht haben. #00:02:03-4# AI_f1

36 Weiß ich nicht, ob man das sagen kann, aber wir verstehen uns gut und ich glaube oberflächliche Freunde. #00:15:14-8# I Seid ihr, seid ihr alle aus einer Schule? AI_f1 #00:15:20-7#
revealed, that from the start they liked to organise the group via grassroots democracy, but in many cases came back to these two and especially one of them seemed to have taken on the role as an implicit leader.

Field notes 20170523
Moderation:
- Po_f4 writes the minutes and tells the topics at the beginning by reading the points from the previous minutes
- But after half of the meeting Ao_f1 takes over the bridges and the moderation of the meeting by asking which topics are still open, once a point was finished, and in the end asking whether there are still open points and after the last point asks, then we are finished with the topic right?
- The moderation is laying only in Po_f4 hands.37

B: (laughs). Yes (laughs). What do I not like about how the group works. Well, I believe, that sometimes/ (...) I believe, I would sometimes prefer it to be more democratic. (...) And I believe as well, that it is a bit self-inflicted. So, I believe it starts with only two people having access to the mail inbox. I find that a pity. So, I do understand, that somehow out of organisational reasons and that not everyone in it or that not everyone works in it and then no one can keep track, I understand that. I still find it, that it implicates a management, which I would NOT want. And we once had that at the very beginning as a subject, because in the beginning I had the planning of [project day] which was perceived as very structured. I always wrote a protocol, someone else out of the group always had the agenda and instructed and welcomed it and I found that totally stupid. Well because I found, that we are a very, very emancipated group and that should also be found in the structure. And then I did say, that I at least, that we technically could also let it rotate simply, right. Also if the mail inbox for my sake remains for two persons, that you could at least let the responsibility for the protocol and agenda rotate. We also did that then. But that served two ways. On the one hand I noticed, that some people prefer doing it than other and also preferred to initiate it and other people, from which I would have wished, that they might say “so today I will run the agenda” did not do it. And I believe I would have wished for that. And I would also wish for that in the future, yes. Maybe I am not direct enough there yet, yes. Exactly. But besides that (...) I believe before the [project day] it was a bit lacking commitment, what sometimes has annoyed me or as well lacking obligation. That has now changed with the group. That that within both so as well commitment and also obligation was there. So exactly. The big group/ exactly. So we have a big distributor I would say, right. The email distributor are thirty people active allegedly. We have also requested that once in between, if someone wants to leave maybe, but they wanted to stay. And of course I find this is a pity like this. But I do not see it now as a group, so I would not say this “that is the active [organisation] group”, but rather this is the mail distributor. Exactly. Yes I believe, like these two things maybe.

37 Feldnotizen 20170523 Po_f4 schreibt Protokoll und gibt am Anfang des Treffens die Themen vor, in dem sie Punkte aus dem letzten Protokoll vorgibt; Aber ab Mitte des Treffens übernimmt Ao_f1 wieder die Überleitungen und die Moderation des Treffens, in dem sie fragt, welche Themen noch offen sind, sobald ein Punkt fertig besprochen ist, und am Ende fragt, ob es noch offene Punkte gibt und nach dem letzten Punkt fragt, dann sind wir für heute fertig mit den Themen oder; Die Moderation liegt nur scheinbar in Po_f4 Händen (Protokoll 2017.5.23)

By observing ArbeiterKind we recognised that, again, friendships played an import role in that group. Hence, we paid particular attention to the fact of friendship and which influences this might have on the workings and development of a group. Most of the female members knew each other from university. At least four of them studied the same subject. Friendship was also the initial reason for them to get in touch with ArbeiterKind for the first time. For that reasons, we see the group as being homogenous to a high extent.

Actually, that was quite a bit coincidental. Last year around this time, in the winter before the semester started, I went to the “Markt der Möglichkeiten” with a girlfriend and had a look around. Because I thought maybe there’s something interesting where I might want to become involved. And then we got to the [organisation] booth: Actually I didn’t really look for it specifically, I had a look on Facebook by chance and at the [organisation] booth there was Ao_f1, who is in our study programme, which is where I knew her from, and we chatted for a bit. For me, even if there would have been someone else at the booth, the work that they are doing sounded quite good. And then I went, for a try-out so to speak, to the first regular’s table back then and I kind of liked it. And since then I was involved, yes.\footnote{Po_f4 \#00:01:17-0#}

And the other two/ I don’t even know how that came. Well they are also friends of us and therefore they probably have heard of something, found that somehow cool. And then I believe to somehow have a certain project, both of them found interesting and then this somehow, exactly, came together. And we also had other people with us, which we just over Ao_f4, exactly excuse me, they had also belonged to the core group, had recruited, which have studied with her and technically know about the field, but which then also dropped out over time. Out of time reasons, other reasons, exactly.\footnote{Ao_f2 \#00:02:41-5#}

Both groups we observed tended to be directed at young people with a high SES. Hence, we would suggest that ArbeiterKind and Greenpeace Jugend are both quite homogenous. The age range in the groups referred to was between youth and emerging adulthood. These findings are consistent with theoretical findings from the WP2, which suggests that civic activities for young people appear particularly concentrated around higher education and tend to be directed at young people who are between school age and young adulthood.

4.3 Active Citizenship

4.3.1 Greenpeace

Concerning active citizenship, responses from the interviews which we analysed by way of content analysis revealed several aspects of attitudes to democracy and rights. Members of the Greenpeace Jugend talked about responsibility for both society and environment. This responsibility, which can be understood as a basic value, implied for the group an intention of action, too\(^{41}\).

\[\text{"It makes me contemplate and I just want to do something against it, even if it isn't easy to achieve. BI\_m1 \#00:05:37-4\#}\]

Furthermore, they explicitly talked about having the right to demonstrate/protest and showing their opinions\(^{42}\). This, in turn, was considered to be more effectively done in a group than as a single person reflecting the acknowledgement of the importance to get organised to pursue social or political goals. Hence, we recognised that members of the Greenpeace Jugend knew, from a theoretical angle, both how active citizenship is functioning in a democracy and how to transform it into a practical action. This was mostly displayed and discussed in connection to protests, spectacular actions in the city-centre and in informing people on current issues concerning the environment or animal rights. However, this group referred several times to the fact that their action – in contrast to the grownups – of Greenpeace (from 18 years), needed to be legal\(^{43}\)\(^{44}\). Thus, there was an idea of active citizenship potentially including illegal action, that is critical of current policy, once you are adult.
Yes, we are at the same events a lot and the adults can always join our activities, and we can nearly always participate in theirs, as long as they are not illegal. AI_m1 #00:24:04

Yeah, I think so. The events differ, because you don’t have to do only legal things. **You do borderline legal things, with which you can make more aware of yourself.** Or you can actually become an activist. For instance, the topic [animals] or something like that, but not necessarily in the local group. But **I would really like to do that, when I’m in the adult group, to join in a few bigger campaigns** as an activist. I think you get a lot more options and opportunities. BI_m1 #00:27:14

Since environmental and animal issues are recurring current issues in German society and social conventions regarding these issues, society is quite clear in describing a code of ethics, members of Greenpeace Jugend have a code of conduct they can follow. Apparently, they also put across these attitudes to other people. For example, group members experience themselves as authorised to inform and remind other people of this code of conduct.

Well to make people aware that the weather is good again and that one should think about taking a bike rather than a car. BI_m1 #00:15:43

In our research, we also recognised that some group members showed little understanding of of people outside the group (youth and older) who behaved in less environmentally friendly ways than they did themselves.

Yes, **what really motivates me is that I am interested in science** and that is why I’m also at school. You somehow hear of **global warming,** what it is and what exactly is going wrong. And there are things that happen, like when one person alone takes a BMW x5 to work in the morning. It is just completely unnecessary. It doesn’t give you an advantage, instead you are too lazy and destroy the environment. {It} makes me contemplate and I just want to do something against it, even if it isn’t easy to achieve. BI_m1 #00:05:37

The group itself is organised from and by the grassroots which is not only a way of organisation but also conveys an aspect of a concept of active citizenship. Asking the members bout their process of decision making, they **all described each other as equal.** We found this, on the one hand, evident in our observations; discussion seemed to be the main process during their meetings. On the other hand we recognised that at least three members of the Greenpeace Jugend had the major share in talking during the meetings.

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Fieldnotes 20110511 Greenpeace Jugend
protocol thoughts
Next point: flyer action
- Want to make a new flyer for the group to

- Experience themselves as a small group

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46 Ja halt die Leute darauf Aufmerksam zu machen, dass das Wetter wieder gut ist und dass man halt doch einmal überlegen sollte das Fahrrad an Stelle des Autos zu nehmen. BI_m1 #00:15:43

47 Ja was mich schon so besonders motiviert ist, dass ich schon so in der naturwissenschaftlich interessiert bin und dementsprechend auf der Schule bin. Man hält irgendwie das mit dem Klimawandel schon mitbekommt, wie das eigentlich ist. Was da genau schieß läuft und es schon ein paar Sachen gibt, wie wenn jetzt wirklich morgens einer alleine mit einem BMW x5 zur Arbeit fährt. Was einfach so komplett unnötig ist. Was einfach keinen Vorteil bringt, sondern einfach aus Faulheit die Umwelt zerstört wird. {Es} macht mich etwas nachdenklich und da möchte ich einfach etwas dagegen unternehmen, auch wenn das wirklich nicht einfach ist. BI_m1 #00:05:37
Grant Agreement N. 649538

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>get more members</th>
<th>Asking about resources, concerning time and know-how</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Methodical question: who can do that on the computer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who has time for that</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which steps are necessary to create the flyer text, photo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bo_1 would have time because there would be summer holidays soon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>asking about the meaning of the flyer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerning size- size of a postcard would be best</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Referring to size, small would be best</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference to adults’ action</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No_f1 wants to know how many people take part</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answer: there are always the same people coming, some only to the actions and parties</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference to other [environmental youth group] groups and their material</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actions of the [environmental youth group] must not be illegal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co_2's mobile phone rings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bo_2 and Bo_1 start talking parallel about Bo_1’s growling stomach</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co_2 picks up leading the conversation again</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults’ action at the next weekend at (Supermarket)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talking about the efficacy in the social networks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question: whether to take part there or not</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explains why Lidl is good for the action because Europe-wide, industrial livestock farming, meat in other European countries at Lidl better, not in Germany, thereby [the environmental group] draws attention</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Media are used in many different ways and for different reasons by Greenpeace Jugend. All through its history, Greenpeace has always been a group who cleverly used media (particularly, the press and television) to gain attention but also to inform their members about their work (e.g. Greenpeace magazine). Still, Greenpeace international offers their members many opportunities to take part in their actions and to inform themselves on current affairs (e.g. Homepage, Twitter, Facebook and intranet).

With regard to the Greenpeace Jugend, we found the use of media as something quite typical during their meetings. Smartphones, for example, were used to minute the meetings, for research on facts and updates from Greenpeace Germany and also as a medium of contact and communications for the group members. Nevertheless, the group had quite an outdated website.
home page, which they planned to renew. During our research the home page stayed in their former web presence. Discussions about attracting new members always focused face-to-face interactions such as meeting people in the pedestrian precinct, talking and informing them. Media strategies, like posts on Facebook or other internet sources were not really included in their plans of action. They is very likely to be because this strategy is the traditional way in which Green Peace in general attracts new members and for that reason the Greenpeace Jugend never took this other media strategies into account.

The main pedagogic strategies of Greenpeace Jugend are displayed in two different contexts. The first context is the weekly meetings of the group, see above, characterised by a strong democratic atmosphere. Hence, discussions on current issues were a highly frequented tool during their meetings. As the second context, the Greenpeace Jugend used the pedestrian precinct as a platform to contact other people. Mainly handing out leaflets, protests and actions were used as pedagogic strategy to attract attention.

That's difficult. I guess everyone that was walking around outside. I guess a lot of families and as well as (...) I think everyone that was standing around would have seen it. BI_m1 #00:16:09-8#

Our content analysis illustrates that these pedagogic strategies are partly transmitted by the grownup Greenpeace group as well as they are shared and transmitted within the Greenpeace Jugend.

Fieldnotes 20170511 Greenpeace Jugend protocol thoughts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Co_1 gets out his mobile phone</th>
<th>Not commenting what she does with it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topic new photo for the flyer idea to use one of the bicycle demonstration as well</td>
<td>During the conversation a lot of references to the EU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telling about that [environmental group] has its own portal similar to Facebook, Co_2 has been there a half year ago</td>
<td>Topic of how current the group is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co_2 well informed about structures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.2 ArbeiterKind

The view that everybody should have equal opportunities in German society concerning education and – irrespective of financial resources – the freedom to choose a career, forms the base of ArbeiterKind work. Increasing equal opportunities for youth can be seen as the fundamental attitude toward democracy and rights of the group. There are no reflections over political protest or other forms of active citizenship other than informing and helping other young people from socially disadvantaged backgrounds with information and knowledge.

B: The topic itself really motivates me. Because we simply STILL assume that you have [theme of organisation], if you are smart, if you are diligent, if you make an effort. And as much as we like to sell it as our European dream, it just is not RIGHT. So THE predictor of your own [theme of the organisation] is the [theme of the organisation]. Period. This has NOTHING to do with yourself. And for me it's so bitter because when you say "ooh [Theme of

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48 Das ist jetzt schwierig. Ich denke, alle die halt da draußen unterwegs waren. Ich denke halt so recht viele Familien und auch(...). Ich denke mitbekommen (Fahrradaktion) muss es eigentlich jeder, der dastand. BI_m1 #00:16:09-8#
the organisation], [theme of the organisation] and so, that's sooo important", that's just not a new topic, you know. So if we take the [other social issue] in comparison, it was precarious at once, it was suddenly a situation where a lot of people realised “shit, we have to get INVOLVED somehow, it's important that we get involved now.” It's not like that with [theme of the organisation], so that's been the case for a long time that we just have inequalities and that we are also ESPECIALLY in international comparison one of the countries with the lowest permeabilities, with the highest selections. Hardly any other European country says after the [theme of the organisation] "well then we split you up now into different ways", yes. So the topic is somehow mine, I think it's very important and of course that has something to do with my own [origin]. Ultimately I'm from a very much [origin] family. My parents were each the first in their family, that [origin] and both come from very [origin].

Having equal rights in the group, many members mentioned the idea of grass root orientation as the basic commitment at the meetings. During the meetings every member has the chance to present his or her ideas. Afterwards the group is used to give feedback and their thoughts on these ideas. All in all, we observed a friendly, polite and respectful atmosphere across the meetings.

Field 20170509 notes Atmosphere:
- All in all, very friendly and respectful
- Annoyed by Po_m1 because he was not as informed as the others

The initial thematic motivation to join the group and pedagogic strategies towards the target group go along with each other. Members of ArbeiterKind intend to inform youth on structural issues which makes it easier to meet challenges before and during their time of study. Therefore they invite youth to meet them and talk about e.g. challenges or structural help in e.g. applying for scholarships. Concerning pedagogic strategies within the group we recognised a high degree of structuring tools being used e.g. minutes and agenda items. The structure, which appeared to be quite similar across the meetings, followed the same process (opening, current affairs, discussion, decision making, agreements, ending). Furthermore, they used WhatsApp, Facebook and emails to inform each other on progress of planning their career-starter event. WhatsApp and emails are mainly used for internal communication within the group, while Facebook and the official website are used for addressing the general public and to inform interested people. Which type of media resources and the way they are used in the group, were democratically decided during their meetings.

We observed the use of media for at least three different reasons. First, WhatsApp was mainly used for an exchange of information. Second, we also observed WhatsApp being used as a tool to define one's position, to criticize someone’s behaviour and to inform the group about one's abandonment of the group. Third, in a few cases telephone calls and letters were used for official contacts, e.g. invitation for keynote speakers on their career starter event. In comparison to the

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official national home page, the local home page of ArbeiterKind seemed to show less
information. The main communication and information on upcoming events and news around
the group were presented on Facebook.

Field notes 20170509 ArbeiterKind
protocol

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>thoughts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Out of it a discussion results about the means of communication brought up by Po_m1: instead of a mailing list (as before) other platforms are suggested because mails are more likely to disappear in the mail history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ao_f1 is pushing in direction of the mailing list, seems to be annoyed of the discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Group does not seem to be satisfied with the compromise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ao_f1 argues in favor of the mailing list because when using a different medium, it actually has to be one of the organisation and she thinks they are confusing and that you can easily put the full-time employees in Leipzig in the CC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Po_m1 argues that a lot of mails do not concern his subtopic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Po_f1 in favor of a different alternative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ao_f1 asks Ao_f4 directly for her opinion, Ao_f4 is undetermined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A compromise is made: it remains with the mailing list however the subject has to be used more actively and label the mail’s content</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ArbeiterKind stands for providing certain knowledge for a specific target group. This target
group should be introduced into an academic context. Concerning this context, ArbeiterKind seems to use the tools that are already established in academic contexts e.g. regular’s table, events like career starter events. Hence, the academic context seems to frame the conceptualization of action and citizenship for ArbeiterKind members. Moreover, we also could find a high fit (e.g. SES, challenges they met, interests) between the members of the ArbeiterKind and the target group. This results from the structure of ArbeiterKind which is close to a buddy program. The fit between ArbeiterKind members and their target group was perceived as less high in certain situations where they got contacted and asked if they could give guidance for refugees who wanted to apply for university.

All in all, we observed micro-political processes with regard to discussions in both groups. Members in both groups get opportunities to presents their ideas and concepts regarding projects or actions. When it comes to public presentations – such as a bike protest or career starter events - the micro-political level is left behind and meso – or even macro- contexts are entered. Drawing on the typology of WP2, we observed mainly normative youth citizenship/behaviour during our research. Particularly ArbeiterKind showed normative citizenship which in this sample of WP8 was recognised as dominant. Besides normative strategies Greenpeace Jugend also showed to some extend critical political participation mostly at a local level. Even though also illegal action seems to have exerted quite some attraction to some of these adolescents they were basically barred off this option by the rules set (for minors) on the superordinate level of Greenpeace.

4.4 The Local, National and European dimensions
4.4.1 Greenpeace
As mentioned before, Greenpeace itself is organised and acts at different levels (local, regional, national and international - including Europe and countries from all over the world). These different levels seem to be more important for the grownup groups than for the Greenpeace Jugend as we observed. Still, an important relation for Greenpeace Jugend is the connection with other youth groups of Greenpeace on a local and national level. There are several events during the year where members (under 18 years old) from all over the country meet in camps and have workshops on different environmental issues. They also offer different kinds of other cultural events (e.g. music and cooking workshops). Meetings like these are optional for every member, some older members (over 18 years) take part as well and help with structural issues. Three members of the group have been participating a few times in those meetings. The intention of fostering networking through these meetings seems to fulfill its goals. The Greenpeace members highlighted the good memories of these camps as well as mentioned still staying in contact with other groups from Germany.

Even though at least three members of Greenpeace Jugend have been abroad, e.g. as exchange students, a European reflection and interaction barely existed. In a few cases we heard comments that people should stick together to provoke changes concerning e.g. climate change, but there were no comments on a European citizenship or references to other countries in the EU. Unfortunately, the international and partly national dimensions were mostly named in connection to evoke a critical mass for having a voice that would be heard.

Field notes 20170511 Greenpeace protocol
- Question of Co_2 whether someone takes minutes
- Bo_1 takes the minutes with his mobile phone
- Co_2 offers to tell about the previous weekend the JAGGIO meeting (youth action group)
- Explanation for No_f1
- Is of bicycle demonstration the last action
- Asking by Bo_2 whether it would be okay if he eats
- offers something to the others
- Topic [environmental group] camp
- Is annual meeting
- Approx. 600 people
- Asking whether someone could talk about it
- It's okay

4.4.2 ArbeiterKind
The ArbeiterKind group we observed is the only group in the federal state where we did our ethnographic research. Members of ArbeiterKind know about that situation and like to have, on
the one hand, another group close by, but on the other hand they also mention worries about more structural work if there would be more exchanges between the groups.

As I have already said, we are the only local group in [federal state] and that of course is rather unusual that one state has only one active group, so now one full-time employee has been hired ONLY for [state], who will then be in [another place] and who, in addition to the goal of supervising us, or the other way around, in addition to the task of supervising us, has the goal of building up as many new groups as possible in [federal state]. Of course, I am very curious about this person. I hope that the cooperation works well and I’m curious to see how it affects us as a group, so in which way we notice that there are a few more connections, you can exchange a few more things with other local groups or whether that is more exhausting for us, because of course there are then EVEN more communication partners with whom you have to exchange somehow. That’s the topic for me now, which will come at December. Yes. Ao_f1 #01:09:23-8#50

In practice there are no interactions on a regional level between the groups so far. One member pointed out that they want to strengthen the contacts to groups from other federal states in the future. Concerning the interconnection between the regional and national level, ArbeiterKind stays in contact with their headquarters in Berlin. Similar to the Greenpeace Jugend the contact among the group and headquarters becomes more important in periods of planning on events. Because of the career starter event of ArbeiterKind, a full-time member from Berlin came to visit. Content analysis of the interviews revealed that the acceptance of the headquarters played an important role for the members.

Well, I would definitely start structurally, because I believe that it's nice and special, that we have an umbrella organisation, a capped organisation also with FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES. Ao_f1 #00:14:58-9#51

Furthermore, benefit and acceptance, as one member underlines, would be the highest compliment one could get in voluntary work.

Exchanges between the regional and national level are also displayed by the career starter event in two ways. First, keynote speakers and workshop leaders come from all over the country which illustrates a national focus. Second, participating students did not necessarily come originally from the case-study town, which also included a relation to the national level to a certain degree. Again, a European dimension could hardly be found. The origin of this fact might be the conceptualisation of the group which deals with a certain educational issue in German society and would perhaps be difficult to transfer one-to-one to other European counties. The European dimension plays a role in some cases where students want to go abroad and in that case contact members from ArbeiterKind for gathering information, help or experience.


51 Gut, also ich würde auf jeden Fall strukturell anfangen, weil ich glaube, dass es was Schönnes und Besonderes ist, dass wir einen Dachverband haben, also eine gedeckelte Organisation eben auch mit HAUPTAMTLICHEN Ao_f1 #00:14:58-9#
Besides this, an international or European dimension becomes also salient in cases of consulting refugees. This case did not happen during the time when we conducted our ethnographic research, but members told us about this and pointed out that political dimensions needed to be discussed in these cases as well.

4.5 Organisational Issues and individual citizenship

4.5.1 Greenpeace

Greenpeace Jugend meets every week on Thursday afternoon. The local group of Greenpeace rents a room, where one of the members has the responsibility for the key and opens the door. Another member comes from another city close by. Greenpeace Germany offers commuting young members to refund the transport tickets, for weekly meetings. All members get their tickets refunded e.g. for camps in other parts of Germany. By giving this opportunity, Greenpeace diminishes problems resulting in staying away from the group for economic reasons and encourages the youth to join the meetings. Other structural issues also include a monthly meeting with the grownup Greenpeace members from the same city.

There is no compulsory attendance but the unwritten rule to sign off or on at their Whatsapp group, whether they join the meeting or not. Each meeting starts with an update on the last meeting and things they like to discuss at the current meeting. A few meetings needed preparation beforehand (e.g. bringing laptops, designing flyers). Among these meetings, we witnessed one session where they introduced a new member. At this time the routine changed. They introduced themselves, told them how long they have been a member and how meetings and the group is working. Furthermore, they collected information on the new member as well e.g. which intention he/she had to join the group, age and school background. Among others, we observed that some members talked more than the others and also put more points on the agenda. This behaviour interestingly seemed to be more linked to the personality of these members, than to age or time of membership. In fact, we observed that one new member was giving input and questioning things right from the beginning, while other members behaved in the same way or were less outgoing.

Field notes 20170511 Greenpeace protocol

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>thoughts</th>
<th>protocol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Presenting oneself for the new PSN</td>
<td>ritualized because it is clear to everyone presenting oneself with name, role in the [environmental youth group] and a secret superpower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Bo_1: JAGAP (responsible person), member for 1,5 years; secret superpower, has none</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Co_1: member since end of the summer holidays (2016), superpower breathing?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- No_f1: wanted to see what the [environmental youth group] does, wants to do something actively, from [city], superpower: see in the future</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Co_2: member for 3 years, co-founder, representative JAGAP (certain position in the group), superpower: flying</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Asking the members how they perceived the group, we got different answers. Some appreciate the homogeneity of the group and pointed out that meeting people with same attitudes concerning environmental issues would be the reason why they joined the group. In contrast to these members, others described the group as heterogeneous. In their view the group gives a
possibility to meet people they never would meet otherwise. We suggest categorizing this in low\textsuperscript{52} perceived homogeneity of the group and in high\textsuperscript{53} perceived homogeneity of the group.

I don’t really believe though. We are all from completely different settings. I would say that.

On one hand it is a nice way to meet friends, and people with similar views, concerning the environment as well as having a deeper exchange and communication than just partying.

Furthermore, we asked them about the perceived homogeneity concerning peers outside the Greenpeace group. Again, we found both, a high\textsuperscript{54} perceived homogeneity and a low\textsuperscript{55}. Regardless of the type of homogeneity, members of Greenpeace Jugend would base this category on their ecological behaviour.

From some I would say so, but not from everyone. I definitely have people in my class that live very ecologically friendly, probably even more so than me and eat very healthy and nearly never use cars and everything. But there are also people that don’t care about anything.

But there are also people that don’t care about anything. They leave their stuff lying around and eat pretty much anything just as long as it is cheap. They buy loads of things, of which they then only wear one. So it depends, I think I’m pretty average.

During our ethnographic research, we identified changes in the atmosphere prevalent with the Greenpeace Jugend. At the beginning, shortly after a bicycle (April 2017) protest they had planned and realised, the atmosphere was – for obvious reasons – quite positive. After the first meetings fewer people showed up or meetings got cancelled at short notice. For this account, we decided to interview group members a second time (September 2017) to challenge the situation.

In the first interviews, members expressed themselves more positively about the group in general. They reflected themselves as being less efficient and productive than the grownups, but referred mainly to the bicycle protest and the positive feedback they got. Emotions concerning the group were positive and rarely negative. The positive picture the members gave us of their group dynamics, seems to some extent dependent on the cohesiveness of the group. As an exception we identified one group member who recently joined the group. During the meetings and in the interview situation this member was more critical and complaining about the current situation and dynamics going on in the group. The main point raised concerned the ineffectiveness and the few ambitions the group had to focus on action.\textsuperscript{56} This atmosphere in the group was described as a hindrance of motivation to plan and realise projects.

I think the group should set itself the goal, not just talking- but being active. […] I believe the group’s goal is not known, I think the group has just no goals, that’s just a problem. (NI_f1, lines)

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\textsuperscript{52} „Wir sind halt auch alle aus komplett unterschiedlichen Umfeldern eigentlich.“ (BL_1. Zeilen 356-357) niedrig

\textsuperscript{53} „Es ist einerseits ein schöner Aufhänger sich zu treffen, mit Freunden, mit Leuten die so ein bisschen die gleiche Orientierung haben.“ (AI_1. Zeilen 93-95) hoch

\textsuperscript{54} Von manchen ja, von anderen nicht. Also ich habe in meiner Klasse zum Beispiel Leute, die leben total umweltbewusst, wahrscheinlich sogar umweltbewusster als ich“ (AI_1. Zeilen 235-236) hoch


From its tradition, Greenpeace is well known for spectacular direct action and campaigns. This tradition also is displayed in the Greenpeace Jugend, we observed. To become active and reveal environmental grievances were pointed out many times as motivational reasons to be member of the group. With use of content analysis, we extracted different kinds of subcategories for motivation. First, we differentiated intrinsic and extrinsic motivational reasons for choosing to join Greenpeace Jugend. Intrinsic motivations included an interest in the subject from a scientific perspective. This interest included water and air pollution and the way it was explained in terms of chemical and physical processes. Moreover, intrinsic motivation was also displayed in a problem-centered view. This was identified by description of environmental problems and cruelty to animals and could be labelled as the pertinence of the subject.

Intrinsic Yes, what really motivates me is that I am interested in science and that is why I’m also at school. BI_m1#00:05:37-4#

Comments we assigned as extrinsic motivation referred to the group, acceptance by the grownups from the local Greenpeace group and performing actions and campaigns.

Extrinsic referred to the group: To be in the group is not bad and you definitely have a lot of fun. BI_m1 #00:03:20-5#

Extrinsic acceptance by the grownups: Yeah and they all thought it was pretty good. And also from [other city headquarters], it was the biggest bike event that was arranged by the teenagers. BI_m1#00:18:12-1#

Extrinsic performing actions and campaigns: And one can do events. I nearly always find it great to publicly show up interesting facts. Precisely in the youth group there are a lot of possibilities to use creative methods. Once we used chalk as an agent for our action, so that everything was colorful and happy and as creative as possible, that’s what I like the most about [environmental youth organization]. Yeah, did that answer your question? AI_f1 #00:05:23-5#61

Greenpeace Jugend is without charge for the members. In general Greenpeace is funded by donations. Greenpeace national supports the local groups and assumes costs of e.g. transports tickets or material at least the under aged members.

Successful or unsuccessful action

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57 Intrinsische Motivation Thematisches Interesse „Ja was mich schon so besonders motiviert ist, dass ich schon so in der naturwissenschaftlich interessiert bin und dementsprechend auf der Schule bin.“ BI_m1#00:05:37-4#
58 Extrinsisch- auf die Gruppe bezogen: „(…) man hat auf jeden Fall auch eine Menge Spaß“ BI_m1 #00:03:20-5#
59 Extrinsische Motivation Anerkennung „Ja und die fanden es eigentlich alle auch ziemlich gut. Und auch aus [andere Stadt Hauptzentrale], es war auch die größte Fahrradaktion die von Jugendlichen veranstaltet wurde.“ BI_m1#00:18:12-1#
60 Extrinsisch auf Aktionen bezogen: „Und dann kann man auch irgendwelche Aktionen machen. Ich finde es eigentlich immer super auf der Straße auf irgendetwas hinzuweisen. Gerade in der Jugendgruppe gibt es die Möglichkeit das kreativ zu machen. Wir haben mal Straßenkreide benutzt als Aktionsmittel und so dann halt ganz bunt und fröhlich zu machen und kreativ wie möglich, das finde ich eigentlich am coolsten an der“ AI_f1 #00:18:12-1#
61 Und dann kann man auch irgendwelche Aktionen machen. Ich finde es eigentlich immer super auf der Straße auf irgendetwas hinzuweisen. Gerade in der Jugendgruppe gibt es die Möglichkeit das kreativ zu machen. Wir haben mal Straßenkreide benutzt als Aktionsmittel und so dann halt ganz bunt und fröhlich zu machen und kreativ wie möglich, das finde ich eigentlich am coolsten an der [Umweltjugendorganisation] Ja, hat das die Frage beantwortet? AI_f1 #00:05:23-5#
Our ethnographic research started shortly after a bicycle protest they had planned and realised. It was the first action they had implemented since a long period of developing and discussing different ideas. The members described the bicycle action as successful. The success included the whole process from the idea, structural planning up to the transfer into the practice. It was both attributed as an individual and a group effort. This attribution was recognised during the interviews when group members on one hand described their personal success e.g. contacting different people in preparation for the bicycle protest. On the other hand, the members pointed out, that it was also a success of the whole group who had planned this protest together and earned the positive feedback as a group. For further actions Greenpeace Jugend members would plan more ahead of schedule than they did the last time. Likewise, one member pointed out that the workload was unequally distributed. This should be different the next time.

Then I also looked at the kindergarten [place where the external participants stayed] that it was left properly again. I also took care of the time plan, so that everything went smoothly. It was also quite exhausting.

Unsuccessful action goes along with practices that block and hinder the dynamic in the group. As mentioned several times before, the group seemed to be less satisfied with their effectiveness in planning and realizing actions. Hence, they named as hindering factors both group characteristics and characteristics of the target group. In connection to the group atmosphere, they pointed out that an aim to focus on is missing. This increased and stuck out in the second period of interviews (September 2017). At the same time, we observed hardly any strategies by members to change these habits into different ones. It looked like the adolescents were somehow overtaxed by this challenge lack of some support and guidance by older and more experienced members. During the period of observation, we could see that many ideas were discussed dealing with attracting new members and updating their homepage. A practical implementation was not made. Finally, the absence of proximal feedback by the target group during their actions was pointed out as a hinder, too.

Well that's quite difficult now because you don't get any feedback during the event and I honestly can't assess it. I hope so, but I don't really know.

Greenpeace Jugend appeared to be a homogeneous group as regards socioeconomic status, age and ethnicity. There were no explicit practices which keep out certain youths and no gatekeeping practices. Nevertheless, we could see that there are factors which might hinder certain young people from joining Greenpeace Jugend. Behaving in an environmentally friendly way e.g. buying certain ecologically valuable products, wearing second hand clothes because of ecological reasons implies on the one hand spending more money e.g. for food and on the other hand the risk of being stigmatized as “greenies”. Members of the Greenpeace Jugend seemed to know about this as hindering other youths to join.

Well I think I wouldn't accuse myself as much if I wasn't in [environmental youth organisation]. Because you tell yourself: “Hey, you are part of a movement and you aren't eating organic produce again or it’s imported from America” but I try to be mindful, but I do eat oranges and bananas every so often or buy a t-shirt, that I don’t wear as often. But I try to take care.

Selbstwirksamkeit auf eigene Handlungen bezogen: „Dann habe ich mit geschaut, das war ein Kindergarten [Ort der Übernachtung der externen Teilnehmer_innen], ordentlich verlassen. Auch auf den Zeitplan geachtet, dass das alles gut funktioniert“ BI_m1 #00:19:18-7#62

Hindernisse, die es Erschweren Handlungen auf die Gruppe zu attribuieren: „Das ist ja jetzt schwierig, man hat ja überhaupt kein Feedback durch die Aktion und kann es ehrlich gesagt nicht einschätzen.“ BI_m1 #00:21:13-4#63

Also ich glaube, ich würde mir nicht so viele Vorwürfe machen, wenn ich nicht bei [Umweltjugendorganisation] 64
4.5.2 ArbeiterKind

ArbeiterKind’s regular’s table takes place on the third Thursday each month. They meet in a café in town. Information on their home page also tells the visitors that times and location might change and provides a link where they can find further information. Hence, flexibility was claimed for members in some cases. In the period of planning the ‘career starter’ event, the meetings were scheduled weekly.

Similar to Greenpeace Jugend meetings, we recognised some unwritten rules in the group. Via WhatsApp, members wrote if they were not attending the meeting. Most members arrived on time for the regular’s table or apologised in cases of late arrival. As mentioned, ArbeiterKind meetings followed a quite similar structure at each meeting. We noticed high requirements within the group for the members regarding accepted responsibilities. This was for example displayed in feedback they got on their task or requests from members to report which progress they made in certain tasks.

Field notes 20170509 ArbeiterKind protocol thoughts

- Ao_f1 leads over to next topic and summarizes
- TOP conception/talks: current state of affairs is reported by Po_f3
- Po_f3 asks about the general idea of the day, this would not be clear to her, yet
- Ao_f1 answers the question
- Generating new ideas
- Additional meeting for working on the concept is supposed to take place: Ao_f1 distributes the task of establishing a Doodle to Ao_f2
- Responding to that, Ao_f4 says to Ao_f2 “you poor thing”
- TOP correspondence with potential speakers, Ao_f1 leading over
- Po_m1 has prepared a letter, but has a question about the exact purpose of the day for young professionals, this was not clear to him beforehand
- Ao_f1 comments that if he had questions, he should please ask via Mail
- She then answers the question
- Po_f3 asks a question about the general concept and is only looking at Ao_f1
- Comment by Ao_f4 to Ao_f2 “you poor thing” is brought up by her as a joke
- Comment by Ao_f1 to Po_m1 seems to be like a reprimand and impatient

wäre. Weil man sich dann immer sagt: „Hey du engagierst dich dafür aber jetzt isst du schon wieder nicht Bio oder aus Amerika“ aber ich versuche darauf zu achten aber natürlich esse ich auch mal Orangen oder Bananen oder kaufe doch mal ein T-Shirt, dass ich dann nicht so oft anziehe, aber ich versuche drauf zu achten. AI_f1#00:12:48-7#
Through interviews and observations, we also got information on the implicit leadership of two and in particular one of the members. This *implicit leadership* seemed, on the one hand, accepted by some members and on the other hand criticised and less accepted by others. We observed the group trying to change these routines of leadership, but after a short while it changed back to the old habits. It appeared that the implicit leadership was taken for granted and the other members referred to the implicit leader e.g. request and statements. Therefore, this power relation seemed to be reciprocal and constructed by the group members rather than mandated by group policy and structure.

The group involved a group of friends who had known each other from their study days. Observations and interviews showed that these friends belonged to the *hard core* of the ArbeiterKind group. In several observations and during the interviews it became obvious that they perceived themselves as more of an in-group compared to the other members. Interview partners also described that *friendship could be the reason why the group was working efficiently* and had high expectation on the work everybody did in the group. Regarding this, we observed situations where a few attendances on the meetings and unsatisfied tasks got criticized by other members, especially by the implicit leader. This critique referred more often to members who didn’t belong to the inner circle.

Exactly, and I felt like this eventually was a conflict, because I believe that we/ We have tried to integrate him, but we have as well, that clearly is because, that we are friends, talked about him, when he was not there and reflected how we should deal with this.

And it was often so / I think for example that it is very unspoken that I was the session leader, but neither I expressed it, nor anyone else has asked me. But then there was this moment when everybody sat there (...) and someone has to talk now going on and then it was usually me.

Similar to the Greenpeace Jugend interviews, we asked ArbeiterKind members what they perceived as motivating to be engaged in the group. Through the content analysis we distinguished between intrinsic and extrinsic motivational reasons. Concerning the extrinsic reasons, interview partners named commitment to the tasks, the feeling of being self-confident, expanding their knowledge and the group itself.

67**Extrinsic commitment to the tasks**: I do have a big Commitment, maybe it is a nine after all, I do not know (laughs). Ao_f2 #00:19:40-7#

**Extrinsic the feeling of being self-confident**: I believe it is always beautiful, when you see, that you create something out of nothing, so only out of your own effort Ao_f2 #00:19:40-7#

**Extrinsic expanding their knowledge**: I think what’s useful is that you learn about being a team player with regard to the organisation. And I also think to be flexible concerning which jobs you take, because sometimes unexpected things happen. So what I take from it for myself is that...
you do something that hopefully has some good use and learn something about organisation and management. Ao_f2 #00:13:23-1#

**Extrinsic - the group itself:** so to also have this social exchange and of course contentwise with the two workshops that I've attended and with the lectures, that I sat in, to really pay attention and take something with me from them. Ao_f1 #01:07:09-3#

Intrinsic aspects related to meaningfulness of the work, transmission of personal values, an interest in the subject and the reference to own experiences.

**Intrinsic- meaningfulness of the work:** So I think I can just do something meaningful. And right now in the [project day] round there were also just friends of mine. Ao_f1 #00:21:18-6#

**Intrinsic - transmission of personal values:** So how can it be, that I, where I believe, that I am comparably a lot on the move and in fact a lot in, yes, well get together with people, did not notice this, that it actually was someone or precisely what I have wished for, that it already exists. And since the wish, to maybe make it a bit more public and to not wait, that people address you, but rather to bring it to the people, because it simply [description left out for reasons of anonymity] is. Ao_f2 #00:13:23-1#

**Intrinsic reference to own experiences:** So the topic is somehow mine, I think it's very important and of course that has something to do with my own [origin]. Ultimately I'm from a very much [origin] family. My parents were each the first in their family, that [origin] and both come from very [origin]. Ao_f1 #00:20:21-6#

**Intrinsic- interest in the subject:** The topic itself really motivates me. Because we simply STILL assume that you have [theme of organisation], if you are smart, if you are diligent, if you make an effort. Ao_f1 #00:20:21-6#

We mentioned earlier that the group contained many friendships. Overall, in most meetings we observed a positive and friendly atmosphere before the meetings officially started and during the meetings, too. Still, we sometimes recognised a change of atmosphere when the meeting started. This increased in the period that the career starter event came closer. The implicit leader became pushier and the atmosphere changed in some moments into a stiff and business-like one.

Field notes 20170509 ArbeiterKind protocol

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>thoughts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Ao_f1 is pushing in direction of the mailing list, seems to be annoyed of the discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Group does not seem to be satisfied with the compromise</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field notes 20170509 ArbeiterKind protocol thoughts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Out of it a discussion results about the means of communication brought up by Po_m1: instead of a mailing list (as before) other platforms are suggested because mails are more likely to disappear in the mail history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ao_f1 argues in favor of the mailing list because when using a different medium, it actually has to be one of the organisation and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

68 Intrinsisch Sinnhaftigkeit: „Sodass ich glaube, dass ich einfach was Sinnvolles machen kann“ Ao_f1 #00:21:18-6# Werte weitergeben: „dass es eigentlich jemanden oder genau das was ich mir gewünscht hätte, das es das schon gibt. Und da der Wunsch, das eben vielleicht ein bisschen publiker zu machen und nicht darauf zu warten, dass Leute Einen ansprechen, sondern das an die Leute rantragen, weil es einfach ein schambesetztes Thema ist. Und das was ich gelernt habe, ja, oder mir selbst angeeignet habe in der Zeit, einfach weitergeben zu können.“ (Ao_f2, Absatz 36); Persönlicher Hintergrund: „das hat natürlich auch was mit meinem eigenen [Herkunft] zu tun. Ich komme aus einer letztlich sehr [Herkunft] Familie. Meine Eltern waren jeweils die ersten in ihrer Familie, die [Herkunft] und kommen beide auch aus sehr [Herkunft].“ (Ao_f1, Absatz 31); Thematisches Interesse: „Mich motiviert wirklich in sich dieses Thema.“ (Ao_f1, Absatz 31, Hoch)
ArbeiterKind is free of charge for members and, like Greenpeace, is mainly financed by donations. In the particular case of the planned event, ArbeiterKind successfully applied for funding from the federal state. With this money they were able to organise the event. All members in the regional group of ArbeiterKind work voluntarily. The regional group got resources (materials and know how) from their headquarters, too, in cases they require them. On the structural and content level, members of ArbeiterKind described the career starter event as a success. During and after the event people gave positive feedback. Furthermore, the ArbeiterKind group also asked participants to give them written feedback during the event. This was presented as the last agenda item to the whole audience. In general success was defined by one key informant as **to do the best they can.**

In general, I would say to do the things that you do the best way you can, at your own discretion. That how I personally would define success. **Po_f4#00:04:53-0#**

Taking this definition, they reflected critically on structural issues and dynamics in the group. One member saw a **risk in the homogeneity of the group**, meaning the same subject they study, as well as the predominance of females in the group. Opening the group up for more diversity would in their view be a further success. Also, reflecting structural problems in the preparation of the career starter event, one member received most of the critique. From the other members' point of view, this member behaved less trustworthy with tasks that needed to be fulfilled during the event. Finally, this member got absolved from its tasks. However, this problem was communicated several times during the meetings and in the Whatsapp chat, too. In this way of action, we can see practices which hinder members that behave in a different way than the majority of the group did in preparation of the career starter event. This refers to dynamics within in the group. From ArbeiterKind’s own definition, they only refer to a certain target group.

So, there are youth who are not included in the support of ArbeiterKind, meaning students with an academic background. Attending university in Germany is more likely for young people coming from a family with an academic background. In this case ArbeiterKind focuses on supporting students without this high SES. Still, this definition is not formulated obligatorily and remains a question of interpretation. We can see that ArbeiterKind’s target group seem to be homogeneous on the one hand (see above), but still they focus on a group which is often not reached in German society. Furthermore, in view of previous cross-national reflection from our ethnographies in WP8, this target group is seldom reached in the other countries by any of the other youth active citizen organisations. In comparison to Greenpeace Jugend, ArbeiterKind addresses youth coming from a social background with lower SES and working-class communities.

### 4.6 Conclusion

#### 4.6.1 Greenpeace

Concerning the success of Greenpeace Jugend, we asked group members how they would describe a successful youth group/ organisation in our second interview. This was scheduled in
the end of our observation (September 2017). For an elaborate definition of success, we asked on one the hand for the personal view of success in connection to Greenpeace Jugend. On the other hand, we wanted to know, how a youth organisation, in general, should be like to become successful and attractive for youth. In consideration of Greenpeace Jugend’s success, members named effectiveness as a certain tool for success. Effectiveness in conjunction with group work, the members point out, is needed to realise actions in time. Furthermore, dynamics which mobilise the group was named as important for success too.70

Yes, it makes a difference, on the one hand that/ Well, or it makes a difference for the efficiency, I would say, that you plan an action relatively quick and then to go ahead with it. I find that the main thing and that there is more dynamic in it, I would say. BI_m1_t2#00:03:51-6#

Asking Greenpeace Jugend members for characteristics of a successful youth active citizenship organisation, they highlighted that the organisation should give many opportunities, e.g. provide a plan of actions. The umbrella organisation should also pass feedback to their youth organisation and show them that they are essential to the organisation. A statement in these interviews shows different aspects we mentioned earlier; The Greenpeace Jugend perceived themselves as less effective in comparison to the local grownup group. By naming effectiveness as an indicator for success, we can assume a gap between the workload of the grownup and the youth group. This can be seen in describing an atmosphere that includes a dynamic spirit in the group too. Moreover, in the members’ view a successful group has an aim they can focus on, reach and refer to. These aims also give the opportunity to receive a feedback by the umbrella organisation and the older adult members. All in all, we assume that members of the Greenpeace Jugend have an idea of their own success and know which steps would be necessary to take for becoming more successful than they were during the time of our observation. Looking from a developmental perspective, we consider Greenpeace Jugend to be successful in creating an environment where skills e.g. planning a protest, evaluating their statements, increasing their knowledge and improving social. In this case, success refers to developmental tasks and is independent from an output counted in action or activities.

Thoughts on what Greenpeace Jugend could do better go along with their ideas about the meaning of success. In their view, they could be more efficient during their meetings, and have more goal-oriented meetings instead of discussions. They also pointed out a need for more members several times. Having more members would maybe scale up their activities. As regards our observations, we paid attention to their commitment not only to their own group but also to our ethnographic research. We experienced very short-noticed changes concerning meetings (time, if/if not) for both the researchers and Greenpeace members. However, in some cases we wondered if a higher degree of reliability and structural issues, e.g. minutes and feedback to the group, would scale up their activities.

During our research, we experienced Greenpeace Jugend as a group with many resources e.g. materials, financial support, support on inquiry by the grownups and headquarters. In some situations, we assumed that a higher cohesion and a different – more stable – dynamic would contribute to changing the current situation within the group and would lead to more effectiveness. While it would be premature to conclude from our field work that a more hierarchical integration of the youth group in terms of national – regional/local adult – youth group could raise the value of Greenpeace Jugend as a context of civic development and empowerment. It is open to question whether members of the age group of concern would be

70 Ja, es macht es halt schon aus, zum einen, dass/ Naja, oder es macht halt vor allem die Effektivität, sage ich mal, aus, dass man halt relativ schnell eine Aktion zu planen und dann halt auch durchzuziehen. Ich finde, das ist halt so die Hauptsache und dass da so ein bisschen mehr Dynamik drin ist, sage ich mal. #00:03:51-6# BI_m1_t2
able to address and solve the challenges without more systematic support by experienced and adult members and without feeling patronised. At some point **it is difficult not to speculate that the youth group might mainly serve as a recruitment base for really active adult groups.** The youth group could still be an important context for development as important issues are touched, experiences of organising a group and activities etc. are offered, and membership provides the possibility to feel integrated in something that clearly goes beyond the individual. This view is an outsider’s one, however, and does not meet the interest in action held by the young members. Finally, it comes somewhat as a surprise that a membership and activity in an organisation pursuing global goals and operating on a world-wide scale, did not go along with hardly any connection with the European and international dimension. Extending the youth camps offered across national borders, respectively make them more famous could be an important step in this direction.

4.6.2 ArbeiterKind
The ethnographic research on ArbeiterKind started during a highly productive period when they began planning the careers starter event. Both, the planning and realization of the event was perceived as successful by members of the group. This event was planned with the objective of informing young people on career options in their education. The ArbeiterKind group fulfilled this aim and got positive feedback from different sides, e.g. students, stakeholders, headquarter of ArbeiterKind. Besides the career starter event, it is difficult to rate the extent of success. From description given in the interviews we knew regular’s table worked differently before the event was planned. Members mentioned that it was less effective and goal-oriented. Still, it was successful in that the target group met and talked about topics concerning challenges on their education. As pointed out earlier, the **fact of friendship** appeared to be significant for the ArbeiterKind group. This fact refers to the question if the ArbeiterKind group would have the characteristic traits if the in-group consisted of other members than friends as well. Friendship, as concluded from content analysis and observation secured an increasing extent of reliability regarding tasks and deadlines in connection to the career starter event.

As I said, simply by being organised better. I think it was helpful in the sense that it made you settle your tasks in time and not forget about it or let them slide. So, I would say especially regarding the long term planning it helped us a lot. Yes. Po_f4 #00:46:36-3#71

To open up more during the meetings for members who follow another pedagogic strategy than the proven ones is mentioned by one member who likes to evoke changes. Changes with reference to less homogeneity concerning their study background are pointed out, too. All in all, the group likes to become more diverse in certain domains. The type of activities and their frequency in ArbeiterKind are dependent on the group and the requests of students who ask for support of the group members. To scale up their activities would imply more advertisement at schools and universities in the whole federal state. This in turn means a need for more resources such as more members.

To sum up, we observed two different kind of youth organisation in Germany. Both perceive themselves as groups who address out social issues in German society. Greenpeace Jugend tries

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71 Also wie gesagt, indem wir eben einfach dann besser organisiert waren. Also ich fand, das hat einem dahingehend geholfen, dass man wie gesagt die Aufgaben, die man hatte, rechtzeitig erledigt hat und die nicht irgendwie vergessen oder hat schließen lassen. Also ich würde sagen, vor allem was die langfristige Planung angeht hat uns das dann sehr geholfen. Ja. Po_f4 #00:46:36-3#
to reach their goals through actions e.g. profiling key issues on banners and logos (logos?) and
providing information on leaflets in public places. In contrast to Greenpeace Jugend,
ArbeiterKind tries to bridge a gap in German society, concerning social inequity in education but
does not give any information on ways in which structures could change or the State could
intervene to prevent the educational gap from recurring from generation to generation. They
both follow pedagogic strategies that we would consider to belong to education in activism.

Reflecting on our ethnographic research, it would have been of great interest to ask non-
members of the group why they choose not to join ArbeiterKind or Greenpeace Jugend. This
could reveal possible reasons that hinder young people from joining Greenpeace Jugend or
ArbeiterKind – even if they are potentially interested. One reason could be the reachability. Due
to these aspects, the understanding could be deepened on several domains of hindrance and
borders for certain youth groups: For examples structural issues (e.g. location, time); contextual
issues (e.g. the way subjects are dealt with) and personal issues (e.g. group dynamics, the way of
communication). This knowledge would complete the results from the ethnographic research of
WP8 and would give the opportunity to propose sufficient policy implications.
5. Greece: Colour Youth – Nancy Papathanasiou, National & Kapodistrian University of Athens
5.1 Introduction

Colour Youth was created in 2011 by a small group of young activists, who noticed the lack of a youth-oriented LGBT organisation and decided to found an organisation that would be exclusively run by and for LGBTQ youth. Its uniqueness lies with the membership requirements: only youth up to 30 years old can become full members, according to the statutes. Any members older than 30 years have no right to vote in the General Assembly or to be elected. Therefore, Colour Youth can be categorised as an organisation strictly for youth.

In their own words, the aims of Colour Youth are ‘to raise social awareness regarding the LGBTQ community’s demands, to apply institutional pressure for the modernisation of the legal framework regarding gender identity and sexual orientation, and to create a strong youth community functioning as a shelter for every LGBTQ person’. These aims are also mirrored in the organisational structure: there are three discreet working groups: raising awareness, support, and advocacy.

It is important to note that Colour Youth receives no funding from the Greek state (this applies to all LGBTQ organisations in Greece). Additionally, currently there is no sex education classes in schools, no directives on how to behave towards trans students, and no widespread policies to combat bullying. As a result, a large percentage of LGBTQ youth have no information for such matters and stay closeted at least until they finish school. Even after they graduate, they often remain dependent on their families to finance their studies, and they are afraid that coming out would mean estrangement from their families. As a result, they will not become active members of the organisation. Therefore, for these next steps to be taken, homophobia in Greece should first diminish, and this should start on a institutional level first. Unfortunately, the Greek state approaches these issues with extreme caution fearing backlash from the conservative section of the society and the Greek Orthodox Church.

The main activities of Colour Youth include:

- **Weekly meetings** open to everyone. They take place every Saturday, in the organisation’s offices. They sometimes have a theme, for example there is a talk about issues and/or ideas such as LGBT history, misogyny, etc., or they are open as a safe place to meet other LGBTQ youth and ‘chill out’.

- **Monthly meeting of groups on:** 1. Issues surrounding **LGB identities and sexual orientation**, 2. **Gender identity**, and 3. **Female identities**. These groups have been taking place for the last five years and are facilitated by a licensed psychologist. They aim to provide support to members that want to explore their experiences of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

- **Personal counselling sessions with a psychologist.** Colour Youth offers a limited number of sessions with a licensed psychologist.

- **Confidential recording of incidents of violence or discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.** This consists of the “tell us!” project that aims to record incidents of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic violence and discrimination, face their consequences, inform and sensitise society on the issue. The aim of the project is:
  - To collect and recording incidents of violence and/or discrimination based on gender identity gender expression and/or sexual orientation
  - To provide the victims of such incidents with charge free and professional legal and/or psychological support
  - To train employees, members and volunteers of LGBTQI+ organisations in managing such incidents of violence and/or discrimination
  - To train and raise awareness of law and police academy students as well as professionals of the Justice system and Law enforcement services on issues such as violence and discrimination against LGBTQI+ people
  - To raise awareness of Greek society on the phenomenon of homophobia/
transphobia/ biphobia and its various manifestations.

The project is not only addressed to those people who have faced violence and/or discrimination on grounds of gender identity, gender expression and/or sexual their orientation, but is also addressed to people who have been witnesses of such incidents and wish to report them. The incidents of violence and/or discrimination are recorded by using the special form of the Racist Violence Recording Network (RVRN) and during a personal interview with the victims or witnesses. The process is strictly confidential and the anonymity of the persons concerned is ensured.

The main ‘actors’ or active agents are the members. All major decisions go through and have to be decided in the General Assembly. Every year, the General Assembly elects an Administrative Group, consisting of the President, the Treasurer, the Secretary, and the Heads of the Working Groups, as well as a representative of the members over 30 years old, that serves in a consulting capacity, without voting rights.

Colour Youth was created as an advocacy group, so promoting active citizenship of youth is in the core of what it stands for. Although most members do not get involved initially in order to become active citizens, civic engagement comes organically for those inclined to. Social activism is in the very core of the organisation’s foundation. Colour Youth was founded by young volunteers in Athens Pride. They were already active in LGBTQ issues and out and wanted to create a safe space for LGBTQ youth, to promote awareness of issues concerning LGBTQ youth, and advocate for LGBTQ issues. From the moment Colour Youth became a registered organisation, they started having an active presence in all aspects of civic engagement concerning LGBTQ issues, with press releases, public statements with the organisation’s positions and demands.
5.2 Conceptualisations of Youth

According to its statutes, Colour Youth considers as youth persons 18 to 30 years old. The lower limit coincides with what what Greek law considers as the threshold to adulthood. However, Colour Youth allows older members to participate, without a right to vote. Regarding gender, as an LGBTQ organisation, Colour Youth recognizes and welcomes all genders. Although there is no special mention for social class or race in the statutes, Colour Youth is aware of how intersectionality affects LGBTQ issues. Regarding class, the annual membership fee is rather low (20€) and all other activities are free. The only exception is the entrance fee at fund raising parties, which is also kept affordable (for example, entrance fee at their most recent party was 2€).

It is also interesting that for members older that 30 years, the annual fee for membership doubles to 40€. Another element is their attitude towards LGBT persons older than 30 years; there is a clear distinction between those that used to be members of Colour Youth (and are therefore in their early 30s) and those who approach Colour Youth while being much older (taking into account that there are many other organisations that they could be involved with). The former are accepted and, while they cannot vote, their voices are heard. The latter are received cautiously; there have been instances where older activists have tried to influence the organisation’s position on issues or have publicly condemned decisions made by Colour Youth. That would mostly be inconsequential, had Colour Youth not been a youth organisation. However, because of age difference dynamics, such criticism is often meant and experienced as patronising and it conveys a belief that young people have no idea how things should be done and should be steered into the right decisions. This can trigger intense reactions, since many members of Colour Youth already have their experiences around sexual orientation and gender identity negated and ridiculed by their own families, they are trying to navigate through the challenges deriving from discrimination and internalised homophobia and are striving to find their pace during emerging adulthood.

Therefore, youth is also conceptualised as one end of a binary construction, something that is different than adulthood: it is a period of solidarity, friendship, and mutual support; and Colour Youth provides a safe space to experiment with different identities and tasks, to learn skills and try out roles, without the criticism of adults. This does not mean that older individuals have no role in the organisation. They are welcomed as long as they recognize that their main function is to support the younger members, and not to dictate their own agendas. In this capacity, they
invite older individuals to help and support specific undertakings, they ask for advice, when needed, and they keep all their public events open for everyone. Colour Youth is also aware of other issues such as fatphobia, ableism, and neurodivergence, and often holds discussions that promote better understanding of these issues and help create a safer environment for all. Their acknowledgement of how different identities intersect and can enhance feelings of exclusion has led to the development of inclusive language and rules around interaction that create a safer space for all identities. At the same time, many members have been empowered to express themselves clearly and to assert their needs in terms of how they relate to each other.

Figure 5.3. Discussion during a training session

Figure 5.4. Creating signs and banners for a demonstration

5.3 Active Citizenship
Perhaps the most interesting element of Colour Youth, and the one that clearly sets it apart from
many other organisations on Greece, is their attitude towards democracy, especially because it is exemplified on their own practices. Colour Youth is deeply invested in following a democratic paradigm inside the organisation as well as pursuing democracy in the public sphere. There are set rules in every meeting, in order to ensure participation and respect. They are the following:

- no interrupting,
- respecting preferred gender pronouns,
- no use of insulting language for any minorities (including psychiatric diagnoses).

All major decisions are voted for by the General Assembly that convenes as often as necessary. Furthermore, members are informed and encouraged to apply for all educational or vocational opportunities that arise (for example participation in workshops through local and international programs, job opportunities from international partners, etc.). Because Colour Youth grew exponentially in terms of organisational capacity, collaborations, and participation in programs, the more active members had to adapt to a steep learning curve; this is the main pedagogic strategy. Akis mentions that:

we should get the skills, there are so many members that when they got here they didn’t know for example how to write a proposal and now they are great, they are better than people who work in companies. They have gather so much experience that others will never get. In two months time, we might have to prepare six proposals, for example, it is a terrific experience. The work can be a lot, I am just a member, and I may come here in the morning and leave after 12 hours. (Interview #1, Akis)

A major challenge is the quick succession of individuals in key positions; because of the age restrictions, its members are mostly university students, and they often leave Greece for post-graduate studies. As a result, the acquired skills and knowledge have to be quickly transferred to newer and younger members. Therefore, any member who wants to participate in any of the projects is trained and included in the existing working groups. Savvas says

The procedure that we have decided to follow –and it isn’t really functional, but this is what we decided- is that we have the three workgroups, and each project belongs to one of the workgroups. For projects that fit the description for more than one workgroups, we choose. It is under the general supervision of the workgroup coordinator, who is also a member of the Administrative Group, we create a group of people that want to work on said project, they decide on who the project manager will be, and the project manager is the connection between the coordinator of the workgroup and so on. (Savvas, Interview #5)

A strong asset of Colour Youth is their media profile. They are extremely active in all social media platforms. In Facebook, beside the official page, they also have two groups: a public and a private one. The public group is open to almost anyone (after asking for permission to participate; for someone to be denied access, their profile should contain homophobic or transphobic material) and serves as a platform to exchange opinions and news on LGBTQ issues. The private group is for members only, and all activities, programs, and discussions for matters at hand take place there. Colour Youth is also active on Twitter. In the recent discussion in the Hellenic Parliament about the Legal Gender Recognition, they live-tweeted and commented on the speeches of the MPs. Finally, there are a few experienced older members that appear on television and radio to convey the organisation’s position. There is also a YouTube channel that features all spots made by the organisation.

As mentioned, Colour Youth was created by a group of younger activists, already volunteering for Athens Pride. Their conceptualisation of what constitutes action is part of the organisation’s legacy until today. The organisation stands for a strong public appearance; they
make their presence felt in all major events of the Greek LGBTQ community, such as the Pride marches (in Athens, Thessaloniki, Crete, & Patras) as well as any other demonstrations for LGBTQ (including feminist and gender based violence) issues. Beyond the public face, another very interesting aspect of active citizenship concentrates in the creation of a community. Because the organisation’s focus is a disenfranchised population, its members often having little or none support from their families and original communities, Colour Youth fills this gap by creating a community, a network of people and relationships for youth to rely upon. In its essence, this is a deeply political act, even though it isn’t formally framed as such, and has a deep impact on all aspects of Colour Youth’s actions. As a result, action is also conceptualized as creating community and striving for relationship. Marilina delineates the organizations goals as being: (…)very well defined by the working groups: there is the one that lobbies and pushes for what we want, then the socialization part, the community development work group, and finally the psychological support workgroup. (Interview #3, Marilina)

As Elena mentions
An active citizen is not only someone that seeks support, but also one who commits to connecting. The one that feels that in order for change to happen, and change also includes himself or herself, he or she needs to work the connection in any community that he or she belongs to. To learn, to listen, to abandon the blind shields, to ask questions, they will have to commit to a process of connecting, a process in which they will open up, and they will leave space for the others to open up. Most of the citizens that I would describe as “active”, persons or groups, are in fact isolated, and remote from this notion [of connecting]. (Interview #6, Elena)

Colour Youth has also commenced a series of events that are now considered to be traditions, such as the May 17th (International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia) one-day conference, where representatives of all LGBTQ organisations and most political parties are invited and attend. Another example is the Christmas Day and New Years’ Eve open offices events, where all LGBTQ persons are welcome, especially those without families.

Regarding citizenship, Colour Youth is vocal on all LGBT related rights issues. They are open to immigrant and refugee groups, with their current President having been an active advocate of LGBTQ refugees’ rights. Because of the legislative and advocacy aspect of their activity, Colour Youth members that are active in advocacy have an excellent grasp of all institutions, both in local and in European level.

5.4 The Local, National and European dimensions

Colour Youth identifies as an Athens based organisation, its full name is Colour Youth – Athens LGBTQ Youth Community. However, being unique in Greece, Colour Youth attracts members from all over Greece, and participates in LGBTQ events nationally (e.g. in Pride marches in Thessaloniki, Patras, and Crete). This is something common to most LGBT organisations in Greece. Due to homophobia and transphobia, LGBTQ persons are rarely “out” in smaller towns or in the countryside; all official organisations are located mostly in Athens and less in Thessaloniki. In other towns, there are only local unofficial groups of a few people. The local dimension of Colour Youth concerns mostly the ability of the organisation to host events in other cities and not their willingness to support youth in other areas. This is evident in the public group that accepts members from all over Greece.

The European dimension in the work of Colour Youth is mostly evident in their use of European directives concerning sexual orientation and gender identity policies as well as in their participation on European umbrella organisations. For example, regarding the Legal Gender Recognition Colour Youth states: “Establishment of a third option for gender to cover people who do not identify with one of the two dominant genders (man / woman). This option can be
adopted for intersex people, until they reach a position where they can choose for themselves if they wish. This has been suggested via 2048/2015 Decision of the Council of Europe.” Also, for LGBT refugees, Colour Youth recalls the 2004/83/EC Council Directive of the European Parliament. Colour Youth understands and utilizes Greece’s membership in the European Union in order to promote policies and demands for the amelioration of LGBTQ person’s status in Greece. Colour Youth also participates in programs and exchanges funded by the European Union, such as Erasmus+. As Nikolas mentions:

we participate in groups such as ILGA-EU and IGLYO, participate in European conferences, good practices and developments regarding LGBTQ issues. We are also financially dependent on European foundations (Interview #4, Nikolas)

Since 2014, Colour Youth is a member of two major European LGBT organisations, ILGA Europe (The European region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association) and TGEU – Transgender Europe. They consider membership to these umbrella organizations as a means to accomplish their aims more effectively by securing access to expertise, potential cooperation with other stakeholders and a platform to raise awareness to a broader public. Colour Youth also receives funding from ILGA Europe.

5.5 Organisational Issues and individual citizenship

Structurally, Colour Youth has managed to mirror its main goals into discreet working groups, as it has already been described. Even though it is perhaps the most active LGBTQ organisation in Greece, its size is small. The six members of the Administrative Group handle all administrative issues and share the responsibility of managing different projects with a few experienced members. The result is that they feel both exhausted and empowered. For Savvas, dealing with serious crises is something that never expected to do:

“I would never thought that we could deal with individuals that have serious mental health issues, we had a case with an individual that came every time shouting and creating a havoc, and we couldn’t react, because she was a trans girl in serious need of support. I don’t know how we got through this…” Savvas (Interview #5).

Nikolas stresses how they support each other:

There isn’t any scapegoating, there isn’t any one person that has done something wrong, because we do things together. The responsibility belongs to all of us. (Interview #4, Nikolas)

Elena mentions for the impact that assuming these responsibilities has for the more active members:

They try to offer, they come together, although they are very hurt and need lots of support, they offer this support, they work as a team, they try to not be hegemonic … (Interview #6, Elena)

The main challenge for Colour Youth is to manage to combine the quick succession of persons in positions of responsibility with the retention of skills and knowledge. Every elected board has to manage and supervise a number of programs and projects through all aspects of their course: administration, implementation, and financial stewardship. At the same time, they have to manage day-to-day activities and respond to crises.

Considering that all members of the Administrative Group are themselves young, they build their skills and experience while facing and resolving problems that arise from their duties. Working in a team can be a challenge, and doing so while negotiating issues, that can personally affect someone, is an added burden.

For example, after the Athens Pride they are faced with accusations from fellow activists regarding their stance on police officers participating, and feel left with an impossible dilemma:

(…) they watch (…) their peers being attacked (an older activist publicly
refers to one of Colour Youth’s most vulnerable members “the snake’s egg”, meaning he is a budding fascist. The CY member is really upset and withdraws. Because of the psychiatric problems he faces, they are also worried for his mental health. Senior members have a feeling of being under attack, because of internal dynamics in the LGBTQ community. They are left with a feeling of “damned if we do and damned if we don’t”. They say that they need a break, that they don't want to deal with anything for a while, while at the same time realizing that they will need to do some damage control in the next days both inside and outside the organization. (Field notes, excerpt)

Luke on resolving conflicts:

(…) generally we try to find the most sensible solution, something in the middle, and the basic principle is that we won’t fight because we have to deal with something that concerns a wider audience, it isn't personal. I would say that we deal with it in a very democratic way, so that we don't lose sight of our goal. (Interview #2, Luke)

What has proved to be an invaluable help is the presence of a “house psychologist” who has provided supervision once per month to all Administrative Groups for the last six years, pro bono. The supervision sessions have also been a space to resolve conflicts between members, to address personal issues, and to seek external support whenever needed. In the words of one interviewee, “without her, Colour Youth could not keep going”. What is even more remarkable is that this psychologist is herself a member of Colour Youth and has assumed this role while she was in her mid twenties, thus providing an excellent example on howColour Youth can offer talented individuals a space to unfold and sharpen their skills. She also runs three monthly groups to empower Colour Youth members, regarding their sexual orientation, their gender identity, as well as a women’s group, also pro bono. Her presence has infused a culture of striving for awareness and a feeling that there is always space to talk about difficult issues, that is evident in all of Colour Youth’s support and community building activities.

Savvas states for the psychologist’s role:

There have been situations that I don’t know how we got through them. I think that our angel is Elena, our psychologist, because she offers her services pro bono for the last five or six years. Beyond the empowerment groups, she also acts as a supervisor for the Administrative Group. Although the Administrative group doesn’t convene every week, they meet with our psychologist every two weeks, and we discuss our problems and how we manage, and the dynamics between us. I think that if we didn’t have Elena as a adviser and helper – and this is why she is now an honorary member, one of four individuals that have really helped exceeding themselves- but Elena is really… if it wasn’t for her we would be nowhere. Often, we see that for an organisation you need a lawyer or leaders. What you need is a good psychologist. This what you need for a successful organisation (laughs) (Interview #5, Savvas)

Therefore, the motivation is to create a community where all LGBTQ youth are accepted and promote the vision of a society in which all identities can be equal. Most members, even those that appear as cynical (for example, Savvas states: “In order to resolve something, it takes exhaustive, carefully structured discussions, especially, because important discussions happen in General Assemblies, which is the worst practice” when in fact is an ardent advocate of these exact democratic procedures), are idealists –as occurs with most activists. There is also something deeply moving about a community of youth trying to support each other through, sometimes, tremendous difficulties (e.g. homelessness, poverty, unemployment) without any
support from families and relatives, or the state. A recent example of this is when T. was cut off by his family when he came out as trans and is currently earning a living cleaning houses, as are other Colour Youth members. Whereas such adversity and pressure could also lead to further marginalization and delinquency, the opposite seems to happen. There have been no reported thefts or property destruction in their offices, although many people visit them – members and non-members. Almost every time, when under pressure, members turn to each other and not against each other. This is also evident in their public presence; to my knowledge, no representative of Colour Youth has lost their calm or control, even when addressed with extreme homophobic and/or transphobic language. The most recent occasion of having to deal with such language was during the discussion about Legal Gender Recognition in the Parliament, when the leader of one of the minority parties said that “to change one’s nature is abnormal” and a Golden Dawn MP said that gender identity is a “psychological disorder”, that people with gender identity dysphoria should be in mental health institutions and unable to stand for any ideal or value, and that they are unable to care for the greater good, or anything other than themselves. On another instance, a psychiatrist on a live debate stated that trans persons also suffer from “a delay in their personality formation”. Despite such provocations, they have also never issued an angry or inappropriate press release. This does not mean that their decisions have never been met with disapproval, or that they have never wrongly assessed a situation, but that their attitude towards all situations is one of deliberation and self-reflection, a characteristic that is uncommon even for more experienced organisations. By their own criteria, Colour Youth is mostly successful: they have contributed to both recent legal victories for the LGBT community (the civil partnership legislation, and the legal gender recognition legislation), they have created a safe space for LGBTQ youth, and they are raising awareness for LGBTQ issues. Their most successful activities include public hugs, kiss-ins, participation in Pride events and marches for LGBTQ issues. The most important action is the Tell Us program, the first program that offers psychological and legal support to victims of violence and discrimination because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. The Tell Us program has also led to the collaboration of Colour Youth with the Racist Violence Recording Network (RVRN), and has further demonstrated the extent of homophobia and transphobia in Greece. Least successful activities are considered to be the motivation of more youth to become member and participate in the organisation’s activities. Considering that the public Facebook group has more than 4,500 members, while the organisation has almost 100, it becomes evident that there is a lot of ground to be covered in this area. This discrepancy can be attributed to the widespread homophobia and transphobia in Greece, which impedes membership in an openly LGBTQ organisation. The almost horizontal structure of Colour Youth (meaning that the General Assembly is responsible to make all important decisions) influences the power relations, as well as the continuity of the organisation. Colour Youth’s dedication to democratic and inclusive processes often means that there will be the context and the time for all voices to be heard. General Assembly meetings often last more than 4 hours and every attending member has the opportunity to express their opinions on the matter at hand. The rapid change of members, however, means that in many instances important decisions have to be revisited frequently. As an example, participation in Athens Pride is decided every year in a General Assembly meeting that takes place in early May (as almost all interviewees mention, the General Assembly makes all major decisions). The decision depends on events and relationships in the LGBTQ community, such as participation of the LGBT police officers, inclusivity policies implemented by Athens Pride, attitudes towards the trans community etc. This process allows members to feel that their voices are being heard and valued; they acknowledge the power to influence all decisions and they are groomed to understand this also as their civic duty and right in all aspects of citizenship. Despite the effort to eliminate power imbalances, it is obviously impossible. Colour Youth has minimised traditional rank dynamics (eg. the hierarchy between gays and trans in the LGBTQ
community), but they have inadvertently created another kind of rank, between those that are familiarized with the language and terminology used and those who are not. Although caution is always taken in order to ensure inclusion, more seasoned members follow closely and incorporate in their discourse advances in concepts and ideas, articulated in the USA and Western Europe. For newer members and members that are not fluent in English adapting and following this paradigm is challenging, at least in the beginning, therefore creating a –mostly temporary in this case– feeling of insiders and outsiders.

Another interesting aspect of what could hinder participation of some youth lies in the very effort for inclusivity. LGBTQ community has a long history of difficult relations between its members, with many documented instances of exclusion between its members (for example, there has been a lot of discussion on the acceptance of the trans community by lesbians and gays, or the visibility and inclusion of bisexuals). Colour Youth’s dedication to avoid such attitudes has resulted in distancing the mainstream gay population. As one of the interviewees stated, “we lack beautiful gay young men”. This is also a reproduction of the discourse on the limits and limitations of political correctness that takes place in the public sphere; it is impossible to create a space for all, not unless all are willing to acknowledge and address their privileges, and how they impact others.

An organisational issue that remains unresolved is finding a way to ensure an adequate building and transfer of networking contacts. The reason for this is mainly the rapid succession of individuals in positions of responsibility that hinders building deeper relationships and networks with other individuals in key positions. Even when this becomes possible, for example in cases of close cooperation in programs, these relationships cannot be transferred to the next person that takes up a responsibility. This hinders progress because in Greece personal relationships play an important role in all aspects of cooperation, from creating partnerships to lobbying and promoting political agendas. As Savvas mentions:

(…) very often it is very difficult to have a youth organization, lack of maturity, change of people in key positions, reflexes, and of course, and I see that a lot in advocacy, connections (networking). Now that we had the same president for two years, it was better, but connections are lost, and it is a problem for advocacy and fund raising (…) (Interview #5, Savvas)

5.6 Other themes arising: Family and Elders

The most important and recurrent theme revolves around belonging and family. Membership in Colour Youth often functions as a substitute for a family. Most members do not feel adequately supported or accepted by their families, or their friends outside Colour Youth. Feeling able to be themselves (in terms of being honest regarding their sexual orientation and/or gender identity) in a safe space among like-minded peers creates a sense of kinship; furthermore, membership itself creates an additional identity (member of Colour Youth) that can function protectively (for example, an interviewee mentioned “I am A. from Colour Youth, not just A.”)

This is also evident on how stories about the first meetings of the founding members are transmitted, like stories from a family’s past, where even though one hasn’t actually met the persons, one feels a sense of kinship and lineage. The connection that is missing when it comes to a rejecting and unaccepting biological family is relieved through connecting and finding elders and role models in the community. When Colour Youth was invited to speak in the Greek Parliament during the proceedings for the discussion for the Legal Gender Recognition, the speech of the representative gathered celebratory comments in the Facebook page, not only because of what he said, but also on his overall appearance (interviewee #1: “When he spoke in the parliament, everybody was watching, what he said, even how he did his hair.”)

The lack of older individuals in the organisation permits members to occupy that role themselves and to become the elders and the family that they miss. This can be a two edged sword, since they have the space to grow, to become responsible, to become adults, but sometimes they also
give up their youth, by taking up too many responsibilities without the traditional safety net of the biological family. The psychologist who runs the supervision sessions and groups partially fills this role, by offering counseling and guidance, but mainly a feeling of support and protection.

5.7 Conclusion

Overall, in our view, Colour Youth is successful in its promotion of youth active citizenship. It is a youth organisation by and for youth, with a very clear conceptualization of youth, a strong adherence to democratic principles, and a vibrant public presence. After 6 consecutive years of being active, it has shown a tendency towards positive growth, in terms of both membership and activities. It should also be considered as a success that the strict criteria of democratic administration on which Colour Youth was founded on have not been compromised in the slightest: there is still a succession of members in leadership positions in the predefined time, every Administrative Group has respected all measures of accountability, its finances are available to members at all times – and even made public on the website.

Figure 5.5. Financial status as presented online in Colour Youth’s website

Even more, Colour Youth has succeeded in remaining a youth organisation independent from the other LGBTQ organisations. This is not to imply that they endorse fringe positions, but to state that they have managed to hold unpopular opinions and to follow their own needs regardless of the backlash from the rest of the LGBTQ community. They have also succeeded in setting a new standard for all the organisations in the LGBTQ community in terms of respect for all identities, language inclusivity, and democratic decision-making.

Regarding areas of growth, the main issue would be a better balance between psychological and practical needs. Because of the particular age group that Colour Youth comes from and serves (mostly individuals in their teens and early adulthood) and the fact that many of their members have faced disproportionate adversity, the need to provide emotional support often arises. At the same time, because of the many programs and projects that are running, there is also the need for a strong technocratic background and approach. Often individuals in leadership positions find themselves torn between these roles, and this division is also evident in the organisational climate as well as the burnout rate for individuals that have served in the Administration Group. Therefore, a stricter boundary is needed in order to protect the more active individuals and allow them to withdraw unscathed, instead of burning out and disappearing.
For their activities to be scaled up, Colour Youth would need human and financial resources. Their current funding consists of membership fees and grants for specific projects. The next organic step would be for it to become a national organisation with offices and activities in major cities (for example, Thessaloniki, Patras, and/or Crete). The obvious difficulty lies not with the organisation itself, but with the overall climate in Greece. There are other LGBTQ youth groups in other cities (e.g. Thessaloniki Rainbow Youth), but they are unofficial, with a very limited membership base, and infrequent activities. The reason Colour Youth has managed to flourish is because it is based in Athens, where young LGBTQ individuals feel safer and freer, compared to other Greek cities or the countryside. In terms of financial resources, further funding would be needed, not only from European, but also from national funds.

To conclude, Colour Youth has managed to overcome a series of societal complications and achieve success in an unparalleled way in Greece. It is the only organisation by and for youth, it has managed to remain independent, and to participate in the civil society as an equal. Simultaneously, it has fostered a culture where youth can experiment with different roles and tasks, feel and be supported, and grow into adulthood. In a resilience framework, we could argue that Colour Youth has proven to be a significant protective factor for disenfranchised LGBTQ youth.
6. Italy: Radioimmaginaria, PrendiParte, and Association of European Youth – Antonella Guarino, Bruna Zani, Cinzia Albanesi, Elvira Cicognani, University of Bologna
6.1 Introduction to the organisations

6.1.1 Radioimmaginaria

Radioimmaginaria (RI) is a youth co-led organisation, a European network with its main office located in Castel Guelfo di Bologna, a small city in the province of Bologna, Emilia-Romagna region. RI was founded in 2012 as a media hub and can be considered a unique case of adolescents’ radio network in Italy and in Europe.

As described also in their website:

The first and only Teenage Network in Europe made up, directed and presented by us, teenagers between 11 and 17 years old. No adult nose around: we say and do what we want. An antenna ready to broadcast signals from the world to come. (Organisation website, section: “who we are”)

The association Radioimmaginaria Media Hub was created on March the 31st, 2012, by 7 associates. Their purpose was to develop and manage the increasing activities of Radioimmaginaria, the first and only teen radio in Italy/Europe. Radioimmaginaria Media Hub is an association entirely supported by its founders, by the generosity of speakers’ parents, and by foundations’, associations’, institutions’ and privates’ donations. (Organisation website, section: “who we are”).

The creator and editor of the organisation was a journalist who had the idea to create a revolutionary organisation that met children’ and adolescents’ needs:

Radioimmaginaria would be a new little revolution that expects the attention from society towards a social target, adolescents, that never had an organised form of expression. (RI_7, ideator).

The project of a radio came after the implementation of a project about cinema in schools called Aria immaginaria (Imaginary Air) that aimed at promoting a discussion, from adolescents’ point of view, about the issue of bullying in their school:

When Radioimmaginaria came into being, before that there was another project at school called Aria Immaginaria (Imaginary Air), a project to do with the cinema. And then Radioimmaginaria grew out of this project, but it’s something that was really devised not to be, exactly, linked with the school (RI_1, F, 17)

Its main office consists of a professional studio for recording, live broadcasting and meetings located in a renovated little old building (old public weighing) that was recovered. Members of RI are called Tipi Immaginari (Imaginary Fellows); they are adolescents from 11 to 17 years old who are ‘partners’ of the radio with the consent of their parents as they are minors. A group of 20 young people from 18 to 21 years old and 3 adults over 40 years old are also involved. Members come from almost 33 different places in Italy and 7 in the rest of Europe. Each of these places represent a local initiative composed by a number of members that varies from 1 to 20 among adolescents and young adults. The local initiative in Castel Guelfo, that deal with the local radio broadcast, consists of 5 people, beyond the members who manage the whole European network. The total number of members of the entire network is 294 and they are equally balanced for gender. There are two girls with disabilities, and and there is an ongoing attempt to involve adolescents from migrant backgrounds.

The main aims of the organisation, as described in the Statute, are the following:
- to promote a **protected protagonism** and the engagement of adolescents and children;
- to support the development of their potential in the transition phase from childhood to adolescence to emerging adulthood through a creative method;
- to use the new media, including social networks critically, to produce attractive and smart content;
- to improve soft skills and transversal competencies, such as relational, social and technical ones.

These objectives are implemented through the activities of the radio station; these are mainly developed by adolescents using informal language and from their own perspectives.

It is a radio in all respects, ok? But it is not a radio that you usually listen to with the same musical rotations, same speeches, same language, format for years. Here, every second something changes, everyone has the freedom to say what he/she wants and, above all, adolescents’ opinions matter. The objective of Radioimmaginaria is to have a broadcast in every hallway. (RI_6, M, 20)

Activities and radio broadcasts are tagged and labelled by a hashtag (#), that stands for the strong link between online language and the use of social networks. It is possible to distinguish radio broadcasts, radio projects and events. Radio broadcasts are labelled with the name of **#Okkinsu (Eyes up)** that is the logo of RI and stands for the eyes up facial expression that adolescents usually make when adults ask them for their future life. This name is also the shows schedule that is composed by different shows:

**#141e5**, a daily program, in live or registered edition, that is transmitted at h. 14:15 because it comes from the daily radio programs that spread news during that time of the day. For Radioimmaginaria, adolescents needed to have a daily program that was not so “boring” like the traditional daily news program in radio or TV. One of the radio directors explains the rationale of this program:

The daily transmission should not be the usual one, the so boring newscast, but a daily that adolescents, who just went out of school at 14:15, want to listen to. It was created from pieces of different episodes, the most beautiful ones that were transmitted the previous day are proposed the next day with a funny intro by a boy; for example, we created a “141 and 5” with some audios produced by a boy who just woke up and started recording. He said such weird things that he couldn’t believe, ok? Then, with the editing it comes up a very funny and unbelievable programme (RI_6, M, 20)

Every group of radio staff have their own broadcasts that can be live-edited or registered. Such broadcasts may deal with different content, ranging from daily news to cinema, from politics to fashion, from friendship issues to football, etc. Contents depend on the interests of the members of each staff. Broadcasts are produced in different languages such as: **#You2** that is the English edition, **#EdheTi** that is the Albanian edition, **#TA** that is the French edition, **#TeTe** that is the Spanish edition. The foreign broadcasts are usually led by a member who speaks that language but lives in Italy or an Italian member that lives, also temporarily, in that foreign country.

Radio projects are implemented in schools and in the whole community and deal with specific issues:

- **School attacks** are meetings in secondary schools to promote radio activities and talk with adolescents to invite them to get involved in the radio;
- **Cacciabulli project** about bullying and cyberbullying is a project born in 2016 from a collaboration with another national radio (Radio 24) that invited members of Radioimmaginaria to have a radio session during their broadcast to tell life stories about bullying in schools or in other life contexts.

- **Europologia project** is an ongoing project supported by the Italian Ministry of Labour, which invited members of RI to give their opinion about Europe and what it means to be a European citizen during an event called “Europe of citizens”, placed in Rome. The aim of this project is to inform and sensitize youth about the European Union and its institutions, by creating a dialogue with youth.

The main event in which RI members are protagonists is:

- **Teen parade.** This is the festival about job, explained by adolescents. It is a 2-days event that takes place within a regional event called “Farete” (the name is a crasis between “fare” and “rete”, that is “make network”), addressed to the main companies of Emilia-Romagna region. Teen Parade is at its second edition and it is totally organised and implemented by RI members. The main issue of this event is work. Adolescents are invited to bring their ideas; such ideas are transformed into projects during workshops prepared by members of different technological companies, editing companies or music bands or groups. During these workshops, adolescents can experiment what it means working in a company, its rules and organisation. The main aim of this event is to promote youth ideas as future scenarios of work.

Other events consider RI as their main guest:

- **Giffoni film festival** is a big Italian festival about children and youth cinema that lasts 10 days and RI is considered the radio that follows the movies showings and the events. They develop three daily direct programs called Usteens, Spaccatutto (“wreck-it”) and Gli Sdraiati (“the laying down”). All the members of RI, from Italy and Europe, are invited to take part.

- **Sanremo** is a big Italian music festival. RI members follow the main edition and prepare a young edition that invites youth who are players or singers, individually or in a band, to participate and bring their music.

**Methodological aspects**

The ethnographic study with **Radioimmaginaria (RI)** encountered some difficulties in the very beginning in establishing trusting relationships due to the structure of the organisation and the members involved. However, the progressive involvement of the researcher in the organisation and the interaction with members allowed to create informal relationships with members and to reach the expected research objectives. The observations were conducted over a period of 7 months, from March to October 2017, mainly to the Bologna radio staff and including ad hoc visits to the venues where projects and activities of the organisation took place (Appendix A, table 1). Data are drawn from 8 field observations and 8 interviews.

**6.1.2 PrendiParte**

PrendiParte is a youth-led organisation located in Bologna. It was created by a group of high school students from the same school and who shared similar experiences of school engagement. As one of the founders reports:

> In the last year of Fermi high school, the famous G. called together some people he thought suitable because they’d always been active in various ways within the school. And so he made...
a proposal to try and continue the commitment we’d had at school also outside, so it was an attempt to avoid dissipating energies. (PP_2, M, 24).

The initial aim of the organisation was to create projects to enhance youth active citizenship, learning from their previous experiences within a big Italian organisation named “Libera” (Free) that deals with antimafia and chose legality as one of its main issues (see Italian report D8.1)

We decided to found the association separately [from Libera] to have a broader action, we don’t have just projects in schools regarding antimafia, we present projects on participation in general, active citizenship as a motivation for youth to be interested in reality (…) let’s say to hinder political indifference. (PP_3, F, 23).

We started to reflect on what we could do, what are the needs of the territory, at first, we established our shared objectives and interests (…) it was a long process of creation and I realized all the implications when it was already created, when we signed the agreement with Acmos and when we visited it (PP_5, M, 24)

Their links with Acmos, a national youth organisation that coordinates a national network called WeCare, allowed PrendiParte to become part of this network that provides the most important issues for discussion and trainings for their activities. The name of the organisation is strictly linked to the territory because it takes the name from one of the Bologna towers (the tower owned in the medieval times to the noble family PrendiParte; literally it means “to participate”, “to take part”), and it expresses the overarching aim of the organisation.

They do not have a main office for conducting their activities but they have the opportunity to use spaces shared with other local organisations or movements. Members are all young adults (ranging from 20 to 24 years old) and can be divided into active (n=65) and supporters (whose number is not specified by the organisation). Active members are those directly involved in the activities of the association; supporters show interest towards the activities but are not directly involved in their implementation.

The objective of the organisation is to promote and support a collective, creative and responsible participation of youth considering the action in groups, the discussion and the mutual exchange as critical and constructive elements for a personal and collective improvement (Organisation statute).

The activities of PrendiParte are conducted both in schools and outside the school context. Projects implemented by the organisation in schools are the following:

- **Scu.Ter. Project.** The name stands for “School and Territory”. It is an ongoing project implemented in 4 high schools in Bologna. It includes activities proposed to students during the school breaks once a week. Such activities consist of organised discussions on important social issues. The themes of discussion are usually decided at the beginning of the school year in agreement with the network. Some themes are regularly discussed in every organisation of the network that organise this project, in the occasion of anniversaries of national or international relevance: the International Holocaust Remembrance day (January, 27), the national Day in Memory of the commitment of innocent victims of all the mafias (March, 21), the Italian Liberation day (April, 25), the Italian National day (June, 2). Such discussions take place in specific locations in the school, in which each team of PrendiParte prepares their activities. This project is based on the use of informal education methods and on the principles of informality and continuity.
- **Oltrescuola** (After school activities) **in primary and secondary schools.** This project is based on providing support to children and adolescents in doing their homework. Moreover, it uses such activity as an opportunity to spread basic values on active citizenship in an informal way within an institutional context.(see section 3)

- **Meridiano d’Europa (Meridian of Europe).** This project is promoted by the WeCare network and is implemented by the member organisations in different contexts (e.g. schools, during extracurricular times, etc.). PrendiParte decided to implement this project in a high school in Bologna. The meridian refers to the line from Utoya to Lampedusa, two small islands located in opposite parts of Europe (one in the deep North of Europe and the other one in the extreme south) which have an important symbolic value respectively for youth and migrants’ history.

The activity organised by PrendiParte outside the school context is the following:

- **P.A. Z. -migrants project.** The acronym stands for Progetto Accoglienza Zaccarelli. The project is based on offering leisure and cultural activities within a reception centre for migrants and refugees. Twice a week, members of PrendiParte meet the hosts of the center and engage them in activities aimed to promote their understanding of the community where they live, of local and national laws and institutions relevant for migrants and to spend their free time in a constructive way.

**Methodological aspects**

The ethnographic study with PrendiParte organisation was discussed initially with the board, and the board reported the positive decision to participate to the research to all members. They were available for all the phases of the study. The observations where conducted along 7 months, from March to October 2017 with ad hoc visits to the venues where projects and activities of the organisation (Appendix A, table 3) occurred. The timetable of the visits was linked to the school time. Data were composed by **8 fields observations and 8 interviews.**

**6.1.3 AGE**

AGE (Association of European Youth) is a youth led association located in Reggio Emilia (Emilia Romagna Region, North Italy). AGE was founded firstly in 2001 as a committee with the main aim to promote dialogue between citizens and European institutions to enhance critical thinking about sense of belonging to European culture and the meaning of (European) Union. (Organisation document about the history of the association, AGE archive). In 2006, due to the lack of youth who could carry on the activities, the organisation interrupted them for a while. This event represented a turning point, which lead, in 2012, to the formal re-constitution of the association by a new group of youth. In 2011, a local project named “Youth Protagonists for Italy and Europe”, was proposed by a local committee named “Culture and Democracy” with the aim of gathering and engaging youth interested in dialogue and political events and to strengthen a critical and independent thinking on these issues. This event represented a turning point, which lead, in 2012, to the formal re-constitution of the association by a group of youth, with the specific mission of spreading civic education and promoting active citizenship among young people, which was perceived as insufficiently covered by the school curriculum. They wrote a manifesto of values that explain the reasons of the reconstitution of the organisation - using an innovative tool such as the open space technology (OST) – and its main aim, that is to educate youth for active citizenship outside the school.

The organisation does not have a main office. One member explains the importance of having a place to meet and a house for the organisation:
It would be easier if we had a main office, it will be our house, our reference point to have our meetings, to organise events. Every time we want to organise something the first thing is to find a place. If we had our main office, it will happen there. We could store our things, materials, gadgets. (AGE_4, F, 24)

AGE includes 30 members, 19 men and 11 women aged between 17 and 36 years (Mean age= 26 years) with the support of a 65 years old member who can be considered as the historical memory of the organisation. There are 20 active members and 10 supporters. All members live in the province of Reggio Emilia. They are balanced between work and education, in fact 14 of them are workers and 17 are still students (13 of them are university students and 4 are still in secondary school). AGE can also be considered a multicultural association in the sense that there are members of different origins, such as Moroccan, Tunisian, Syrian and Azerbaijani.

The activities implemented by AGE for its members include the following:

- **Informal education and socialization** with the aim to promote civic and social values in school and community contexts (such as youth centres) and to strengthen networking among youth at local level. The main projects are **Du iu spik inglish** (the name means “do you speak English” but it is written how it is pronounced) and **Mercatino del libro**. Du iu spik inglish project aims to improve participants’ English language skills and to recruit new members. Mercatino del libro (second hand school books market) project is based on the organisation, implementation and maintenance of a book market.

- **Promotion of Active citizenship**. Projects aimed to promote active citizenship attempt to develop and strengthen youth’s sense of European citizenship and the idea of European Union, to foster social cohesion and cooperation at local level and between different cultures and people and to create a dialogue with European Institutions. The main projects are **Ovunque, Troviamoci, Bilanci partecipativi**. Ovunque (Everywhere) project is based on youth mobility in Europe. Its main objective is to promote European mobility programs for local youth; a second aim is to recruit new members. Troviamoci (Let’s meet) project is based on the collection of data about local youth organisations to promote networking, communication and cooperation among them. Bilanci partecipativi (Participatory budgets) is a project that has been recently created with the aim to meet and discuss with local politicians and government about youth involvement in the political arena.

The logo of the association represents the link with Europe; in fact, it is shaped like the geographical area of Europe transformed into a geometrical form and with the colour, blue, that represents the main colour associated to Europe.

**Methodological aspects**

The ethnographic study with AGE association was implemented thanks to a linear and clear collaboration between the members and the researcher. The presence of the researcher was initially agreed with all the members in a general assembly and, then, the calendar of the activities, observations and interviews was planned according to the research objectives and to the availability of members. Access to the association archive, that is composed by formal and informal documents and working materials for projects, was discussed with the members and they decided to invite the researcher to their online platform (google drive) and to their discussion group (WhatsApp group) with the aim to observe the interactions between members and to analyse the most important documents. The initial trust given to the researcher and to the extended research project, promoted an informal communication and informal relations that were necessary for the successful implementation of the ethnography. The ethnographic research
with AGE lasted 6 months, during which regular visits to the association were organised twice a month. The ethnographic data collected include 7 field observations and 8 interviews (Appendix A, Table 5).

6.2 Conceptualization of Youth

6.2.1 Radioimmaginaria

Our thoughts, our language: our radio!

In the Italian context, Radioimmaginaria as a web radio mainly composed by adolescents, allows its members to experience a unique role and position, by providing them the opportunity to spread their opinions during radio broadcasts and claim for adolescents power, as it emerges from this statement:

Radioimmaginaria: the first and only media run by 11-17 y-o. We are teenagers, we want to have our saying and share what we think and have in our minds. This is the right way of doing it: imagination, a microphone and #EyesUp. (Spreaker RI homepage)

Adolescents and young adults of RI (see section 5 on the organisational structure) can be considered empowered and empowering (table 7) due to their role as enactors of their own decisions and choices and to the mediating role they have for their peers. As one member says:

We want it to be the media of adolescents, OK? Instead of listening to news from anywhere, we would like that adolescents listen to us because we think that our generation is right for the others, ok? For another adolescent, it will be more comfortable to listen to something that comes from similar adolescents. It is also interesting for adults to understand what adolescents think of a terrorist attack, ok? (RI_6, M, 20)

They have the opportunity to use their language (slang and informal) and to improve their skills having an active role with the initial support of adults. Broadcasts follow the language, the slang of teenagers with the aims to let them feel comfortable during the programs, to express their ideas with their words and to involve other adolescents who listen to them.

We, adolescents, we decide our language. Sometimes M. says to some speakers who try to imitate some famous speakers (…): “ok, you are a journalist but not really a journalist. You are an adolescent and you have to speak as an adolescent because those who are listening are adolescents. Or he/she is an adult and wants to listen to a true adolescent, not a fake one, ok?” (RI_6, M, 20)

RI adolescents consider themselves as protagonists of their own life. It is a “protected” protagonism, (see par. 1.1) created by the peculiar organisational context and reflecting the educational aims and vision of youth of the adults who created the radio station. They seem to be aware of their skills and resources and act with them in their own ways, in the context of the radio activities and, apparently, with spill over effects in other domains of their lives. Their actions try to challenge the general representation of adolescents as “slaves of a virtual world” or “passive” or “asleep”. For this purpose, they attempt to generate opportunities to establish direct relationships among adolescents and to engage them in society by using in a critical way the tools that the society offers them, such as digital devices. They perceive themselves as “awake”, critical and with “open eyes” on their life. They developed a kind of mantra that they often repeat to let adults and other people understand their position.
The objective is to let us, adolescents express our opinions: our thoughts. And, above all, we want to show that it’s not true that we, adolescents, don’t have interests and do not want to engage but, on the contrary, we want to do something concrete for our future. In fact, Radioimmaginaria was born to challenge the general opinion that adolescents are “asleep”: we felt that this is not true and we want to demonstrate it. (RI_4, F, 17)

The process of youth empowerment is (subjectively and objectively) developed within the organisation, moving from the apparent lack of future visions and scenarios when members first enter the organisation to the hopefulness generated by the concrete opportunity to explain and prove to their peers and adults that adolescents can take care of their future from the early phases of their life.

Sometimes, you think that our future is far away, that there is time, then, you are at the last year of high school and you say: “what do I have to do now?” and you don’t know and, then you settle for one job that you find, that is not your job and you feel it is not what you really like. Let’s say that we hope to let our peer understand that, it’s never too early to take care for our future. It’s ok to deal with since now, before arriving to the end of the school, that can be late. (RI_2, M, 19)

6.2.2 PrendiParte

Members of PrendiParte consider the organisation as an informal place to express their views, share interests and opinions with other members and with young people they meet during their activities (table 7). In fact, they act as bridging agents, constructing weak ties between young people and Institutions. As the former president of the organisation explains, they see themselves in an intermediate position between adolescents and adults:

We are not adults, and this status allows us to build a privileged relationship with them. But we are not their friends, peers, who might be a bit disregarded by the institution... The institution [school] tells us: ok come to the school, we like your project, so. Thus, we are this sort of mediating figure and this allows us, on the one hand, to establish a relationship with students and, on the other hand, to establish a relationship with the institution, school or district. (PP_5, M, 24)

This “mediating” position between adolescents and adults allows them to reflect continuously on their activities and to be critical on the issues that they present in schools.

PrendiParte members can be considered promoters of critical thinking: their primary intervention strategy involves organising debates about social or political issues. Thanks to their personal experience, they act as tutors for adolescents, taking care of their social and political development.

They are approached by young people, a little older, who take them very seriously, respect their opinion and challenge them with complex questions on important issues: this elicits their interest, which allows to inform them, engage them, spread information. (PP_1, M, 21)

According to PrendiParte members, the development of critical thinking, allows participants involved in this process to take an active role within the organisation and the society, developing an active and engaged listening with the students they meet during their activities, and taking care of their opinions and interests. As this member recognizes, this is an important opportunity that the organisation offers:
You see that many of them “turn on” if you ask them what they think about an issue, because maybe they heard about it but nobody ever asked them. This should be exactly the role of the school but it doesn’t, because the school is doing other things. So, nobody takes care about this, to ask young people: you, as a “thinking mind” – because when you are in high school you have your opinions and should have also room to express them. You should have spaces to express your views. If someone, with limited resources, during the five minutes of the break between lessons, engages them in a discussion to ask them their views, they like it.. if not, the project would have already ended, but it goes on, because we see that it works. (PP_1, M, 21)

6.2.3 AGE
The representation of youth shared by members of this organisation includes a variety of characteristics (table 7). Firstly, youth are considered as bearers of new ideas, even if sometimes these ideas are considered naïve. The process of creation of the organisation and the tools used to create projects and activities exemplify the representation of youth focused on youth ideas, capabilities and power. In fact, the association itself was established as a result of the opportunity to generate and share new ideas through the use of the Open Space Technology. This participatory methodology is considered one of the most important strategies of the organisation to promote youth voluntarism and to recruit members. After the experience in 2011, members of AGE decided to use it also to invite new members to the organisation in 2013, creating an OST with the name “You, as youth from Reggio (Emilia), what are you thinking?” Indeed, as one member of AGE says, youth ideas were heard and were transformed into new projects or activities for the association and for the whole community. The following quote expresses the motivation to be engaged by contributing with own ideas and projects and sharing them with other youth.

I liked very much the OST … even though only two or three projects have been developed, we generated a lot of ideas, one proposed to build a labyrinth in Reggio Emilia, so to have something to attract people. .. I feel lucky to be in Reggio, which offers many opportunities, because I think that not all other cities are like this. (AGE_4, F, 23)

The association shares a view of young people as testimonials to (the importance) of youth mobility based on the importance attributed to meeting and getting to know other youth from different cultures. In AGE, this aim can be reached through participation to mobility programs. In fact, the opportunity to meet and interact with different European youth is considered by AGE members an important step to increase the feeling to be European and overcome stereotypes and prejudices. As a girl says:

For me it is normal to have friends all over the world and from my experience in AGE I see that it is the same for all the others, almost all AGE members have participated in at least one camp, have done an experience abroad that opened up their mind on the world. However, talking with this German friend, I discovered that not everybody can do this (AGE_4, F, 23).

Even if AGE members consider themselves youth according to their age, they seem to consider important the generational renewal (with young people just a few years younger than themselves). In particular, they admit that they don’t know well the interests and activities that can attract younger youth and how to engage them:

it’s really very complicated because here too… I feel old talking in this way, I’m twenty-three myself, but in effect the sixteen year old of today isn’t interested in being part of a group of this kind. So it’s really complicated, even when we did various days in the schools (…) I’d like there to be more participation from young people, I can say this, and precisely the fact of not feeling young myself
worries me a bit, but yes, I see that, well, having a brother of fifteen, sixteen, I realize, I mean, that I'm totally outside these things. (AGE_5, F, 23)

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Table 6.1. Definition of youth for the three organisations.

6.3 Active Citizenship

6.3.1 Factors that promote active citizenship

It is possible to identify some elements that clarify the meaning of active citizenship for members and the factors and processes that enhance active citizenship (table 8). Considering the factors that, in the participants’ views, may enhance active citizenship, these can be articulated as progressive steps in a process of construction, where the first steps are seen as prerequisites of the more advanced ones.

The first factor concerns interest towards civic and political issues. The opportunity, for members of Radioimmaginaria, to have a voice and express their opinions increases their interest towards actuality issues, including civic and political ones (see section 1). This process of protected protagonism creates a virtuous circle that is an important part of active citizenship. The opportunity to share own interests and to discover that other adolescents and young adults can have the same interests is considered by members of all three organisations a key factor that promotes a form of citizenship. The level of interest for current events, both social and political ones, increases thanks to membership and engagement in the activities of the organisation. As one member of RI says, her interest increased - and civic issues became more attractive for her - because she must review them to create radio news and contents, thus increasing the quality of the information collected and provided through the radio broadcasts.

Thanks to the radio and, in general, to the fact that maybe the news would be useful for a broadcast, I mean, I want to talk about this thing, so I have to be well informed and, I mean, it’s very different, the level of information I now have about things, in comparison with maybe a simple person who reads and says: fine, I'll read the headline, yes, well this thing has happened to me, okay, I'll go on scrolling. (RI_1, F, 17)

In fact, creating robust information means that they have to search for the sources of information to create content. By quoting the sources, radio listeners (both youth and adults) can also refer to these contents and form their own opinion by reading the news from the main sources. This practice became a habit for radio members that is used not just to edit news for radio contents but also to find information useful in other domains of their lives (i.e. at school or with friends). A member explains this practice:

In general, also at an informative level, I feel much better informed about the world, I mean, I understand the things that interest me and that it is important to know, those things that maybe, no, I mean manage to do a… Let’s say a filter for the news. So to say: I feel capable of grasping when news is fake, when news is true (…) because I know that there are certain sites,
certain things that maybe aren’t reliable, also because, maybe, I find something on a reliable site and it always has to be checked, in general, not only for the broadcasts but precisely in life. So yes, in my view this thing has helped a lot also in understanding if, I mean, to have a thousand times secure source rather than draw on news just like that, for the subject of the programme I mean, and then it comes from the fact that I do it normally, that’s it. (RI_1, F, 17)

The involvement in the organisation and the attentiveness for social and political issues appear to us to define what has been called the informative level of citizenship practice (Ekman & Amna, 2012). From this level of active citizenship for adolescents of RI, the further step is defined by the attention to contents and contexts and themes that are the subjects of debates between youth within their organisation and in the contexts where they propose their activities.

In PrendiParte, interests, content and debates within the organisation encourage members to get involved in projects with different types of youth populations and this can be considered a significant practice of active participation.

PrendiParte enhances active participation, that means also looking at what happens around you with a critical perspective, and not only … that is if you agree you participate and if you do not agree, instead of complaining and writing a post on Facebook you go down in the street and express your anger by doing something… (…) For example, I experienced a change, I used to be a culturally informed citizen, but I did not participate, absolutely, nothing concrete. (PP_1, M, 21)

A member of AGE reports the importance of sharing and discussing civic and political issues with other members and youth who are the target of their projects.

In my view this is active citizenship, because I am interested in what is happening in Reggio Emilia, in Italy and in Europe: this is already active citizenship because you develop an interest and share your opinion with others. Maybe you do not act concretely but even talking with someone else is a way to begin to do something. It is a little thing but is important. For sure, I am much more active now in AGE that I used to be before becoming member…. Besides engagement there is also the recreational and play dimension, but they are both important (AGE_4, F, 23)

From this statement, it is important to notice the recreational, playful and amusing dimension of active citizenship that member experience within their organisation. For Radioimmaginaria members, the context of radio is a place to express their voices and have fun (Radioimmaginaria report, 2017); for PrendiParte members this dimension is supported by their focus on informality (see par. 3.2) and for AGE members the opportunity to discuss with other youth within a non-institutional organisation.

Another factor that is mentioned by members of these organisations as a transversal skill that can be improved by their engagement is critical thinking.

Members of RI use this skill to look for information and to improve their knowledge of youth lifestyles thanks to the interaction with adolescents coming from different parts of Italy and Europe.

active citizenship is that of a citizen who does not passively suffers what happens in the society in which he/she lives, but asks you questions, thinks that his/her contribution may be
important in every domain, including professional life, family, human relationships. This is more or less my idea. (RI_8, F, 21)

For this member, active citizenship can be fostered by the opportunity to question and problematize the society in which she lives. By promoting critical thinking, adolescents can develop a different perspective towards the world that makes them active in their lives. For PrendiParte members, the promotion of critical thinking can help young people to overcome their condition of indifference by engaging them in political and social issues, such as, for example, migration.

I enter in school, in Bologna, with young people with whom I would not have any type of contact and, in some ways by stimulating their critical thinking I attempt to grow aware citizens. This is active citizenship, I am working for Bologna. When I go to the center Zaccarelli, even there I am doing active citizenship because I work for Bologna, I am attempting to prevent social exclusion and negative situations in free zones. People do not see problems, or prefer to deny them. (PP_8, F, 22)

6.3.2 Practices of active citizenship

We can describe the process of promoting active citizenship by the organisations considering the practices and procedures through which they engage their members and young people (adolescents, young adults) that they meet in different contexts. The members of the three organisations value the procedure of learning citizenship in formal and informal contexts. In the school context, the objective of their activities is to spread citizenship education by filling the gap in schools’ curricula that don’t deal with youth issues (RI), citizenship and democratic values (PrendiParte and AGE). For Radioimmaginaria members the process of citizenship education is enhanced through learning about social and political issues:

We never talked about work, what we would like to do in the future. We generally think about curricular subjects, maths, science, physics and that’s it, these are the subjects. … The school should instead take care of young people growth, training, and in order to pursue this aim, the disciplinary subjects are not sufficient, we need someone who can help them to understand their passions. For example, the boy who is not doing well at school because he does not like studying, and if you hear him singing or playing a musical instrument you realize that he is wonderful. But the school is not able to see this. (RI_4, F, 17)

PrendiParte members refer to ethical values that are fundamental if one wishes to implement a creative learning process within schools. Values of solidarity and justice, participation and responsibility are considered basic values of active citizenship and has the aim to promote and support democratic inclusion through education projects.

Over and above the statute we’ve got an ethical charter we devised which is, fundamentally, configured in a series of quotations, or at any rate passages by people who in our view… people we consider inspirers. So for example: Don Milani, Danilo Dolei, we even slipped Kant in, I tried to slip Hegel in – don’t ask me why because I don’t remember now – and others; and so we did some work of a shared kind at the beginning, all fifteen of us because we started with fifteen, and then we renewed it when we started to become a bit bigger, something like twenty-five. (PP_2, M, 24)
The school is considered by Prendiparte members the main context to construct citizenship:

School still comes into it, more so, due to the fact that, I mean, it would be the main place for creating citizenship in our view, from one side, precisely, at the level of education, and then acting within the institution of school inasmuch as it is a community. (PP_2, M, 24)

They use a pedagogic strategy characterized by an innovative process on learning about civic and political issues based on informality and continuity.

Members of PrendiParte are homogenous in terms of age and power relationships within the organization. As regards their relationships with high school students, being just a little older than high school students puts them in a position to act as mentors or tutors of students. In fact, this position allows members of the organization to reduce the distance of asymmetrical relations between teachers and students and to create new spaces of discussion beyond the traditional classroom. Indeed, they receive a formal authorization and recognition from teachers and an informal feedback from students. Informality characterises the mediating role of members when they organise animation activities during the school breaks to engage young people.

Continuity is the other fundamental strategy that allows members of PrendiParte to sustain their activities and relationships with students. The teams that work in schools are almost the same from the beginning to the end of the project. Members view this as a strength of their project, that supports informal relationships:

Continuity, in order to safeguard this peculiar interpersonal relationships that we create, we try as much as possible to keep the groups the same along time... for example, N. and A. have been doing the activities in Copernico school for three or four years and they have created very solid relationships with many young people, and some of them now want to become members and be involved in Scu.Ter. So, we pass the torch and… (PP_1, M, 21)

As clarified in the previous quote, informality and continuity create, in both members and students, a strong sense of belonging to the project and to the organisation. Sometimes this sense of belonging generates active participation among the students in schools.

It happens that deep bonds are generated through this experience. For example, at the end of this school year they made us a very beautiful gift, they prepared a poster with all the pictures made during the entire period and they wrote letters, dedications; also last year the gift was a yearbook with a lot of dedications (PP_3, F, 23)

The concept of active citizenship is pervasive for PrendiParte as an organisation and the forefront of its implementation is the G.E.C. group (“Groups of Citizenship Education”). Members of this group come generally from Scu.Ter. Project. Young people who decide to be part of it, show an awareness about the importance of citizenship education thanks to their own experience and believe that, through their belonging to G.E.C., it is useful to give continuity to this experience, developing a focused training on the values of active citizenship (see the general values of the organisation). The group includes young people who are motivated to share their experience with their peers in school and to develop new projects for their school and community.

Finally, Prendiparte conceives that through this pedagogic strategy, a process of promotion of of social change can be enhanced. As the ex- president, founder of the organisation says,
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members build opportunities for young people to be active engaged; their engagement makes them role models, with a transformative power.

In the beginning, I threw a little stone, then obviously, thanks to the engagement of the founders, we enlarged the organisation inviting friends. … I think that each project has some people who are role models toward young people, and they, on their turn, become role models toward their friends and people they meet; concrete example is fundamental, informing and discussing is important, but it is not sufficient, you also need action, and often it is action that is effective in changing the attitudes of other people. Thinking about Scu.Ter, and the many young people that tell us: “how beautiful, I would like to be like you, it is a wonderful project”, it is already two years that it goes on (…). I remember the first year of the project, when we proposed after school activities in junior high school. Children were struck by us, one of them asked: “why are you here? …you are not paid for being here, you have to follow your university studies and you come here to help us to make our homework; are you crazy?” This is important: we are attempting to deconstruct certain mental schemes of young people. Obviously, you can do it using words, but it is especially concrete behavior that works, not the behavior of an abstract person but of a concrete person that is informed, engages with them spending a lot of his/her time with them, shows that he/she wants to know them… this is what we are attempting to do, build a relationship with young people, getting to know them really. (PP_5, M, 24)

AGE members notice that citizenship education in their organisation can be expressed through direct involvement in social and political issues instead of traditional lessons on civic education. As described below by a member, schools as formal contexts can strengthen the processes of citizenship education by organising discussions about democracy and politics:

Citizenship education should have continuity, year after year; instead we realised that in the school citizenship education was conducted episodically and based on the good will of some teachers, or it was conducted in part, in the sense that the only topic that was dealt was Constitution, unfortunately this is insufficient, it is important to teach also democracy, the importance of politics, because this is the ground where power is allocated. Then, attempt to understand that the problems affecting quality of life of people are related to politics and management of power (AGE_6, M, 65)

A second important practice is the construction of democracy that is primarily addressed to the members of the organisation and it is different according to the organisations. In Radioimmaginaria democracy and its implementation is detailed in a structural aspect and functional one. The structural aspect considers to allow all adolescents from 11 to 17 years old to become members, offering them an opportunity for improving their skills and developing critical awareness. As reported by a girl, responsible for human resources:

It is a media that aims to represent all adolescents, to allow them to express their views using their own words. Approaching the issue of bullying with a peer who was directly involved in a bullying episode is more effective than having a teacher explain it (..) it is a project that rejects the idea that adolescents are passive slaves of new media…I see my friends who don’t study, don’t work, they are dragged into their lives, this is an experience that allows to get involved in something and reconsider human relationships, because there is a lot of virtual in this for adolescents but sometimes it is not true. (RI_8, F, 21)

The primary functional aspect that contributes to the construction of democracy Radioimmaginaria, is the process of gathering, offering and providing communication of good
quality information to other adolescents. Here one member explains in detail the value of analysing information and dispersing it amongst adolescents.

Because I keep myself informed, I find out, because I contribute, in fact I discovered it the other day, I did a course of journalistic communication, because I contribute to the democratic function. We contribute to the democratic function of the press, of information, because we also give something, we try to be, precisely, the bridge that links the world of adults and the world of kids, and we give the possibility, not only us obviously, it’s not that we’re so… I don’t want to feel superior, but we do our bit to help adolescents understand that by communicating, being informed, being interested and having an opinion you really can do something. So, I feel very much an active citizen. (RI_5, F, 21)

For members of PrendiParte and AGE, democracy is considered a strong value, it is framed ideologically, embodied within the organisation and linked to the notion of legality. As a member of PrendiParte says:

There are political values that are undoubtedly transferred, such as legality, the principles on which democracy is based, like listening others’ opinions. Such values are not foregone, they are political values that PrendiParte spreads, absolutely, and are those building blocks of our DNA that are incorporated in all the projects we propose. (PP_7, F, 21)

Another member of PrendiParte explains critically the opportunities and limits of the democratic processes that she experienced through her participation to the organisation.

Democracy depends on participation of the different members, I would say that it is democratic, because I can tell my opinion, participate in the meetings of the board even though I am not board member … We insist that at least the referents participate in the board meetings, and from this point of view it is democratic, as I can tell my opinion and help others in the board to have a more eclectic perspective on the organisation. Then, obviously there is always a limit to democracy, you need to find a final solution, and so… we cannot always satisfy everybody. Decisions are taken that you may not approve of personally, but when you know that they were based on a debate, there was a discussion, and were not an imposed decision, … in the end it is always a personal thing. (PP_8, F, 22)

The democratic structure of the organisation expressed by AGE members comes from the idea that debate is a basic democratic value and members can share their democratic practices with other youth. AGE can be seen as a context in which members try to experience the best form of democracy for youth because the organisation allows members to have a voice, express their ideas and transform them into concrete projects and activities. One girl notices that the democratic process created within the organisation is different from the democratic processes that youth can live outside the organisation.

We have a very strong idea of democracy, which informs how we function and how we teach the functioning of democracy. Because if we realise that in our small organisation democracy works, … I realise that in AGE for example, I can have more say that the one I can have as an Italian citizen. (AGE_4, F, 23)

This view is also emphasised by the old member who connects the value of democracy to legality, intended as the method used to reach an objective and develop activities, proximity, that is the opportunity to create spaces of cooperation and collaboration between youth and among youth and institutions and responsibility, that can be considered as taking care of political and social issues to influence them.
The main idea, exactly, the discourse of democracy, law, proximity, meaning with democracy the idea of people sovereignty, therefore we are against whom think to politics as an self-referential activity for the boss: [concerning] law, they support a democratic law, because law, is it is not democratic, law itself could help to damage. And proximity, this means looking for the others, the neighbour, it means the whish to work with the others, because it's with the others that, then, you can reach best goals. And it is necessary, because when somebody is responsible but he doesn't find somebody to link with, he will never find to whom link his responsibility with the others to make it count on, he is like a fish who does never find the water and, then, he becomes tired to be a fish and he start to do something else. (AGE_6, M, 65)

Active citizenship means also to take a position. Taking a position is viewed as a political process because it initiates a process of co-construction of meaning with other youth and gives them another perspective on their own life and on civic and political issues.

For Radioimmaginaria members, this political position can be explained by the influence of the radio activities on other life contexts, in particular school. As this member explains:

In fact, I have started to write all the things that were not on the book. And then, I’ve said: teachers have said “when you will be informed”, I said: [I’ve spent] days over days to study these things, but then I mean, with Radioimmaginaria you talk about things, news of current events that will give you a huge head start. For instance, being at a college of humanities, [studying] sociology we often talk about news and you can link some past facts to current events. And this will help you a lot, because maybe with the radio, the day before, you have talked about something that is relied with what you are saying and so, you know something more that, then, you can use during exams. You have a wider sight. (RI_4, F, 17)

For PrendiParte members, young people can’t avoid taking a position on political issues if they want to be part of the process of construction of citizenship:

It’s the attempt to be a participant in a constructive process and it is constructive that it takes place continually in what you have around you and that, therefore, it’s somewhat a case of understanding what you want to build, I mean, what you want to be committed to with regard to this. So it also means relating in a determined way to other people to carry a thing forward, for… It has a whole series of aspects, I mean, very deep, actually, with regard to… precisely to positioning yourself at a level… Meanwhile with oneself and then at the level of the social situation. (PP_2, M, 24)

AGE members refer to the political meaning of their activities considering the adjective “political” as a reference to the opportunity to exercise critical thinking about civic and political issues through the participation to the organisation. As the responsible of Troviamoci project says, membership of an organisation gives youth the possibility to understand their own political ideas, to elaborate a political position and to have an impact on other youth:

It gives you more chances to understand what you could do or be in your life, what another activity would not do, because it makes you face with, it puts you in front of some issues, it puts you in front of some people, it force you to understand what you real positioning is, concerning all the themes you could deal with. And, what more, beside having such a feedback for you, you have, at the same time, a feedback for other people, because other people too use the same principle with you, because other people too have to face with you and, then, people who are in closer relationships but, at the same time you have also an indirect feedback about all the people who know these people, who take part to activities or
that, by extension, can be inspired by, [they] can know a new method, [they] can know something new, easily, knowing that AGE did that. (AGE_3, M, 23)

Sometimes, having determining a political position for the organisation is not a simple and clear process. As a member of PrendiParte explains, the organisation has a strong political position on issues considered fundamental such as antimafia, legality, non violence or migrants, and promotes a critical and open discussion on emerging and confrontational themes, such as Europe:

Projects that we pursue, side us, migrants’ projects and Meridian of Europe. At the end, we said: the best thing to do is to take a position just on themes that are pillars of PrendiParte, themes on which it is easy to take a decision because they are intrinsic in our DNA such as antimafia, migrants welcoming, Europe. But this solution didn’t convince all…when a difficulty arises we don’t take position because we don’t agree then, it is not definitely but it gives the possibility to expose on some themes that belong to our daily routine, even if we don’t claim it openly. (PP_7, F, 21)

The process of political positioning is linked to the possibility of influencing society through the activities of the organisation, thus creating different relations of power to change the current political situation. A member of PrendiParte explains that membership of a voluntary organisation seems the only way to influence the political scenario because political parties are perceived as not attractive (nor representative, and with unpleasant dynamics).

Because the political party scenario that is surrounding me, doesn’t attract me, absolutely, partly for the internal dynamics, partly because I don’t feel to support fully any party. So, it remains the associative area for me now. (PP_7, F, 21)

The possibility for youth to be key actors in their social context with the aim to exercise their power at a political level is the political vision of active citizenship provided by a former member of AGE, who defines active citizenship as the recognition to be an active part of a government by improving the common good.

It is to be aware to belong and not to be ruled from the State and, when you are aware, to be engaged and make it possible that this big group [the State] works in the best way and always improves. (AGE_8, M, 25)

This vision is shared by the old member of AGE organisation who strengthens the political protagonism of youth and their capacities to act as multipliers:

active citizens in the sense that they are equipped to involve other youth to became protagonists. Then, influencing concretely on things that regard youth issues and involve youth(…) Politics with P it is an action that brings to ask for sovereignty in the sense that you want to be an active participant not passive, it is a great difference. Then, if you want to influence and stick the nose where the administrators, if alone, decide with their reasons. (AGE_6, M, 65)

6.3.3 Tools of active citizenship

The process of active citizenship is also supported by the tools that each organisation uses for the activities and provides for its members to have a role within the organisation. Social networks, such as Facebook or WhatsApp, are used to implement the activities and to recruit new members. Social networks are useful to keep contacts between members online and to spread information on the events, but also to organise and remind important events of the organisation such as meetings or assemblies to its members.
Considering Radioimmaginaria, social media allow to organise and to manage almost all of their activities. They use Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and other social networks to share their activities and to collect opinions from other adolescents. The online platform Spreaker allows people to share and to store all the broadcasts of the radio. Social networks offer adolescents the opportunity to challenge the commonplace view about the use of digital devices by young people. According to the funder of the radio, these tools are effective in helping adolescents to be aware on the use of these tools to construct and spread information:

applications, websites, then every kind of content that can reach the eyes and the ears of these 11 years old, even younger (...) to transform all these possibilities and the extraordinary freshness and flexibility and potential of a brain of that age that never came back in life, in an aware planning of activities with cultural and communicative basis. (RI_7, M, over40)

Tools are concrete means to implement the activities of the organisation. The radio station has developed different mobile locations, as reported in the website:

- Lucy’s booth. “Our easy-to-go emplacement”. It is a booth, with one wheel, easy to steer and to set up with a couple of microphones. It comes from the comic strip of Charlie Brown and Lucy’s psychiatric booth.
- Street Lab. It’s an independent seat that can contain 10 speakers at the same time, powered by solar panels, provided with 10 microphones and 10 headphones.
- Bikelab. “To move easily, carrying on board a guest, a speaker and a sound engineer.” It is a wheeled seat, a pedal radio, ecological, to go “where we want and broadcast from every square, every alley, every beach or everywhere else without plugs, cables or anything” created by a local leader company in the ecology business.
- Caravanlab. It is an old rusty Caravan transformed into an independent radio studio with microphones and mixers, given as a present for an antenna affected by the recent earthquake.

As regards Prendiparte, the Scu.Ter. project implemented in schools uses as tools to attract and engage students in schools role playing games, theatrical techniques, visual methods:

we go to schools every week and we propose different topics of current events or requested by students and we try to involve them: we dress up or we give flyers, in short, we try to attract their attention as we can to get to a higher purpose (...) try to give input to create a minimum of civic awareness and critical thinking (PP_1, M, 21)

Also, AGE members acknowledge the usefulness of social networks to strengthen participation to the activities of the organisation. They use WhatsApp for formal and informal communication within the organisation.

The social networks luckily have this positive aspect which adults, also in quotes here, that is, the generation prior to ours, see as non-communication, whereas in reality that’s not the way it is, I mean, you always have to find the right means, so we therefore organise ourselves online, or on WhatsApp or Facebook, it’s okay, but we also see one another (...) They work, absolutely. First there was the Facebook group, exactly, because WhatsApp, I won’t say it didn’t exist but it still wasn’t used so much, anyway not everybody had a smartphone, I’m saying, with internet. I had a phone with keys until just the other day practically, therefore I didn’t have WhatsApp. Now that everybody’s got it we use it, I’m not saying only WhatsApp, but we use it almost exclusively for communication and of course when we’re not there in person. (AGE_5, F, 23)

AGE uses different tools to spread active citizenship. The first level encompasses

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communication and socialisation, between members, of roles and other important information. For example, a privileged tool is the **online platform** where drafts of past, present and future projects are stored. This platform contains the **documents describing their various projects**. These include the following: a title, the name of the member of AGE who is responsible for the project’s implementation, the main theme and objective, the beneficiaries, the human resources needed, the type of internal and external communication expected, a brief description of the project and a timetable. They use also an **online calendar** for meetings and assemblies, shared among members. Another important document is the **vademecum describing the roles of members in the organisation**. The vademecum illustrates step by step what every member must do in relation to the role played in the organisation as well as the rules and procedures, such as the **general assembly**, the **board** and **communication procedures** between members.

A significantly democratic aspect is that this document is co-constructed by members who have a role in the organisation (e.g. vice-president, secretary) and is considered as a document “in progress”, which is expected to be integrated based on the experience of such members. All members who played important roles in the organisation, at the end of their appointment are expected to contribute with inputs aimed at improving the definition of roles, tasks and procedures, as well as with practical examples that may help the members who will take on the roles. All these aspects make the vademecum a tool to sustain the organisational aspect of AGE and a method to socialize between members important information about roles.

The second level regards the expression of ideas and the involvement of new members that are mainly promoted by an innovative and creative tool: the Open Space Technology (OST). Such tool has been adopted so far especially for the purpose of generating new ideas for projects, to enhance discussions between youth and to network with other organisations at local level.

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Table 6.2. Factors, processes and tools of active citizenship.

### 6.4 Local, National and European dimension

#### 6.4.1 Radioimmaginaria

As a web radio, RI is a network that collects youth from different cities in Italy and it is spread all over the countries in Europe, thus showing the strict relations between local, national and European dimensions. (graphic 1). The local level of the activities of RI is exemplified by the network with schools for the “school attacks project”, the interaction between different radio staffs and the involvement in local events. For Radioimmaginaria members, local communities are contexts that support their daily broadcasts by offering spaces where the different local staff can meet (Images RI_1 and RI_2). In fact, the radio staffs are in different places such as shopping centres, bars, shared spaces with other local organisations, etc. events, such as Giffoni film festival or Teen Parade have a broader (national) dimension. Events and meetings during the year that allow all the adolescents to meet, share their broadcast experiences and have fun together.

A speaker of Radioimmaginaria explains how they can meet other national groups:

> I mean, maybe there’s an event in Milan and two or three from Bologna go, then there are some from Milan, someone comes from Cremona so in the end, I mean, you see one another
a bit, but really everybody, everybody together, we see each other only at the big events like Teen parade, Radio Campo, Giffoni which are all sort of in summer, and Sanremo which is in February, so, that's the time when, I mean, a lot of us, we meet and get together. But yes, generally, it's a bit difficult to meet in… Whereas during the year, in summer and with this team office thing. (RI_1, F, 17)

The mobility between different radio groups at national and European level, is useful to strengthen and to share skills and competencies, to meet friends and create new friendships.

The most beautiful thing is that you can have friends in all parts of Italy and beyond. Sometimes it happens that you are, let’s say, in Milan and that you need something, and I know that I can call a speaker from Milan, In fact, we all host each other and it is really nice. (RI_8, F, 21)

An important dimension for the national action of Radioimmaginaria is the collaboration with political institutions during the organisation of their events. Teen Parade, the main event organised totally by members of Radioimmaginaria, is part of a major event organised by the regional business companies. During the 2017 edition of Teen Parade, adolescents explained their meaning of work, they interviewed the Italian minister of Education and the Minister of Labour. The rationale of this event is to overturn the traditional way of approaching politicians and politics: usually politicians explain and adolescents are supposed to listen; politicians illustrate the meaning and the essence of their work, ministries have the opportunity to detail their political program. In this event adolescents asked questions and have an active role in setting the agenda and the language of the conversation with politicians; as such they asked ministries questions about youth issues, such as school and future opportunities for job. As the responsible of production remembers:

Out of the broadcast there is a formal relation, when you sit behind the desk of Radioimmaginaria there is the idea that you are the mayor, but you are seated with Radioimmaginaria. And, then if you are a mayor or a headmaster or a council member or a janitor, you are within Radioimmaginaria, so it is not a lack of respect, it is a game, you are talking with adolescents, then instead of being Fedeli ministry can be just Fedeli, right? I call you ministra. Or I can make jokes on the last reform she did, why? Because you put very tangled articles or typing mistakes. What! Ministra! You are doing typing mistakes?” (RI_3, M, 21)

A speaker explains how the scenario for the interviews was prepared:

We let the Ministry of Education sit behind a desk, it was a bit fearful and we told her: “don’t ask us things, please, be indulgent”. And, behind there was a blackboard. On the other side, seated behind on a workbench there was the Ministry of Labour and we were in front of them (RI_4, F, 17)

Members of Radioimmaginaria took a challenge, proposing an innovative format to create a dialogue with institutions. By the discussion with politicians in a protected space where the asymmetries between adults (in this case, the two Ministries) and adolescents (the members of Radioimmaginaria who are conducting the interview) are minimized, the language used and the contents of discussion become closer to the adolescents’ perspective. The radio format they propose subverts a standard way of relating to politicians, bringing politicians closer to adolescents needs (of understanding, of a simple language, etc) and not the opposite. Politicians continue to invite members of RadioImmaginaria to discuss with them about adolescents’ issues.
and bringing their perspectives in the political arena. This request of consultation coming from politicians seems to be innovative within the scenario of adolescents issues but, in some cases, it can bring to an exploitation of their views for political aims. So far, the organization is structured to protect adolescents from these risks.

Radioimmaginaria expresses its focus on Europe by spreading the adolescents’ voices in different broadcasts from different European countries such as England, Spain, France, Norway and using national languages. This member notices that the first European staff were in London, leading them to define their webradio as a European network:

Well, it happened when we opened the studio in London, if I’m not mistaken, it was the first one abroad, but that definition was still in any case pretty, I mean a recent definition, both network and European network, because anyway it presupposes that, firstly what network means, that it’s not so taken for granted; and then it also presupposes that there’s a physical network, or virtual, of people who exchange ideas, opinions, information, and this is there with Radioimmaginaria. It’s a network they use also independently of Radioimmaginaria’s activities. (RI_5, F, 21)

The mobility of adolescents across the different European staffs is promoted in order to increase the cooperation within the radio network. The contents transmitted through the radio are usually focused on youth interests, such as cinema or school or peer relationships and some topics, such as Manchester attack that is relevant from a European and international level, are dealt across staffs. Broadcasts in foreign languages are created also during international events of RI, such as Giffoni Film Festival, because adolescents meet and share their skills and realize that they can be speakers too. Further, there are radio shows conducted in foreign languages such as English, French, Spanish and Albanian. Hence the opportunity to share their interests also beyond their own country and to create friendships relations. As a member explains, adolescents from all countries who speak a foreign language can create a broadcast or send individual recordings to the responsible of direction who will upload them on the show schedule.

Especially at Giffoni the new studios came into being. I mean, at Giffoni two years ago the idea came to us, we had the idea of doing the French one, Giffoni last year for the Spanish,(…) I mean, it works exactly like the studios in Italy, I mean like if you, take for example this girl who lives in Bath, in England, who sends broadcasts, so the palimpsest works just like in Italy, from your studio you do You Too, you do French, Spanish there’s also a channel in Albanian because there’s this girl who talks in Albanian and sometimes also does webcasts on her own, with two or three people because, precisely, there aren’t many people. (RI_1, F, 17)

The European dimension is expressed also by the participation to national events that deal with EU issues such as Expo 2016 in Turin (Italy). This event gave the opportunity to reflect on the idea of EU and to give a concrete representation of what Europe can be, as cited in the quotes below:

At the European Union stand with the person in charge of the stand, who is a professor and a researcher, we talked about the European Union. Then we met him at his office that is next to Turin (…) we were there to explain Europe because, maybe, it was not so clear what it is. Some said “a union of States”, we had vague ideas but, during this event that they organise every year we tried to understand what Europe is and if it is united or not (…) the result was that we would like to have a more united Europe than now (…) we would like that we, as
adolescents from Europe, had same opportunities and were more connected, for example to go to different states having same connections. *(RI_2, M, 19)*

European citizenship is more explicitly addressed by a recent project named *Europologia*. The idea originated in the context of the event “Europe of citizens” promoted by the Italian Ministry of Labour, who invited speakers from Radioimmaginaria to discuss with him about the meaning of European citizens from adolescents’ points of view, and to assess the level of information that adolescents have on European institutions and history. Members of Radioimmaginaria moderated the whole event by promoting the discussion among adolescents who were attending the meeting and by creating an online chat in which Italian high school students could make questions about social issues such as equality, migration and youth work. The whole event was also transmitted in English with the support of some English radio speakers coming from foreign staffs.

**Figure 6.1. Relations between local, national and European dimension for Radioimmaginaria.**

6.4.2 *PrendiParte*

Local, national and European dimensions are connected and expressed within a national network that allows members of the organisation to act at local and European levels (graphic 2). The local dimension, for PrendiParte members, is the network between the projects that are developed within the organisation. An example is given by the name of the Scu.Ter. project that stands for School and Territory, thus underlining that the action of the organisation starts from the needs of the surrounding local context. The connection within the projects of the same organisation is an attempt to give the structure of network to the organisation. An example of this process is the visit for students who participate to Scu.Ter. project to the migrants centre where the P.A.Z. project is implemented.

PrendiParte decides to collaborate with local institutions by joining a local network called conCittadini (fellow citizens) that is promoted by the regional legislative council:

ConCittadini network is a kind of network, a public call, something particular. What is? There are different realities that meet thanks to the coordinating role of the Legislative council of the Region, then it regards schools, neighbourhoods, associations and other realities within
the Region; everyone does its projects, its things but sometimes we meet, we tell stories, and we exchange opinions and information […] the assembly in which they give us final feedback, they introduce, every association presents their project, then, we saw it too much formal… 

(PP_1, M, 21)

The advantages to belong to this network are: to be in contact with different regional organisations or people involved in projects dealing with citizenship, to collaborate with political institutions and have the opportunity to get an economic support for their projects. A difficulty experienced in this network is the use of traditional methods perceived as too formal and conventional:

It is nice because they give us the possibility of showing and explaining what we do, but methods that are used from Concittadini, according to me, they are on the opposite of what we do, that is frontal conferences, too strict with people that speak, ask questions, focused, but these meetings resulted a bit heavy. But, as idea, it is not wrong and, they fund economically (…) last year they fund us and money are important. (PP_1, M, 21)

Prendiparte and ConCittadini network seem to use different educational approaches to involve youth and organizations. Nevertheless Concittadini is open enough to provide funds to a project that shares similar aims even through different methods, and Prendiparte is flexible enough to accept the support of a project that uses different methods, and a different approach. Both the organizations are able to collaborate and find an overarching objective beside their differences. The European dimension for Prendiparte is most clearly expressed by the Meridiano d’Europa project that deals with the promotion of active citizenship in Europe. According to one member who run the project

The Meridiano d’Europa is a project set up some years ago, three years ago – I think it was promoted by WeCare, which is the network Prendiparte belongs to and (…) it involves a series of meetings, in classes or small groups created ad hoc for the project, on the theme of Europe and it culminates in a trip to a place that is significant for Europe. (PP_4, F, 21)

The main aim of the project is well explained by the presentation on the Acmos website that takes a clear pro-European position:

The Meridian of Europe is a project to allow youth to be protagonists of Europe that we want to implement through an educational activities referred to high schools. The main aim of this project is to promote active citizenship based on the sharing of peaceful values and the need to strengthen our awareness, through debating and reacting. The Meridian of Europe is a cultural frame and its purpose is the creation, through dialogue, of tools to elaborate facts and events that upset our democratic societies, thanks to the promotion of the sense of identity and affiliation to a better Europe. (Acmos website, Meridiano d’Europa Section).

The objective of the project “Meridian of Europe” is to analyse the meaning of Europe, the European Union and its institutions critically, pointing out the strengths and weaknesses. It is implemented using a workshop format:

The aim of Meridiano d’Europa was to problematize a bit, to analyse the Europe of today, try to understand its strongpoints and weak points and, especially to make youth understand, or at least arouse their curiosity, get them thinking, because since… you set out from the presupposition that something isn’t right, at that moment, and try to understand how to influence and change things and why. That’s the general idea. (PP_4, F, 21)
The final outcome of these workshops is the participation of students to a 3-days event, organised in Brussels, called “Which Europe?” where a delegation of the youth coming from the organisations that joined the project, have the opportunity to hear about and understand the consequences of the migration events in Calais, observing the effects of the migrant policies on the territory and to discuss about this with European politicians and institutions. They had a visit to the main places identified as symbols of migration and spaces of discussion and hear the decisions of policy migrations.

The members of PrendiParte did not recognize themselves completely in the manifesto of the project, they did not endorse an "a-critical" pro European position, because they felt that a total identification with Europe could not be in line with their values. As two members of the team say, they kept the basic idea of the project but they decided to problematize the definition of Europe and also some positions taken by EU:

The Manifesto [of the project] was talking about European identity and it finished with: "long live Europe" and that sort of thing, "long live united Europe", like. Let’s say, yes, okay, but I mean there’s no way I’m going to walk into a classroom and say: “Don’t forget kids, long live united Europe”, I mean, I go and say: “what do you think about it?, I mean we’re trying to draw what you think out of you, let's try to analyse the situation together", but we no longer want to carry on with... Or at least we’ve... I mean more of an idea with regard to the other in certain ways, yes, in the sense that we have shared foundations whatever parties we belong to or... or faiths, let’s say, but we’re definitely antifascists, I mean we have a common baseline, but at a level, I mean we’re also very different, multifaceted (PP_4, F, 21)

The discussions and debates within the organisation about the definition of a political position on Europe, based on the Meridian of Europe project, were articulated before implementing the project and then ended with an awareness of the members about their critical view on the functioning of European Union and its institutions. Their critical perspective on European Union raises the importance to construct youth active citizenship at European level by resisting the urge to construct strong uncritical European citizenship. At the end, PrendiParte took a pro-European and critical position, expressing its role of critical promoters of Europe by developing the Meridiano project in order to create a critical knowledge about European issues. A member reports this process:

In fact, we realized that we are not well-informed on the subject, there was a confusion on the European institutions among us, because, anyway, it is a theme that is not discussed at school (PP_7, F, 21)
6.4.3 AGE

School activities and universities are privileged sites of action also for AGE at a local level. In particular, their actions inside universities are supported by other regional organisations such as university students’ organisations, local companies that specialise in issues environmental and political issues, critical consumption, and more with the aim to involve university students. Another important link with the local dimension is expressed by an AGE project named *Troviamoci*. It started in 2014 with the support of the local administration to collect data of local youth organisations. This project aimed to create a local network between small and unknown organisations and bigger and better-known ones (Image AGE_4). For Age members, collaboration and dialogue with local institutions makes citizenship a practice and not just a formal status. Thus, the active role of the organisation is acknowledged by society and, consequently, youth are considered as good actors and partners:

> Just the fact of collaborating with the Council makes us feel part of a town that wants to do something, so this collaboration makes me say yes. I mean, I don’t know about the other guys, but before AGE I never had anything to do with the Council except for renewing my ID card, in the sense that it wasn’t something that really concerned me.(…)whereas if there was a Council saying: okay, we’ll ask for the total hours to make some space for these associations. There’s not just us, exactly, who promote precisely culture, and we somehow want to link up with the youngest ones, give them an avenue and, in my view, this would be a way of feeling more like citizens in the sense of having this triangle of school-association-Council, which however seems tougher than it looks. That’s it, in my view, if we could manage to get into schools, it would be a bit more involving also from that point of view. *(AGE_5, F, 23)*

The focus of AGE as an organisation moves straight from the local to the European level. It seems that the organisation does not have a focus on the national level.
The European Union is considered an inspiring venue for the projects of the organisation. As the vice president says, AGE is a pro-European organisation and this position is shared by members, even though they acknowledge both weaknesses and strengths of the European Union:

We’re pro-Europe, but it’s a fairly interesting theme too, because we’re for a European union in the sense of union, in the sense that we would like union, in certain cases also in a federal sense for some of us in the European Union. We’re not very satisfied with the current European Union I mean, at least some of us aren’t satisfied, me being an example.(…) we’re critical, we’re critical of the European Union but we’re not sceptics, in the sense that we want to arrive at European union, so we might say reformists, I don’t know, we want to reform the European Union because for us, now, it’s a kind of chimera. At least this is more an opinion of mine, I mean, this theme is already widely debated in AGE. (AGE_2, M, 25)

According to this member, it is possible to reach the European dimension of participation through acting at the local level:

Pro Europe, absolutely. Our guiding principle is the sense of cultural unity and, always, valuing the local territory, and for this reason we included the attention toward valuing the local community of Reggio Emilia. Since we had planned to organise a camp here, we decided to focus the project on environmental issues, and we wanted to involve participants from other countries, so the project had both a local and a European dimension. Unfortunately, the application to the call was not successful. (AGE_4, F, 23)

Europe is an issue of interest for the organisation because of Ovunque project, concerning cultural mobility programs. AGE is part of a network of organisations that sensitize youth to European mobility and organise informative meeting for youth who wants to participate to these programs.

Europe is the most important theme of our organisation, as we became part of a network of European organisations involved in cultural exchanges. Last year we attempted to organise one exchange but we were not successful mostly due to our limited experience with calls. …this is the most important reference to Europe, mobility and the possibility to visit another country. …this is one of the most useful activities because it is the best way to get to know other contexts, direct contact. (AGE_8, M, 25)

The main aim of the projects at European level is to create awareness about Europe conceived as a community of people with its rights, going beyond the national dimension. This representation of Europe allows members to consider themselves European citizens.

The awareness of Europe as a group of people, the idea of being a European citizen and not different countries, Italy, France, Spain .., the diversity, yes, but also what we have done, what others have done before us, the European Union. What does this mean? What rights does it allow us, what can we do together? What is the positive outcome that can arise from this? So, developing greater awareness ourselves in order to create such awareness in today’s youth; this is our main interest I believe… (AGE_3, M, 23)

Another important activity is the participation in the World forum for Democracy in 2014. The theme of the forum was “From participation to influence: can youth revitalize democracy?” and was addressed to European youth. A member of AGE participated as a delegate of the
organisation and promoted, after the forum, a discussion with other members about the issues presented during the forum.

World forum for Democracy was essential. … because on the notion of the usefulness of the EU I did not hear discussions, so we will try to deal with this issue, because someone might have doubts even though, in fact, no member of AGE thinks that we should not build Europe (AGE_6, M, 65)

![Diagram showing relations between local, national and European dimension for AGE.](image)

**Figure 6.3.** Relations between local, national and European dimension for AGE.

### 6.5 Organisational issues and individual citizenship

#### 6.5.1 Radioimmaginaria: a creative structure

The organisational structure of Radioimmaginaria includes two levels: the structure of the general organisation, with the different roles and positions within it, and the structure of each radio show in terms of staffing (we will describe one of them as an example).

This organisation is mainly composed by radio speakers who are the engine of the radio. The role of a speaker is the first one that every adolescent from 11 to 17 years old can cover inside the organisation. A member of Radioimmaginaria can be a speaker the whole time spent within the organisation. The speakers are usually organised into local staff groups with a chief editor, elected each year, who is responsible for the contents of the broadcasts and for the relationships between staff members, as explained by one of them:

Generally, the editor and assistant editor are the ones who are in quotes responsible for the broadcast, I mean not responsible like I control you just like a teacher sort of, but also within… I mean, with regard precisely to all the other stations, all the other editors and assistant editors, you have to account for the webcast you've put out, in that case your station (…). Then there many specific tasks, such as keeping the relationships with the speakers, knowing very well the staff, because if you know well your staff it is much easier to organise ad hoc programmes… for example, if I know that my staff is always gossiping, why should I ask them to talk about topical issues? Then we talk about gossip, and this sort of things. (RI_1, F, 17)

The majority age is a turning point in membership because adolescents have to decide whether
they want to stay or to leave the organisation. In case they opt for staying, they need to take a higher responsibility within the radio (e.g. taking care of a specific area or content) and a new role, called Jay. There is a specific procedure to become Jay that consists of sending an email, by the board, to the future Jay, with a request to present a written manifestation of interest toward the organisation, by specifying three issues on which the candidate would contribute to the organisation. The role transition is celebrated with a ritual called Jay day which date remains secret for the Jays until it won’t happen. From the following quotes, we can notice the importance given to this role and to the transition from simple speakers to Jays:

The so called Jays are the ones that have turned eighteen and decided to stay on with Radioimmaginaria and have specific duties, I mean, more demanding than a plain presenter, a plain editor, because they’ve decided to commit themselves to Radioimmaginaria even after turning eighteen, and so they maybe give us some guidance because they get together, they in turn have meetings, so maybe, I mean, they’re bodies that work and communicate together,

When Jays turn eighteen they need to send a sort of letter to Radioimmaginaria in which you have to explain why you want to stay or leave.; Then you have to make a proposal of what you want to do within Radioimmaginaria: if you want to engage you can, and this is the nice thing in my view, you can decide what you would like to do. Afterwards they make a decision whether it is right that you do this thing or whether it would be better to do something different. Being involved in a task does not mean that you cannot do other activities: however, each member has his/her own specificity. (RI_4, F, 17)

Candidates are proposed during the J Days, lasting 3 days. They are organised in a secret place, that only Alan and Michele know. The Jays learn about the place when they get there, obviously, and they are involved in three full days in which they work and get to know each other’s. Last year we went to canoeing in Maremma park, a naturalistic journey, we visited a park, watched movies, talked about Radioimmaginaria, and what we wanted to do. They are three days of team building. I remember this moment, very emotional, in which we stood in front of each other’s and said: okay, these are the Jays of Radioimmaginaria, look at you, you are the J. … we meant "okay, this is Radioimmaginaria team, it is you". For me it was a very strong emotion. (RI_3, M, 21)

Another role is the Ultra Jay, the name given to the responsible for the direction, production, human resources, graphics and contents areas who have a responsibility role within the organisation. Those responsible for radio direction work in collaboration with the local directors to manage all the broadcasts technically, that is, by using the radio instruments necessary to make the broadcasts function. The person in charge of production manages the live broadcasts during the daily routine and during the events.

The person in charge of human resources takes care of the different members of each local staff group and of the incoming members and staff and has an important role in managing and organising the members meeting during events at local, national and European level. The responsible for graphic oversees the visual part of the radio contents, marketing gadgets and aesthetic contents of the radio. The responsible for contents has a role of supervisor for information and news that each broadcast announces, trying to avoid spreading similar news during the same period and communicate fake news.

The general structure of the organisation consists of a traditional board composed by the President, vice president and the treasurer and other two parts called Sala macchine (Machines
The general board deals with economic function such as budget, agreements with marketing companies or external funders and it is composed by the adults of the organisation called Babs. Sala macchine is composed of the president and vice president and the person in charge of for each area of the radio. It includes Ultra Jays who are the youth responsible for direction, production, graphic design, human resources and contents of the radio. It can be considered a development of the traditional board because youth are considered responsible for different sections of the radio and are able to participate in the decision-making process at a different level. As the person on charge of production and one of the member of Sala Macchine says:

Sala macchine is the centre of union of Radioimmaginaria, it is composed by: M. as president, A: as vice president, a Jay, an Ultra Jay for each area, thus I take care of production, G. takes care of contents, L. takes care of human resources, T. takes care of direction, C takes care of graphic. (RI_3, M, 21)

The function of this part of the organisation is to take decisions when single broadcast or members can’t do.

Sala macchine takes decisions, sometimes important decisions for Radioimmaginaria. Why it is Sala machine in charge of this? Because adolescents are not always able to take them, so Sala Macchine has this necessary mission, that is to guide Radioimmaginaria in doing what the guys ask Radioimmaginaria to do (RI_3, M, 21...)

This body of the organisation interacts with the other called Co.d.A. to guarantee the maximum cooperation between members to take decisions that are representatives of the adolescents’ views. One of the members of the Co.d.A. says that “Co.d.A is the heart of Radioimmaginaria, Sala Macchine is the mind” and confirms the strict collaboration between the two bodies. Co.d.A. is mainly composed by the responsible members of each local staff who meet every two months to discuss about the contents of the broadcast and the relational problems (if there are any) in each staff.

As one member reports, the contents of the meeting depend on the activities of the radio during the year.

This body that’s called Co.d.A, called Council of Antennas, which is a body that includes all the editors and assistant editors and producers in Italy and you, practically, you have to… Let’s say, when you do a broadcast you have to send a sort of playlist to show that you’re not always talking about the same things and, in any case, you’re also kind of responsible for internal relations at your station, I mean if there’s a problem with a particular presenter or with the production in general, you communicate to the right person and say: look, in Bologna we don’t have this piece of production, and maybe it’s a problem etcetera, etcetera. (RI_1, F, 17)

I can say, I don’t know, maybe, the meeting of the Co.d.A. closest to summer is useful for learning about the summer events and how not to lose your station when there’s somebody who goes off to the seaside, another to the mountains, another goes abroad etcetera, to ensure they take part in the events, maybe, those that come… I mean, the ones that are new and maybe haven’t done anything with Radioimmaginaria, and the events are always a great spur towards participation. (RI_1, F, 17)
The emergence of these two organisational bodies comes from the need to improve the face-to-face meetings between adolescents from the different national broadcasts.

The structure of radio staff is composed by speakers which number changes depending on the numbers of members, the referent of that antenna, the chief and vice-chief editor (if present) and a director. The daily broadcast is generally composed by two or three slots containing the news and separated by some music taken from youth bands and independent brands, generally chosen by the director. A person responsible for a local antenna describes her staff:

we are eighteen and we coordinate ourselves during the broadcast. We all try to speak, to say something, we try to do it but sometimes we are not in the same slot because it is complicated. For example, in our first slot there is the Mariotti debate that makes laugh a lot; every time nothing suits him so, he makes a service of a minute and a half during which he says: why this thing is happening”. Then, in the second slot we have Giada news, she makes a strange voice and comes up with new words, transform things, and finds strange news. And, finally, as usual, in the third slot, our section. (RI_4, F, 17)

News, contents and the language used to communicate them are chosen from members of each staff in a meeting organised before the live broadcasting. As one member explains:

Yes, we chose them, maybe if one finds the news, then he posts it on the group and then we discuss together in a staff meeting, we try to do questions during the broadcasts to involve our public, on social networks and people that are assisting our live broadcast in the supermarket, where usually we are. (RI_4, F, 17)

During a live broadcast, there are some technical rules to follow as mentioned from a chief editor:

There are things that you absolutely have to do when you’re on the air, I mean, remember the contacts, know how to pronounce the songs, for example, or these things, there are certain things you have to, sort of, when you present an article you have to remember where you got it from, etcetera, etcetera. But generally, also, maybe, I mean the most important thing is to be comprehensible to the listeners, I mean you must be sure they understand what you’re saying, so you also have to put things in the simplest way possible, maybe, however, generally, even when you give your opinion, when there are moments a bit, you know, and you get it all wrong, well, that’s nothing, actually it’s much more fun. (RI_1, F, 17)

The communication of news follows the general rules of communication but it is not so strict because the aim of each staff is doing radio in an informal and funny way. Regarding the economic support of the organisation, the organisation funds its projects and activities using the associative fees from its members, by participating to public announcements or receiving funding from private organisations and foundations. They receive funding also from external companies considered as supporters through concrete actions.

**6.5.2 The traditional organisation structure: AGE and PrendiParte.**

AGE and PrendiParte internal structure is characterised by a board composed by the president, the vice-president, the treasurer and the secretary. The representatives of the different projects are invited as temporary members to the board. In fact, they are considered part of the board in order to ensure the inclusion of a range of different views. The rationale for inviting the representatives is:
I mean, to have less of us means maybe having fewer voices and therefore less plurality; seven is a bit of an encumbrance, on the other hand though, more often than not you realize that maybe without the leadership AGE would really be somewhat lost, so, I mean, it’s a hierarchy which in my view is necessary just for this reason, otherwise there’d be the President and it would become I’m not saying a dictatorship but nearly. (AGE_5, F, 23)

Both the organisations use a majority system to decide about the projects to be implemented and evaluate projects and activities. Dialogue and critical discussion about issues of interest are the main methodologies used to improve the interaction between members.

The board takes the executive decisions based on the decisions of the general assembly and on topics not discussed by the general assembly does not choose (...) it coordinates some meetings of the general assembly, it prepares the agenda, the associative moments out of the meetings, for example the training initiatives (PP_3, F, 23)

A general perception about this traditional structure of the organisations is that the role of president is perceived as authoritative and predominant on the opinions and views of the other members. In AGE organisation it emerges that, even if members perceive a very democratic structure of the association, the current president has a key role in decision making processes and in the implementation of projects. Suggestions and advices from the president are generally respected and treated as the best planning solutions for the projects. Sometimes, even if projects have limits or create some risks for the organisation (i.e. wasting time and resources for unstructured projects or economic risks), the assembly decides to run them. The secretary of AGE, who works in close contact with the president, argues that he [the current president] has a clear and organised vision of the processes of the organisation:

He’s got his ideas very clear and, in effect, each time we all talk together you realize that the voice of P[president], more often than not, I don’t say always but 98 percent of the time is effectively, in quotes, the right one, if you’ll allow me the term, in the sense that, exactly, having this idea of a grouping, he often knows already how to act; and then, he’s very precise, he also knows the bureaucratic stuff, when you don’t know, just ask him (AGE_5, F, 23)

The authoritativeness of the current president seems to be based on his competence and his trustful relationships with the other members. The president knows how the organisation works and members trust that he is able to make the better choices for the organisation.

Yes, I don’t know if it is because people trust me or because I say things that are rights and people believe me or I don’t know why. Usually, I try to take the less risky route of if I must take a risky one, I am prepared for the consequences. And, in this sense: it is not difficult to understand that this is a good way to minimize the damages. Then, I believe that this is the reason why people usually agree with me. Now, there are some who tried to do things without caution. (AGE_7, M, 25)

Such authoritativeness allows the president to provide a direction to the organisation, but it does not override truly democratic decisional processes, as illustrated by the example below in which the president’s opinion was shared by a minority of members

When I am within minority and they decide to follow another route, I can advise that something can’t go straight...I know that it is a positive thing. The first time that happened it touched me, now it doesn’t touch me but I know that it is a positive thing, that there are debates and different voices from inside. (AGE_7, M, 25)
The president seems to view his own role and power critically, and he is aware of the importance of internal socialisation processes in order to allow the organisation to recruit and train new members to take on the different roles and ensure its growth and sustainability.

I should not be the president anymore, I applied for president because during the two years I have been up, the two Presidents have not exactly given much space to smaller projects or to projects that could involve more youth or simply be a kind of tutor, to push people to take an interest and then they decide to spontaneously take roles within AGE (...) the first year AGE has grown little, because there was still a bit of motivation, the second year, practically, has remained stable or has decreased. (AGE_7, M, 25)

The president views his role as flexible; he defines his main task as managing the whole organisation with the support of other members of the board or the whole organisation.

Even though the current president is considered by members as the optimal person to ensure a rational management of the organisation, one member feels that AGE lacks an emotional, informal and charismatic leader, capable to strengthen the internal cohesion of the group. The president of Prendiparte is also considered an important reference and a guidance for the members. He is considered an ideological and spiritual guide due to his role of funder of the organisation. Actually, this role of authoritative manager of the whole organisations is gradually changing thanks to the new election of president run in September 2017.

He created the organisation and he outlined things for the first years, he guided the organisation so he is a guide for me a spiritual guide, he is the nature of the organisation, he founded it. It has to be noticed that he is a boy two years older than me who, at the end of high school, created this organisation with its aims, he became involved a lot..if I should ask someone to do something with Prendiparte I will ask him… (PP_1, M, 21)

Economic resources for the implementation of the projects come mostly from the following three sources: associative fees, public announcements and local activities and projects. Prendiparte organisation receives funding also from the national network, as reported by one member:

Well, it's financed through membership fees, and we also get money from the districts, in the sense that... on projects, from the schools and free donations from sympathisers or supporters, but the sources tend to be competitions through maybe association networks like conCittadini and then sources of self-funding like parties, as Prendiparte or maybe as several sources of self-financing. I'd say that these are the sources, yes. This year also through the network We Care we got considerable revenue because we took part as collaborators, because we couldn't be partners, but as collaborators we took part in a competition called by the Ministry, the 383, in a project and they had organised it as stories, on storytelling, the creation of storytelling, how to create a sort of storytelling alternative to the invasion of the foreigners, exclusion etcetera, which we too have to find a way of doing here in the area. (PP_2, M, 24)

AGE economic support comes from events organised by an association of elderly of which the old member is part; the project Mercatino del libro, organised for this explicit purpose and membership fees.

6.5.2.1 AGE: rules and procedures.
The process of developing projects within AGE organisation follows specific rules. All
members of AGE can propose projects and activities but they must follow a specific procedure:

1. each member of the organisation who has a new idea can propose it and develop a project;
2. ideas and projects are firstly presented to a general assembly (or even through an online group);
3. proponents of the projects then have a meeting with the president (or another member of the board) who provides support in structuring and organising the project;
4. if projects are finally approved by the board, the initiator becomes the person on charge of its organisation and implementation, with the support of a group of volunteer members, who may take the responsibility of some activities (i.e. communication activities, networking, etc.).

Members describe this procedure in the following quotes:

The procedure was: the head of the project proposes the idea and he meets with the President and with him they write the document of the project. P. explained me everything because for me it was the first experience and I didn’t know what I had to do, so we met and he explained and he asked me questions: “what do you want to do in this project, what do you think you need, what kind of people you could involve, so he helped to outline a guideline, on how to realize the project and, then, step by step, I moved forward. The president supports the head of the project during the implementation of the document of the project for the first times, if someone has some experience and is able to do alone, he can do it. (AGE_4, F, 23)

AGE members emphasize the transparency of their processes and activities, thanks to the tools they use to share their materials, that are accessible to all the members. AGE also developed an internal regulation specifying the procedures concerning the participation to the assemblies. For example, if a member does not participate to three meetings, he/she is not allowed to vote; if a member arrives later to the assemblies or stands up during the meetings he gains a “bad mark”. The process of recruitment of members does not follow strict rules but is experienced as “a natural process”, as explained by the vice-president:

We never reject anybody, but if we see someone who wasn’t particularly nice, particularly interested, who joined somewhat because he liked travelling, but then in the end doesn’t respond much, after a while we’re not about to run after him/her. (AGE_2, M, 25)

AGE members aim to engage youth who share the same objectives and values of the organisation and are careful to avoid recruiting those who wish to take part for instrumental reasons or personal utility (e.g. youth who shows their interests in mobility programs just to have an opportunity to travel to another country for free). They address their recruitment efforts particularly to youth that they consider “interesting”.

In order to ensure the recruitment of young people who are really interested in this type of organisation a common practice is to invite potential new members to observe the activities of the association, such as an assembly, before joining it.

Moreover, the organisation adopts a strategy to engage interested and active youth to become members and to encourage more disengaged and uninterested youth to remain with the status of supporters or leave. Indeed, from our field observations during a general assembly we got the impression that the distinction between the roles of active members and supporters (those who
are not willing, or not able to ensure a sustained commitment in the organisation’s activities) offers participants the opportunity to decide about their acceptable level of engagement and is thus perceived as a fair treatment. Usually, there is a periodic monitoring of members: a member who was not active for 6 months is requested to become a supporter or to leave the organisation if he/she is no more interested. In one meeting, we noticed that members strongly recommend following the rules.

Moreover, AGE members aim to recruit youth from secondary schools capable to contribute with new resources and energy and to ensure a generational renewal.

from the third year of high school onwards would be our ideal target. I mean, high school, because they have energy but they’re not too young... (AGE_2, M, 25)

6.5.2.2 PrendiParte: the value of informality.

As we have reported before, one key value and intervention strategy of PrendiParte is informality that characterizes the activities of the whole organisation. A particular moment of the organisation where informality is appreciated by members is the group meeting to plan the activities:

The process of recruiting members is accompanied by informality, thus meaning that new members usually come from close relationships of members of the organisation. They consider the direct meeting with new members as fundamental to involve them. The local events and the activities of the projects represent the ideal moment to recruit and meet new members:

Some got in touch with PrendiParte by coming to the aperitif with friends… it is always needed time for meeting. Once we meet, then, if there is some interest in taking part, it is done. There must be a meeting that is the most difficult part (…) it is very important the work we do…. The activities at school, contacting students who are more interested, with Scu.Ter. we create some relations with students and, at the end of high school, we ask whether they want to join PrendiParte. Then, they already know the organization, they have some personal contacts so, it is easier to join us if interested (PP_7, F, 21)

The process of recruitment follows a sort of selection from the president and the person in charge of the project of interest for the new member

At the beginning there was the presentation of PrendiParte by the president who was A. (…) And, then, I had another meeting with the representative of the project “after school at secondary school” and, hence I joined the project supporting the activity (PP_6, M, 21)

The different teams that develop projects are balanced for gender because gender balance helps to establish informal and direct relations in the school context, were students are both males and females, as this member explains:

a team is not just composed by girls or boys. Sometimes it happens that there are 3 girls and 1 boy as at Manfredi activities (…) you deal with a school population that is partly male and partly female, there are different sensitivities, different themes easy to deal with boys (PP_1, M, 21)

6.5.3 Individual citizenship: motivations and emotions
Motivations for membership to the three organisations can be divided into two categories:

1. first access: reasons that led youth to choose to be members of the organisation;
2. continuity and sustainability: reasons that promote the permanence of the members within the organisations.

The first category can include different motivations connected to previous experiences of members, critical phases of life and interests on the issues of the organisations. As one member of RI explains, his previous belonging to a cultural organisation led him to know Radioimmaginaria and to decide to leave the previous organisation to devote his time to radio activities:

> It was 2015 when I met them at “Sea of Books”, a cultural festival held every summer in June in Rimini, my city. It lasted three days and I was a volunteer, dealing with logistics, a task very close to the one that I have now; one year we collaborated with RadioImmaginaria and G., C. G. came to Rimini. They followed the festival, doing some broadcasts about festival and, then they asked to interview some volunteers. The artistic director of the festival proposed me and my sister. We did this first experience as guests and we liked it a lot (…) the following year guys from RadioImmaginaria came back to us but we said “why don’t we go to greet them in Riccione?”. So, we went and the idea to create a local staff in Rimini was born. (RI_3, M, 21)

The previous membership to a similar organisation that deals with cultural, civic or political issues, is a motivation that encourages also members of PrendiParte to decide to join the organisation. As the new president says, his motivations can be summarized as the need to create an experience of participation that is adapted to youth interests and values, the opportunity to be part of a concrete project and the possibility to meet new people:

> I was a volunteer for Libera since high school and, then, before joining the organization I had a training of three years with a group of students in Libera. This group was composed by students coming from different schools and, then, the different groups of Libera that were present within every school met and together we did awareness-raising activities, funding activities and typical things of associations. It was a very useful and important experience, for me it has surely influenced many choices I made in my life and, then PrendiParte was born. I knew people who were creating it. At the end of high school, I thought it was useful to take the distance from Libera but I wanted to continue to be involved with antimafia and there were two opportunities in Bologna, Libera and PrendiParte, I talked with both and PrendiParte seemed the most impressive because they simply answered me soon, I talked with A. who explained me all the projects, the structure of the organization, why it was born, what they do, why they do, why it is an association and not a student organization; and I was impressed by the wholeness of the projects and it seemed that I found the part I was missing in my previous experience (PP_3, F, 23)

In AGE, the first members who were recruited to re-create the organisation in 2011 were inspired by ideological reasons and previous projects. As the vice-president says:

> Practically speaking I was drawn in by M. D., because they needed more people, because they didn’t have enough people to found the association, and because actually a lot of other projects had been done. He’d asked everybody who’d been part of the Locomotori Collective, which had broken up a bit, and at the time I was really struck by the idea, especially because I’ve always had a pretty Europeanist spirit. So I made an approach and in the end I decided to join. (AGE_2, M, 25)

A political motivation came from one of the founders who was inspired by the opportunity to
have voice and power through the re-creation of the organisation:

We wanted to do things a bit seriously, participate in calls for projects, have a voice. This man helped us and gave us the contact details of the former president, the last president and founder of AGE. We contacted him and we re-created his organisation; it was an exchange that I very much enjoyed personally, because I am aware that leaving an organisation that you have founded to other people, younger people with no experience is always a leap into the void; (AGE_8, M, 25)

Interests can be considered a strong motivation that led different members to approach the organisations. Adolescents show their interests in music or radio activities before meeting Radioimmaginaria. As one of the radio directors says:

I always had this interest for ‘deejay art’. When I was younger I played with those programs on my pc. I had this great passion for music and I listened from my cousin that in RadioImmaginaria they run just music without speaking. But I didn’t understand…After two months I went to meet M. who is the director, the artistic director of RadioImmaginaria and I asked him if I could be a deejay but he looked at me and told me: In what sense? Because here, we don’t have deejay”. I said: what could I do?” “if you are interested in music, you could support G.” who was one of our most important directors (…) I collaborated with him for long time and I learned a lot of things (…) my interest was being a deejay but I discovered that I liked also being a director. (RI_6, M, 20)

It is important to notice that interests generally come from early life experiences and passions and could find in an organised context a place to be developed.

In other cases, it was a previous lack of interest in or of opportunities to develop cultural activities for adolescents in the place where they live, that led members of RI to join the organisation as explained by one editor of a local broadcast:

I joined RadioImmaginaria 5 years ago because here, in my town there are not a lot of activities for us teens and, RadioImmaginaria arrived also here. A friend of mine joined it firstly and told me: “why don’t you try, you could like it, finally there is something for us here”. At the beginning I was skeptical but, then, I stayed because I liked it a lot. (RI_4, F, 17)

Members from PrendiParte explain the combination of an extrinsic motivation coming from their friends and the interest in social and political issues that encouraged youth to join the organisation:

I knew it was a trustworthy organization, as I listened my friends talking about it, and the interest for the organizations raised since high school. I joined some school activities like being a representative of students when I lived in my hometown. When I moved to Bologna, I wanted to pursue my interest in politics and social life. And, then, through the experience of my friends, I joined PrendiParte. Their work seemed to me very trustworthy, it is an organization based on projects so there is no risk to talk a lot and doing nothing. So, I gave it a try without difficulties. (PP_8, F, 22)

Trust in the organisation, as it is presented by the members, seems to be a key element that enhances members’ motivation. The focus on concrete activities, projects that increase competencies and the context are considered very important for new members, particularly for
students coming from other Italian cities. The organisation is considered as "serious and competent" by members, hence they consider their membership as an opportunity to acquire new competencies for their future.

My interest in education was always there, so this was an opportunity for my personal benefit of doing something useful within the local context and to go to school to help students in need, then, this could be a very important experience also for my future work as teacher (PP_6, M, 21)

In fact, also AGE members show a motivation based on the good and trustful relationship with the initiators that led them to join the organisation spending their free time in a useful way.

We had already done something similar together at school, organised some activities and he liked the experience, to organise projects with me and he asked me whether I was interested. Then, in 2012, when we officially re-created it, I was already in. So, I approached them because I was young and I thought it was a good way to use my time. I felt comfortable since the beginning, obviously expectations where not so high in the beginning. (AGE_3, M, 23)

Another motivation comes from the opportunity that AGE provides to new members to participate to its mobility programs. As one members says, travelling to a new place to meet other youth for some weeks seems a good and attractive opportunity to join the organisation:

I took part in Duiuspikinglish and it was fun, but to be honest I hadn’t thought about getting involved, because I wasn’t… I don’t know, what I thought was, I believed that to join you necessarily had to bring projects to the association. So having no ideas in particular I said: “okay, maybe, we’ll keep in touch, but no hurry”. Then later on I got to know people like P. etcetera who contacted me for the Ovunque (Everywhere) project. It was the first year that we organised – that they organised then – so you had to enrol, so I actually joined, compulsorily in quotes, in the sense that if you wanted to go with them, precisely, free of charge etcetera, enrolment was obligatory. Well, I said: five euros for a week in the Czech Republic, I'd say that ‘s worthwhile. To tell you the truth, I joined precisely to make that trip. After which, I got on well with them, they said: “look”, and they explained to me a bit better what it is that AGE actually does (AGE_5,F, 23)

Motivations to join seem to differ also according to the phases of life when they meet the organisation. The opportunity to meet other peers and to get involved in new activities in a structured organisation seem to be good context to experiment with different aspects of their identity in some phases of life. This member speaks about the importance of joining RI in a phase of life during which lack of interest and lack of responsibility could still be transformed through the ludic and associative dimension of the organisation:

I liked talking, a terrible character, so, in short, I always wanted to have my say, and I liked diving into something new, well, I felt rather stimulated by this thing, although in the beginning, I mean, I withdrew worse than a snail, I mean I slipped away all the time, when there were things to be done, responsibilities to meet, something that has served me very well and still does, because I remember what I used to do to avoid meetings, things which instead were useful, because in any case we had to get this thing into some kind of shape. (RI_5, F, 21)

The second category of motivation is represented by the reasons for continuing the experience within the organisation. Radioimmaginaria members seem to be attracted by innovative activities
suggested by the organisation that provide them different learning and cultural opportunities and created positive relationships within the group, thus enhancing members sense of belonging:

I stayed because I felt highly integrated in the group since the beginning, I liked to work in this group. I stayed because I felt that it was a very lively environment. When they asked me: “let’s go to Expo” I said: “Wow! We go to Expo, they are really enterprising. So, I always engaged a lot and in the end I realised that it was something that I would want to continue, so I decided to remain and give priority to this project. (RI_3, M, 21)

In particular, Radioimmaginaria is seen as a formative context in which adolescents grow up and develop their ideas with other adolescents in a structured and protected organisation. A member recognizes to be part of an organisation that developed during the years through the activities of its members:

I am still here because I’ve seen a lot of Radioimmaginaria, I’ve seen the organization while it was developing. From here in Castel Guelfo, I’ve seen our development, and we did a lot of improvement, the fact that we have a main office here in Castel Guelfo that was a challenge to get it. This was a ruin and with the support of the municipality, we rebuilt it. And now we are here and we do radio in Italy and also in Europe. (RI_6, M, 20)

Some difficulties to continue to be engaged with the organisation depend on members’ school assignments and tasks. As this member of RI explains, sometimes the commitment within the organization must be combined with school life. Moreover, the feeling to be bored by the everyday routine of the organization and life, can motivate members to explore new interests for new activities.

Sometimes it is not so easy because we have school, tests and then, sometimes, we get bored if we are here since long time…and you can’t find your space. Then, every time we need to find some new topics and understand the attitudes of every single member, find their interests in order to transform their interests into a radio content to motivate members, to motivate them to be on air, then activate their passion and this is not so easy. (RI_4, F, 17)

For PrendiParte members, it seems that concrete actions experienced within the organisation are perceived as active citizenship, help to reframe traditional visions of AC (demonstration vs. talking about an Italian partisan in school) and are perceived as having a transformative power. A member explains how the process to act citizenship changed through his involvement in the organisation:

Since I started to develop a bit of civic sense I stopped participating to demonstrations, because… I was not particularly convinced that this was a good method. For example, part of my family shares rightwing political opinions, and never celebrated the 25 April [Liberation day]72. I have been used to not celebrate this anniversary because my family didn’t. Bringing my own experience, which I can share without problems, this year I went to the main square and read pieces of Ada Gobetti [italian partisan] (...) and I have always been reluctant to participate in demonstrations what we are doing is already active citizenship …(...) To me, as I was used to do politics using words, without doing anything concrete, this helped me a lot. Going into schools to talk with people and you need to do this activity on the 25 April and

72 Liberation day is the national Italian holiday commemorating the end of the Italian Civil War and the end of Fascism and Nazism occupation of the country during World War II. People, as the family of this members, who sympathises with far right wing political ideology seemingly to the fascist ideas, may not be interested in celebrating this day.
you get informed about what happened, on everything, you form an opinion, a bit more critical and then it becomes difficult to reject completely the issue as I had always done due to my cultural background. Now I celebrate it and I am happy about this. (PP_1, M, 21)

Individual passion and enthusiasm allow the organisation to recruit and to attract new members:

It is true that I am very enthusiastic about things, above all when I believe a lot in the organisation, as this is the case; and my enthusiasm and my energy help to attract and affiliate – this is what others say- and I believe it because many of my friends joined the organization and this means that I gave them a positive picture. (PP_3, F, 23)

The opportunity to have something useful to do during free time and the opportunity to do interesting activities seem to be the motivations that led the members to sustain their engagement within the organisation. The current president reports changes in his personal motivations, from being motivated by others at the beginning to be the promoter of the whole organisation. It is an interesting process that shows how the strength of the group work and the internal relationships between members of the organisation can enhance civic engagement and, eventually, create some sustainable changes across time.

I was very bored and I didn’t know what to do and I spent most of my days playing with pc. Then, this organization comes up and the fact that there was a group of friends in which M. was – let’s say- the leader (…) I liked it, I had fun to not be on pc for the following three days … I was no more the person to be motivated but I was the promoter and the motivator. And this is still the situation and, maybe, it is a problem. (AGE_7, M, 25)

Moreover, it seems that experiencing a united and cohesive group that sustains its members is a factor that promotes collective efficacy, that is the awareness of the possibility to act collectively, as explained by this female member:

…and the opportunities that it offers because I could never say “stop, now I want to do this and I organize it alone” but it is possible with an organization behind, because there is who can explain me how to do it, who can give some materials I don’t have, who can support me and to have someone to count on to realize almost all the projects you want. Having someone to collaborate and count on, is very nice. (AGE_4, F, 23).

Motivations are connected to emotions that members felt during the participation to the organisation’s activities. Positive emotions are linked to particular moments of the organisation life, as explained by this member of Radioimmaginaria:

Three days of Team building on Js. And I remember a very beautiful moment in which all of us, we stood and we said: okay, these are Js of RadioImmaginaria; now, all those Js are not here, some went out, some left the organization but the sense was: ok, this is the team that lead RadioImmaginaria, it’s you. And for me that was a very strong emotion (RI_3, M, 21)

Even simple moments, such as becoming a speaker for an adolescent can be considered an emotionally positive experience:

Being a presenter is really cool, I mean it’s really a great thing, I mean very different, it gives the sensation you get when you sing, for example, it’s a whole other thing, but in any case the fact of being with a radio, in fact, I remember that it was reassuring because it was a situation where it was only us, we didn’t actually know who was listening, there was no need to have a
special face. Then, when you heard the playback of your voice … A heart attack, you wanted to hear nothing for the rest of your life, just to avoid hearing that voice again, because it’s hard anyhow, in the sense that I’d never heard my own voice before. (RI_5, F, 21)

Even if emotions are not really expressed by members, there are good sensations linked also to the relationship that can be created within the organisation:

The great thing is that the oldest helps you based on the mistakes they made or based on their experience and they give us suggestions and this is a good thing because they motivate you, they try to understand you… and this is a good sensation because you feel to be in a unified place. When I join my staff, I feel to be in a family because I stayed with them since years and we shared good and bad things, we faced many challenges (RI_4, F, 17)

For PrendiParte members, emotions are connected to the activities shared with students they meet in schools:

Getting in touch with students is the most beautiful thing; I like a lot the organizational part and I like when we have training meetings, I like also the board meetings but the most emotional moment is the time spent with students (PP_3, F, 23)

Sometimes, negative emotions are experienced considering an ideological level and the impact of the actions of the organisation. The feeling of being powerless regarding attempts to create good solutions to civic and political problems is experienced by the ex-president of the organisation:

I think that the feeling of powerlessness is the strongest feeling I ever felt on different issues, because you feel small – as it really is- and you have to deal with this. I try to do my best, by trying to involve other people in order to multiply the possibility of everyone. (PP_5, M, 24)

In AGE, only few members are used to express their emotions related to the activities or to particular moments experienced with other members. They prefer to focus on the implementation of activities without being overloaded by the tasks, and to have informal moments to express their sensations and emotions. Generally, positive sensations such as satisfaction, sense of self-fulfilment and sense of belonging are reported:

From a lot of fun to a sense of responsibility, sense of realization, sense of unity, knowing that I had someone who supported me, knowing that I am part of something. Once I went with the past president to an important meeting, I felt designated because I was there as a members of the organization AGE, (…) sometimes it was surprising the projects we did, we succeeded in involving people and we realized nice experiences as the Youth Camp (AGE_4,F, 23)

The satisfaction of seeing your own commitment in something that, then, that leaves you something, I don’t rightly know what emotion it may be, however, a satisfaction I think you might say. (AGE_5, F, 23)

Negative emotions as disillusion and discouragement are experienced when the implementation of one project is not so satisfying and the organisation of the team of the projects meets some obstacle, as reported by the person in charge of the Duiuspikinglisch project:

Sometimes a feeling of disillusion because this year, for example, I was not very satisfied by Duiuspikinglisch project because I was less committed, I let things go, I didn’t see the
involvement that I expected and I did not agree with all the members of my group, I had some difficulties to organize and I didn’t feel well. It is needed to follow people, remembering them what they have to do and this is annoying. I felt disheartened and I said that maybe I won’t propose again this project, but I want to do other things. (AGE_4, F, 23)

6.6 Specific issues from each organisation

6.6.1 Radioimmaginaria: youth-adult partnership.

The relations within Radioimmaginaria fill a gap because members, from adolescents to adults work together for the same objective. The relations between adolescents and adults are both friendly and professionals, as confirmed by one member:

We always work together, I mean, I know certain things, I tell him, we agree on this fact: well, what to you advise me to do with the Sanremo station. They’re doing this, that and the other. What do you think? To do such and such. Ah, okay, yes. It’s okay now maybe, then, I hear them too. In short, these dynamics that are there, continually, of exchange. I don’t know well how I consider him, certainly he’s someone I like so much that it goes beyond the fact that we do Radioimmaginaria, I mean, I consider him a very important person. But in a word, I also consider him as employer. (RI_5, F, 21)

They are also presented as reference points for the radio activity and for life problems, as in some cases they are part of adolescents’ life as if they were their parents, as a girl explains:

They are our babs. It is a unique relation -let’s say- because it often happens that we meet them more than our parents. S. is a reference point for us because she is our representative of local staff so she has another perspective and she can give some advices. I think that we have a good relationship with them because they have things to do but, meanwhile, they suggest you how to do things, then you choose but they try to let you understand the right way to act. (RI_4, F, 17)

The relationships with adults allow young people to consider the organisation on the one hand as an extended family, and on the other hand as a “creative company” where adults and adolescents are colleagues. These forms of relationships are experienced and detailed by members:

They are our … not really our employers, they manage the most demanding part of the organization that is to relate with institutions or to manage the most difficult balanced relations; but they are also great models for us. For example, M. is like a father for me, when I am in Castel Gufelfo I am at his home because often we host each other (…) at the end, it is inevitable to create a friendship or a family relation because when I set the table at his home I know where all the things are (…) it is a very positive and formative relationship. (RI_8, F, 21)

Asymmetric power relations are certainly not totally eliminated; but there are progressive changes, as the opportunity given to Ultra Jay to open a VAT number to implement activities for the organisation, as explained by this member:

I am now VAT registered. (…) And practically speaking, now and again, especially when our activities come under competitions, in any case, in donations on a project basis, we get a contribution as consultants for that segment let’s say. (…) Then we issue invoices, the only difference is that instead of outsourcing people to do these things, we specialise in that field and let’s say I go to do a talk at Sarnano and if the item is in the competition, we do the consultancy. For the moment it’s a very easygoing thing, we don’t reckon on making millions, but it’s a help because at least we’ll be less of a burden on our parents. (RI_5, F, 21)
This method of funding youth members is used just for older members (between youth) because of their role and responsibility within the organization. For other members, other types of reimbursement are provided such as fundings for hospitality during events and meetings given by the organization itself.

The relations with peers and younger members are kept in a funny and familiar climate. They are considered colleagues for the radio activities and younger brothers or sisters to take care when it is necessary, as one member affirms:

We have a lot of fun, even if there is age difference of ten years. For example, I feel good with boys and girls aged 11 or 12 years old and you can find something similar maybe in an oratory but here is something completely different. We do this because we have fun and we enjoy it and we really like to do radio with other people because, any age they are, they share ideas that others didn’t have. And the beautiful thing is to play with that idea, on that creativity to get out a radio content, to decide to play that music or another… (RI_2, M, 19)

6.6.2 PrendiParte: political action

The topic of which PrendiParte discussed most often is the political positioning of their activities (see also section 4). The political position can be intended as actions that can influence the common good. Given that the organisation does not belong to a political party, its political vision is conceived as the opportunity to debate political issues from different perspectives allowing, within its members, youth who declare themselves to follow opposing political ideologies. This member affirms:

To join PrendiParte but this is a thing that scares me because I am politically distant from all Italy and all members of the organization and I was a bit scared to join an organization anthropologically different from my political ideas. But I never felt attacked or misunderstood, when I bring some different ideas we discuss, it never happened that my ideas were rejected but we find a meeting point. (PP_1, M, 21)

The opportunity to be aware of the political aim of the organisation seems to be important for the development of the activities and projects but also for the future life of the organisation itself. The belonging to an organisation seems to have an exclusive role to bring a political message to youth:

As far as youth are concerned, my opinion is that this is the only way to do politics in schools. I don’t know how it was before but, within schools, those young people who are part of political parties, youth sections of them are a low percentage that is irrelevant and the organizations are the only ones that bring a political message in schools. (PP_7, F, 21)

This position is strengthened by the political values that are transmitted through the activities to the youth raising critical awareness on different topics, as the ex-president confirms:

We are not neutral, in schools we do not say: “inform yourselves”, sometimes we do activities (…) we have a position. Then, in some cases we don’t have a position but we try to do the counterpart, for example if I think at Scu.Ter. and the activities at school on abortion, we are in favour of the right to abort but if we meet a boy that has the same idea, we ask questions to problematize and try to develop a critical thinking even if we share his idea. On many issues we have a position and this is clear, natural and inevitable. (PP_5, M, 24)
7. Conclusions

The analysis of the three organisations Radioimmaginaria, PrendiParte and AGE offers a representation of different types of youth organisation and specific models of organised structures that can include youth as actors of citizenship. Youth organisations can be considered as spaces to experiment old and new forms of active citizenship at local, national and European level. We have analyzed some good practices of active citizenship of each organisation (table 9).

Radioimmaginaria can be considered a creative youth- adult organisation in which members can have a powerful role in promoting their own active civic protagonism. Partnerships with adults support this process and maintain the balance between adults leading the organisation and allowing young people to become leaders. Adults encourage adolescents to be critical regarding social and political issues and to use the tools they have to perform their citizenship (ie: smartphones, social networks, etc). From a political perspective the organization can be considered unconventional because it strengthens the overturning of youth representation from vulnerable and weak to active and empowered. A positive effect of the role of adults is the promotion of a bottom-up process which allows adolescents to construct and perform their own idea of citizenship by acting with their language and projects in different domains: from informal and funny contexts to formal and institutional contexts. The partnerships with institutions, politics and schools provide to pursue the aim to consider adolescents as active protagonists in social and political domains.

PrendiParte can be considered a non formal political organisation in which a strong adherence to civic and political values is performed through a non formal pedagogic strategy. The educational format is a key element that defines active citizenship for its members and for youth in general. Hence, the role of tasks and emotions are kept balanced to ensure an informal context for members and beneficiaries of their activities. Their emphasis on informality, even if a good strategy, keeps them away from having a continuous collaboration with political institution that hinder the improvement of their network at different levels. The definition of active European citizenship that raises from the organization is critical regarding the European institutions legitimacy and policy.

AGE can be considered a conventional organization given the great attention addressed to the structure of the projects and to the rules and norms for the involvement in the organisation. The strengths of the organisation are the strong ties at local level that allowed the organisation to create a local network through the collection of data from local youth organisations (see section 4). Moreover, AGE affords the participation to European mobility programs to strengthen interculturality and spread European values. Mobility can be considered a value and a tool to promote youth participation at European level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Radioimmaginaria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth-adult partnership (protected protagonism)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different ways to express adolescents’ voices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PrendiParte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogic strategy (informality and continuity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutoring role of members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to European mobility programs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.3. Good practices of youth organisations
The representation of youth arising from these organisations claims to change the perspective of passive, apathetic or indifferent youth towards civic and political issues. The members affirm their role of protagonists at different levels of the political scenario that is not just institutional and conventional but also informal and creative. For these reasons, we can define these organisations in the theoretical model of Ekman & Amna (2012) as a starting point model in which the action of these organisations is considered a latent form of political participation at different levels. Hence, a step forward can be done considering that the political aim within the organisations is not so implicit or hidden. The political ideology is strong and the level of their action is political, considering the original meaning of this term. The engagement within youth organisations has a political impact in the whole society for the three organisations.

The definition of active citizenship (image 4) that raises from these organisations consider the link between factors that promote it, processes of construction and tool or instruments that are necessary for youth to define active citizenship. The consideration of tools seems very important because it is a part of the practices of active citizenship as means to construct and spread the vision of active citizenship from these organisations.

Considering the stress on citizenship education for Radioimmaginaria, PrendiParte and AGE members, an in-depth analysis suggests that learning processes and empowerment processes are transversal to create a youth citizenship from adolescents to young adults. The role of democratic structure is still predominant within these organisations and, from a critical perspective, it is experienced in an alternative and different form compared to the democratic structure offered by governments and institutions. The future perspective that can be framed according to these organisations is the importance to sustain future opportunities and spaces of experience to improve youth active citizenship. This is considered fundamental if we regard to the European dimension of active citizenship. The need to define a European framework of active citizenship is not so explicit for youth organisations even if members spread their activities within European borders and for European values, such as mobility, cooperation between youth from different countries, creating youth networks. Europe is referenced and presented as consisting of real contexts in which youth can play an active role. Schools as local and national contexts, online and offline networks and a non-stop dialogue with institutions make European Union a closer context and a valued framework to plan activities and projects.

Figure 6.4. Model of active citizenship
In the Italian context, these organizations represent conventional forms of civic engagement and political participation. PrendiParte and Age activities can promote traditional forms of civic engagement or latent political participation (Amnà and Ekman, 2012) in which the level of commitment of members depend on their time, interests and political perspective on reality. The time commitment of members in both the organizations does not create an imbalance between organizational and private life. Positive emotions are usually linked to the satisfaction for their organizational membership, to the development of activities and projects while the negative emotions are linked to the awareness that the changes that each organization can bring, are small if not shared and have an institutional support. The level of action of the organizations is mainly based on local and national networks. The European level is expressed through opportunities to develop projects that deal with European issues, such as mobility between countries and the issue of migrants and refugees in Europe.

Radioimmaginaria is focused on adolescents protagonism through a creative tool (web radio) and can be considered an innovative organization. The original strategy of the organization to deal with adolescents’ issues and interests reflects the methods they use to promote civic and political involvement of youth and the partnerships they create with adults and institutions.

References
Local Appendix A (Italy): Ethnographic methodology

1. Radioimmaginaria ethnographic activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnographic Activities</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Field observations</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Interviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>07-March 1. meeting with the board at its main office</td>
<td>06-July</td>
<td>RI_1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-March 2. meeting between university research group and board</td>
<td>07-Aug</td>
<td>RI_2 (via skype)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23-May 3. live recording Radioimmaginaria (Bologna)</td>
<td>09-Aug</td>
<td>RI_3 (via skype)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06-June 4. live recording Radioimmaginaria (Bologna)</td>
<td>25-Sept</td>
<td>RI_4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07-June 5. school party Forlì</td>
<td>27-Sept</td>
<td>RI_5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-June 6. live recording Radioimmaginaria (Bologna)</td>
<td>10-Oct</td>
<td>RI_6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23-June 7. Community event</td>
<td>17-Oct</td>
<td>RI_8 (via skype)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04-July 8. live recording Radioimmaginaria (Bologna)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Calendar of the ethnographic study.

The interviews were conducted with representative members of the organisation, according to their role, to account for the different voices, and trying to balance interviewees for age and gender. (Table 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N interview</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Role in the association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RI_1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Speaker, chief editor Bologna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI_2</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>J, radio director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI_3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>J, radio director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI_4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Speaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI_5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Speaker, Representative of radio contents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI_6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Responsible for radio direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI_7</td>
<td>Over 40</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Creator, Founder and President of Radioimmaginaria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI_8</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Speaker, J, Representative of human resources</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Descriptives of interviews with Radioimmaginaria members.

2. Prendiparte ethnographic activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnographic activities</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Field Observations</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Interview s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24-March 1. Board meeting</td>
<td>29-May</td>
<td>PP_1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05-April 2. Meeting with Scu.Ter project members.</td>
<td>13-June</td>
<td>PP_2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03-May 3. Meeting to plan the school breaks (Scu.Ter. project) with the group that works at Aldini-Valeriani school.</td>
<td>29-June</td>
<td>PP_3</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Table 3. Calendar of the ethnographic research.

The interviews were conducted with representative members of the organisation, according to their role to account for the different voices, and trying to balance interviewees for age and gender. (Table 4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N interview</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Role in the association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PP_1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Scu.Ter. project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP_2</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Vice president (ex)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP_3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Scu.Ter. project, new president</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP_4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Scu.Ter. project, Meridiano d’Europa project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP_5</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>President (ex)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP_6</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Representative of Afterschool activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP_7</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Scu.Ter. project, Meridiano d’Europa project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP_8</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Scu.Ter. project, Migrants project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Descriptives of interviews with PrendiParte members.

3. AGE ethnographic activities

Table 5. Calendar of the ethnographic research.

The interviews were conducted with representative members of the organisation, according to their role to account for the different voices, and trying to balance interviewees for age and gender. (Table 6)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N interview</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Years of membership</th>
<th>Role in the organisation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGE_1</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Supporter member</td>
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<tr>
<td>AGE_2</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Vice president</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE_3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Troviamoci project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE_4</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Duiuspikinglish project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE_5</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE_6</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Participative budgets project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE_7</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE_8</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>5, ex member</td>
<td>Ex-member</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. Descriptives of interviews with AGE members.

7. Portugal: Cidade+ – Joana Cruz, Carla Malafaia & Isabel Menezes, CIIE – FPCE, University of Porto
7.1 History and context of Cidade+

Cidade+ is an informal group, integrated in a formal association “Moving Cause”, located in the city of Porto. To understand the story of Cidade+ one must go back to 2011 and introduce the two main active members – Mateus and Branco – who have been projected the idea behind Cidade+: to have a “place” to link and discuss ecology and politics. Branco was almost 30 years old, from Porto, very active politically, with an ongoing political activity mainly in the communist party. This brought him later to work as a trainee in the European Parliament’ Commission within a left-wing party. Later, mainly for personal reasons, he returned to Porto and started to work with a NGO. The proceedings and the outgrowths didn’t fulfil his expectations.

I was doing a professional internship in an organisation, an NGO, but that... after leaving the parliament...getting back to some sort of stone-age, coal era level, it didn’t work very well. Then at a certain point I began to think: I had participated a lot in the European Green Party. I had followed many of the debates on this topic: political ecology, etc. I started having this idea of doing something [similar] here in Portugal. There were some environmental associations, but they didn’t do that much either. There were the Green Party that never came up. PEV [the Portuguese green party] was that fiasco I talked about and then I was also in the foundation of the Livre [another left-wing party]. The idea was always a little similar but later it ended up not bringing much either. This was with lots of people who are also in this area, who have been leaving in the meantime... such as Paulo for example and the other old school political ecology people. (Branco, Interview, 31st July, 2017)

Mateus was another youngster from Porto with a somewhat different pathway: he spent the last years organising and producing trance music festivals in Portugal. Mateus was also very involved in the political and civic life of Porto, even when he was not part of any political party or association. With his recent enterprise, dating 2009, he had been one of the partnerships of a former festival “Porto Ecologia na Cidade” (“Porto Ecology in the City”).

It’s funny my arrival [to Cidade+]... coming from the psychedelic world... Boom festival and its connection to sustainability started to interest me whilst I started to lose interest in organising festivals. I’ve done that since I was 18 or 19 years old. I was 18 and I was calling an ambulance to this “burned” guy that passed out on the dance floor. I understood then that that was not what I wanted to do: producing an event where people didn’t know how to enjoy without “burning” out! And Boom brought that connection between psychedelic world and a concerned culture, more aware of sustainability and environmental issues. Those routes: mine from the cultural arena; Branco from a more political side were funny to entangle! Joka had a keen eye! (Mateus, in Field notes [21-07-2017])

A common friend (Joka) brought them together, and they started to engage in a process of organising “something” they would like to be big and central in Porto. They recognised each other from the former high-school movement that struggled for the quality of secondary education, in 2000-2003. They belong to different schools, both were engaged in school life and students’ associations. They met in Orfeão, an old association in Porto, trying to connect different people from civil society and enterprises. After several meetings they decided they

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73 All names in this document are pseudonyms, chosen by the ethnographer, in order to preserve the participants’ anonymity.

74 This movement involved a mix of demands ranging from changes in educational policy, inclusion of sex education in the curriculum, and access to higher education (Seixas, 2005).
should start a group in order to create professionally-minded commitment and input towards the project as they wanted to create something relevant and effective.

We went on having meetings and I think we were there going from meeting to meeting. It didn’t advance. Deep down, it was Mateus and I who were interested in making this happen. It wasn’t advancing in that framework. We were in that mindset: “ah, this is needed, something else I don’t know what is needed… a month went by… nothing happened.” It was clearly not working. Since it was Mateus and I who were the people with the most interest in getting on with the project, that’s when I started thinking: “No, this has to be more professional. It has to be done with a specific team.” I also had no interest in doing something small, something for some half a dozen people. I wanted to do something with proper conditions, so it required a professional structure. I wanted to move the buzz of the city forward a bit, that this thing would be great. So it precisely required a professional structure, dedicated people. (Branco, Interview, 31st July, 2017)

They applied for “COOP Jovem” in order to fund a cooperative of 9 persons, only dedicated to this project, focused on different areas, from marketing to design or management. Initially, they had funding for 6 months and then they applied to “Passaporte para o Empreendedorismo” [passport to entrepreneurship] which enabled them to start working full time, since March 2013, with a group of three people. Since then, they have been managing different funding aiming the financial sustainability of the project.

Our ethnography lasted from March to July of 2017 in a weekly-basis – with some periods of intensive observation, depending on the group’s activities. Some of the encounters have been longer than others (sometimes the ethnographer was with the group four complete and consecutive days), once their routine varied based on their workload. Especially concerning their major event, we were followed the process: the preparation of the event, the event itself and its evaluation meetings. We attended both the formal and the informal meetings, working and leisure encounters, in public and private venues. With the exception of a last hour meeting in the city hall, in which our presence would imply a very fast bureaucratic authorisation, the group always welcomed the ethnographer in its activities (formal and informal ones). Such openness of the group enabled the collection of some rich and relevant data. The position of the ethnographer inside the group was fluid and organic; she was quickly recognised as “a family member” (in Verónica’s words). This ethnographic work was intensively linked with personal life experiences of the ethnographer, which aroused several discussions with other ethnographers for ethical reasons as well as to promote the contact with ethnographic literature aiming to redefine the empirical focus of the fieldwork. Although the duration of this ethnography was relatively short, this does not necessarily jeopardise the knowledge produced. Indeed, as argued by Pink and Morgan (2013, p.354) “the sets of encounters through which ethnographic knowledge/knowing emerges [in a short-term ethnography] are qualitatively different, their development is rapid, and intense, and will grow in different ways as encountered by different people, arguments and ways of knowing long beyond the life of the fieldwork itself.”

The ethnographer and the activists of Cidade+ were aware of the duration of the ethnography, which probably urged the closeness to the group. The will from the ethnographer to get enough information and the group’s desire to be accurately described – and their “essence” caught – allowed the intimacy and familiarity created. All the observations were registered in the field notes and used as relevant data to understand and link the multiple information that was being collected. The wish to be seen beyond the “known intentions” of the group is visible in the following excerpt of a informal chat between the ethnographer and Henrique.
Henrique asked me how my study was going on and if I had already started the interviews. I answered I was going to do it later in July. Then he asked me if I also wrote about Ilídio’ birthday party. I answered “yes” and he continued “cause I think that that is like an extension of Cidade+, it’s part of who we are. That moment.” And he talked about affection. “I feel you are quite connected to Cidade+ - do you write about that either? Because that, alone, is already an index of who we are as a group.” Then we shortly discuss about closeness-distance on the relationship settled between us (me and the group’ members) and he gave me a lift to my car. “I am new here” he told me “maybe that can also give you relevant information, my vision almost as an outsider. Think it over and let me know” (Field notes, 21st July of 2017)

Aims of Cidade+
The goals of this group are: to raise environmental awareness, reflected on day-to-day actions from home to the way we all relate with each other and make business trades; to promote a network of civic, economic and political actors concerned with environmental action/ social responsibility; and to make an effective change on politics, in Portugal and amongst its citizens.

The main objective was to deconstruct sustainability; to change it into small pieces so that any person and any organisation could understand it; so that it could be integrated in their day-to-day, into their daily lives. This being said, the main goal is to change behaviours: from less sustainable to more responsible, conscious and sustainable.” (Verónica, Interview, 28th September, 2017)

After this it would be like passing from that level to the other higher levels, within the various points you have because that’s just the way it is: there are companies, there are civil so linked; there is education, there are state institutions and there is a lack of communication between the various interveners. We felt that it was really necessary to have some points where they would arrive and could all be present somehow and exchange some information and with this permit and facilitate the approximation between them. (Mateus, Interview, 31st July, 2017)

Then we have several sub-objectives: one very important is to really contribute to the change of urban policies.” (Viviana, Interview, 4th October, 2017)

Main Activities of the group
The group reaches its activity’ peak in a public 4-days’ event focusing on environment and sustainability in a big local garden. This event is preceded by a “warm-up cycle” (3-months of events until the final weekend), trying to ‘create community’. This event entails conferences and debates to reflect on ideas, from institutional to academy or common citizen’ audiences. “Business plazas” – for companies which work for sustainability to be close and get to know each other and regular citizens. "Mercadeco" [little marketplace] – a space for trade and to present on-growing projects related to handicraft, food, clothing, with an area for associations. Workshops - to schools, families or adults - with various dimensions from physical health to recycling tools. Shows – music, performances, and dance – to celebrate sustainability and the environment with a positive attitude.
Main actors

Cidade+ comprises four young-adults (aged 30 to 37), two females and two males, working in daily-office activities throughout the year; Branco is one of the founders but currently lives outside Portugal, even if he still is a central figure in the organisation. It also involves what the main activists designate as a “friendship network” that includes both volunteers (23), interested individuals (137), organisations (69), companies (35) and local partnerships (3).
7.2 Conceptualisations of Youth

7.2.1 Group Outlining: an attempt to conceptualise the Youth of Cidade+

This core of the group is composed by four young-adults (aged 30 to 37), including two males and two females. Based on the public activities we attended, and on the historical process of Cidade+, the group seems to reach mainly a female audience as well as female workers. The recruitment of militants and associative leaders with high expertise, scientific and technical training, and mainly coming from university, was one of the main driving forces of the ecological movement, producing a new professional domain (Oliveira, 2015). The pursuit of humanitarian profiles (Dauvin e Siméant, 2002) was a way to contribute to the engagement.

Mateus: So we started by making a scheme of certain profiles we ought to engage and soon we understood they were different from what is the reality now. But that was our first idea. We also needed to advance from somewhere and so we did this. We defined certain profiles…

Branco: we put on advertisements…

Mateus: CVs came thick and fast. We analyzed loads of them, interviewed lots of people…

Interviewer: “So you built a team of 4, and everyone accepted the condition of writing down the application with no guarantees of getting funded?”

Branco: That was the condition, yes. It was also a way to filter an opportunistic from a dedicated person.

Interviewer: In terms of vision of the project?

Branco: Yes, of who we wanted to be working with us. This is not a 9 to 5 job. It demands that people have the ability to manage the unplanned, to do more than they have skills for, deal with the lack of money… Rosa and Hugo didn’t completely fulfil this requirement but they had profiles that we were searching by then. We wanted someone that could lead the administrative part: someone with an accounting profile. And Rosa had that. We also knew we would have to have commercial contacts – with enterprises and certain entities – so we needed someone who could cope with it, who had the right profile. And Hugo was working as a commercial for a long time. Soon we realize that Hugo was really good only if he had some concrete product to sell. And to sell an idea was a very different matter.” (Interview, 28th of July, 2017)

We soon sensed that we needed to have a more bureaucratic profile, more stringent. And Rosa had that. Viviana was a person with an extended background on environmental issues, a person who knew things: knew the social movements and had a lot of connections there. Branco (Interview, 28th of July, 2017)

The members of this core group are from middle or upper-middle class backgrounds, and three of them (Henrique, Verónica e Viviana) have post-secondary education; Mateus has not completed secondary education. In fact, this is an interesting “inside exception” as he seems to have an unconventional professional and educational life, and the same could be said of his trajectory as an activist. Other elements from the friendship network also seem to come from more diverse social economic backgrounds. For instance, Ilídio, a very well hosted volunteer, comes from a very poor social ground and a different city, and has become an everyday presence of the event as volunteer the event for 4 years now. He seems to be stimulated by his participation within the group and he is treated as friend and family.
The shift from the militant activist to the expert activist seems to be a common feature of environmental movements (Ollitrault, 1996; 2001). This transition was visible in some activists of Cidade+, as Viviana explains:

When I joined Cidade+, my role was to create a bridge with civil society. When I got to DaRaiz, in that time was PortoDaRaiz, that was my role. Because I already had those relationships settled from before. So, I was the person who would bring them to Cidade+. Other people would bring other relationships. There was a commercial who would bring his business links, Branco his connection with politics… that was the general strategy. So I was the one who brought these partnerships with associations. I was working with a lot of them… I got engaged, didn’t work there but I was there as a volunteer… I interacted a lot! I was very dynamic in all events from different associations…” (Viviana, Interview, 4th October, 2017)

Family context seems to impact on the political and civic attitudes of the participants (Azevedo & Menezes, 2007; O’Neill, 2007). These authors pointed to a prominent connection between family context (interests and political discussions at home, communicative practices in the family and previous parental political engagement) and the engagement of the offspring. Some of the group’s members stated they were raised inside a “political atmosphere” trying to address their own preferences and personal motivations throughout their trajectories:

My parents were members of LCI, later turned to PSR and then to Left Bloc. So, I was always in that left-wing context, getting a ‘left-wing-look’ of things. But when I was younger I also tried to figure out my own direction. There was a time that I got allied to JCP [Youth’ Communist Party]: I went to a first meeting – I already talked this over with Branco – and I felt really uneasy with the type of leadership there. There, when the leader says something everyone else says ‘yes’.” (Mateus, Interview, 31st July, 2017, emphasis added) [all examples above are of communist movements from the late 1960s/early 1970s, together with existing political parties]

This search for a personal political course from Mateus, regaining and reconstructing the influences he received, seems to suggest the active role of the individuals stimulated by the family context (cf. Bandura, 1986). However, and emphasising the opposite conclusion, Verónica seems to reflect the opposite, having impacted on her family’s politics since childhood:

You know, I was always the most revolutionary in my family – I was always against the tide. My brother would say “yes” to everything. But I rejected everything and called it all into question. I think I remain the same in spite of the attempts from my brother to put me straight. I remember once he gave me a cigarette to try and then said: “see, if you ever say to our parents that you saw me smoking I will say I saw you too”. He was this way with me and I always undermined myself, but always retaining an oppositional attitude. I think that my parents transformed themselves a little for me, because I was different. (Verónica, Field notes, 10th July, 2017)

The social capital of each nuclear member of the group as well as the social capital from the entire group as an entity (extracting the concept of Bourdieu in Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992 and moving in the direction of Putnam’s conceptualization, 1993) seems to have an important impact on the upbringings of the group and on the political and civic participation of its...
members. This relational net seems to be important in the acquisition of members, both as staff, as “friends” of the movement, and as part of the networking in general – enterprises, associations, workshop members, etc. They seem to also make the network last and have an overall role in the trajectory of the group’s composition.

Viviana added a lot to what we had: the connection with different movements that we, coming from hard politics, had at no time! Viviana came from that type of post-modern politics that had nothing to do with us, you see? She came from those “freaks” – those groups that go to the mountain and eat some seeds! You know? – She would do that connection that was lacking to us, and it is so important! She was a landscape architect, had worked with Gaia Municipality, served her apprenticeship here and there, she was also a researcher… So she had this interesting profile that complemented us a lot. She had this institutional side from the academic research and also a more alternative component, from that alternative world. At the time, I already knew her from a former fight in Porto – Fontinha [a urban movement connected to the occupation of a former primary school building that was abandoned] – and I knew she was also connected with fair/alternative trade. (Mateus, Interview, 31st July, 2017)

In the meanwhile, I had this idea of: why creating a new association if there are already so many associations? An idea of maybe being practical and sparing, and such things. It’s a chip! We were checking what associations we would really identify with and I always had a fondness for Moving Cause because I love their work, their attitude. I knew the people inside. I trust them. I really trust them 100%, I really do even though it has many more people now than when I met them… And that’s how Moving Cause joined in a year ago. And we are now renewing the experience with them for another year.” (Viviana, Interview, 4th October, 2017)

Cidade+ also involves close relationships inside the group, revealing the link between intimate and affective relationships and activist engagement:

My partner is completely involved [now] and I even approach him with matters related to Cidade+, even matters that concern decision making within Cidade+ (…) Since the beginning. Even because he’s not exactly from this area, maybe the way he got involved with the theme went on growing throughout the event. He became more aware of what this thing called sustainability is all about, what it involves… (Verónica, Interview, 28th September, 2017)

Olivier Fillieule (2001) – influenced by the re-interpretation of Becker (1991) from Hughes’ notion of “career”76 – found a consistency of activists’ trajectories that he named as the “militant career”. This notion of a militant career enables to see engagement as a processus, considering the disposition for militant activities, the time taken to engage and its transformations during time, the multiple engagements or the shrinking and extension of each commitment. This is very visible in Mateus’ trajectory, for example. He has some formal education (high-school degree), was part of students’ movement in high-school (together with Branco), engaged in different associations and collectives (from less institutional to more institutionalised and even committed enterprises), and still struggles for an accurate selection of where to put his energy:

It [his “militant career”] has changed largely in the sense that I need to be less active in certain things. Cause one must also to have a certain detachment. Here [in Cidade+] we are currently bombarded with a certain amount of information on a daily basis. It reaches

76 Becker (1991) underlines the two sides of this notion: the objective dimension (status, responsibility, occupied position from the subject) and the subjective dimensions (the self-interpretation of the subject’ trajectory that explains and keeps the continuity of the engagement.
a point when perhaps the call is for a person to want to do a lot, want to get involved in a lot stuff (…) I keep doing my things with my time in my daily life but not so much involved with other projects. Then all of it also becomes a little complicated when you have a series of partners, because you get involved with A or B, and why do not you get involved with C, D, and E? So the management here has to be a little smarter. (Mateus, Interview, 31\textsuperscript{st} July, 2017)

7.2.2 Cidade+’s conceptualisation of Youth

It was difficult to get a concrete definition of Youth inside the group. It seems as if they find it an hard task, considering the scope of the age range: “What is youth? Until 25? Until 34?” (Viviana, Interview, 4\textsuperscript{th} October, 2017). The group is mainly composed by young people and although they yearn to embrace different age-groups and family types, they seem to reach mainly a young audience.

The majority of our audience I think it comes from 18 to 35… so they are truly youth. (Viviana, Interview, 4\textsuperscript{th} October, 2017)

It seems that three ways of looking at Portuguese Youth prevail in their attempt to conceptualise it:

1) Distanced from politics, holding little information about what is happening in social and political terms.

They rationalise this as a consequence of the “civic” and the “political” being neglected topics in the Portuguese educational system and in the Portuguese families and culture.

I think it’s very related to the education we have both in school and in the education we have at home. It’s about being politically correct. It’s very related to the Portuguese as well. It’s very cultural! To not say something because it may look bad or because it will harm [people’s] susceptibility. Yet there are also ways and ways to act. With this, what I see in young people is related to two things: with education but also with the amount of distractions that exist today. Fully! I think it’s these two things, the strongest.” Verónica (Interview, 28th September, 2017)

“Our education is done in a classroom. We stay there during I don’t know for how many years… listening to someone shout a series of information and for me this is not exactly a productive thing. It is productive from the point of view that if we want to prepare people for only a certain knowledge, and to realize what their capacities are within the labour market, that’s ok but it’s a part of our lives. If we effectively want people to be an active participant in their day-to-day lives there must be another kind of stimulus, which will not be given in this place. It will be given with the people. Children and young people going to visit a series of places, going through a series of experiences that will in a way raise awareness when they grow up and make decisions.” (Mateus, Interview, 31\textsuperscript{st} July, 2017)

A youth conceptualisation grounded on the economic system, which according to the participants leaves little room for freedom, self-thinking or creation, was also found in the interviews:

Many problems in society that begin with the young people who are going to be tomorrow’s adults, is that they don’t have that good challenge or that motivation let’s say, that feeling of
being alive. Because in fact, they don’t feel alive because they’re not co-creating! Co-creating is the unknown. So if they are stolen the unknown because they have to go to school, then have to go to college, university and then whatever else, there is a continuous line that one must do in such a way that life is lost. The surprise is lost. The contribution that someone can give that has never been seen before, is lost.

And we have to be very vigilant because there’s always a discovery, it is not something that I already know is going to happen or that I’m going to do, it’s something that happens in connection with life and with people. And that’s very important, that sense. (Henrique, Interview, 20th October, 2017)

2) No opinion, recognising the difficulty of evaluating the relationship between Youth and politics.

I was probably going to say no. Still… maybe because I get in touch with so many different groups and I think we live in a time when we have very big discrepancies between the attitudes and interests of these young people. I see things daily that scare me and I see other things that… WOW. Also… what doors do I have for reality? In truth I don’t contact with so many young people and sometimes my door to reality is a very bad door. For example, all the Facebook interactions. A horrible door… So I don’t actually have a perception of it. If I watch a lot of television, maybe I think the world is lost. If I watch that Morangos com Açucar77, which I think does not even exist anymore, but… (Viviana, Interview, 4th October, 2017)

3) Participatory and engaged in the society daily life and politics.

In the meanwhile, I get to OPOLAB [creative laboratory/incubator in Porto] for example and I have the super gadget making young people who discover everything for themselves, self-learners, really beautiful beings who just want to know to do all things open source, free for everyone… (Viviana, Interview, 4th October, 2017)

7.3. Organisational Issues and decision-making processes

7.3.1 Communication and decision-making

The group tends to pursue a horizontal decision-making process, perceiving their internal structure as a shared-leadership. Yet they acknowledge Viviana as the “head of the group” or the primary “face” of the project. Once they incorporated a very specialised division of labour, that recognised the leadership from Viviana is quite inherently accepted, rather than dismissed.

This has been changing throughout the project. Definitely, Branco was very much that element of leadership at the beginning and for me he was always an element to take into consideration, a prospect to take into consideration in the development of Cidade+. Then in his absence there was a moment then… Who would take Branco’s place? There was a lot of pressure on me. Then naturally the leadership matters were taken over by Viviana, I think. Although it is still a shared leadership in a way. Shared in the sense that I think it is Viviana who is definitely leading but she counts on me for support very much as well. So I’d say that maybe it is a shared leadership. The leadership, the path of Cidade+, it is also very supported by the perspectives of the partners and in the very people who, directly or indirectly, collaborate with Cidade+. Yet I would still call it a shared leadership.” (Verónica, Interview, 28th September, 2017)

77 Words meaning: Strawberries with Sugar, Portuguese soap-opera for teenagers.
The leadership is a divided thing, there isn’t a defined leadership as such. There are three people who discuss things with each other, who debate and make decisions together. At this moment we already end up having things somehow compartmentalized there are certain things that I no longer question. As a rule, in terms of the programming, Veronica has been with that task for some time, she already has the autonomy to make certain decisions, just as I have the autonomy to take others and Viviana has the autonomy to deliberate over the others. *(Mateus, Interview, 31st July, 2017)*

They actually seem very successful in achieving group decisions. They mainly do it through consensus and if that is not possible, through a vote. Their internal communication seems to be accurate and healthy, making room and time for everyone to speak their minds and to be heard. Hereby an example of a typical discussion where the group tries to achieve a decision. It’s a dialogue between the 3 members that have belonged to Cidade+ for a longer time: Viviana, Verónica and Mateus over the writing of the final report:

We got inside the room. They were both [Viviana and Verónica] talking. They are writing the report over Cidade+’ event and were discussing how to count the number of the intervenors. Verónica said she counted everyone up.

“Even a band with 5 elements you count 5 intervenors?” asked Viviana.

“Yes, that’s how I do it since all times!”

“But that for me is not proper, we should have a criteria. For me, intervenors are those people that somehow bring content to Cidade+. That give information over a certain issue.” Responded Viviana.

“But then you do not count on the fact that we have bands that are concerned with sustainability, the environment and so when they do their concert in Cidade+ they are already publicizing their way of seeing the world with the publicity they make in their media, sites and such? You would count as one but they are five. “The work it gives us, even logistically, is very different from one person to five” continued Verónica.

“Yes but what content does a bass player bring to Cidade+? What do you mean, he is an actor?”

“But Viviana, there we would have to separate trainers/speakers from actors. Intervener is someone who intervenes. A bass player intervenes, moves the public!”

“But that is relaxation, entertainment. We are not entertainment. We have to find an accurate way to communicate our numbers to others. Otherwise people won’t understand. If we start taking everyone as an intervenor, at a certain point, no one will understand, it doesn’t make sense anymore, lumping everything together! This are tuff criteria, we are going into details here!”

“You are the one wanting to put different criteria!”

“Yes, cause those are grey areas!”

Mateus intervene saying “sorry Viviana but I agree with Verónica. What would you say over Inês’ performance, the ballet dancer, over there in the middle of the benches last year? Does it have any message? Do you count it as content? And what about the guy that came to dance in the opening of the event this year?”

“Ok, that’s a good example.” Replied Viviana. “However, I still think we should distinguish them otherwise people will look at the numbers and when they understand we counted it that way, that will discredit us. And, at a certain point, no, it is jnot all the same. One thing is someone who comes with a content, other is someone who comes to cheer people up. One directly intervenes in our program – in the content we want to convey – the other doesn’t.”
“Yes but what about that kid who was choreographed by Carlos this year, from Ballet Teatro? They started from a poem about nature. I felt [it]… it moved me… and I saw the relationship with nature and our theme… would you not count with this either?”

“Hmmm, I do not know but I think we have to have criteria for this” said Viviana.

“Then this is what this discussion is about, to find criteria” Verónica said.

“Maybe also I am just a little square, I will admit [it]” Viviana would say as she looked at Mateus to look for his opinion and she continued “Because it is two of you, I am one. I think we are going to have to stay there but I do not agree” (This two to one decision-making relationship had already been mentioned to me a few minutes ago by Mateus during the interview. As there are three elements, to be democratic the final word is up to two if there really is no consensus, but this is sought. As seen in this discussion that proceeded)

(…)

That discussion lasted for more than 30 minutes and was completely strategic and ideological, completely poured with what each of them thinks and how they value the activities and the different aspects of Cidade+. It was really interesting. (Field notes [31-07-2017])

This clear communication seems to be one of the greatest apprenticeships from the diverse elements of the group: both as an encouragement to voice her/himself more and loud her/his opinion to the group (1) and as a chance to evolve and be more aware of the other, taking a step backwards in order to raise space for a true co-creation (2).

1) “In the decision-making process I think the presence of all three of us is important. And each one of us has a very great weight in the decisions that are made, really.” I: “Do you feel that you can do it openly? That you are heard?” V: “Yes, now more than ever… And when I am not heard, I feel it is up to me to say: "I'm not being heard and I want you to hear me because I consider important what I'm saying.” (Verónica, Interview, 28th September, 2017)

2) At first I think I faked having active listening, you know? A clean listening. Then I'd arrange all the arguments, I'd work all my argumentative art to not accept it or to turn the other person to my side, I'd manipulate. Now, none of that. Not anymore. This is a community project, even if I don't agree, I have to understand that I don't know everything. I don't. It was an idea I had, it was: “I know how to do things well!” (Laughter) I have a bit of shame about this but there it is… and “No, you do not know everything Viviana!” Also, this [the project] is supposed to be everyone's image, so that's it. That is basically it.” (Viviana, Interview, 4th October, 2017)

Initially (laughs), because I am speaking of four years, four years of project involvement, this being directly related to the growth we are having. Relational growth, is it not?… with the people. Initially I think I wanted to impose my idea, not that I didn’t respect other’s ideas but I probably looked at different opinions as something that would shake my self-confidence. A different opinion. Oh. (Laughs) That’s when we were more immature. Currently, I try to understand what that different opinion is, what that different perspective is bringing, because Veronica related concerns no longer make sense and I started to look at the project as a… What’s important is the project it's not me, is it not? It's not Veronica, it's not Mateus. It's the project and where we get to with the project. So from there, it's all spectacular! When another perspective arrives, it’s to explore: Does it make sense? Or does it not? Is it important? Isn’t it? It is really about realizing what is important for the project, whether it is my perspective, or whether it is another or whether it is the mixture of the two. (Verónica, Interview, 28th September, 2017)

Even if horizontality is pursued and widespread in the group, it doesn’t seem to be easy to achieve and sometimes, almost as a utopia, covered some unclear behaviours.

Everything was already arranged in the room, with chairs disposed in rows. Mateus was talking with Verónica and she asked “why are the chairs still disposed in rows?” Mateus replied: “We’d better leave it like that”. But Verónica insisted “We can organise it in two
half-moons”. And Mateus: “but people are already inside the room, it makes no sense now". I felt that Mateus intentionally postponed the arrangement of the room ignoring Veronica’s suggestion because he personally prefers the more conventional organisation”. (Field notes, 18th May, 2017)

Honest and direct communication seems to be also a successful element for the settlement of their bigger network. For Boff (1999), the rising consciousness over the distortion between humans and their created tools78 is what makes some entrepreneurs to discuss new synergetic and cooperative relationships between all the elements of the equation – entrepreneurs, workers, bosses or institutional executive boards. Peralta, friend of Cidade+, understands the lack of horizontality as the main obstacle for creativity and true co-creation processes. And this capacity for creating and maintaining good relationships is at the centre of the functioning of Cidade+.

After that Peralta spoke and said that he also wanted to say something and it was “That young guy who likes systems and complex things”. He said that he has known Cidade+ for over a year, when Viviana told him about it and that “After traveling extensively and even having attended a huge international conference on sustainability, I realized that what is missing in this movement for sustainability is not greatness, it is actually in the human relationship that are created around it. It is these relationships that will bring change to life and they will truly transform. It is not the event in itself but the relations that are at the base of this event and that do not exhaust themselves in this event, which give strength and the necessary connections for continuity outside of it. And when Viviana told me about the event and after watching and being more involved I realized that they do it very well. It has nothing to do with such conference that I attended, which was great and had good content but it is the relational commitment they [the women from Cidade+] have, it is the importance that they give to this human part that will bring change effectively. It is not the event, it is these relationships they are trying to deepen today that will bring change”. Viviana said “Wow. Thank you”. And asked if anyone else would want to say something. (Field notes, 18th May, 2017)

7.3.2 The role of networking – Municipality and Enterprises – and the inevitable tensions

As mentioned before, the group is enlarged by formal and informal partnerships: they hold a “friendship network” that involves different agents, activists and civil society; a formal partnership with the Municipality of Porto (which includes the inclusion the group’s activities in the Municipality agenda, availability of spaces and human resources); and other partnerships and networks with enterprises. The efforts to maintain inter-organisational links, especially with public institutions, have the intention to build political strength and guarantee their role in the local political arena (cf. Landriscina, 2006).

This network makes possible to link agents with different experiences, professional and personal backgrounds and public roles, turning Cidade+ into a “meeting place” where different actors can come to discuss their common concerns, their personal or objective goals and “get together on the same feet” for a strategic pursue!

Another thing that gives me great pleasure is being able to have contact with completely different people, from completely different organisations; some people with positions of great relevance and of great importance – I mean, they all matter –, by this I’m saying with very important positions within organisations, I’m talking about municipalities, companies, universities... And to have contact with the young people, with the children,

78 Referring to the industrial crisis as the subjection of the human being by the instrument itself, a paradox that got the man enslaved by its own technological tools, Boff (1999) diagnosed our society as a soulless society, living from apparatus.
with teachers, with projects that work with homeless people for example. This is another one of those things that fascinates me the most, to have contact with all these people in all these different ways, and at the same time to be able to put them in the same space to discuss topics that are really important for the society as a whole. (Verónica, Interview, 28th September, 2017)

According to MacKinnon et al (2007) the respect offered in the treatment of “others” is even more important than other good criteria for successful engagement as participatory methods or engaging them on their own turf. “Building community” is an expression very much used by Viviana that seeks to aggregate people who think and feel the same concerns.

With regard to Cidade+, I see community as people who gets hold of the event. And for that I have to give up of any idea of possession that I might have from the event… (Laughter) of property, cause if it is not genuine, if I don’t do this in a genuine way, there is no Community… Community is not stupid! (Laughter) other people aren’t stupid! (Laughter) that is something one can feel! And for the people… they have to feel that what they bring is valued, is listened and has an impact in the same measurement has they are willing to give. So I see that community…. I really see Cidade+ being organised by a community that gathers people and projects and that meets up regularly to define…. (Viviana, Interview, 4th October, 2017)

This results in promoting their own influence in local politics as they are recognized as capable of generating collaboration and dialogue between different organisations and people. However, this direct contact with the Municipality seems to be a valuable resource that other groups/enterprises long for.

Viviana shared that in the last conversation they had with them [PROFESSIONALS IN THE ENTERPRISE V], they were really straight and Viviana could not grasp what they really wanted from Cidade+. She continued saying that they seemed to be detached from the central purpose and main ideals of Cidade+; they just wanted to know about concrete facts and their “personal” rewards in order to make a partnership. “I think they want our mailing list”, said Viviana. “Do you really think that’s what they want?” asked Verónica, continuing “They want the contact with the City Hall!” “I agree”, you have a really valuable thing that they would like to have as well. You must be careful about that. Having a direct contact with Municipality is a really valuable thing, not every group has that” intervened Renata. Then, Viviana reflected “Yes, and the City hall is directing a lot of their “environmental budget” to us, that’s the truth!” Renata continued “Yes, enterprises like the one they own, can never get that chance! They don’t have that clean link. They need your help!” (Field notes, 10th April of 2017)

Although there are tensions, the ethnographer could observe a certain degree of intimacy, improved by the regular contact and inherent closeness between the group and the different institutions, proving how contact can dilute some barriers.

Viviana told me after I made a positive comment about Marta [a person working for the Municipality]: “You know, I had a very prejudiced idea about people connected to the municipal halls. Maybe because we started Cidade+ soon after Fontinha and there… you know, you were there. So, I have been changing my view of the municipalities and the people there SO but SO much. It is almost impressive. I still have not gotten a bad person in there, not one.” “Yes, maybe they do exist but yes, I said the same to Verónica the other day “You only get along with incredible people” I commented. “Yeah and maybe the theme does not call bad people, right?” I said to Viviana. She told me about Rodrigo… that “He loves Cidade+. Seriously, you have no idea, we talked for ten
minutes and he said he was ready for whatever it takes. That’s where this meeting comes from”. (Field notes, 15th of May 2017)

The discussions are fluent and involve a positive attitude and easiness between the two organisms, embedded in respect and diligence that seem to rest in the recognition of the importance of the work of Cidade+:

Joel: “and another thing: your relation with PARTNER X, how is it going? Cause I saw the advertisement as an independent meeting... how is the arrangement between your entities is proceeding?”

I had already heard Verónica and Mateus commenting on this case the week before. I noticed that something was not quite right because PARTNER X – supposedly an event within the Cidade+ event – was publicizing itself and publicizing the event as an individual, isolated thing. There was no mention to Cidade+ in their posters. Verónica was the one who said it because her partner – Nelson – had seen the poster on the subway the day before. Therefore, in addition to having already begun to advertise without the knowledge of Cidade+ there is no mention to the event that welcomes them – which is Cidade+]

Viviana replied him with extreme calm. She knew what he was talking about and where Joel wanted to get.

Viviana: “Well I am waiting to see a poster to take a picture and then talk to them. The relationship is good, communication is fast and continuous. There is a problem here on the conception of the thing. They are very inflexible with that being their brand. So it is almost an aesthetic question. And I also did not like the poster that I saw that has the name of Cidade+ because it seems that our logo is hanging there, you do not understand the connection”.

Joel: “It is just to be careful as it seems that Cidade+ happens there by chance and it should be the other way around. You are doing them a favour in welcoming them”. (Field notes, 5th of May 2017)

However, the group is conscious of the risk of being unable to preserve their coherence due to some of the partnerships, especially with bigger enterprises.

I went to help the boys cleaning up the space ‘cause PARTNER X left everything untied: plastic bags on the floor, tape ... even the carpet that they asked us to save for them. I asked them why we should be the ones who clean the place! Ricardo answered that while they were having lunch, Viviana received an SMS from someone [municipality professional] asking if we [Cidade+ team] were not tuned with the disassembly of PARTNER X, because they got some complaints! “So we understood that we should be the ones making it in their place, that’s why we are cleaning this mess now”. All of us continued to clean, even in an upset mood. We felt that that was not our place as volunteers, mainly because PARTNER X was there only for commercial reasons, to make business! In the meanwhile, Mateus arrived with a hand full of screws and construction materials! “Wow, those guys... they buy that, you see... that is not rented, it’s bought! And then, they don’t even care, they don’t give a shit, they just let everything abandoned! Me, when I disassemble in the big festivals, you can’t even imagine! It’s a hundred times this, sometimes we bring big trucks just to fill with rests of materials! And these are completely new!!! They don’t give a shit! And here, these guys... ecology????! Ecology for hell!! This is capitalism! Pure capitalism! They are completely careless over the waste, everything is abundant for them!!! And they aren’t even themselves who make the assembling and disassembling, they contract someone who couldn’t care less, that just want to call it a day!” said Ricardo, angry! (Field notes, 10th July of 2017)
Evident in the discussions over the process of growing and the programming of Cidade+’ event:

And now this group with Cidade+, you have to be careful. Beware of growing up. You are now moving on the razor edge and it is not easy. It is not at all easy”.

“Well we have been talking about it, about the issue of growth, even because of PARTNER Z” Viviana said.

“We should invite PARTNER Z. Despite of everything, it makes sense to go to the international [level]” said Verónica.

“But will it already make sense to do that? We are only three years old. I feel some pressure on the part of the municipal hall to widen. Even at conferences to go more international. And I feel we have to be careful about being sustainable, in making a sustainable growth”. Viviana

“I feel it more in relation to the business world. In bringing bigger companies. I think we should bring PARTNER J, it makes more sense than PARTNER C”. Verónica

“That is right, you will begin to feel it more and more. And it is not easy to make the choices and I honestly think so… Look here, we are on PARTNER Y. Do you know who created PARTNER Y? PARTNER Y is INDIVIDUAL NAME, directly. More [stuff] on the razor edge than this!!! You have already begun to expand to dangerous grounds in this more ethical sense…” Renata

"Right, we want to at least pay attention to the companies that we get here to function with us. We want to at least make sure that we have the best of the bad”. Viviana

"We are talking about companies. The business world is not easy, you are in the middle of a very unequal market. It is not easy to be ethical here. And I can tell you [that] in this sense with PARTNER Z, there is not even a comparison with a ANOTHER COMPANY, or ANOTHER COMPANY or ANOTHER COMPANY. It is much more sustainable. They do not have a square on their website to say ‘sustainability’! They apply sustainability. PARTNER Z International is based on this idea of sustainability and they do things in local practice. They directly financed the routes that lead people with reduced mobility to the beach for example, in the Matosinhos area. They pay attention to this sort of things, access to minorities and everything”. (Renata, in Field notes [10-04-2017])

Heclo (1978, p. 446) points out that “issue networks push for argument, division, and contention to ‘maintain the purity of their viewpoints’, which in turn sustain support from their natural but narrow public constituencies”. the vision of “issue’ networks are groups of individuals who focus on the task of applying their knowledge to a complex policy issue rather than on protecting their interests.” And this seems to apply in this group as they see the dangers but also justify them as a way to achieve a wider audience…

I know we’re not 100% clean, harmless… are we? There are no innocuous, clean companies. It doesn’t exist, does it? Even so, we are not green-washing any brand! We don’t have Coca-cola selling here, we don’t have any of those things… and for an environmentalist this is important because these big companies and big brands clearly damage the environment and sustainability and therefore we could not have them here. I know that this is important to many people here, that consistency, honesty… because that’s how these people live their lives themselves (…) Maybe it would be possible to be 100% clean, maybe. Not only environmentally but also socially and economically! Maybe it was possible, if we were making a very alternative festival! But it wouldn’t reach an audience that is there in the limbo area! And that is also our audience! We don’t want to make an event for converted people! It’s also for those, the converted, to get together, show themselves and celebrate, but is mainly to convert people! So… we have to do it
like this… it’s a free event, so yes, we are making some compromises! (Viviana, Interview, 4th October, 2017)

… while making the best choices they can!

I think [Cidade+] is the voice of all those projects that try to survive from arts and crafts in a coherent way, which strive to do things in a sustainable way. They are not in the same competition market as the others, companies and other projects. With the restaurants for example, "RESTAURANT O" and "RESTAURANT L"… they work on doing things well MUCH more than the others. They are very concerned: that packaging comes from there, that fruit comes from there and it doesn’t come from Chile. This is the same with us. As we also assume this coherent position we are respecting this and giving voice to these…” (Viviana, Interview, 4th October, 2017)

7.4 Conceptualisations of action and citizenship
Specifically, the citizenship practices of this group (entailing not only the individual attitudes of its members but also the very role of the group), is very much about the changing of behaviours linked to consumption (e.g., boycotting products for ethical reasons) and daily attitudes, trying to target spheres other than State. In order to deliver citizenship and to get their messages across, the group revealed an integrated form of advocacy towards both public and institutional arenas – resonating the works of Pettigrew (1990, in Lang, 2013) and Dechalert (1999). Indeed, the ethnography on Cidade+ enabled us to learn how the group strives to achieve their goals by placing itself in-between the institutional sphere and the public realm: the ethnographer had the opportunity to observe their attempts to influence decision-making by acquiring some degree of insider status in institutions that legislate (being effective project implementers can increment impacts on policies); simultaneously, trying to engage with large publics, stimulating citizens’ voices and involvement in a co-participative processes focused on a common intention. There is an optimisation and exploration of the insider/outsider role that seems to drive the group towards success, maximising their goal of raising citizens’ consciousness and provoking individual change.

7.4.1 The group’s conceptualisation of active citizenship

1) The group seems to undertake actions both as a group and as individuals, associated to more ethical behaviours, products, enterprises and associations. This conceptualisation entails particular understandings and attitudes of politics and citizenship that go beyond formal institutions (as referred by O’Toole, et al., 2003 and MacKinnon et al., 2007).

Sustainability is one three vectors thing; and all three are linked in the background: it’s society, it’s the environment and it’s the economic part. Deep down what we, at least what I felt was that: We are living beings, we are animals like all the others, and like all the others we depend on the environment where we’re inserted. In the last two hundred years, what we have basically done is to place our very existence at risk. It’s as simple as that. We may even sometimes think this is a false issue because everything ends. We all know that the planet is finite; we all know that one day this will eventually all end and regardless of our good intentions there is an inevitability of things; life will eventually end. The question is: do we have the need to rush this process? Do we have the need to be so completely unfocused from what the near future is to the point of only worrying about today and not thinking that there is also a tomorrow? (Mateus, Interview, 31st July, 2017)
Discussing a touristic trip for the invited entity, Viviana refocused the others: “I wouldn’t really like to contribute to that company…. Do they have the monopoly of that? Can’t we find a smaller one? There must be more than that one!” (Field notes [10-04-2017])

Figure 7.9. One exercise they made in university class called "how far do I go in the world?" [left side: in terms of expenses in home, city, community and world; right side: national, European, non-European.]

Such participatory activities may entail behaviours linked to consumption (e.g., boycotting products for ethical reasons), targeting spheres other than State (e.g., corporations, governance structures), going beyond geographical boundaries (e.g., alter-globalization movements) and platforms (offline and online). This acting besides formalised structures, and the daily stances named lifepolitics – conscious behaviours based on political/ethical decisions (e.g. Giddens, 1991) – seems to entail particular understandings and attitudes towards citizenship as to live a democracy in an extended and deepened version (e.g., Andolina et al., 2002; O'Toole, et al., 2003; MacKinnon et al., 2007). MacKinnon et al. (2007) points the double incitements or common proclames delivered to Generation Y (born after 1979): “less is more” / “small is beautiful” so “be the change you want to see” together with the assertion that “one should not wait for a ‘stable job’ and should grasp (or create) opportunities”. So, less institutionalized action or the tendency to enact individually is a very predictable result.

She talked about Fruta Feia\footnote{Fruta Feia meaning “Ugly Fruit” is a Portuguese association created to channel the fruit that is wasted due to its size and appearance.} so I was thinking if they were themselves part of this association as consumers. A few moments later, Verónica whispered me “today is day of Fruta Feia. Now it’s on Wednesdays.” I think I got the answer I was needing, even without asking. In reality, I have Viviana as one of the most coherent persons I met. I remember the period I private more with her, she would go every week to the supplier market getting the waste of the unsold fruits, she was vegetarian and would make some vegetarian barbecues in her garden.» (Fieldnotes, 29\textsuperscript{th} March of 2017)

I can... for example, I make a point of making compost, using products... I think at the moment, I'm using almost all household products, cleaning and that, not all, but almost all of them are organic. It's not only an economic or an environmental question but I almost always have cold water showers for example, which causes me to waste less water, this means that I don't waste heat or gas or whatever else, in my case, it's electricity. Whenever possible, I don't have much problem with travelling by car. I've done it a lot but nowadays I don't. There have been months when I would rather not travel by car, but nowadays I don't and whenever possible I prefer a bicycle, I prefer to get a ride, the maximum possible. The small details as much as possible, the action of being a
vegetarian also has a lot of impact, right? Anyway, everything that meat production implies and so on…” (Henrique, Interview, 20th October, 2017)

2) Their conception of active citizenship is very much linked to being informed, interested and conscious,

The environmental ethics must be present. We should have moopies and posters with information of where it comes from to force the reflection”. “Yes, but from my experience it is not because I have information that habits change, even with people knowing that napkins pollute a lot the second time they go there they are going to take a few just the same, they will no longer remember. Having information is not enough”. Said Isabel. “There is still a lack of information on the environmental impact of the choices”. (Field notes [11-07-2017])

It has a lot to do with this that we’re talking about, planting the seed. I think our seed is a little bit like this: it’s a question of changing people’s daily behaviours and also bringing a bit of awareness to this active citizenship. We have several things that appeal to a more active citizenship. If people change certain behaviours, there it is: active citizenship.” (Mateus, Interview, 31st July, 2017)

Active citizenship is an attention... this is a difficult question! Like this so suddenly and without thinking too much, it is a daily attention for the events that occur in the day-to-day. Daily attention on the part of the citizens, on the part of the people who are going through their everyday lives and have an active stance. A stance of action in matters that interfere, which are all the matters! That interfere with the act of being a citizen, of living in society, in community, in a collective.” (Verónica, Interview, 28th September, 2017)

3) but also, being confident and expressive as a way to have voice and power.

(…) For me [a citizen] is a brave person, is an autonomous person. So… a person… who expresses. They are honest, courageous, honest, (coughing) they don’t exactly have to be intelligent, it doesn’t matter. To be honest and concerned is enough. Being a watchful citizen, out of their box… isn’t it? Therefore, someone who is connected with the community, interdependent… autonomous and interdependent, within the environment where they live. I think that just the fact that you express yourself already has a huge impact. It doesn’t matter if there is a consequence after this or even any change of laws or paradigms... but a citizen who uses their voice and expression (…) from music, let’s see, graffiti, going to assemblies and expressing. Also, someone who
provokes, that also expresses in common places, common spaces like: coffee
shops, squares. It has to do with creating culture, it's to create public opinion.”
(Viviana, Interview, 4th October, 2017)

4) Different from participation, as this latter involves responding or being reactive,
Participation, I think it involves more the act of responding. I think it involves
more action. It’s actually doing something. Also, when it comes to people
complaining formally, complaining about the various services, this is also civic
participation. (Viviana, Interview, 4th October, 2017)

I think civic participation seems to lead us to the word responsibility. This saying
that as a citizen I have a responsibility to also have an opinion and to do
something of what I see that can be improved. And it seems to me that this is
what brings active citizenship. It seems to me that civic participation brings active
citizenship, to me it seems to be this (…) There are two parts, I think, you have
the action part, isn’t it? It has the action part and there is the responsibility slash
conscience part. It might even be upside down, first is the responsibility slash
conscience and then it’s the action. And it's funny, I really like the word
responsibility because, it’s easier in English, responsibility - ability to respond.
Therefore, I think it is important to have the skills or to be interested in
responding. This is why responsibility and conscience come first. This is why
deep inside me I think this is something that could be different. A seed is already
there and then comes the action. (Henrique, Interview, 20th October, 2017)

5) and co-create, co-participate as a key to develop active citizenship and involvement in
society.

Because in fact, they [Youth] don’t feel alive because they’re not co-creating! Co-creating
is the unknown. And we have to be very vigilant because there's always a discovery, it is
not something that I already know is going to happen or that I’m going to do, it’s
something that happens in connection with life and with people. And that’s very
important, that sense. Then young people end up doing things to self-create challenges
to themselves and feel alive, and they end up going through already known social paths,
even in a social status, in patterns that already exist. And that can be a fundamental
question for a richer and more conscious society. (Henrique, Interview, 20th October,
2017)

6) They also tend to assume an activist as an economically precarious person.

In the way out Viviana told us [me and Verónica] “Tamera is making a workshop
to activist that costs 800 euros! 800 euros! WOW! 800 euros, how can an activist
have 800 euros to give for a workshop?” “Even with food and all… that’s a huge
amount of Money!” replied Veronica! (Field notes [31-07-2017])

If we enlarge the investigation to their friendship-network we find other definitions of “active
citizenship”:
7) Being engaged in a certain cause without financial return.

In the meanwhile, Flor arrived. She was dressed in yellow, very shining and cheerful. She
presented herself to the group as an active citizen, an activist. She was looking good and
happy, in her 50’s, and hold an organisation with 2 friends in the waste collection, called
“Plastic Sundays”. She told she had come as an individual entity and she was what we
could call “activist, and that underlines someone who uses her free time to surrender to a specific cause that does not give any financial return. I am part of a variety of associations that try to find solutions for the environmental problems we face nowadays, thanks to our lifestyle” (Field notes [18-05-2017])

8) Being able to influence others.

I think active citizenship is the capacity that we have to impact and influence those around us. Just to give an immediate example that this is what most legitimizes this, you can demand the change of people around you. Then my wife gets a bit mad at me sometimes because in the traffic I’m a bit intransigent and intolerant when I see people throw garbage through their window... among some persecutions I have already done. (Laughs) it is something that moves me a lot. This is why I think that within our scope of influence we can influence those around us. I would say that this is the minimum required for those who want to have an active and participative citizenship.” (Artur, Interview, 2nd November, 2017)

9) Citizenship as also a (moral) duty!

I think we must have the courage to get involved in politics, which I think should be almost an imperative amongst most people. I’ve been thinking a lot about it. I think it’s only a matter of time before I get more involved. Not because I have the ambition to make a political career because I don’t have this ambition but because I think it is important. The party militants define who is going to run for elections where all the Portuguese vote. If we don’t get involved in this sorting within a political party that we feel more ideological identification with... then we will have to subject to whoever deals with this (...) So yes, it is maybe important to get more involved. Then there is that, people have their professional and personal lives, and sometimes it is not possible to give more. Though, I do think it’s almost a must to seek civic intervention to the limit of your abilities.” (Artur, Interview, 2nd November, 2017)

10) And we even find a rejection of the term “activist”

During lunch, António asked me what I was doing there, what was the purpose of my study. I said that I was interested in understanding better the “activist world”. “Activist?? I am not one of those!!! Please don’t even say that!” he told me markedly shocked. Viviana faced me and we laughed to one another. (Field notes [11-07-2017])

7.4.2 Group’s operationalization of active citizenship – practices of engagement

The group believes in and promotes a process of co-creation in order to achieve a full participation, both within the group and within their enlarged network (that we could call their audience). Welcoming the others as co-creators and partners of the Cidade+ – mainly regarding the 4-day’ event – is a strong strategy to achieve a more democratic and participatory process.

Many problems in society that begin with the young people who are going to be tomorrow’s adults, is that they don’t have that good challenge or that motivation let’s say, that feeling of being alive. Because in fact, they don’t feel alive because they’re not co-creating! Co-creating is the unknown. So if they are stolen the unknown because they have to go to school, then have to go to college, university and then whatever else, there is a continuous line that one must do in such a way that life is lost. The surprise is lost. The contribution that someone can give that has never been seen before, is lost. And we have to be very vigilant because there’s always a discovery, it is not something that I already know is going to happen or that I’m going to do, it’s something that happens in connection with life and with people. And that’s very important, that sense. Then young
people end up doing things to self-create challenges to themselves and feel alive, and they end up going through already known social paths, even in a social status, in patterns that already exist. And that can be a fundamental question for a richer and more conscious society.” (Henrique, Interview, 20-10-2017)

1) For that they use participative methodologies, such as open space technology, world café or other group dynamics that can develop their interest, knowledge, values, and skills as full participatory citizens (cf. MacKinnon et al, 2007).

The moments of open space technology and beyond this. Deep down Cidade+ appears to raise questions, does it not? To bring knowledge, to create, to provoke citizens. This provocation is only to awaken consciousness, [for people] to become more active, socially more active. Therefore, all initiatives of Cidade+ or almost all do this.” (Verónica, Interview, 28th September, 2017)

[In Cidade+ visit to ESE] Then she asked us to join in groups of 5 and proposed a World Café. She briefly explained that World Café is used in more unformal places surrounded by coffee and cakes, but they would improvise with what was there. She explained that in each table there was a paper with different questions and the idea was to gather in order to try to find answers for those questions, as a group. Someone could volunteer to stay in the same place so he/she could take the information to the next persons and the remain elements could change tables every 20 minutes. There were 4 tables and questions were among others “What holds me from being sustainable?”, “Why is sustainability important for Heritage Management?”. (Field notes [29-03-2017])

To set up the main event, the group organised smaller activities, throughout the year, in which they usually worked with small groups, grounded on co-creation, and equipped with participatory tools and methodologies to foster everyone’s participation. They did use the ideas and materials raised from the event’s production. This co-creation process is extended to the network they hold, providing space, time and voice, for citizens, enterprises, political institutions and academics.

Viviana explained the rules of the second part: they should spare by the different rooms, trying to have the same amount of people in each one. Each group would have a theme and 30 minutes to discuss it and then everyone would get together and present the results back to the larger group. Verónica and Viviana discussed loud this changes – Verónica thought people should have time to swap rooms but Viviana pointed they were short in time – it was 7.30 p.m. and the event was supposed to stop at 8 p.m. Viviana asked the
group if anyone minded to stop 15 minutes later. Everyone agreed. Later I understood that even a 2 hours extension wouldn’t be problematic. So they agreed to embrace Verónica proposal to exchange between rooms as they pleased, with the exception of the spokesperson from each group. Viviana continued “The first room is about the conception of Cidade+, the second is over the program of Cidade+’ event, and the third concerns the future of Cidade+”. She asked who felt most recognized with the first, second and latest room. There was no one for the latest, so she told smiling “it’s a pity because the latest room is the cooler, it has toys!” Everybody laughed. Peralta raised his hand for all the rooms – he wanted to stay in all of them, he was really excited. So they told there were apples, cookies and water in each table and everyone could eat while debating. I went to my room – it was the second one – and people started to come inside. When I sensed we had quorum I started to explain the rules – the goal was to make the program for the 4-day event of Cidade+. We had cardboards, marker pens and a giant calendar entailing the days of the event, the different spaces available inside Palácio de Cristal and some white holes if we wanted to add spaces or times. (Field notes [18-05-2017])

Figura 7.4. "What is the meaning of 'Comunidade+'?"
Figura 7.5. Room of "Cidade do Futuro" [Future of Cidade+]
Figura 7.6. Collaborative calendar for the event of Cidade+

2) The co-financing of the event is also one of their strategies in order to be efficient and promote a direct implication from partners.

Then they returned to the theme of the companies to invite and Viviana insisted that the companies that will be in the colloquium should contribute financially to the event, this would be the only way that we could get them to be co-organisers of the event and not simply invited. They must start to reinforce this very well with the danger of distorting the initial idea of Cidade+ [if they don’t do it]. This means having a group of companies, organisations, groups that co-financed an event that was important for itself, both in terms of publicity as in terms of dissemination and the promotion of sustainability spirit, and really create a different and better world. (Field notes [24-03-2017])

3) Crowd-funding as a form of public selection and commitment

Ideally, they should have a low public funding relative to the needs of the event in itself. Now they are at 50% but the ideal would be to reach 30% and the rest to be private, or even less because that way they would be supported only by individuals and did not depend on the state. Viviana said “we have no notion but the citizens, the people… is
the largest mass that exists: we are an immense [number] and if we join efforts, if each one gives one euro for example, we do what we want and do not need 'them' for anything. The 1% or less of the citizens that exist is who makes decisions. We have to bet more on the decisions of the citizens… and these decisions also result from partnerships with small businesses, crowd-funding, and so, and I think we will achieve it”. (Field notes, 7th of April 2017)

4) The transparency with regard to the budget expenses is a strategy that seems to be used in many associations and enterprises that want to be clear about the way they deal with money and expenses (Lang, 2013). Transparency and responsibility in operations’ movement is seen by the group as a positive method that they want to improve in the following years.

Then they showed the transparent and complete budget of the last year’ event. They spent 50,000 euros. She [Viviana] explained that all the interveners were payed and that these calculations covered the warm-up sessions, the event itself – including concerts, talks and workshops – and the post-event, meaning the boring part of evaluation and measurement of the whole event. (Field notes, 29th March, 2017)

Then Francisca intervened and said that “In the Ser Educação event there was a poster first thing at the entrance, with the transparent budget and what was being put together by the donations. And it was the first thing people saw. It was not even the program. It was the budget and maybe we should do something like that here, have it as the first thing because sometimes people do not realize it. I can help with that this year. We could even put the money that was going in”, “It is 15,000 euros so if you want to contribute” Branco said in a playful tone. “Could we not [do it with] parcels?” Viviana asked “2000 euros or 3 at a time”. Then Viviana asked if there was an easel left over and proposed to make the transparent budget, straight away, the next day”. The conversation was not concluded. (Field notes, 7th July, 2017)

7.4.3 The professionalisation of activism driving the activation of citizenship
This self-sustainable logic of participation and financing of the event is also visible in their own struggles towards a professionalisation of an activity that the four activists care about and (also because) it is consistent with their own beliefs. This tendency to institutionalise associative action, visible throughout the 1990s, made a professionalised profile of activism and a more conventional way of political mobilization emerge (Sawicki & Siméant, 2011). The professionalisation appears as a possible meeting point between state, enterprises and private needs: a legal status that can permit the access to funds and to the possibility of making advisory service on decision-making processes. However, this professionalisation comes with a diversity of tensions that we can draw in a parallel line with ONGization processes (Lang, 2013). Some are worth discussing as the articulation between legitimacy and limits of the process constantly emerged in the fieldwork and data collection.\footnote{This process is now confirmed as the formal association linked with Cidade+, Moving Cause, is making the step of passing from association to ONG.}

We cite some of the growing characteristics that we could observe in the field:

1) **Specialisation of the activists** in certain themes: Viviana and Verónica are both landscape architects, with past academic research in the field of environmental management. Mateus is engaged in logistic management and Henrique is in the communication area.

Now at this time my specific work has been very much more focused on the logistics of the event… Essentially due to the existing team but also because of other thing… in other works I had, I’m not really the logistics’ person, neither am I a specialist of logistics, but I do work at other events in areas very closed to logistics. Here [in Cidade+] it does give me a certain pleasure… maybe that’s a personal gain, cause I feel I am developing a skill, a competence that maybe I knew I had but I was not using before! To plan things, to be more objective in certain things, all that helps me, not only here in Cidade+ but also in other works that I develop.” (**Mateus, Interview, 31st July, 2017**)  

2) **Negotiation with authorities** and the provision of services in “environmental management”

“You should think [he gives example of other municipalities in the North region] … when you spread to the Metropolitan Area of Porto you can reach the whole of the North region. They have a plan for climatic changes and they can contract daRaíz for some of it. And you can coordinate this, do you understand? Maybe it’s too much for daRaíz but part of it you can manage. (…) Verónica is a member of the commission that supervises the plan. She cannot be paid but it’s a lobby … she can verify if they are doing something or if it’s going to rest on a drawer.” Fonseca (**Field notes, 5th May of 2017**)  

3) **Increased efficiency**: making things faster, better and less bureaucratic than other institutions. This is illustrated in the following dialogue, in which they consider turning Cidade+ into an enterprise or an autonomous association, as shown in the following excerpt:

For that we should think about creating an enterprise” said Mateus. “An enterprise? No, it’s better an association!” replied Viviana. “But if we earn more than 10,000 euros we have to pay taxes. Like now: moving cause will have to pay taxes.” Said Mateus. “Because of us?” asked Verónica. “Yes, because we joined them! I think we should have
proper accounts, an accountant – it’s cheap! 150 per month and it is an investment that compensates in a long-term. Cause now we will have to pay like 12.000 euros that we probably won’t review! If we had organised accounts we would, then, make tax' deductions. An enterprise has advantages like not needing to be making all these strategic movements to be paid! And in an association we cannot be in the direction’ board! We need more people.” replied Mateus. “Yeah, we put our friends and family. I continue to feel it’s better to create an association!” finalized Viviana. (Field notes, 21st of April, 2017)

4) Work where the government do not want to act, fails its action (Huddock, 1999) or does not have basic knowledge (Lang, 2013). The capacity to create and sustain interested audiences: to be “the savior of citizen’s engagement” (ibid.)

We had two visits from municipalities last year, from CITY 2. They wanted to learn from us and have more information.” Said Viviana to Fonseca. (Field notes, 5th May, 2017)

Verónica talked passionately, as ever, about what was happening. She was delighted with the meeting in CITY 3 “they found us, it’s really lucky.” “What’s their idea?” I asked. “Yeah, she replied, it’s still not clear for me either. They like the idea, the co-creation of Cidade+, and want our knowledge of how to do it. They are building a virtual lab to apply to a funding and they want our help. Viviana even said that ‘you know we are too old to work as volunteers!’ and he was really great, he said he did not believe in volunteering, he preferred passionate workers. So, we do not know what they really want, yet, but they want our help on this issue!” (Field notes, 11th May of 2017)

7.4.4 Tensions: what are the limits and tensions in the professionalisation process?
In a processus identical to the NGOisation, very vivid in this group, tensions appear with a phenomenon that includes (1) bureaucratization, (2) volunteer work, (3) institutional presence, (4) accuracy of communication, or (5) running for money (Lang, 2013).

1) The discussion “to be or not to be” an autonomous association popped several times but the participants never reached a conclusion. They seem to maintain the relationship with an outside entity – Moving cause – for bureaucratic matters.

2) Volunteer work is used by the group both to meet the needs of the event’ production and as an opportunity to engage others in the movement journey. The perception volunteers have from their work in Cidade+ differs from being really happy and thankful for the experience (*) to the feeling of an existing “gap” between “organisers” and “volunteers”(**) that helps to decrease the appreciation of their engagement.

* Then, one of the volunteers (a woman in her fifties), said: “I like the positive energy that exists here – I am always greeted with a smile. And this creates empathy with people! The way I was welcomed … I like very much people your age, I like young people! I did not know that much about the topic, and from this I learned new things, and I loved it! Next year I want to have strength to continue! If there are things to be done, let’s do it! This will to change, that is what I saw here, let’s do it! Thank you!” (Field notes, 11th July of 2017)

** André [a volunteer] told “I think we shouldn’t make a distinction between organisation and volunteers.” Some people reacted against this opinion, stating “But that is what protects volunteers, cause they are not obliged to know
“I disagree with you Andre. I think that it’s easier for a normal person to understand that as I am volunteer I won’t probably know everything. If I had something saying ‘organisation’, then, I should know everything!” Verónica continued “And it also lightens on the fact that this event is lacking resources, so it is more transparent! But I also tell you that it is not the first time that someone transition from ‘volunteer’ to ‘organiser’. And that we must see case by case and I think we can think this over later.” Fonseca intervened saying “there are volunteers who are so competent that probably they should make the transition to ‘organisation’. It’s a question of personal reward, of an increased value!” (Field notes, 11th July of 2017)

3) Institutional presence and being “inside” the formal decisions platforms, unfortunately, can entail risks of co-option or deviance from the main goals. Brulle (2000, pp. 257–264 in Josephh, Mahler & Auyero, 2007) concludes that “dependence on external funding requires the moderation of a movement organisation’s political goals and strategies, and eventually leads to co-optation and ineffectiveness”. We could witness this danger felt by the participants in several occasions, which was openly discussed and acknowledge from the diverse elements.

We were meeting with the city councillor [of another City] and the assistant. When we were walking, Verónica told me “I do not know if we will be doing this next year. This helps, the money, the network, but it has nothing to do with us. Every time I feel this more strongly. The way they do these things is just to fill in the agenda. We do not like to work this way, you know?” (Field notes, 26th May of 2017)

“Because there are many people who think this is sponsored by the municipal hall and it is not. They [people] think they should not give anything because it is already paid for and it is not true. We have to be able to pass this on to people because the idea is that this is to be something that people themselves want to create not that the municipal hall organises. And there is already a huge difference about this because in this last news about Cidade+ the municipality hall wrote that it was an event organised by the daRaiz. It was the first time they did not put it as a municipal event and that already means a lot. They got it and it took a lot of talk to get here. It was the communication that changed, nothing else”. “Before it was an event organised by the Municipal hall in partnership with the daRaiz, right?” Asked Verónica. “Yes but nobody reads the partnerships and it is false. The event is ours and we have other partners. It is not a municipality thing. And yes, I think people should know it”. (Field notes, 7th July of 2017)

And this link is not truly accepted by the whole network.

Then Nelson spoke: “I think that the city hall has to be involved from the beginning also in the evaluation of the projects, to really commit itself and guarantee that this moves forward.” Nelson look like someone who is very calm but sharp, right to the point. “Municipalities … what they want is to appear in the photos!”, says Antonio.” (Field notes, 11th May, 2017)

4) The communicational accuracy and formalisation of speech

“now [institutional contacts] it's something that I keep getting further and further away from, and in a way I prefer to stay away. It has been mainly the part of the partnerships, everything that has to do with partnerships, more institutional or less institutional. These are things that require a certain kind of formality in some sense; I have always had a bit
of an aversion to certain types of formalities (...) I like the logistic part because it makes me stay in touch with the gardener here, with the guy from Pavilhão Rosa Mota, who is there and is not the boss, he's just that person to whom I have to ask for X or Y. As a general rule I like it better when I'm in contact with the people, not very well put but I would say it is simpler. However, as a norm, to form a partnership or to reach certain people in an institution, there’s a need for certain other kind of care, which I also know how to have... It was something that didn’t please me, it was not about having to always be adjusting my vocabulary, measuring all the words I say, having to think clearly about what I'm going to say because the word X can be interpreted differently. There it is, with the people with whom I currently contact I don’t have to have these kinds of worries because people don’t tend to complicate things that much...” (Mateus, Interview, 31st July, 2017)

Always planning dissemination activities, considering their impact on public visibility, the activists implement a professional use of political marketing and media.

There were two investors of 13,500 Euros each, who sponsored the event because if they did not put the money there (or somewhere similar) they did not get funds in the following year: nothing comes from charity or true solidarity but that’s just the thing in the real world. They talked about marketing techniques, making small crowd-funding slots or big ones that would give people more money: they talked about putting their names on a wall, the marketing man talked about making cork pens... they spoke of several newspapers names and of those where it would be of interest to have Cidade+ things. SEVERAL EXAMPLES OF JOURNALS AND MAGAZINES which don’t have a lot of online public. The marketing professional said it was important to study the people before the meetings so one could have common subjects to talk about. He told one could see in the Facebook if common friends were there, for example. It was important not to let this information go to waste. (Field notes [17-03-2017])

The institutionalisation comes with the need for impact measurement, once performance measurement has become a primary tool for enhancing accountability of governmental programs in the post bureaucratic era (Barzelay, 2001). Financers are waiting for quantified data (Thomson, 2010; Alexander et al., 2010), but this is a difficult request as finding an accurate measurement’ tool for the impacts and “making good” depends on the context (Vedder, 2007).

Now whether it really is effective or not this is what we are... actually, this is one of the main challenges that we are facing now in Cidade+: how can we measure that impact, this influence that Cidade+ has on its participants? And now I remembered that at the beginning I spoke of the Cidade+ as an event and I did not mention the rest. (Laughs) (Verónica, Interview, 28th September, 2017)

It also complicates living what they deem to be a passionate, expressive and activist work vis-à-vis an instrumental and utilitarian dimension that allows the “work” and the “desired transformations” to exist. There seems to be an inevitable tension that results from the institutionalisation of social/political movements: activists are expected to reconcile their (cherished) beliefs with other interests to guarantee the effectiveness and sustainability of their (political) actions:

Nothing is safe, but we ended up managing things in a way we continued to stay in the project. We felt that it could have a future, even if we started to understand that it was

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81 Pavilhão Rosa Mota: formally the Cristal Palace, the location where Cidade+ is held
not going to be as fast as we wanted, but we ended up, each of us, to keep on going. We ended up finding alternative things to complement our engagement.” (Mateus, Interview, 31st July, 2017)

5) And the survival of the group depends on funding so the “running for funding” is a constant matter.

I think the only part that is not rewarding – and it shouldn’t be my role – is the quest for funding! I have no patience for that! (Laugh) (Viviana, Interview, 4th October, 2017)

And as a consequence, this type of professionalisation is framed by precarious lives, revealing one of the main contradictions of the group: the coexistence of the market rationale and the logic of sustainability.

I [Viviana] am really broke. And this life I am having no longer makes sense. I am 33 years old and this is not the age, it really is not… it no longer makes sense. This precariousness no longer makes sense, this dependence, this constant uncertainty. I feel that we are good at what we do, we have value! Seriously, we know how to do this, this management. We are among the best in [what comes to] human relations, in the contact we make, in the networks that we get. We have to value that. We cannot always be working, working and not even be sure if we have ways to finance ourselves. This is not sustainable. I am now at Henrique’s house. I only have some change left over. I cannot always keep coming here, from Braga. I have to leave Kungsu (a martial art that I still do not know what it is). It is enough of thinking that it can all be done so lightly. My parents loaned me €500 last month. I am going to give it back to them as soon as I get paid, it is just borrowed. Anyway it does not make sense to ask money from my parents when I work every day. The municipality money has not arrived yet. We have been waiting since September to receive this money. We are in April… with what money are we supposed to be living with? I was [living] with last year's [money] up until now. It does not make sense. They must be paying soon, so this is just temporary… anyway I do not know. I have no way of knowing for now when this will happen and then the money goes from one place to another and never comes to us. We do not even have Social Security. It is not working. I do not know, I cannot stay in this for longer.”

“[Emphasis added] “That is it, I am not that well in this either. I have 50 euros until the end of the month”. Verónica

“Also, then these lunches… it is cool, but it [the money] is needed [elsewhere]. I cannot even spend 4 euros on a meal, I cannot. And I have to be honest with myself and say no, enough of this! I am not being sustainable”. Viviana

“I have all my energy in this project that does not even give me any stability. And it is also not fair for me either. I have to change this, explore other things. The design, the web, other things”. Viviana

“Yes, because from one [event] we grab the next one and cannot even breathe”. Verónica

“Right… but that is it. I have to start coming to Oporto less often. I would come once a week. This may not even make sense in a week or a fortnight but now it does and I wanted to talk to you about it. To be honest with you and say that I cannot. I cannot go on like this anymore. And it is good to be like this. On the one hand I like it too but on the other... I do not want it anymore, it already made sense, now it does not. Maybe I have to slow down, stay at home until things change and then we have to evaluate
This precariousness is overwhelming and visible to others, outside the group. António, a “friend” of Cidade+ pointed it out as hypothetically leading to the end of the project, and all in all, a reason for activist’ movements not to last:

At the end of the dinner António told me “Because they are now on the razor's edge. As such, this will not last much longer. Because I do not think it is anything normal, Viviana getting to that place of saying “Ten euros? I do not know if I am going to have dinner”. We are not talking about €100 for dinner, we are talking about €10! What does this mean? She makes this event and does not have ten euros to come out to dinner once? Something is wrong. And then they are young, they are going to want to get married, of course, to have children and then there is no parent's house, there is no counting crumbs. Some money is really needed and they do not have that money. And they are giving face to Cidade+. They are the ones who are going to be known so it is easy for someone to see them and want to get them… and what will they say? That it is a no? Of course, they have to accept. As much as they enjoy this they have to accept that because they also have to live and they have to have some money for themselves and their families. And Cidade+ is not sustainable! I mean, this is what it seems to be like for me from the outside, but from Viviana's comment it is obvious that it still is [not sustainable]. I may have the defect of thinking business and being the bad guy in this but that is how I think. This is how life works. Why do young people so often begin to do things and as long as they have the will they continue... But what when it ends? And when there is not so much will or annoyances start? If there is no financial return people are no longer there, there is no chance. And things have to be sustainable to have continuity. Cidade+ runs the serious risk of ending if it does not change this situation quickly. And we are in the 4th year of Cidade+, it is urgent to reverse this situation so that we do not run the risk of it all ending because this is really very beautiful. I LOVE Cidade+. Everyone likes this, there is no [other] way! And if there is no return that is it. There is no such thing for anyone. Because they work on this in an amateur way. I mean amateur as the one who loves! And they have to move on to the business side, see this in a lucrative logic otherwise they will not go forward, they will not. It came to the 4th year. This should already be different. They should be making a profit on it. It does not make any sense like this but I do not even tell them anything because they are doing a brilliant job and I am afraid that when I speak of it to them they may take it in the wrong way and think that I am saying that they are doing something wrong and they are not. It is really a matter of thought. I even thought that with the junction of PARTNER 3 this would improve [that] they would council them on sustainability. But nothing. [What] they just want is publicity. Free advertising. What? They give one or two rooms, some meetings and then enter as partners and it is about them?! There is no way!” “But then what is it to think from a profitable point of view?” I asked. "It is for example thinking about merchandising, making merchandise. The workshops, these are all freebies. You do not see this anywhere else. The other day I went to a marketing training and each person paid €300 and the auditorium was full. Have you already imagined the amount of money that they got? If they paid €5000 to the trainer, look at what is left! Thinking about it being profitable is thinking about that too. Were there 20000 people at the event? We could have sold 20000 pins at one euro each, we could have made €200,000 euros in an instant. And it has to be undated things, so that it is cheaper. Cidade+ must have a logo, an already bought image. You cannot keep on looking for customers, customers have to come to us”. “Well it is creating consumer need, is it not? It is the consumer to ask and
not to even have the need to call their attention” said André. “Yes it is about the customer knowing the brand, wanting to take something of the brand and you do not see any of this in Cidade+. It is all free, the municipal hall gives X but the rest is what? Sponsors and such? But oh… that is not enough for anything. So €10 for a dinner! And partnering and forming a network, you need money for gas, to move to places, to have dinner or lunch with a client, this is not the way that it can be thought through?! But anyway… who am I? I tell you. They are on the spearhead. He concluded! (Field notes, 11th of July 2017)

Actually, taking action seems to entail the possibility of suffering some kind of ‘participatory exhaustion’:

Here we are currently bombarded with a certain amount of information on a daily basis. It reaches a point when perhaps the call is for a person to want to do a lot, want to get involved in a lot stuff. Later this [attitude/life style] is not healthy and I’ve also had experiences of this throughout my life. In this to say that we also need to take time for ourselves. Time is managed in a different way by each one of us. There are people who are involved in certain causes in their daily lives, it’s almost a hobby, others not so much. I have some causes with which I connect with and I like to be active. With the Cidade+ the input is about engaging more with more and more things. This is something that I soon realized, that in terms of my mental health it would not be positive for me and it would cause me to wear out much faster. So in this way maybe even I participated at that level... my participation became much less active with a series of other projects. I keep doing my things with my time in my daily life but not so much involved with other projects. Then all of it also becomes a little complicated when you have a series of partners, because you get involved with A or B, and why do not you get involved with C, D, and E? So the management here has to be a little smarter. One time or another I can get involved with a certain cause but at the moment I try to make these things very sporadic, so there is also no difference in treatment. There must also be some balance at this level too. (Mateus, Interview, 31st July, 2017)

Viviana, in the interview, reflected on the connection between activism and individual's exhaustion, trying to be aware that the selflessness prevailing among activists can lead to burn-out.

(…) activists who have such a great love and a great energy that they give to causes they neglect themselves and, or they have exhaustions, or... Maybe [this happens] because they are lacking this step that will allow them to perceive the intimate relation in which they are with everything – For example, the Fontinha school. I saw some huge amounts of incoherence there!... And that was a shame! Many people even had actual nervous breakdowns (…) The thing is that the activist… gives everything! They give everything and can give to such a degree that they forget they’re also part of the equation. If they aren’t well then the project dies. You have to be really well because you are part of the equation! You can’t kill yourself over the precipice because of a cause or… possibly it can make sense. If it does make sense, if it’s conscientious… yes. I think that sometimes the activist may even lose some insight because they don’t have that side of stopping and realising…” (Viviana, Interview, 4th October, 2017)

Mentioning an example of a positive attitude of another activist she witnessed in the past.

I remember a time when I was at Casa Viva [an autonomous house-project], that woman from Poland was there... It was the first time I: “Wow, that’s really cool”, she made some emotional support cards for activists. I saw those in Casa Viva and I was like: “wow…
that's cool, this is going up a pretty path.” This woman was starting to give... how did she put it? “It's just a talking time with tea and cakes.” (Viviana, Interview, 4th October, 2017)

And problematising this selflessness as ultimately a lack of consciousness and a perception of “separation”.

(...) even because enemies are also created easily. It's something I still have to think about but I think this enemy attitude also doesn’t... There is something there that can take away the strength after the action that can take the strength away from the action. Strength and even efficiency! It does not mean they’re a friend. Though there is a lot of energy that you put into hatred that could be used in a more... And hate is the enemy: “I think it is because it is the truth” while the rest is a construction that comes from this illusion of separation. Damn! I'm talking my mouth out here. I don't even know why. Why did I come here?... Active citizenship! That's all I'm feeling right now... It's abstract... It's not abstract! Now what are you going to do with this? I have no clue! (Viviana, Interview, 4th October, 2017)

7.4.5 Tracing deep ecology as an ideological ground to analyse Cidade+

Lichterman (1998) stated that green movement groups tend to focus on topics that can range from economic decentralisation to alternative spiritualities, to multicultural movement-building. According to Taylor & Zimmerman (s/d) “some activists have designed ritual processes to further deepen participant’s spiritual connections to nature and political commitment to defend it”. The term “Deep Ecology” coined by Arne Naess in 1972, enlarged the value of nature from its usefulness for human beings towards its intrinsic and purposeful life with an evolutionary destiny in itself. A spiritual connection to the different life systems, viewed as sacred and worthy, was based on the ancient “Indian understanding that we are not outside nature” (Sessions, 1987) and together with the ethical obligation to protect and embrace it would be the basis of deep ecologist commitment. Viviana would explain in the interview the supremacy of the ecological domain as:

I think we do this [terming the main purpose as ecological] by default because both Veronica and I feel for the environment a lot more. We feel the nature-environment more than the rest – the economy, the social theme – even though I’m also very connected to the economy and the social aspects. Another thing is that in sustainability that people speak of the pillars as something that is at the same level – economy, social or environmental – for me it is not. For me the environment is the ground because the environment is the truth, it’s given, it’s the environment, isn’t it? The economy is only there as a concept or as a discipline because we created it. We did not create the environment. It is here already and needs to be healthy because otherwise we can’t be here for much longer. From this aspect, I don’t even agree very much with how the pillars of sustainability are presented sometime. I think the environment is the ground. For me it is sustainability and the environment... (Viviana, Interview, 4th October, 2017)

Deep ecology seems to be linked to practical work on the roots rather than a work on ethics. Naess & Rothenberg (1989, p. 17) acknowledge that ‘breaking away from the system either in thought or in lifestyle should never be seen as an opposition to those working for short-term change’, adding that ‘things that are quickly satisfying have a way of not lasting so long – like shallow ecological solutions’. In our interview with Viviana she talked about her dreams and life goals in the same direction as here stated: living in another place more conformed with her connection to earth and well-being.
It is like Cidade+ was, in reality, a result of a world which is sick! So you need to put some bandages, isn’t it? To avoid the spread of the disease a little longer… when, in fact, I think that what is happening in the world is very much a reflection of what we have inside of us (…) I don’t want to be in the area where one put bandages… where one is trying to heal… I want to go deeper, deep inside! To our nature, our true nature… it is this connection … a nature that it is impossible to hurt… ‘cause I think that the part that is hurt is more superficial … it results from fear, is it not? That fear exist in our body and in our culture, in our society. (Viviana, Interview, 4th October, 2017)

According to Taylor & Zimmerman (s/d) the “green spirituality” and ethics helped to transform a more anthropocentric culture, challenging the conventional and influencing an environmental philosophy that includes changes in lifestyle. This “ecocentric” proposal helps us to understand some of the experiences we observed from different elements of the group Cidade+ and its urgent passion to promote spirituality, sustainable living and environmental activism.

From the moment you become happier, you make better choices straight away, don’t you? You listen more to the other person instead of talking and not listening and being worried about what you are going to say next. In concrete things, I don’t know. Getting my choices to be... the daily choices are much more easily sustainable than before, when I almost suffered with them as if I was “a victim of my love of sustainability”, do you know what I mean? Because if I can’t do this, I can’t do that, I’m a victim. And not anymore.” (Viviana, Interview, 4th October, 2017)

7.5 The Local, National and European dimensions
The interjection of these dimensions was not visibly noted throughout the ethnographic period. There were some specific moments where the group outlined this transition local – national – European as an important element for the strategic procedure of Cidade+. The first moment was in a private meeting with a “friend” of Cidade+, Fonseca, a political-marketing designer, mainly over the possibilities to get funding:

And now the municipalities have something in their hands that is the climate change plan. This could also be interesting for you, this time. And look, 17 ODS -> 17 autarchies… They could go around there proposing each parish to deepen one of the objectives and to finance it. [It could be] them or a company of their choice… and there they would have everything locked in, and [they could] ask for, I don’t know, some money… because you also need money for other things right? (…) It is complicated at times, not the commitment but [to] materialize it (…) Fonseca (Field notes, 5th May of 2017)

Then about the Gulbenkian candidacy “And it is the Coordination committee that will evaluate your proposal. It is very subjective, it goes very much from believing. And it is also good that it comes from above. For example, Paiva’s walkways... no one believed in that. If they had not given them the hint. No one would have ever bet on that, it was risky. And this begins with a simple request for a meeting. You present Cidade+, you contribute to your climate change plan and by the way Verónica is helping with the budget for the climate change plan”. (Field notes, 5th May, 2017)

… and as an open-mind of what is possible to establish at a municipal level,

Then speaking of CITY 1 and the lack of funds despite of the very good work he said “You cannot get this fund because you have reached the top of what is requested. CITY 1 already has the brand image. You do not see garbage on the floor. They have received lots of foreign prizes, they come here to learn. They had a very good vision. The guy who had it (Tomás, former civil engineer in the environment area) began to demand for garbage rooms in the new apartments. This [was] in the 1980s. The other municipalities
will never again in their life time [have this] because now they are fully built. And they have lower costs than in the centralized collection. CITY 1 Ambiente generates revenue! Others have a margin of 5% and the residents separate the trash because it is inside [the building], it is more comfortable. It has the highest recycling and glass national rate. It is not easy to copy that model, is that not it? Now the next step is to change the [recollection] route depending on whether people do or do not have trash at the door. And an electric composter… having an electric composter would be important… She [Maria] is all about these things. You go to her office and it is oriental music and everything… And she goes by bike. Still yesterday with the awkward day, [she] went by bike… The CITY 1 municipal hall gives breakfast to the employees who arrive by bicycle… and it is not just about the trend “Oh, this is cool, let's do the same thing”. No, he takes it seriously. It was Tiago the civil engineer who promoted this. Much of what shows up about the environment is by CITY 1’s hand. It is the municipal hall that has more green areas per inhabitant. And it has an obvious indicator, fewer respiratory diseases. They planned it very well. They have a very good team but the communication there is a little short… A Scottish local authority asked them [to the CITY 1 municipality] for everything to sell them the service. They refused... But now CITY 2 is also a good place. CITY 2 is taking advantage of everything to get the green prize” (Field notes, 5th May, 2017)

… or as an aid to advance strategically in Cidade+:

Fonseca is really someone who is on the inside of the local government system and who knows exactly what is happening at any moment, and what there is among favourable projects and presidents that can be harnessed to a specific subject, sustainability in this case. I was quite amazed even with the amount of information he gave to Viviana at that time and with that gift that is, in itself, a gesture of trust and generosity. From what I have understood, he is a marketing designer and is involved with several companies and municipalities. It is visible that he has a thorough knowledge of what is happening in each of them. At the end, she was still kind of in a silly mode and told Viviana that he was very knowledgeable and asked what his role was in the Cidade+. And she replied “Nothing. He is really just helping, made himself available only to give us some tips and some help”. “Wow and what a help!” “Yes, now it is to assimilate all these things. But you see this is what I would like to do in Cidade+ at this moment, these networks, these relationships amongst companies, municipalities… this is the part I like”. (Field notes, 5th May, 2017)

A second moment was in a warm-up event where the councillor presented the connection between Municipality, Cidade+ and the European dimension:

He [the council man] said that the impact of environmental issues also has to be seen in employment and economy. He spoke of the urban cycle of water and that Porto is a leader in Europe. In his view, political lobbying is important and the European Conference on Water Cycle is going to be in Porto, next September. And that Porto participates in the Urban Agenda for Circular Economy that involves only 6 European cities. He spoke with a certain pride that Porto gives priority to these environmental issues in a way that is visible at the European level. (Field notes, 10th May of 2017)

And in the evaluation of the meeting where they tried to highlight the strategy of the group:

Branco asked to speak and very serious, really serious said “I think we have an important decision to make: do we want to keep our focus in the city? At the national level? At the
international level?” Verónica, slightly bored said: “I think that this is no longer an issue – we already made that transition.” *(Field notes, 11th July of 2017)*

They also referred EU in dissemination activities, such as in a class in ESE:

Then she [Viviana] spoke of the 17 sustainable goals, explaining that it was a UN’s proposal and the EU countries will try to respond to those goals until 2030. She questioned the teacher if he had already discussed this with the students, he said no and then added: “some are more complicated, like ending the war”. I said to myself, the others are also quite difficult. *(Field notes, 29th March, 2017)*

Finally, in the interviews they exposed their opinions, providing some comments about the importance of EU connection, as depicted in the interview’s excerpt presented below:

It always is. Even because we are integrated into the European Union. Also the inspiration that we... It’s very much that thought of global thinking, local acting. So it’s important around this but we’re constantly on the lookout for what’s happening, not only here in Porto but also on the other side of the world, in Europe and on the other side of the world as well. So to be following what is happening in the European Union at different levels, from legislation to social dynamics to environmental impacts, [all of this] is fundamental to the work of Cidade+, yes. *(Verónica, Interview, 28th September, 2017)*

While being part of the EU we have a number of constraints but we also have a number of perks. It can be very easy to speak very well or it can be very easy to speak very badly.

**As a country we have developed a lot since becoming part of the EU. We have made great progress and I am not just talking about structural issues because this is the most obvious thing that we have. Since we entered the EU it's been the structural question, ranging from the road systems or the modernization of the country in a number of things. This is visible socially as well with a series of changes, perhaps they're not all better but I also think many of them are for the best. We started having access to much more information, we can go to other places with much more ease, and these are also important things. It’s normal that there are advances and fallbacks but in my opinion it brings a lot of positive [things] just as it brings some negatives. Is it not? Because we end up being much more conditioned by a number of other things. As there are these various factors for us as Cidade+, it is an important question because we live in this same ecosystem. This ecosystem is built of: first the regional, the Porto one, secondly the North of Portugal, then Portugal as a whole… the Iberian Peninsula, Europe, the World... is it not? And within these is the question of the EU. It ends up at this moment deliberating many things that the various countries have: rules, norms and a series of things by which we have to be guided by. And as we have to guide ourselves, many of these things become important for us to realize a little bit about what is happening, not only around us but also what we have to do or what content we have to bring. In a way to be within what our time actually is, in fact. Currently, the theme for this year were the objectives for sustainable development. It’s not only an EU thing but it is a very strong theme also in the EU at this moment. We now kind of effectively have to understand: ok… What is this actually? What are people talking about? What are the objectives? How are we thinking through this process that is being done? What timings are there? What experiences are being done and where? By whom? How to reach some of these people? What to draw from this? What is most pressing to bring and to inform [people] about? And bring it to the program… to make the information available to the public, be it general or more specialised public. That is, these are all things that within the EU are almost already like a kind of macrocosm of
what our reality is and something that we cannot ignore in any way. (Mateus, Interview, 31st July, 2017, emphasis added)

7.6 Conclusions

The exploration of tensions and contradictions that came from the interactions inside a group are one of the richness of political ethnographies. By witnessing this process (Katz, 1988), we observe the not so visible aspects of politics: ‘its day-to-day intricacies’ (Baiocchi, 2005, p. 16); its ‘implicit meanings’ (Lichterman, 1998); its passions and its sacrifices (Mahler, 2006). The importance of lived experience of the political, projecting the mundane details involved in politics, gives us ‘privileged access to its processes, causes, and effects’ of broader political processes (Tilly 2006, p.410).

If being political is a process in which the individuals interact with the institutions, sites and other political actors in a compliant or disruptive way, their desires can be disciplined, producing a productive citizen, docile body or an activist one (Baiocchi & Connor, 2008).

Verónica told me that initially she was very “stuck” in what she was supposed to do or say [in more formal meetings]. She would always say “yes”, only Viviana would ask some questions if she wouldn’t understand or agree. Then, she understood she could also make some questions, that there was no “correct way” of acting, she could also question things, how the reality was and she stopped saying “Amen” to everything she was asked for. (Field notes, 21st April, 2017)

The awareness raised inside the group is quite visible as a politicization while acting.

“Fully, totally and completely! Even because five years ago Cidade+ opened a new world for me. There were already many things I had, but it transformed me, it continues to transform me. If before I used to think that... hey! No way… Before I was nothing... actively! Active citizen, not at all! And nowadays, I already consider myself active but I know that I still have much more to do, but it totally transformed me!” (Veronica, Interview, 28th September, 2017).

Following Ekman and Amna’s (2012) perspective, the group seems to entail both latent and manifest forms of participation. They seem to conceptualise active citizenship in a more individual manner (personal interest in social and political subjects; self-voicing problems and concerns; expressive salience or individual option of consumerism); however, their proposal as an “open” group is quite collective, embracing both latent (vegetarianism; sense of “community”; volunteerism, etc) and manifest (participation of Cidade+ network and member of co-creation processes) forms. On the other hand, considering Banaji typology (2016), the group seems to fit a major conformist and pro-democratic group regarding their orientation towards institutional participation, disposing from conventional and normative spaces and contexts to encourage both local and global civic actions.

This group seems to be extremely successful at relating their proposals and concrete achievements. Their agreed way of proceeding within the group, since its creation, was to maintain a connected link between more alternative cultures (entailing vegetarian eaters, spiritual related practices, mobility’ critical, self-sustainable or more autonomous groups, etc.) and more institutionalised practices or individual memberships (municipality’ professionals, “eco-friendly” enterprises, curious/engaged civil society’ members, etc.). Through the extension of their network, one can understand the effect they have on distinct people acting in different spaces and thus generating changes in other areas – from policy’ making to more conscious individual and commercial acting in market disposals.

The fact that, including in their nuclear group, they gather individuals from different backgrounds and interests seems to be a positive strategy to be effective in their proposals.
According to Lichterman (1996), the respect over individual trajectories and inspirations makes possible that activists with different backgrounds work together. Maybe this personalised culture is what sustains long-term engagement and enables social transformation. Probably the financial sustainability is the more urgent aspect to attain in order to turn possible that the group lasts as an entity. Formed by a group of people that is emotionally and strategically sustained, a group that “dresses the shirt” for a cause, to have the time and the availability is the possibility to ameliorate a growing path towards a better place and more sustainable society. If this won’t be achieved, serious risks emerge to sustain an activity, which could change and affect dozens of people.

Finally, it is interesting to stress how ‘Europe’ seems to be the “silent partner” in most of this: while Europe seems to be absent in the spontaneous discourses of the activists, many of their actions are directly inspired, related or even supported by European policies. For instance, part of the work the group does in collaboration with the municipalities is boosted by EU policy and funds. So, in a way, the EU seems to be taken for granted but not explicitly mentioned – which might suggest that the EU is really more “part of the territory” than sometimes we recognize, and that the relationship with ‘Europe’ as an “imagined community” is more organic and incorporated than criticized and contested. This is not to say that such a political naturalisation comes without risks, including those related to populism and authoritarianism.

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8. Sweden: Awesome People – Jasmine Ivarsson, Örebro University
8.1 Introduction

Catch-EyoU aims to explore youth active citizenship and participation in the European Union in order to strengthen ties between the EU, EU institutions and citizens. The project involves eight member states, The Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Sweden and the United Kingdom and combines various methods and disciplines in search for factors that are influencing and/or hindering young people to participate in the society. Work package 8 is focusing on the meaning and practices of youth participation and cases of successful participation and is coordinated by London School of Economics and Political Science. The objective of this part of the study is to map and explore participatory practices of European youth organisations.

This report draws on the findings of the mapping of youth civic organisations. Among the 30 initiatives analysed in Sweden, one case was selected for the ethnography. The Swedish selection ended up with Awesome People since it is an organisation which works on one of the major challenges for the civil society in Sweden: to involve and encourage young people who do not usually participate or engage in their society. The organisation is also interesting because they are working and developing new methods, as well as involving local and European dimensions.

The data collection was conducted during the period April-September 2017. The material consists of field notes, interview transcripts, pictures and policy documents. The organisation was visited 18 times during six different kinds of activities; inspiration labs – involving presentations and workshops with members who had been on exchanges or training courses, preparation meetings – involving planning and information about up-coming events, a study visit from an umbrella organisation from a North European member state, a training course and a youth exchange. The researcher mainly observed the sessions while taking field notes and talked to participants during the breaks. But also participated in some activities – for example during the training course coaching session with students the researcher volunteered as a coachee since there were too many participants compared to the number of students.

The researcher also carried out six interviews of about one hour in length each with identified key members (three male and three female activists) of the organisation. Five of these were conducted face-to-face in connection to an activity, and one was by telephone. All interviews were audio recorded. The interviews followed an unstructured character along pre-defined themes developed by the work package leaders.

The organisation

Awesome People was founded in 2013 in one of Sweden’s smallest municipalities by a couple who had worked with young, vulnerable young people for several years. It was their experience that a lot of young people lacked the basic skills requested by the employers, such as how to behave at work, to keep the time or to take own initiatives. Young people did not believe in themselves or their ability, which affected not only the employers but also the individual and in prolonging the whole society:

(…) everything comes from 2013 when we started this project (incoherent about 01:25) that was 2013 and it started a little bit like a, like a project or like a method that we wanted to evolve, we had worked with young people at a lot of different places, I had worked with them in, through the Employment Service for example they have been job-seekers, we have worked with them in school, we have worked with them like this, so through that we want to come up with a good method to simply, partly build up their self-esteem, self-confident but also to get this commitment maybe and “go get it”-spirit, to do things, then we created it [the organisation] …

(Respondent 1, Emphasis added)
This made them think about how they could help these young people which later resulted in a new method – today called PiFbase, aiming to strengthen their self-esteem. They hence decided to start the organisation to make them able to request money from both public and private foundations:

(;) it started with the fact that this method had come so that’s what we had as a foundation and was more oriented on that we were gonna work with that, with the method as we then discovered very soon was that it was very hard to find someone, some collaboration, funding and so on with only having a method and not having something behind it but being two civilians so that made us pause the method and realized “okay we build the organisation where we can work with the method” so that was a start to why we even started the organisation was because we had the method (;) (Respondent 2)

The main focus was from the beginning to test and to develop the method by using a pilot group. But the work with the organisation did not actually begin until 2016:

(;) we began to work in 2016 you can say in the beginning of the organisation, we saw that okay we need to have a strong organisation we can’t just come with excuses but every time we got the question “who are you?” we never had anything then, we had nothing so we simply betted on building us up with all that it’s called in the business world with finding an image simply (;) (Respondent 1)

The couple therefore started to create an organisation image based on five corner stones – Be brilliant, Be brave, Be different, Be yourself – Be awesome. The corner stones are also present in the organisation’s logotype:

![Awesome People logo](2017d)

Figure 8.1: Awesome People logo (2017d)

The star represents the corner stones of the organisation – be brilliant, be brave, be different, be yourself and you will be awesome. The slogan “We make people be and feel awesome” is motivated by the following argument: You can be awesome, but not feel awesome. You can also feel awesome, but not be awesome because you are not brave, or brilliant, or yourself. If you want to make a difference you need to both believe in yourself – to feel awesome, as well as having the capacity to act – to be awesome. The idea behind the cornerstone is that when you do something for someone else your psychical health and efficacy will improve, and the one you help will also be motivated to do something as well. The process is thought to create a synergy effect which makes our society a better place, which is how their actions connect to active citizenship:

In Awesome People we have a vision, that vision is a generation of young people who takes initiatives to make a better world for themselves, for others and for the planet. We believe we can reach that vision if we work with our mission which is to make people be and feel awesome. When you feel awesome you have the capacity to make other people feel awesome and that is the
kind of world we want, the world we strive for, where people not only thinking of themselves but also care for others. (*Awesome People 2017e*)

Today the organisation involves around 20 members (support members excluded), from different parts of Sweden. But since you do not have to become a member to take part in the activities far more people are reached. Their central office is settled in a mid-sized Swedish town, but a lot of work are still settled in other, smaller municipalities and even outside Sweden, among else as a part of an international network (see section 5). The main activities consists of projects, training courses, workshops, camps and exchanges and runs from supporting local asylum young people to international courses of youth leadership:

§2 Aim and goal
The main aim for Awesome People is to *make people be and feel awesome*. Awesome People shall work with projects, training courses, workshops, camps and exchanges, at local, regional, national and European level. In addition Awesome People is aiming to *strengthen the quality of youth work and to reinforce and broaden the participation in meaningful leisure time activities for young people who else are hard to reach as well as to improve cooperation and integration between different youth groups*. By a diversity of projects and activities the organisation shall contribute to decreasing alienation and increasing foremost children and young people participation in society. (*By-laws for the organisation Awesome People*)

Young people are both involved in the conduction of these activities as well as being the target group. The main focus is on vulnerable young people, but they do also involve young people from other social classes. The founders do still have a very present role in the organisation, not least in the establishment of networks and partnerships (see section 6.1). Besides the leaders are three very active members who play a central part in the recruitment of and connection to young people.

8.2 Conceptualisation of Youth

Awesome People claims to be *politically independent* and there are no formal demands concerning for example age, religious belief or political identity, and involves both young people and older adults. Anyone can become a member according to the by-laws as long as they share “the organisation’s ideas and values” which are not further defined:

§4 Membership
Anyone who supports the organisation’s ideas and values can become a member. All members have the right to vote in the organisation at the annual meeting. All members must have accepted the By-Laws of Awesome People, name and address shall be registered in the organisation’s membership list and the membership fee shall be paid. (*By-laws for the organisation Awesome People*)

The organisation targets both males and females and strives for an equal gender balance in their activities. A lot of the young people, both directly involved in the organisation as well as participants of its activities, have a foreign background which can be traced to the founders’ professions within the area of integration. Jobs which have made them able to establish relationships with the target group:

Eleven youths participate in the session, all asylum-seeking boys around 15-16 years old. They have been recruited via the existing networks, for example did one of the organisation’s leaders previously worked to support them. (*Field notes from Youth Camp 2017-07-03*)

The target group is mainly youth between 13-18 years old. But since they have been working a lot with Erasmus+ they have to adopt to EU’s age definition of youth – 13-30 years old.
Yes, that is our target group, our primary target group is 13-18 years old because we want to work with them at a young age but since Erasmus+ has a target group of the ages 13-30 that’s their youth, so and that we have worked a lot with asylum seekers now and integration (..) (Respondent 2)

The mean age is around 19-20 years old and in terms of social class the target group is foremost **vulnerable youth – youth who lack financial and/or social resources.** Based on the activities arranged by the organisation, vulnerable youth can be considered to be asylum seekers (see for example “Youth Camp”), of families who cannot afford to travel or pay for leisure time activities for their children, and young people who belong to the group of NEETs\(^2\) (see for example “Training course”). But the focus does shift across the activities – for example “Youth Camp” did directly involve the target group, whilst the training course did focus on how to train and support young people who belong to the group of NEETs. The target group is hence not always physically present in the activities, but it is always a present theme:

The formal objective of this camp is to improve young new-comers’ results in school by **teaching different study techniques.** But it also has an informal aim to make the participants **explore their capability and make them more confident,** that they actually dare to talk in front of a group and that they can handle whatever comes their way. *(Field notes from Youth Camp 2017-07-03)*

Well, I would say that the organisation focuses on people, youths who don’t have that many opportunities might not have a lot, a lot of money, who doesn’t have those opportunities to do such things like traveling abroad, to discover other parts of the EU. *(Respondent 6)*

The young people involved may therefore have different backgrounds dependent on the key focus of the activity, and sometimes they are mixed, involving vulnerable young people as well as well resourced young people (see for example “youth exchange”). The requirements for participating do shift accordingly, where the participants of the training courses needed to be at least 18, involved in youth work and good at English, whilst other activities are open to everyone. The roles of the young people do also shift – for example participants from “Youth Camp” helped to organise the training course and vice versa. This connects to the second aim of the organisation – **“to improve cooperation and integration between different youth groups”** *(By-laws for the organisation Awesome People, § 2).* The role of a specific member can sometimes be traced back to his/her situation where some have started as a participant and thereafter started to work for the organisation:

Q: (..) Are you someone who works for the organisation, do you see yourself as working toward this group or… how-, how do you look at you role in the organization?

**Respondent 6:** Well I would say that I used to be one of those people who had it tight with money and who didn’t have many opportunities and things like that.

Q: Mhm.

**Respondent 6:** But here and now I would say that I have it pretty good, I live by myself and study and things like that.

Q: Mhm

**Respondent 6:** Eh, so yeah… my role today is to… help youths you know instead. *(Respondent 6)*

The above quote is both an example of the vision of the organisation – by improving young people’s self-esteem and provide them new opportunities and ability to develop themselves, they get encouraged to help others. But it also illustrates how young people become active in the organisation. The activist usually starts as a **participant of the organisation’s activities with**

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\(^2\) Not in education, employment or training
no intention to get further involved, but in the end gets inspired and motivated to do so.
Previous engagement but also opportunities as for example ability to do leisure time activities
and to travel aboard also seem to play a major role. The roles of the young people and their
relationships within the organisation differ and run from being a participant or the target group
of a specific event, to help to organise activities or to recruit new members. Young people are in
this sense both objects and subjects in the organisation’s work, both the target group as well as
the instrument – a phenomena which is intimately intertwined to the pedagogic strategy (see
section 4.3).

8.3 Active Citizenship

8.3.1 Conceptualisation of Action & Citizenship

The materials indicate what Amnå & Ekman (2012) have defined as civil participation (latent
political participation) both at an individual and a collective level. Firstly, the members tend to
have a personal interest in political and societal issues in general – classified as “involvement
(attention)” as well as performing individual activities based on this interest – classified as “civic
engagement (action)”:

Q: How come you started to get interested in integration in particular?

Respondent 4: Well… good question. Like, I feel like I’ve always been… raised with and always
thought that… all us humans-, like really like, everyone has the same worth and everyone should
have a chance at a good life, like, it all comes down to the-, like, in that everyone should have a
fair chance, we’re born in different countries but that should not be the thing that sets the limit
for-, like, you can’t help where you’re born but you should be able to control your life, eh, and…
for me it’s really been about people on the run who flee their home, who flee their country
because of wars they’ve witnessed and experienced things we can’t even… imagine or
comprehend.

Q: Mhm.

Respondent 4: So for me it’s been so very much like… like it’s shocking to me how the
migrations policy is conducted at the moment eh, because… it has a-, it’s about a number, it’s
not about the people anymore it’s about the money, it’s never abou-, it’s never been about the
money and it will never be about the money for me because… we can afford it, that’s how it is.
Period. And… I don’t think it’s about like picking one for me but-, I think it’s about being there
for everybody else because we’re all a part of the same thing you know. (Respondent 4)

Collective forms can be added to these categories. A lot of indications of identity creation
and feelings – factors connected to the category “social involvement (attention)” (Amnå &
Ekman 2012) can be found in the material. One member enthusiastically describes his/her
experience of the organisation like being a lonely artist finding an arts club:

During coffee breaks - before and after the sessions – I get time to talk about some of the
members, for example the boy/girl who held the first presentaion. S/he was very excited about
the organisation and told me that it was like being a lonely artist which has discovered an arts
club. ();

(Field notes, Inspiration Lab 20170423)

The identity is reinforced by recurring promotion of who a member of Awesome People is
and what people and the organisation expect from them – to be kind, helpful, engaged and
responsible. An issue which is always brought up at the preparation meetings before an event.
Moreover, they use material such as organisation t-shirts and textile bags to make the members
and participants feel and can be identified as a group:
Figure 8.2 The back of the organisation t-shirt

Collective “civic engagement (action)” is of course the most prominent theme concerning active citizenship. The category covers the organisation’s activities based on the objective to improve young people’s self-esteem and stimulate them to get engaged in society and help others. The activities run from helping young newcomers to study and organise leisure time activities for vulnerable young people, to educate and exchange information with other youth organisations and train youth leaders. What is common for all actions is that none are directed towards the formal political institutions such as the parliament or the municipal council. But they do however consider themselves as active citizens:

**Active citizen** for me is, funny that you should bring it up because it’s actually something that I’m debating, reflecting, philosophize around it very often, I usually don’t say active citizen, I usually say an active part of the community, we are by volunteering, school compounds like what to say, social that I hang out with people, that’s what gets me to and like, things I have done through the organisation and before that, that’s what gets me and like be able so sleep at night and feel that I do an active part in the society because I want like I want to improve, I want to do it, I want to be part of an improvement like integration is something that I have worked a lot with and like I’ve really been given a chance to be a part and integration is something of the biggest challenges that Sweden has in front of itself, and just having been out in the field, working with children on my own initiative, (..) like I’m so proud of myself now that I took the train voluntary every Tuesday and was there just because and like hang out with the refugee children at an asylum accommodation, I wouldn’t even see them next week but still, like such a thing, an own initiative is something that I think makes me able to call myself an active citizen and it’s something that I wish more would say about themselves, because being an active part of the society, it’s not so hard, I think it’s an active priority of other’s and society’s bes, best than your own good and it’s not really practically more ideologically too and that has, I reflect on my
own opinions and how I think you should be a citizen and being a citizen is a part for me being active so that’s why I would say that I am active. (Respondent 3, emphasis added)

Active citizenship is in this sense conceptualised as a broad concept which does not have to involve formal politics. In fact, some respondents distance themselves and the organisation from politics which they perceive as limited to the political institutions and parties. In addition, there is a belief that changes must take place at a local level which in turn give life to politics:

My dream would be to see a whole country that's volunteering for it’s like the way to get things moving forward in today’s society so it’s not just about that politicians should do it, pull the whole society forward anymore, it’s not just about that big corporations should take responsibility but it's about civil responsibility that you have (..) I think that the more people that are committed, as long as it's about something the better our society will be, and then it can be about everything from international level to a “rake day” in your neighbourhood, it doesn’t need to be big just your, but I think it has started to lose a lot about being in your sports club, sure you go to the games but it's not that you host camps anymore like and it’s, I think it’s a shame because like there are so many times where you have compared with just a community or arias that’s only started an volunteering association that is not a neighbourhood community but, but a rake, cleaning day, but you do it once a month and all has become so much better and it’s only the initiative from a few civilian people in the neighbourhood and then you don’t have a janitor who works his ass of or a neighbourhood community or a condominium that needs to raise the rent because they need to hire more people to keep clean, that is it becomes more logic that you get a better world with commitment (Respondent 3, emphasis added)

But for me it doesn’t really feel like it [politics] but at the same time, for me-, since I haven’t been like active politically, I don’t have a really-, had that big of an interest in that so for me politics are very up here, you know. They are the ones in charge, they are the ones who makes decisions, it's like… at the same time I do understand that there are people who are committed down here, in the end that’s what… shapes what’s up there in some way you know so, eh, if you understand what I mean. (Respondent 4)

8.3.2 Attitudes to Democracy and Rights

The by-laws states that the organisation “works according to democratic principles.” (By-laws for the organisation Awesome People, § 1). The document further indicate parts of the content of these principle such as elected representatives and all members’ right to vote at the annual meeting:

§3 The organisational structure

The decisions of the organisation are made at the annual meeting which is held once a year. The Steering Committee is elected at the annual meeting and makes decisions of the work between the annual meetings.

The Steering Committee consists of a chairman and at least two commissioners.

§4 Membership

Anyone who support the organisation’s ideas and values can become a member. All members have the right to vote in the organisation at the annual meeting. All members must have accepted the Bye Laws of Awesome People, name and address shall be registered in the organisation’s membership list and the membership fee shall be paid. (Bye laws for the organisation Awesome People)

The by-laws offer indications of an “elite democracy”, where members are encouraged to be active during the formal elections of the annual meeting (Held 1997: 210-217). However, these formalities appear to be just a piece of the reality and in fact short from practice. A member explains that the majority principle is not always present, but the decisions are often made
through discussions and deliberations until the participants reach consensus. But even though a decision is taken, it can be changed and brought up again later on. One of the members explains that this ongoing discussion is what makes the organisation democratic. Though s/he also thinks that this practice is dependent on the organisation’s limited size:

(…) this will sound too good to be true, but I feel that there has never been any kind of team forming against one person to take kind of advantage of the majority but it has been democratic in the sense that whatever, whatever the person says then we tear it apart and see if it’s possible and if it’s a good idea which is slower of course but it’s part of the democracy also that things should change, be torn up, be worked through and become as good as possible and in all formal contexts now we’re talking yearly meetings, etcetera board meetings and such, then it’s a democratic voting that stands (Respondent 3)

Besides the formal processes the underlying philosophy and idea of democracy and rights can be found in the activities. For instance, the organisation works with informal learning which implies that the youngsters get to explore and experience a certain issue in practice instead of listening to ordinary lectures by a teacher. The method can be understood to take outset from the idea that the student is able and competent enough to perform, reflect and learn from practical activities. The method is described as handing over the power to the individual and let her/him find their own way to solve an issue or a problem, to let them test their capacity. The idea can be connected to democratic principles and the belief that all people are capable and have the right to participate and decide about issues that concerns them – in this case the learning process. That no one knows better than the individual concerning their needs and objectives (Dahl 1989: 97-105).

The philosophy applies to both activists and the target group but is not always that easy to implement in practice. Especially since there is an unavoidable power imbalance between the activists and the target group. The below quote is from a coaching session where the activist shall try to coach a person to reach his/her goal. A situation where the coachee asks for a different kind of support than what the activist is able to provide. It clearly illustrates the relation of dependency and vulnerability on the one hand, and responsibility and demarcation on the other. But also, the paradox in supporting young people as the time as claiming their autonomy:

Respondent 4: But then there was this very special coaching session or session, it wasn’t really… in that s/he chose… such an incredibly personal goal, or like, a personal dream. Eh, and when s/he’s this insecure in perhaps both herself/himself and what others think and a little… well, unstable e-, you could say perhaps… eh, then… it’s very difficult to take on such a personal goal without trampling straight down into that quagmire of psychology. So I suppose it was that line which I thought was so incredibly difficult to stick to and even so I thought I did that pretty well, I thought that… s/he mentioned a couple of things and I instantly jumped in the completely different direction and just: uh huh, but what do you think about this, and really tried to avoid this sentimental and tried to… keep to, like, focus forward and like… we managed to-, s/he didn’t have any other goals other than to become more confi-, or, become better at talking to people, you know.

(…) Respondent 4: The problem was also that when we started to pick it all apart the issue perhaps wasn’t really that s/he is shy when talking but maybe more the confidence and self-confidence and self-esteem and… all of that. [inaudible ca 42:35] you start to unravel stuff like that then it’s very hard to keep to coaching, I thought, at the same time I also thought that it still went pretty well, when I thought it through in hindsight I think in some way that I… I did keep myself on the line of coaching as well as I could but I also think-, like, I think that for her/him… this I understood in hindsight, the thing was that his/her friend were with us in the same room…

Q: Mhm.
Respondent 4: And s/he hadn’t shared this with his/her friend previously and then suddenly it all became too much, it was like it you know… well, then s/he had to show to-, that s/he was vulnerable to her/his friend and that was too tough you know, so… so I tried to-, and then I had to completely step out of the role of the coach and just try to like… we ended it there when we-, I ultimately said that like, no but if you feel like you think this is too much, that it doesn’t feel good then I don’t think we should continue.

(.

Respondent 4: At the same time it didn’t feel terrible it was more just the fact that s/he… cried, other than that it felt you know totally okay [inaudible 44:09] then when we were about to leave s/he came up to me, or I went up to him/her and just asked him/her how it felt and you know and… like, if s/he felt okay and then s/he was very like: oh man, I’m sorry I cried and it wa-, I was like: no you don’t have to apologize! If I-, you felt like I pushed you-, if I pushed you too hard then I’m really sorry and I hope it-, like, you know. But s/he didn’t think so and… and s/he gave me biscuits which s/he had brought which we had talked about the day before… so yeah I got biscuits and then I was just like well thank you very much and s/he was like can I give you a hug as thanks? So it felt like-, and I was like of course you can! And then it kinda felt like you… got a little confirmation that this didn’t go as badly as you might… you always expect the worst you know. Wha-, you really do. If someone started to cry you draw those parallels incredibly far pret-, like pretty quickly that, that those-, that they-, you know that you have done something to re-, have destroyed this person’s life and that it will affect them for a long time, like that’s how it goes you know. (Respondent 4)

However, idea of citizenship in Awesome People is not just about rights, but also about obligations – to be kind and helpful to other people is a prominent theme in the preparation meetings as well as showing up to and be engaged in the activities, to take responsibility and respond to emails and fulfil your commitments:

Thereafter they talk about how to be a good participant including checking and responding to emails, be prepared, be active and stick to the schedule, be in time, take care of each other, give feedback, take photos and make videos, write a report or diary of the day and be professional and kind to people you meet. (.) S/he also states the importance to be a good representative of the organization – to help and support each other and to actively take part in the activities. (Field notes from Preparation meeting 2017-05-25)

In summary, the democratic idea of the organisation can be understood as an elite democracy with deliberative qualities, where deliberation takes place before and after formal decisions (Demokratiutredningen 2000:21-23). Even though they vote for candidates to the steering committee, the practice points towards a reality where the members still have a lot to say and are expected to take part in the conduct of the activities.

8.3.3 Pedagogic Strategies

The organisation is working with informal learning which in short can be described as self-directed learning or learning by doing. Instead of a formal lesson the young people got to for example experience, test different strategies and play in order to learn own their own basis. A central theme is to actively engage the participants in the task and let them think and reflect by themselves in order to make them find the answers by themselves:

16.10 One of the organisation leaders organises a workshop. S/he picks up notes with words and then asks them to identify what is and what is not coaching. They should also try to define what coaching is.
16:30 The groups are gathering and are asked to place the words in a four-axed graph consisting of “coach”, “therapist”, “mentor” and “consultant”. (Field notes 20170822, Training course)
The performances of the method take different forms – sometimes the participants get to do an activity without previously knowing its aim or objective and afterwards they reflect upon it:

12:35-12:40 The participants are asked to find one person who they have not worked with before during the day and sit down and look at each other for two minutes. (..)
12:40-12:50 The couple shall now lead each other, one with blind folded eyes. The participants are at first walking very carefully and close, but they soon dare their wings and try to run and jump.
12:50-13:00 The participants shall now try to lead the one who have his/her eyes blind folded to where s/he wants to go.
13:00-13:20 The group are gathering in a circle in the grass and are asked to reflect on how the “blind-folding” activity relates to coaching. Some comments that are raised is that different persons want to be led in different ways, some by holding hands, other by a hand on their back. This also applies to coaching, where different persons have different needs of being coached in a certain way. Another participant claims that it is also about trying to understand the other’s perspective – to try to get where s/he wants to go. An additional reflection that comes up is that different persons have different goals, it is about helping them raise the goal and not to define them.

(Field notes 2017-08-21, Training course)

But it could also involve playing games, creating or expressing yourselves as well as coming up with, presenting and performing your own ideas:

11:00 Interview with one of the organisation leaders and a member of the organisation conducted by the local newspaper. The interview takes place at a small meeting premises. The member talks about the project which is about becoming aware of different cultures and take care of and respect each other. The aim of the project is to challenge prejudices – even if we belong to different cultures we are quite similar. (..) This weekend the group will participate at a local festival where they get to organise a performance on the theme, it could for example be a flash mob or interviews.
11:25 Presentation of the next activity called “Art over Discrimination”. The participants shall work with photo-voice in order to illustrate different situations, persons, activities and statements such as “short success”, “green world”, “warm together” and “power punch”. The participants are divided into four groups.
(..)
11:35-11:40 I follow one group consisting of two girls and two boys, to outside. They sit down at a bench and read through the list with the different situations/kind of persons they shall illustrate. The participants discusses and soon starts to take photos. One of the participants goes to the kitchen to get some kitchen supplies in order to illustrate “freaky family”. The aim of this activity is to boost the participants’ creativity and make them feel comfortable to perform before the festival.

(Field notes 20170927, Youth exchange)

Other common methods related to the strategy is story telling instead of formal lecturing in order to illustrate certain points. But also to make use of the young people own language to make them able to relate to the leader:

17:50 (..) The leader tells a story by Milton Ericson, a psychologist, about a man who finds a lonely horse in the forest. He does not know the owner of the horse or where it lives, but he sits up and let the horse find the way by itself. Sometimes the horse tries to wander away from the path to eat and drink, but then the man leads it back again. He manages to find the home and owner of the horse just by keeping it back to the path, not by deciding where it should go because only the horse knows the final destination. The leader explains that it is the same with
coaching, the role of the coach is not to tell the coachee where it shall go but to make him/her stick to the path. (\dots)
*(Field notes 20170822, Training course)*

The leader talks in Swedish, but with a foreign accent just like the young people. At first it appeared like s/he tried to make fun of them, but later on it was evident that s/he used it as a way to make them feel comfortable by using their way of talking, to make them able to relate to him/her and in the prolonging make them more interested in what s/he tried to teach them. *(Field notes 20170703, Youth Camp)*

The idea behind the pedagogic strategy can be traced back to the cornerstones or watchwords of the organisation:

\[\ldots\text{our key value is that you should strive to be brilliant in whatever it is that you are doing whether it’s cleaning your room or work at a workplace or writing a test you should always try to strive in yourself to do it just as well as you are able simply but just to strive to be brilliant and in and with that we believe and have seen when we work with youths when they have strived and feel that they have reached this goal they get a higher, that is a, a better self-esteem in themselves and a better feeling that they have performed something good for they have always been able to have a reference point in that “yes but when I did this and my teacher said that it was really good it actually wasn’t” and when they then have done an actual good job when you have really pushed then, then they were more content with themselves like “this stands, this is awesome by me” both surprises and feels like and then the next step in this is that you should try and stretch as said comfort zone talk there this coaching to just dare to test yourself, go go outside of lines you have not been, dare to meet people you hadn’t meet before and dare have discussions and dare to think about other solutions, just taking those steps it’s those steps that make yes where the magic happens as you usually say when you try this and it’s also there that you can find new solutions that you otherwise wouldn’t (\ldots) then we have the next which is to think outside of the box but also connect to yourself as a person it’s okay to be different everybody is different if we were to look at it that way which they have figured out themselves in discussions so it’s actually, there is actually no one that’s the same no matter if you wear the same clothes or something else and it’s okay to be different and also to think that these other paths, we usually challenge them, as said, when the teachers say we should use Times New Roman and 1.5 dots, try and do something else just for fun just to see if it works better for you to write a test or something, try in a different way, can you ask you teacher if you can do it orally or maybe visually or something like that to show abilities we usually exchange some ideas there, because we work a lot with (incoherent about 10:20) versus the formal learning and we use more, use a lot more of the different learning- and teaching processes which are those too then naturally through the different they discover that shit you could do different things you use different ways to get the same result yes you can so it goes to show and there too so we have, we notice just this to have information about knowledge that they have but can’t get out because there’s only one way to get it out so they have suddenly, then they feel shit I finally got it out, to do it this way, yes you see (incoherent about 11:00) and then we have the last and most important and that is to be yourself because no matter if you should be brave or if you should be different or if you should do something brilliant you should never lose yourself in the process you should never lose yourself with these words or be put in such an environment, you should never be someone other than you and you should accept yourself and maybe really look a little more on who you are, find your talent, find what you are good at, what, what is (incoherent about 11:30) good at, what do you want to work, what do you want to know and more just get that connected with all the other, as said, you are you, we have just found that everybody aren’t different so you here are unique but to then build that self well of inner self esteem, self-confidence that is just that *(Respondent 1)*

The pedagogic strategy can hence be seen as a way of challenging the student, as well as of making him/her explore his/her capacity and competencies.

### 8.3.4 The Role of Media
Media – both social media and mainstream public media such as newspapers and radio programmes play an important role in the organisation’s work to find partners, sponsors and of course to recruit new members and participants. But it is difficult to get the mainstream news’ attention and it often requires personal contacts, at least until the organisation reach a certain size. Social media and more specifically Facebook and Instagram are in this sense a tool to make the mainstream news media interested in their work, where followers on Facebook appear to be even more important than the formal member base or amount of participants. The organisation does hence work with directed marketing on these platforms:

Q: Was gonna move on and ask a little about how, how do you work with media and how important, how important is media for your work?
Respondent 2: Yes media is really important because as [Respondent 1] usually say “if we’re not seen we don’t exist” it’s a little bit like to reach the masses we have to be in the media and we have tried, we haven’t quite found the way, we know that you have to have a personal relation (..), you get no answer if you send to a common, like the local newspaper.se or someone but you have a person like for example in one municipality there I have a contact at the local newspaper so then I contact him/her “that now we will do this” in my regular job and then came, do they think “yes we’ll go there and write something about that” so that I’ve been able to use as well when we did that during the youth exchange because that was his/her area like, it’s this geographical area so then they wrote a story on it but on the other hand we don’t have a contact at the local newspaper for example so when we’ve sent to them no one’s ever shown up, no one’s ever shown themselves interested on the other hand we do have a contact at Sveriges Radio in this region so they have done at least two stories on us I think it is and then SVT and TV4 we’ve never gotten a response from either, (..) we always send out to everyone when we do something like now we’ve sent out that we’re having a Kick Off-party so we’re trying with that but we know that you need a contact then we work very actively with social medias because there we are the ones in charge so there it’s easier and there we have breakthrough (..)
Q: Okay so you buy, do you buy add space or how do you do it or?
Respondent 2: Yes we buy, on Facebook you can sort of have a campaign and then you can reach out to a certain number of people and then it costs a certain amount but it’s not that much money it’s a very cheap way to advertise to still be able to reach people and show them that we do stuff and that’s why we’ve very strategically has always made movies, short movies about our activities for it to be easy to get out through social media and be able to boost it a little trough it being spread a little more than to the ones we reach for free
Respondent 1: It’s incredibly specific Facebook, (..) you can be so specific on exactly who you want it to reach so that it, that’s why it’s so damn good and we do it all the time but in different ways and with different stuff, sometimes we’ve done something I’ve sent it to grandma and grandpa, mum and dad, the young people, the ones who are going on trips that is different movies, different rides that I make on different ages to spread it out and then but then we get automatically because if you like something on Facebook then it’s shown on your friends walls and that’s what’s happening with this internationalisation that it pops up all the time Poland, Estonia and then has, and then with the name it’s spread, we have the whole world, we have USA, South America, Asia we have likes from
Respondent 2: You know we have a grateful name to promote us all the time so that it [followers] keeps flooding in because even though, you know, people are like this, they [press] like if they think it sounds cool, yeah, and it is more to… just that you get that “like” on the page because it is not often they unlike it you know, they [are like] “okay it might not have been something I am interested in” but they still like have it in their feed it’s, that’s that then we think, through us working a lot with the social medias, we get our page up, now we have four thousand likes but if we were to raise them to maybe ten thousand then maybe it would also interest traditional medias, that when our organisation does something it’s worth to write about because they have ten thousand followers so they gamble a little with each other so you get a stronger voice to
Q: So, followers are almost as important as members?
Respondent 1: Yes
Respondent 2: Yes, it’s a lot more important
Respondent 1: We because that’s what it is (incoherent about 46:30) in a way when it’s us because we don’t actually have any use for being seen in the local newspaper in a way for me it’s and for us it’s hard to see that it would actually bring something more than someone on the town saying “yes but you I recognise something like that” but the thing with the local newspaper is that it gives access to the parents who might sit at home, that might have young people who aren’t doing anything that can sort of take...
Respondent 2: Yes, the local newspaper doesn’t reach the target group, but on the other hand it reaches the secondary target group and above all it looks good for prospective financiers that they read (Interview with Respondent 2)

The experience of lack of interest from mainstream media are in line with the findings of wp5, which indicated that only a tiny proportion of news items involved young people as a main or secondary actor in civic and political matters. When young people were targeted they were most often described as vulnerable, non-active and apathetic. The limited attention to youth initiatives might in this sense mirroring a general media discourse.

Even though public media is foremost an instrument to find new sponsors and partners, it also impacts the social climate and the public’s attitudes towards the organisation and its activities:

11:30 The group meet up again and the leader of the exchange (a member of the organisation) shows an article in the newspaper from yesterday's activities. S/he translates it continuously. The member tells me later on that it is always a great advantage to be in the newspaper. S/he tells me about a previous activity focusing on social entrepreneurship among new comers which s/he helped to organise where the newspaper had a very positive impact on their work. Before the article about the event was published, the local society was very suspicious of them. But as soon as they were in the newspaper the inhabitants suddenly became very friendly and helpful, and also started to donate money to their cause.
(Field notes 20170928, Youth exchange)

Media does in this sense impact the organisation in multiple ways and plays an important role both directly and indirectly.

8.3.5 Social Media Platforms

The organisation is active on various social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube and to a minor extent Twitter. They have an official Facebook page named Awesome People, but the organisation does also create specific groups for every event they arrange. The activity specific groups are mostly used to share information, send out reminders and to make the participants able to communicate with each other and to share photos and videos which they have produced during the activities. The Facebook page is foremost used for marketing of up-coming events as well as sharing previous events and news articles in order to let people know what they are doing and be interested to participate or sign their child up for an activity:
This year they have also produced an advent calendar where members of the organisation get to talk about their experiences with Awesome People and their feelings after taking part in the activities. The calendar is published on their Facebook page and on YouTube. Besides the calendar, are short movies about every project the organisation has arranged are posted to their YouTube-channel. Most of the material on YouTube can be found on their Facebook page too, though the YouTube platform allows them to gather video recorded material and hence is more refined. Further, Snapchat enables the organisation, its members and participants to share messages from activities in real time. Providing the followers with live updates about activities at the current time. The Instagram account foremost consists of short messages and homemade quotes to promote the organisation:
Beyond the social media platforms is the organisation’s website where they publish general information such as a presentation about the organisation, its activities and how to contact them. The website does also include a blog which is updated sporadically. The blog posts consist of small reflections and thoughts connected to the organisations vision, work or ideology written by the organisation leaders:

Figure 8.4 Awesome People Instagram - Source: Awesome People (2017b)
As seen in the above examples, all material is published in English, which is a part of the organisation’s “promotional strategy”. Since the organisation is operating at an international and national level it is easier to reach out with English. Swedish material is usually unnecessary because most Swedes master English too. Therefore, in contrast to most organisations there is only limited information available in Swedish whilst the main part is written in English.

8.4 Local, National & European Dimensions
The national level is foremost perceived as a “wallet” to get financial support as well as a monitoring agency to whom they have to report their work. Financial support can of course come from local and regional institutions too. But since these finances are connected to clearly defined regional and local investments as well as involving more personal contacts it tends to be seen as a partnership rather than a bureaucracy:

(. ) I’ve worked in one of the municipalities so I’m familiar with the problems there so last Friday I met with the school nurse and the school counsellor who also became very interested of the prospect of us coming there and have the activities there, I told them about us, so they gave me the number to the principal whom I’ve tried to call today if I only get a hold of him/her it would, because in those municipalities there’s money to be applied for rural projects so that’s always something that we’ve always wanted to start but like now there might happen something with it (. ) (Respondent 2)

What is interesting, though, is that the European level is perceived as a network and an arena for organisational work, compared to the national administration. The explanation behind this phenomenon can be found in the administrative structure where one national agency of each country – in Sweden The Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil society (MUCF), is responsible for the applications and evaluations of Erasmus+ as well as for certain national funds. The national level is in this sense the gatekeeper to European collaborations and local activities. Another factor that might influence the view of the European level is the practical work. The organisation has hitherto not organised any event at a national level in the sense of having a national remit, which can be supposed to require a stronger and bigger organisation. But it is a part of a European network – an umbrella organisation which seeks to improve youth work. The network does for instance co-organise projects such as training courses, develop methods and instruments for informal learning and share good practices and ideas. Personal contacts and practical work can hence be assumed to be an important factor that influences the members’ views. This is not least present in the European projects where the sense of belonging seem to be strong between the participants, even though the come from different parts of Europe:

The concept ”EU citizenship” is present both implicitly and explicitly in all presentations. Values such as being a part of a whole is present. Cultural differences are described as something positive and enrichening, something to explore and is a part of the European community and of yourself. To feel “at home” even outside the boarders of your home country and on equal terms meet people from other nations. One group are talking about authentic experiences, outside the European community you are just a tourist that gets to see a limited part of the country. But in the EU and via Erasmus+ you become a part of it and get a real experience. They also talk about a shared labour market, shared networks and knowledge. That you often get a job through contacts are not seen as a problem but neither something positive, but as something to act on. Networks are also pin pointed as an objective of the course itself. The European citizenship is in this way both a foundation as well as a vision. Another central part is to do something meaningful for the world, to change something. (Field notes 2017-08-21, Training course)

(. ) each time that I’m away I feel more like an EU citizen than a Swedish one and I think that it’s a title that is mentally very good, preferably I think that you should have the title world citizen but and feel like an EU citizen and create a connection between young people across EU it’s and like still, and still diminish the “we and them”-feeling and really feel your way around Europe and bee quite actively involved in EU as you automatically becomes through the fact that we have EU, The European Commission that is organising the Erasmus+ program that is where we seek founding makes you more involved in EU because you have the knowledge, that is know that EU, the Erasmus+ program will shut down “okay what discussions are behind this, now Turkey does this, how does that effect their situation in Erasmus+?” Now Greece’s
financial situation has changed to this how does that affect them okay why do they have a lower travelling budget than us? (...) (Respondent 3, emphasis added)

The European level reconnects to the local level. Firstly, the local level is where the organisation’s activities take place no matter if it is an Erasmus+ project or a camp for young people from a specific municipality or region. Secondly, political policies and legislations made at the European level do affect the organisation’s practical work and activities as well as the outcomes of them:

EU decisions that affect (the organisation) because anything that has to do with the mentality of countries affects [us] that is, the more laws you have, either against economic restrictions or the opposite economic release affects [us]. Like how the collaboration works in some country, countries because of corruption, no corruption, preventions and above all it’s when you have EU decisions that affect, like also countries within EU that are affected it’s when we work with and send refugees abroad, those asylum seekers not refugees but asylum seekers and then see which countries they can enter with a Syrian passport and which countries we need to seek this permission for or so that is that which affects a lot too and since the organisation has targeted a lot towards integration these EU decisions affects this as well of course it does and it does, that is EU decisions makes you very emotionally engaged too that is you become quite disappointed w, yes but when the refugee way into Europe became legal like, those things affect a lot (Respondent 3)

The role of politics is of course present in relation to the national level as well, especially when working with vulnerable young people. The work of civic organisations will not pay off if no political action is taken:

19:20-20:00 The group meets up at the garden. A male leader takes the lead and starts to sum up the week. Thereafter the participants get to speak and tell about how they feel and what they have learned during the course. Many participants thank the organisation and the leaders. One participant pinpoint during his/her speech that even though they have learned a lot about NEETs, got tools to work with this group as well as come up with ideas of project for the target group, political actions is also needed. It is not enough to motivate the youngsters and help them to find out what they want to do, if there is no jobs it will not have any effect. (Field notes 2017-08-27, Training course)

The different political levels can by this perspective be understood as a complex and interactional system where actions (or non-actions) at one level impacts the others.

8.5 Organisational Issues & Individual Citizenship

8.5.1 Structural Issues & Power Relations

The organisation is small in relation to its members which can be seen as both an advantage as an issue. On the one hand it makes the organisation dependent on a few persons and the power gets more or less concentrated with them. In this case it is evident that the funders of the organisation, as well as one members which has been involved from the beginning, play a major, executive role:

That is would like to say that the voices that gets heard in the organisation are the voices we wish to have in the organisation, since we don’t have such a high number of members since it’s almost only the board that does everything then I think the voices are our voices that adjust to, to what we think the young people want to hear to become active. And refugees, generally that is, that is youth refugee for me it’s the same thing in a way to, that is youth as youth (Respondent 3)
However, some members do not seem to consider the power imbalance as problematic but as a natural result of the organisation's size:

Q: Okay. Do you feel, eh, do you feel that you are a part of the management can you affect the decisions…

Respondent 5: Ah, I feel-, I feel part of it and even I have a proposal to be part of the management [inaudible ca 24:33] but since, ah, it is the beginning and I do not see much, ah, an role of mine in the management engagement because now it’s a small organisations and these, eh, two guys they can manage it…

Q: Mm.

Respondent 5: … but whenever there’s a need so of the third person or another person then definitely I will be one of the persons with the management. (Respondent 5)

On the other hand, the small member base generates preconditions for direct democracy, where the members are able to directly influence the work and to reach consensus:

(…) this will sound too good to be true, but I feel that there has never been any kind of team forming against one person to take kind of advantage of the majority but it has been democratic in the sense that whatever, whatever the person says then we tear it apart and see if it’s possible and if it’s a good idea which is slower of course but it’s part of the democracy also that things should change, be torn up, be worked through and become as good as possible and in all formal contexts now we’re talking yearly meetings, etcetera board meetings and such, then it’s a democratic voting that stands (Respondent 3)

But the small personal resources limit the ability to distribute the work and to establish formal procedures and structures. In turn it makes the work reliant on the members’ ability to combine their formal occupation – job or studies, with the work of the organisation. During the field work it even became apparent that the key members most often wear two hats. The limits between their occupations and their voluntary work is blurry and intertwined:

Q: And if I understood you correctly it was, you’ve talked about presentation you had a study visit from a north European member state here and you talked about amongst other things then about this equality project and that it’s part of a collaboration with the municipality, did I understand you correctly?

Yes that collaboration with the municipality there, there I'm in my profession here in the municipality, and then we have an organisation member who’s employed by the municipality for the project but we collaborate with the organisation to evolve the method material and hold workshops, that’s why [Respondent 1] s/he goes in as a representative of the organisation and volunteers and holds the group and is a part of evolving the method material

Q: Okay, and now lets see, you're here today as a professional?

Yes for them

(…) how important is it to be able to do these, these things it sounds like you have some sort of combination between your work and still the volunteering that it marries quite easily?

Yes now it’s been quite grateful with the integration because we’ve started working with the organisation too and with the target group then and that’s what I had to do because otherwise I would not have had so much time and opportunity to do if I would have for example if I were to work with something completely different then I wouldn’t be able to do anything with the organisation now I can like work together so that both the municipality can gain from it but also the organisation, when you can do such col, collaborations but it’s not always possible but, when it’s possible it’s good

(Respondent 2)

The phenomenon certainly risks excluding certain young people outside this network, but might also be a strength that enables the organisation to involve a group of young
people who otherwise is hard to reach. The problem of recruitment is applicable to the Swedish civic society in general. Civic organisations have difficulties to recruit and engage new members. Instead young people choose to engage in other forms which is not fully compatible with today's formal and financial system:

The organisation is formally a partner to develop methods and workshops, but the boarder to where the organisation starts and ends appears to be unclear in practice. The leader utilizes his/her professional role in the voluntary work, concurrently as the voluntary work improve his/her professional efforts. The same can be applied to the other members of the organization – compare for example [Respondent 3] who describes that s/he despite high level of absence succeed with his/her studies because s/he manage to utilize his/her experiences and skills in school (see interview with respondent 3). One of the leaders has worked with supporting young newcomers which made the organisation in a short period of time able to organize a camp for the target group and quickly recruit participants. The leader is highly appreciated and have a good relation to the participants, which can be understood to encourage the participants to participate and actively engage in the activity in a way which would have been much harder for an outsider. It probably has pros- and cons, but appear to be a key for the engagement. (Field Notes 20170815, Study Visit from a North European member state)

It is neither easy to recruit new members by formal ways for example by advertisements or public events. Some members connect the issue with the Swedish (and northern Europe) welfare – young Swedes can afford leisure time activities, they can afford to travel every year and they do not have to worry about finding a job to the same extent as young people from other parts of Europe:

(…) I am told that young people in Sweden might be too spoiled, they do not need to worry about a summer job cause their parents will pay for them anyways, most of them have an own car and are able to travel every year. They do not see the value of voluntary work as they do in other countries where they have to work in order to get these things. (Field notes 20170521, Inspiration Lab)

This situation makes personal contacts and networks crucial for the organisation’s growth. It is apparent that almost all people engaged in the organisation have found their way in through someone they know and who is already involved:

Q: Yes. Great, great. Eh, I thought maybe you could start with how-, how it happened that you became involved with the organisation?
Well, it was because my friend [Respondent 3] you know who's involved in the organisation needed some additional participants for a project in an east European country and s/he asked me if I wanted to come along. (Respondent 6)

Eleven youths participate in the session, all asylum seeking boys around 15-16 years old. They have been recruited via the existing networks, for example did one of the organisation leaders previously worked to support them. They have all lived in Sweden for a maximum of two years and talk in general good Swedish. Many of them know each other from before for example by living in the same neighborhood or playing in the same soccer ball team. (Field notes 20170703, Youth Camp)

Q: How did you come in con, contact with the organisation?
Respondent 3: I knew [Respondent 2], we are that I kind of, what to say, one of the few committed youths in the municipality, but I was not committed in the municipality which [Respondent 2] was and then I started to get to know [Respondent 2] through s/he was, s/he was at my school now and again, and tried to start the recreation centre, I tried to help him/her a little to get the recreation centre started and then one day I was at the train, I had just come home from another c, course in the, from my old organisation, I get of the train, I walk into
[Respondent 2] and then this, this was probably about three years ago, then s/he said “do you want to be in my organisation, we deal with international trips” basically and then I said “of course I want that” (...) (Respondent 3)

The phenomena certainly risks excluding certain young people outside this network, but might also be a strength which enables the organisation to involve a group of young people who otherwise is hard to reach. The problem of recruitment is applicable to the Swedish civic society in general. Civic organisations have difficulties to recruit and engage new members. Instead young people choose to engage in other forms which is not fully compatible with today’s system:

Q: Can you tell me more about that that you don’t believe in the form of associations because we’ve talked about that before? Respondent 2: I don’t believe in it for this generation that is know because it’s too stiff and today’s young people aren’t like that that is they can’t that is and then, oo it’s a really tuff question because in the same time it’s a school in democracy so to speak and being in an association and to have these yearly meetings with where you choose and it’s democratically built and everything and it’s like the whole built to the actual political parties and like the democracy as a whole but I don’t know maybe it’s about to become a bigger change too because it isn’t the way they can, can commit they commit to one question, a certain time and then it won’t work that you first has to start an association and pick a board and have a yearly meeting and a protocol and so on you just want to do so it has to be built in such a way that it’s possible then when you’ve already started like us (...) (Respondent 2)

In order to stimulate young people’s engagement in the civic sector one of the leaders suggests to include voluntary work as a mandatory part of the curricula. The idea comes from Romania where it is already implemented. One of the leaders argues that not only civic organisations will benefit from such a policy, but also the individual and in the prolonging the whole society:

Yes it will be a win-win, of course for the volunteer organisations that they get volunteers so that they can grow stronger and you get a youth perspective as an organisation because it’s a lot of organisations that has become very outdated these days and who don’t get any new members so that’s and also that you as a youth also get an understanding for how volunteer organisations work but then it’s also because that is their future that it’s commonly good to come out into the real world to see how a workplace works what, what it takes, which abilities and so on but also develop their abilities and competences, especially if it’s then maybe like special projects that you can be a part of and build up and take initiative in and like just work in the volunteering sector where you do something maybe for someone else get those abilities like and see the world in a different way than just in your own little bubble that you’re in, in school but you apply what you’ve learnt right away just to be, because then you can think “but this they are doing at my internship or they could be at a company because that gives an even bigger connection to work and so on” but I think it could be good to be in the volunteering sector just because the volunteering sector is important for Sweden that, that the whole Swedish society is built on the fact that there’re volunteering football coaches and there are those who work with art and so on, that is why the young people can do so much more so it’s important to that they see it and can engage and maybe be a catalyst for a greater commitment amongst young people to actually do things but to organise might not be in an association because I don’t quite believe in that form but still organisation like (Respondent 2)

8.5.2 Funding

From the beginning, the organisation’s ambition was to operate at a local level. But it appeared to be very difficult to get financial support and to find partners as a newly founded organisation in Sweden. This phenomenon constitutes a paradox, where organisations need to be large and to involve a lot of members in order to get financial support, at the same time as they need financial support in order to grow and to become fully established. It is claimed to depress new initiatives
and favour old organisations independent of their quality of work and output. The system is also critiqued by the activists for turning civic organisations against each other, obstructing collaborations among them and making the civic society compete about members. Furthermore, it is blamed for putting the focus on “the hunt for members” instead of high quality work:

**Respondent 2:** (..) an association still isn’t the best because we don’t care about whether we have members or not, that’s not it, but it’s like all funding systems are built on which becomes very unevenly distributed because then there’s those associations that are this old, yes old in the game like, like automatically has a lot of members but might not do so much business but still get a lot of money who can have like hired staff while we do very much but we don’t have so many members because we don’t go and say to our young people that might come to one thing “yes but become a member” because that’s like, yes it becomes wrong like, it’s just that we want to do things like and there I’ve looked and the best form would be a foundation the way they have in USA where it’s more that you have an activities controlled foundation where you don’t need members where there can be a board but it’s the activities that matter, while I read that the foundation form in Sweden is very troublesome and most of the time these money foundations that you think compared to the new ones like social businesses or the youth associations for example (incoherent about 35:50) who are quite big now they are a foundation because they do exactly what we want because they have a theme they have an area they want to work with and then they want to work with that like and they can still apply for funding because they’re a voluntary foundation but they don’t have to care how many members they have

Q: No precisely and the goal isn’t in any way to recruit, to get a written member but to participate then?

**Respondent 2:** Yes that’s what we’re talking about it is funding, collaboration, reaching the target group in some cases but we haven’t really gotten to try everything that we want because of the funding because of the difficulty to collaborate and if we were to have all that, if we were to have that security “okay now we’re working with the organisation both two hundred percent, we have collaborations with different parties then we could together like focus on reaching the target group and have different strategies to do so, then maybe it wouldn’t, that is it would be the biggest challenge then but it wouldn’t be as big of a challenge as now then maybe you would be able to solve it but it’s, it’s still what’s needed first for now, it’s just like with the method which is a method with which we actually reach the target group yes we can't upscale it because we don't have the time because we can't sit like and do so many coaching talks when we do it in our spare time and you should like prepare and you should do after work and so on so it’s, because then, yes it depends like on do you want to do what we want and still do a lot and do it very good then you need to work with it

Q: What can be improved politically and is there anything there that can be done or should be done and push the association life, facilitate for associations and these kinds of initiatives?

**Respondent 2:** In some way like change I don’t even know how but in some way change this thing with members and that it’s based on members that there has to be some kind of quality assessment that you do it with the actual activity in that is like those, it can be a new just like collaboration of people who’ve come up with an awesome thing and the one who doesn’t have a single member like so it must be, what you do or want to do, what you think like but then yes make it easier to do collaborations with the municipality, that is there’s this with IOP [ideology-driven public partnership (see 6.4)] and it’s something that we will look in to but it still feels too complicated for us as a new association

(Respondent 2)

The funding system makes it hard for the organisation to become established and one activist explains how they were continuously faced with scepticism from the Swedish funding agencies and foundations due to their small member base. They were once even told that their application was overall interesting and good, but that the funder could not see how they would be able to work it out:
Respondent 3: MUCF [the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society] has on several occasions e-mailed us about our capacity and it’s a form of criticism according to me at least then how the rest of the board interprets it, I can’t stand for that but my own opinion is that it’s criticism from MUCF who thinks that we have too few members to do as much as we do but once again over and over we prove them wrong and that we ta, when we receive criticism we see it as feedback and if it’s criticism or feedback that is worth to assimilate then we do that and improve based on that.(.)

Q: Yes but if I understand you correctly then you experience some scepticism from amongst others MUCF that you are a small organisation and how will you be able to do the work?
Absolutely yes. I stand for that we have received that.

Q: Does that affect you in ways of being able to get money or other things?
It does but on the other hand that is we still get our money and most projects were approved since we time and time again proved them wrong but most of all a certain, how should you say, criticism we've received has come from schools and other associations and organisations in the region because we've been so small and they sort of hasn't ever cared to open the door for a collaboration so I wouldn't say it’s criticism I would say that’s arrogance because of our size (Respondent 3)

But whilst the national level let them down, the EU helped them through:

14.00-14.30 Coffee break
We sat down and came to discuss the Erasmus+. The organisation’s intention have ever since the beginning been to work locally, but since it was hard to get funding and attention from the local level they turned to the EU and have grown enormously internationally, which in turn made local stakeholders interested in their work. They experience that the national agencies and municipal administrations do not dare to put money in small, untested ideas, and always meet scepticism due to their smallness. But as one told me; we might be small, but we are effective and therefore manage to accomplish a lot. It seems hard for new organisations to establish on the national arena. Although Sweden tend to brag about our active civic society it seems to be dominated by old, well-known organisations which eat new-comers. (Field Notes 20170521, Inspiration Lab)

The success at the European level is described as a combination of luck, a more permitting funding system with lesser demands on the organisational structure as well as an absence of concurrence from other Swedish organisations and actors:

Respondent 2: (..) we sent a lot of applications to a lot of different things then it was still that we were very unknown and not, well didn’t have a name that anyone knew of so that’s why we’ve worked a lot with Erasmus+ and that's wh, that was both good and bad because that’s what made it possible for us to build the organisation with that we started with international work so because of well a little bit what you got founding so we have a little bit like evolved the organisation from that
Q: Has it been easier to get funding from, EU than to get, than to get it nationally or locally?
Respondent 2: I would say that it’s easier, or you have, it was easier in Sweden because there’s less competition within Erasmus+ in Sweden because there aren’t as many who works with it, so it was easier to get funding even although you weren’t a known organisation which is completely impossible with other fundings as we have noticed then, then maybe it’s harder still for others, that is it’s, it’s hard to know if it’s just luck or I don’t know, but it was, once you get in, and I guess it’s like that with all funding, once you’ve gotten in somewhere you understand the system and then it might be easier later to apply again (Respondent 2)

Swedish organisations are told to seldom engage in European projects or apply for European funding. The reasons are claimed to be a satisfaction with the national support and possibilities, but also that people do not know about it in general and organisations lack information about how to apply:
The organisation leader told me about the funding of Erasmus+ and that there were few Swedish organisation who applied for funding, even though it provide great opportunities for young people and youth organisations. S/he said they were like a unicorn, to be Swedish in the context of EU youth organisation is very rare. One explanation according to the leader, is that few organisations know how to apply for the funding. (Field Notes 20170423, Inspiration Lab)

After the session I and the Swedish participant start to discuss Erasmus+ and how differently it is utilized in the European member states. It seems to be better known in South and Central Europe and s/he tells me about an incident when s/he went by taxi in Spain. S/he told the taxi driver that s/he was on a travel via Erasmus+ and the driver immediately knew what it was. Whilst there is not the same awareness in Sweden and northern Europe, and in those projects where Erasmus+ is a central part it is not emphasized. S/he tells me about a friend of him/her who had participated in an Erasmus+ project but did not realise that it was a funded under the program until later on as the project went on. (Field Notes 20170824, Training course)

Although Sweden have a lot to learn from EU when it comes to funding the system, they also think that funding system of EU could be approved. One problem with Erasmus+ is that the final compensation maybe smaller than indicated due to loss of participants, even though the costs seldom reduces to the same extent:

One more participant should have attended the course, but missed the transport. [Respondent 2] tells me later on that these kind of losses are problematic, since they got lower compensation concurrently as the fixed costs such as food and accommodation do not diminish. (Field notes 20170821, Training course)

Moreover, the organisation lacks long-term funding, targeting smaller initiatives at the European level. They call for something in between Erasmus+ and the European Social Foundation (ESF) – which they found too complicated and demanding for smaller organisations:

Q: Is there anything that can be done at a European level? Is there something that is, that is hard there or complicated there that would need to be changed?

Respondent 2: That is now we’ve only been in, in Erasmus+ and it’s still a fairly easy structure, they’ve gotten really far there, that is compared to Sweden because there you can actually be just a group of young people or a group of people you don’t even need to have an organisational number so you can apply for Erasmus funding then you just get this (incoherent about 55:45) number that you need for the actual application but you can do that and only be a lose composition of people, really cool so with that I think they’ve gotten really far and then sure the applications are quite demanding so but, they’ve tried and make it easier and if you have a good national office like we have then you get help and such on the other hand I know that if you want to continue working in, with EU-funding like for example ESF that is European Social Fund and such then it’s a lot, a lot of paper and a lot of documentation so only big organisations can do so that, when it comes to more long term, that is K2 that is strategic partnerships that’s more like long term that you can do as a voluntary association within Europe but it would be fun if you could get funding to run like something a little bit long term so

(Respondent 2)

This kind of mid-step could possibly bridge the gap between different kinds of organisations, help them to develop and in the prolonging stimulate youth initiatives.

8.5.3 Emotions & Motivations

The motivation behind the engagement can be sorted into two categories. Firstly, is an ideology-driven motivation to do something for someone else that might support his or her
development and mental health. This idea can be connected to the aim and objective of Awesome People and the underlying assumption that societal change starts with the individual:

Well I think kinda like… hopefully what we are doing for the youths in the club, or what you do when you engage yourself in these networks or when you engage yourself in the organisation. Hopefully… it will lead to, even if there’s not that many people but perhaps they’ll feel a bit better, that they get better support that they develop a bit better or feel better than they would have if they weren’t a part of the organization, this actual organization… eh, so I do think and I believe t-, personally, for me the ball sports were very important for me for a period. Eh… it wasn’t at all like I-, was bullied or anything, that’s not how it was. But, I might not have had that many friends who I hung out with after school, I had friends at school but I didn’t have that many who I hung out with on my spare time so for me the ball sports were tremendously important for a period because that’s what I was doing on my spare time and I had my place there, you know. (Respondent 4)

The positive feedback and outcome from the work is hence of great importance, and is what gives proof to their vision, making the members feel that they actually can make a difference:

A project that I was a member of locally that was in collaboration with the municipality it was when me and a few translators and a few co-workers which was led by our president and even the one who hired us in the municipality taught entrepreneurship to refugee children so they could reach their dream and go to an amusement park, even if you shouldn’t talk about integration in everything I think it’s a very big part in society and especially in a small community as this municipality is, and see all the children with different national backgrounds together and see them crush all stereotypes, barely understanding each other but pull together so hard and understand each other enough to make a difference, without parents, without adults just them together with a little bit of hard work and the right guidance provides and get one of their, a lot said best days of their lives and get a diploma as your, two boys that I still have some contact with, their father was so proud that he cried when they (inaudible about 19:40) the diploma and see exited and powerful it was and get all the youths and like see how happy they were when they managed to reach their goal and how willing they were to work for it in the end, it was then that I felt that this, now I really made a difference this was awesome, they will keep this with them, they will understand that their nationalities, religion or language barrier doesn’t matter again like (Respondent 3)

Q: Yeah, I see. Ehm… eh, can you give me an example, eh, of a time when you felt like your work was making an impact on-, on young people?

Respondent 5: Actually, ah, there was a camping activity with youngsters last year in one municipality…

Q: Mm.

Respondent 5: … and there was-. And there-, ah, so school, ah, students were there and we taught them how they come-, ah, they-, their dreams come true…

Q: Mm.

Respondent 5: … and those activities that we did it on the-, in real life we experienced that our work pays of and, eh, so the students reached to their targets and end of the project whatever that they said [inaudible ca 20:02-20:04] so it was a good feeling and I realized that it was a good [inaudible ca 20:08]. (Respondent 5)

Second, there is a more self-centred motivation where engagement is characterised by self-fulfilment and personal development. Although it may sound egocentric and even oppose to active citizenship, it can as well be perceived as an important part of the vision. The individual’s self-esteem is understood as a significant key to be an active citizen – change starts with yourself:
**Q:** What, what makes you want to commit, what is your drive?

**Respondent 3:** I think it would be the social benefits, myself fulfilment, the knowledge it gives and this, what should you say, the almost familiar relation that’s in the organisation and also a little bit in role model purpose, that is I want to show other young people that it’s possible and that there’s time and that like school and your workout isn’t the only thing you need to focus on or the only thing you have time for and most of all because it’s so fun it’s my absolute hobby (Respondent 3)

**Q:** Mhm. Eh, what drives you to eh, to engage yourself?

**Respondent 6:** Ooh man, what drives me…? That’s a good question. Like, I-, it drives me to see other people happy.

**Q:** Mhm.

**Respondent 6:** It drives me, I want to… do something that make others happy, I want to you know… learn things too, it drives me… very much to learn new things. (Respondent 6)

But even if the engagement is described as something encouraging for the members, it is not always faced with happiness and support. The family, and not least the parents’, are often described as supportive and as accepting. A family relation which can be understood as crucial since engagement often requires a lot of time and energy:

I have incredible support from my mum and my dad in my commitment and it has since I was twelve both in should I say support in planning, financially, and purely emotionally but then of course they think it’s hard that they don’t see me so much because of all that’s happening, that is I have a lot of meetings, I have weekend plans, I go abroad a lot, I’m several thousands of miles away and they have like no clue of what I’m doing in one way, it takes a lot of trust on their part which they give me and I’m really grateful but, of course they think it’s tuff and especially when I don’t live at home anymore and it then take quite a lot of weeks, that is mostly when I travel, the meetings are a different thing because they are often had during the weekdays but then of course it still takes time, it does and it takes a lot of energy from me too which does that I might not have enough to spend a whole weekend with my mum or dad or be everyday with my friends because I sort of put a lot of time on a lot of other things that make it, but it’s clear that it takes energy but it feels worth it, so it’s clear that it feels a little hard for them it is (Respondent 3)

However, the parents sometimes express a worry that their children are doing too much and won’t get enough rest. The engagement also tends to affect relations with friends where it is hard to find space for activities outside their voluntary work, resulting in disappointment as well as a sense of guilt among the activists. It is evident that high degree of voluntary engagement is perceived as something odd and not fully socially accepted, pushing further demands on the individual’s ability to resist this norm:

**Respondent 4:** Well… like, of course it’s-, it depends a little on how you say it and when and where and why and you know. When my parents say it I know it’s more them wanting what’s best for my health rather than them thinking that I’m abandoning the family-, you know like I don’t care enough about the family and It’s more about them being worried that I… take on too much.

**Q:** Mhm.

But for example if it’s my friends, partner, or sibling who says it then it might be a bit more like, well you know, you only do that. You don’t prioritize us, you know, like that. I’ve actually not had a friend who has told me that though but-, of course people can be like: Yeah, but you have so much to do all the time, like that. (Respondent 4)

**Q:** What do your friends think then?

My friends they, they think it’s fun in a way, maybe a bit odd, I suppose it was more normal when I was in local as, local association but that is they think it’s fun and a little cool I have to say and I get a lot of positive feedback and a lot think that it’s a good thing, some think it’s stran,
sort of geeky of course as it always is and the only think that they can think is that it’s a bit annoying when you have something planed for a long time and then some association thing comes in between, I choose it before them but there’s also a kind of understanding and sometimes maybe a strong non-understanding about it too but (Respondent 3)

The role of the school is also present in the material. Incoherence with the findings of wp4, an open and positive attitude towards social engagement appear to stimulate an active citizenship. It can also be compared with the findings of our survey in wave 1, which indicated that a supportive family in combination with a positive school climate encourage civic engagement. Trust, flexibility and possibilities to make use of the experiences in school assessments make the activists able to combine studies with voluntary work:

Q: How does it work with school then?
If I’m being honest I’ve missed about a third of junior year but my grades have never been so high as they are now and according to me it’s a lot thanks to the educations and the courses and the exchanges
Q: That are provided by the organisation then?
Mm
Q: What does the teachers think about you being gone so much, it it
They love it because they think I bring back knowledge that I’ve learnt, and some are questioning and scared that I will lag behind too much but basically all the teachers are like “s/he doesn’t need to be concerned about my subject but the other teacher’s subjects” and if all the teachers thinks so, then you know, of course it’s been tuff with school for my own part and to keep up but like I said my teachers have had quite a strong trust, I have delivered quite good on my own, I guess it’s about deadlines that has been a little flexible but it can be that way even without volunteering too and they I guess that, I’ve reserved praise from my teachers but also about my high absence but still good results so to speak and as said by my last mentor and my mentor agreed that I do what Civics teach, that is I do it in the field with my volunteering and my commitment with young people and societal and projects and (Respondent 3)

The positive view of the teachers can be related to the findings of our work in WP6 on teachers and textbooks as well. The study indicated a discourse which encouraged education with practical work. Activities which often are hard to fit into the school curricula.

In contrast, the focus on formal educational pathways and paid work as the way to success is described by some members as a barrier to social engagement. Young people often do not see the value of civic engagement; and voluntary work can be perceived as something deviant – to conform, you are supposed to do well in school and maybe have a part-time job or hobby. Discussions with Awesome People active members reveal a sense that some young people have become focused on material success and personal ambition, to the detriment of social goals.

Q: Why do you think there isn’t more who are committed?
**Respondent 3:** I think it’s a fear and a stress over your own comfortable bubble, that your everyday routine will break I think it’s a lot about not daring to take the chance and being so focused on school being everything that can prepare you for life that you, the most common excuse that I hear is “no I have school” both, but school isn’t everything but I think that it’s simply an imprinted system that school is the only thing that can get you forward in life which makes a lot of people not want to go (Respondent 3)

Another thing discussed is why young people are not engaged in youth organisations, and one told me that – you know what the first thing other young people ask me? “How much do you earn?”, and I earn nothing economically, but there are so much more in it for me than money. If you do something you love, you will be really good at it, and even if it does not pay from the start, the more you effort you put in it, the more likely it is that your avocation will become your job or lead you to a job. S/he told me about a person s/he known which had worked voluntary

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for years with dance courses, which lead him to an occasional job which sooner offered him the opportunity to start his own enterprise. He is now very successful and earn a lot of money, but his intention was never to become rich but to do something he loved. (..)
(Field notes 20170521, Inspiration lab)

Moreover, it is hard for civic organisations to provide opportunities that Swedish young people do not already have, which makes it a challenge to recruit new members:

(..) I am told that young people in Sweden might be too spoiled, they do not need to worry about a summer job cause their parents will pay for them anyways, most of them have their own car and are able to travel every year. They do not see the value of voluntary work as they do in other countries where they have to work in order to get these things. (Field notes 20170521, Inspiration Lab)

Respondent 3: … attracting young people is something of the hardest thing to do it’s very individual and it’s been a lot of times that a taco night and pizza night “yeeey works perfect, I want to do it every night”. Then just “yes we have a meeting next week”, “no my younger brother has broken his leg” there are a lot of bad excuses so you lose everything, it’s that young people have to understand that it can’t be fun all the time sometimes there’s a little sacrifice even if you do it for free and most of all life isn’t just about cash
Q: Is that what it’s about for a lot of you
Respondent 3: Yes sadly those who isn’t about cash is about a loose and comfortable lifestyle which is also sad but you should absolutely not have a lo, loose or passive and you should have as a goal to be successful but success isn’t money so that’s what I think (incoherent about 46:05) in today and feel (Respondent 3, emphasis added)

Alongside this fairly depressing view, also resides a belief that young people are still interested and engage in social issues. But their engagement takes new forms and civic organisation therefore have to find new ways and methods to reach out:

(..) when big organisations that’s been around for a really long time like the Scouts and the Red Cross and so on start to lose members that is it’s not the commitment that’s lessened because instead you see a lot of initiatives popping up but it’s just that, that’s like initiative like you are as you want “yes but this thing then let’s start we don’t stand out” because this is our question and we want to work with it “ or now let’s create, yes but after MeToo I’m sure there will be a lot, it’s when something’s happening, something’s boiling then people can come and commit to it during that time that is how it will be then maybe there’s a few organisations like for example (incoherent about 39:55) who has an area that’s very current all the time that can form an opinions image, educate and so on, a little like the organisation that is with entrepreneurial and initiative power with the young there will maybe always be some kind of need for it so it can sort of always be there but it’s important that we have it easy to exist then so to speak that our form has it easy to exist but also that we can help young people start their own initiatives because that’s what will be (Respondent 2)

Q: In what way do you think the organisation contribute to that, what is it, what is it that they do that is good, or what is it that you do that is good?
Respondent 3: I think we give a unique chance to young people who dare to take it and I think that the thing that we do best is that we become more and more of a role model for new thinking in different youth associations that are a lot bigger than us, have more local activities, have more members but aren’t working in the same way as us but are working in this 70ies way that obviously doesn’t work today, you see massive associations that have huge problems with losing members and while we are a new organisations that’s only growing and growing because we are fresh, we are new thinking but we are still experienced and we are very targeted on our goals and has a completely different way of thinking, we don’t think “we have always done this, this has worked before, why isn’t it working now?”, we think “how do we get it to work now?” so that’s what I would say is the most important thing that we do and we are a role model internationally about how youth projects should work and also as a source of inspiration for a lot of others who
wants to start something small that even if you’re a really small group and have very little capacity you can still, you can still do very big things (Respondent 3)

8.5.4 Successful & Unsuccessful Action

What makes Awesome People at least partly successful is, among else, their ability to reach vulnerable young people. In contrast to the findings of WP3, a study which set out from a top-down approach exploring policy discourses among policy actors from different political levels and sectors, and which pointed at a discursive paradox within youth policy which risks to increase the gap between vulnerable and resourceful young people. This study nuances the picture, indicating a practice which reach its targets and manage to bring different youth groups closer to each other. The phenomena illustrates the value of interdisciplinary research and can be understood according to the reduced Bronfenbrenner model presented in WP2 by Motti-Stefanidi (2016). The model reveals how different layers of factors connected to the societal, interactional and individual level interact and must be taken into consideration when studying active citizenship. Whilst our interviews with policy-makers managed to cover factors at the societal level (youth policies), WP8 contributes with factors connected to the interactional and individual level. Though both equally important to understand active citizenship.

It can also be related to Banaji’s (2016) WP2 model of active citizenship and typology of active citizens, which further defines the complex processes taking place within and between the levels and how changes of one factor may influence the outcome. In this case informal networks or what in previous research has been called “inside activism” appear to play a major role for the success. The concept refers to an administrative officer who acts with the outset of private engagement inside public administrations in order to change society to the better (Hysing & Olsson 2012:105-117):

13:00-13:30 We go to the municipal center and I talk to the leader of the organisation. We start to talk about work and voluntary work versus private life and rest. The leader tells me that s/he part of the day works in his/her ordinary profession, but that it is not always possible. In this case it means that s/he will switch role to his/her profession in order to present the work s/he is doing for new comers.

13:30-15:00 (...) the leader holds a presentation about some projects s/he is working with in the role of his/her profession. But it will also be shown that the organisation is a part of these projects. Two men, one younger and one older who work in the sub-projects join the session at this time. They work at the project and I notice that one of them is engaged in the organisation since we have met each other before.

The organisation is formally a partner to develop methods and workshops, but the boarder to where the organisation starts and ends appear to be unclear in practice. The leader utilizes his/her professional role in the voluntary work, concurrently as the voluntary work improve his/her professional efforts. The same can be applied to the other organisation members – compare for example [Respondent 3] who describes that s/he despite high level of absence succeed with his/her studies because s/he manage to utilize his/her experiences and skills in school (see interview with respondent 3). One of the leaders have worked with supporting young new comers which made the organisation in a short period of time able to organize a camp for the target group and quickly recruit participants. The leader is highly appreciated and have a good relation to the participants, which can be understood to encourage the participants to participate and actively engage in the activity in a way which would have been much harder for an outsider.

It probably has pros- and cons, but appear to be a key for the engagement.

(Field notes 20170815, Study visit from a North European member state)

The activities are often co-organised with the municipality where one of the leaders and some of the members work. For example, one activist is hired by the municipality within a gender equality project that is carried out in collaboration with Awesome People. Another member works within an integration project helping young new comers to, among else, find trainee jobs,
which made the organisation able to recruit new young people as well as finding new partners. It makes the activists able to switch roles and effectively utilize their profession in the voluntary work, and their voluntary engagement in their professional work. Something which is understood as a great advantage and a facilitator for the engagement:

Respondent 2: Yes that collaboration with the municipality there, there I’m in my profession here in the municipality, and then we have an organisation member who’s employed by the municipality for the project but we collaborate with the organisation to evolve the method material and hold workshops, that’s why [Respondent 1] s/he goes in as a representative of the organisation and volunteers and holds the group and is a part of evolving the method material (..)

Q: (..) how, how important is it to be able to do these, these things it sounds like you have some sort of combination between your work and still the volunteering that it marries quite easily?

Respondent 2: Yes now it’s been quite grateful with the integration because we’ve started working with the organisation too and with the target group then and that’s what I had to do because otherwise I would not have had so much time and opportunity to do if I would have for example if I were to work with something completely different then I wouldn’t be able to do anything with the organisation now I can like work together so that both the municipality can gain from it but also the organisation, when you can do such collaborations but it’s not always possible but, when it’s possible it’s good (Respondent 2)

Networking and activism is practiced both consciously and unconsciously in Awesome People. The organisational work cannot just be assigned to formal meetings and activities, but is actually something which takes place all the time:

Respondent 3: [F]or me networking sadly has or not sadly, both good and bad, happens all the time on my spare time since I’m passionate about the organisation and my commitment so it’s a popular topic to talk about and when you meet people that have similar organisations or above all when I have a project then it just happens that when you find someone likeminded you just get, you transfer this to each other and exchange experiences which makes you both better at what you do and also creates a network that can be of use so it’s really difficult for me to say that I assign work hours for net, networking it happens automatically in my everyday and my attitude toward things, but I can assign hours when I check on my networks if it’s, that is say one night “yes but now I have this project or now I heard about this project and now I want to know more”, then I can assign those two hours to elaborate and get in contact with a lot of contacts in the same time and check how things are and sometimes just one of these social hours like this, not just pro, then not just professional but on an emotional way keep in touch through and have an update and compare stress levels (Respondent 3, emphasis added)

The implications of this practice have been discussed in the literature and in research (Hysing & Olson 2012; Klijn & Skelcher 2007; Sørensen 2002) and involves both pros and cons dependent on the democratic and bureaucratic ideal applied. It can be critiqued for obstructing the accountability and the principle of legal security in the public sector by favouring a certain group and interest. But it is also celebrated (appreciated?) for the same thing where the public official’s connection to and engagement in the civic sector are perceived as an instrument to solve complex issues in which youth policy belongs. The latter perspective is present in the argumentation of the organisation, advocating for solutions such as ideology-driven public partnership where the municipality outsource tasks to the civic sector instead of doing it by themselves:

Leading with official partnership [IOP] and it’s when the municipality that is can see that “there’s a need here and this association can like go in and work with” instead of the municipality should start a new business and do it, because it is what it is, that it should always be that the municipality starts it, you might not do it in the best way, sometimes it’s the voluntary sector that
does it better, and I was on, where was it, yes it was on that collaboration day then a person said it so well it’s that if you take, you have a lot of people and then we will do something and you could hire then and have people, what they lack is this passion, that is the commitment from the toes you don’t get that from someone who’s only hired eight to five work just that, so that’s what you get but what you’re also getting that you don’t think about is that you get the persons whole network that when you as a volunteer comes in for example like I will say on Thursday to the employer if they can hire me but that I get to be a representative of the organisation partly I will have my commitment in a different way if I get to be a representative of the organisation than if I were to be hired at the company but I get, I take my whole network with me, I can bring [Respondent 1] as a volunteer and maybe have a guy group that is do you understand, you get so much more, you get all of the volunteers than if you just hire someone so sometimes the municipality could gain by joining in an IOP instead and have some association that’s already working with the target group with this need, maybe doing it really well but they’re doing it by voluntary powers you might need this reinforcement then, okay you get so you can actually work with this fulltime during a certain period of time and then you can evaluate but then maybe actually do more or it will do more than if you were to do it yourself as a municipality, so it would have been clearly a lot easier to do, that is have it more in thought like as municipality and then this part with the funding then, then it would also be good if you valued that is volunteered work that you, that there was a better calculation system on this return of investment to be what we put in, okay we put in this money but what does it give in values, how can we recount it so that we see that that which the volunteer organisation does is actually worth a lot so that you become more that is someone to count as so, it’s not just something that’s just, because if we were to remove all volunteered work in Sweden then we would not have this society (Respondent 2)

However, it is not always possible for the organisation to make this combination work and hence they are working with additional, more conventional methods and strategies too. These include formal networking, advertising and recruiting. The difference is striking both in the initiating phase as well as in the output of the activities. It is said to be very time consuming and almost impossible to find partners through formal requests, making the personal network and meetings crucial for the organisations existence:

We try to network but it’s basically impossible because we have sent, as said, requests to all teachers, all principals, all schools, everybody, and there’s no answer without meeting someone like we did when we went on an EVS-course in Stockholm, then we had such luck that we met a person that worked at the municipality with young people where we could sit and have a coffee and talk sort of and we got a connection with him/her so we could meet and talk here and talk about it, s/he thought it was awesome that we had just Erasmus+ and Europe international educations and development and s/he knew one were of to a upper secondary school and meet someone so we were there last Thursday at the upper secondary school so now we will start collaborate with them so that, it’s about having contacts. It’s, it’s, I would like to say it’s only by contacts that you move forward actually, at least here, it definitely is, so the day to day work is insane we do everything, we build the webpage ourselves, that’s we do everything ourselves, method, material, everything (Respondent 1)

Two different activities – Youth Camp and the coaching session with students from the training course, illustrate the impact. The participants in the first activity where recruited through a personal network. Nearly all of them knew the leader beforehand and those who did not were friends of those who did. Moreover, they attended of their own free will and no one forced them to participate. The second activity involved both participants who attended on a voluntary basis as well as participants who could not resist attendance since the activity was in collaboration with their school and part of their school day. The voluntary participants and the students did not know each other before the session but had just met briefly the day before to do some teamwork activities.
Even though the below samples illustrate different kinds of activities – one where the participants shall prepare a group presentation, another where course participants shall coach a student, it shows how the social relation affect the situation. The relations in the first example is well established and generate a comfortable climate. Everyone are participating by their own will and are free to exit whenever they want, which also can be supposed to contribute to their engagement throughout the activity:

13:20 (\(\))
The leader then presents the next task, a group work with three members in each group. Each group shall find information about a specific Swedish city, create a mind map of it and thereafter present the information to one other group. That group would in turn make a mind map of the presentation and then presents it to the third group, each group will in the end have a mind map of each city. The activity aims to improve the participants’ ability to make presentations and to take in information from presentations by others using mind maps.

(\(\))
It is a relaxed climate and the participants are chatting and joking with each other and with the leader. They seem more comfortable in comparison to yesterday’s session.

13:30 Work in groups, the concentration is high and the participants are taking the task very seriously.
I walk between the groups, asking them questions about what they think about the activity and the camp so far. Most of them seemed to enjoy it, even though they had some difficulties with the language. Those who I talked to express a willingness to continue in the organisation to meet new people and to improve their skills.

(Field notes 20170704, Youth Camp)

The relations in the other activity differ a lot dependent on the individuals and their social ability to connect to another person in a relatively short space of time. The engagement differs across the group and not all of them felt comfortable in the situation:

10:10 – 10:50 Coaching session in a group activity room. A male participant shall coach a student. He starts by telling about how the session will be conducted, that he is going to take notes. The student wants help to find strategies for a sport s/he practices. They talk calmly, despite some language barriers. Beside sits another participant who observes the session. S/he shall give feedback to the coach. It is hard to make the talk proceed, a lot of background questions are asked. Soon the mood gets more relaxed, but the talk just goes round. The student often ends up in answers as “I don’t know”. (\(\))

11:30 – 12:00 Break outside the school. I follow up how the participants have proceeded. What have been difficult and what have been easy. The experiences differ from one whose coachee started to cry, to another one whose session proceeded very well and the student appreciated it a lot. The lesson seems to be that a lot depend on the social contact, and that no coachee can be coached in the same way as another. Another general difficulty appears to be to not go too psychological.

(Field notes 20170825, Training Course)

8.6 Conclusions

Awesome people as an active citizen organisation is successful to the extent that they seem reach a group which otherwise is hard to reach. This seems to be thanks to their professional positions and personal or individual professional networks which enable them to organise and gather young people in a relatively short period of time. The already established personal contact can also be supposed to further increase the trust and in the prolonging the impact on the individual. However, this practice is not unproblematic. Even though they reach the target group, some people still get left behind if they are not within the network zone.
This is a difficult problem to solve and might not be the burden of a single organisation. What could be done is to stimulate these kinds of initiatives and facilitate the ability to combine professional and voluntary work. This could for example be done by extending the law of leave of absence (1998: 111) as well as embracing and continuing to develop methods for partnership between the municipalities and civil society. Efforts could also be made to help young people to discover and experience the civic sector by reserving time for voluntary work in the school curriculum.

Complex societal issues call for multiple competences. Future policies therefore should be focusing on collaboration rather than competition both within and between sectors. The Swedish funding system appears to involve some unforeseen and undesirable effects which hinders new initiatives to flourish and discourage collaborations among organisations. A development of a funding system based on the quality of output instead of the number of members might help to overcome these deficiencies. The implementation of such a system would in turn generate a need of a common quality assurance system for organisational activities. Other possible solutions would be to develop a funding system based on partnerships in order to stimulate collaborations among youth initiatives.

Our study indicates that the European level and funding have played a central role in the organisation’s growth and development. But clearly, more efforts could be made to make more Swedish organisations utilise the possibilities which Erasmus+ provides, for example by more information targeting the civic organisations and initiatives. Furthermore, it is possible to think of funding system in between Erasmus+ and ESF to stimulate long term youth work in Europe as a whole.

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9. UK: Momentum and My Life My Say – Sam Mejias and Shakuntala Banaji, London School of Economics and Political Science
9.1 Introduction

Our CATCH-EyoU project takes place at a time of political upheaval and uncertainty across the United Kingdom. National elections in 2016 and 2017 have provided an intriguing and timely context for observing the changing contexts of youth civic and political engagement in the UK. Fortuitously, although for reasons that are contingent and exceptional, much of this engagement during our ethnographic work happened to be linked to the question of young peoples’ European citizenship identities and their daily active citizenship practices with regard to the political leadership and governance of the UK.

While our research project focused on investigating what we considered ‘successful’ youth active citizenship organisations, networks, groups or initiatives, our study took place in the context of the UK’s June 2016 vote to leave the European Union (colloquially known as ‘Brexit’). This provided a clear opportunity to focus specifically on how young people were enacting citizenship around (whether for or against) Europe, the Brexit decision and the process entailed therein. We identified multiple examples of successful grassroots youth civic practices, and explored a spectrum of normative progressive, normative conservative, and non-normative progressive forms of youth active citizenship. These three criteria – EU focus, grassroots, and the normative/non-normative spectrum – along with an interest in including a comparative dimension to the ethnography led us to seek initially to engage three separate organisations or initiatives.

At the outset, and based on the range of cases of active youth citizenship, our study secured agreements to conduct ethnographies with two organisations, Momentum and My Life My Say (MLMS), who are both working centrally with youth and UK politics or policies (around Labour party electoral and grassroots politics and youth participation in the Brexit process, respectively) to engage young people. While MLMS matched our criteria for youth active citizenship as being explicitly focused on Europe and the EU, Momentum provided an example of an organisation using a range of both normative and non-normative structures and strategies, while also developing out of grassroots political activism linked to the progressive left wing of the British Labour Party. We initially sought to include a third organisation in Scotland, Living Rent, as a successful example of youth-led grassroots action in one of the devolved nations around fair housing policies. However, for a series of complex reasons to do with time and work pressure, after agreeing to participate, Living Rent decided to withdraw from the study and is thus not included in this report.

9.1.1 Methods

For our ethnography, we elected to focus more of our observation and interview time on Momentum (35 observations, 23 interviews) than MLMS (12 observations, 3 interviews). This was due to a number of reasons. Firstly, Momentum was a larger organisation and granted us access to a busy daily office life with constant activity, whereas MLMS had no daily office life to speak of and its CEO did not have a specific set number of days in which he worked from their freelancer office. Secondly, and considering Momentum’s position on the national stage, organisational reach, and aspirations to impact the election outcome, we felt that the announcement of a snap general election in 2017 gave us a unique opportunity to observe innovative forms of youth citizenship operating at the highest levels of UK politics. Finally, in the case of MLMS, while we observed all of its APPG events and all of its major events in

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London, and could have performed more observations of their smaller café events, we felt that our close working partnership producing the APPG Brexit research report gave us a different kind of ethnographic contact – of a partnership nature – that richly amplified our observation and interviews.

In our day-to-day engagement during the ethnography, for Momentum we would typically arrive at the office unannounced and spend 1 hour sitting on a laptop and observing the office at work. The remaining 3-6 hours that we spent at the office on any given observation day included directly volunteering for Momentum, or engaging in key informant interviews with office staff and volunteer (and taking field notes during breaks for both). Our observations of MLMS public events usually involved being an audience member and taking field notes; during the APPG meetings we also acted as participants (as the researchers supporting the APPG study).

In addition to observations and interviews, we took photographs at all observations and on a few occasions (e.g. a Momentum door knocking training event) shot video. We collected data from both organisations’ websites, and Twitter, Instagram and Facebook platforms (screen shots); downloaded original videos produced by Momentum; tracked and collected all media coverage of both organisations throughout the period of the study; signed up for listserves and retained organisational emails to supporters; and collected or copied public and internal organisational documents (subject to permissions).

Our ethnographic code of ethics prioritised reciprocity when first approaching both organisations, and consisted of our offering to provide a service to each organisation that would be beneficial to their organisational missions. In the case of MLMS, it was agreed at the outset that LSE would be lead on designing, implementing, analysing and reporting a comprehensive research study of 40 focus groups for the APPG, at no cost to MLMS. For Momentum, they requested that as reciprocity for access to their organisations, all observations during the weeks leading up to the June 2017 general election be undertaken in the form of campaign volunteering; during five weeks in May and June we spent 3-4 days per week volunteering on any and all campaign tasks assigned.

In the sections that follow, we present an accounting of the MLMS and Momentum case studies that were conducted simultaneously at two separate organisations and sites. Throughout the analysis and in our conclusion we provide comparative insights.

9.1.2 My Life My Say

MLMS ([www.mylifemysay.co.uk](http://www.mylifemysay.co.uk)) is a youth-led, youth focused youth political participation organisation dedicated to bringing young people from BAME and other excluded backgrounds into contact with UK politicians and to assisting them in expressing their opinions about the effects of policy. MLMS was founded in 2013 by Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Mete Coban, a local Labour party councillor for Stoke Newington in the London borough of Hackney, who was elected in 2014 at the age of 21. MLMS is essentially the organisational vehicle for the CEO’s mission to involve more marginalised young people in institutional politics in the UK by influencing national policymaking to become more inclusive of youth opinions about and experiences of policy outcomes (termed by MLMS as youth voice).

MLMS is staffed mainly by the CEO and, at any given time, one, two or three part time supporting staff members. MLMS’ employees and volunteers are all in their early or mid-twenties. MLMS work in a freelancer shared office space in the lobby of a corporate building in the Paddington area of London. They officially rent six desks within that space, but usually just use two for the CEO and Chief Operating Officer (COO) (Figure 1). The space is well stocked
and adequate, but feels temporary, and occupies a small footprint. MLMS’ branding banner is the lone signifier of its presence amongst the many digital start-ups and freelancers working next to them.

Figure 9.1: MLMS full time staff and office spaces

Figure 9.2: Tweet of a humorous GIF announcing the promotion of an MLMS employee
Prior to the EU referendum in July 2016, its work consisted mainly of EU and Starbucks-funded ‘Café Europe’ events. Based on an idea about the Eighteenth century civic public sphere, young people would be invited by MLMS to discuss an aspect of politics and learn about the positive benefits of the EU for young people over free coffees. These café events, typically organised to include young people from the area in a particular locality, (often school groups), begin with inspirational speeches about youth citizenship from the CEO followed by discussions in groups about particular political issues and how these issues relate to and impinge on young people’s lives.

After the Referendum vote which finished by mandating the government to exit the EU, MLMS changed their focus to explore and organise youth action to get youth views considered in the Brexit negotiation process. Using the CEO’s personal and political connections (including a stint as a staff member for London mayor Sadiq Khan) with local and national politicians, MLMS was able to establish an All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on a Better Brexit for Young People and to act as the group’s secretariat (all APPGs are required to have an external organisation secretariat). All Party Parliamentary Groups in the UK are interest-based political support groups composed of ministers of Parliament (MPs) who come from the three major UK parties (Labour, Liberal Democrats, and Tory). The purpose of most APPGs is to advocate on behalf of an issue or interest, connecting civil society stakeholders with parliamentarians who could advocate for particular policy changes. Because APPGs formally are comprised of MPs and its meetings must be convened by MPs at Parliament, they provide a mechanism in which particular social interest groups can be connected to powerful support within policymaking structures. All of this requires a high level of political literacy and institutional connectedness. Working directly with LSE, MLMS used the APPG as a vehicle to undertake a national research study on young British people’s views about Brexit. This bespoke study was designed as a completely pro-bono research project by the LSE team both out of interest and in a sense of ‘giving back’ to the organisation for their role in our ethnography. It canvassed the views of 40 focus groups of young people and concluded with LSE drafting a report that is currently being used by MLMS and the APPG Better Brexit for Young People to lobby the UK’s Department for Exiting the EU (DExEU) to include youth demands as part of the Brexit negotiations. In addition to the advocacy work that the report on young people’s views of Brexit has spawned, MLMS also held simultaneous ‘Brexit cafe’ public events for youth to encourage young people across the UK to discuss the future of the UK after Brexit. In 2017 they launched a ‘Better Brexit’ political campaign to increase youth awareness of and participation in shaping a post-Brexit Britain.

Over a period of the 14 months between September 2016 and October 2017, we observed MLMS’ efforts to engage young people in conversations about Brexit through cafés and other public events; to use its Parliamentarian and European Commission connections and networks to create a platform for bringing attention to youth views on Brexit through its APPG; and to participate through its CEO in public speaking, lecture and political discussion events across London and other parts of the UK.

As our study progressed it became clear that the political connections and savvy networking of a single passionate and driven young person (MLMS CEO Mete Coban) had successfully created some channels for young people – including a significant number from black and ethnic minority (BAME) backgrounds, and particularly in London – to experience interactive youth political engagement and create new communities of youth inquiry and advocacy around current political issues of relevance to the European civic sphere. The tangible outcome of this work seems to be the creation of positive spaces for groups of young citizens to express their views on politics, the EU and Brexit in a participatory and reflexive forum that was both entertaining and challenging.
9.1.3 Momentum

Momentum ([www.peoplesmomentum.com](http://www.peoplesmomentum.com)) is an incredible and almost accidental success story in active citizenship. It is a cross-generational progressive leftwing activist organisation and political campaign group. It supports current socialist Labour party policies and the leader of the Labour opposition Jeremy Corbyn. Momentum was founded in September 2015 by four Labour Party activists from different backgrounds. Two teachers, a young researcher and activist, and an older Labour left activist: these four shared an enthusiasm for the leadership of Jeremy Corbyn, and two of them had joined his surprise Labour leadership bid campaign as volunteers with little expectation of the stupendous success they would achieve or of the enormous angst and hostility they would face from within the centre right wing Labour party establishment and from mainstream news media in the UK. Although the founders have decades of activist experience in a range of fora between them, three were under 30 when Momentum was formed, and brought with them a challenge to older institutional forms of political organising on the British left.

Since its launch, Momentum has evolved from a loose collection of dedicated activists supporting Jeremy Corbyn’s leadership of the Labour Party to an effective national campaigning organisation with over 30,000 members and 170 local activist groups. Its main activities resemble those of a political party campaigning organisation, attempting to generate support for the Labour party through a mixture of online and offline activities and actions. It is distinguished, however, by the key strategic importance it gives to three things: gathering, keeping and using data effectively; getting the vote out; and including young people and their more reflexive and flexible political identities through a range of face-to-face and media events and spectacles.

In 2017, the national office consisted of approximately 15 to 20 staff members who were paid either part-time or full-time for their work. On any given day at their office, particularly during the 2017 general election campaign, between 5 and 15 volunteers would also come and go throughout the day.
Although cross-generational, at its heart Momentum has been a youth-driven movement. Most of Momentum’s national staff members are under the age of 30, while many key staff members are in their late teens and early twenties. Throughout our study it was apparent that Momentum’s cachet with young people was an important part of its success as a movement. At the well-attended national conference in March 2017 we interviewed 13-year-olds and 16-year-olds desperate to get involved. In interviews and observations at its national office there was clear evidence that young volunteers were energetically committed to increasing youth participation, using approaches designed to appeal directly to other young people across the country. Over a period of 8 months in 2017 we observed organisational life during both non-campaign and campaign periods at Momentum’s national office in London, where national strategy was conducted by full- and part-time paid and volunteer staff, and at some of the dispersed local Momentum groups across London where divisions and fractures over the political identity and direction of travel of the organisation were more evident.

9.2 CONCEPTUALISATIONS OF YOUTH

In the case of our two organisations, statements about how each conceptualises ‘youth’ are made with the understanding that one organisation (MLMS) is explicitly youth-focused, while the other (Momentum) is politics-focused, and identifies as cross-generational, yet nevertheless wants to build on youth enthusiasm for progressive politics.

9.2.1 Conceptualisations of Youth at My Life My Say

MLMS officially defines young people as being 25 or younger. The organisation promotes itself as a ‘youth-led charity’ aimed at bringing young people into (institutional, parliamentary) politics by relating (such institutional) politics to their everyday experiences and concerns. MLMS refers to this as ‘rebranding politics’ a definition that indicates the demystification of institutional politics.

‘Our duty here at MLMS is to make sure we can rebrand politics and make it more
accessible to young people.’ – Quote from field notes, quote from MLMS CEO, April 2017, Hackney

Of course, ‘rebranding’ also invokes the spectre of the market and capitalist competition to present political perspectives potentially as commodities that young people can relate to and become loyal to.

During observations and conversations, MLMS framed young people as generally existing outside institutional political deliberative processes in the UK, and in need of better systemic representation in order to take forward youth concerns to policy and decision makers. MLMS’ conceptualisation of youth therefore appears to rest on the assumption that young people, particularly those considered marginalised, suffer from a number of ‘participation deficits’ or ‘barriers’ that must be overcome. For MLMS, young people are not adequately represented by politicians; there are too few politicians who are young and hail from similar backgrounds to the diverse UK youth population; they are not given the proper tools or opportunities to assess how politics is relevant to their lives (MLMS’ self-stated reason for existence); and they have little recourse to having their views considered and acted upon by politicians.

MLMS’ CEO often pointed out in public speeches a lack of young and/or minority politicians currently and historically in Parliament, citing it as a motivation for his entry into politics at a young age:

I’ve always been a strong advocate of young people [and] institutions reflecting the people it represents. The average age of councillors is 65 in the UK. So, I thought to myself, well why doesn’t these chambers have people that are younger [who] represent the views of the young people? So that’s why I put myself forward for it, because I had a keen interest in my local community and wanted to make sure it was represented. Field notes, speech delivered by MLMS CEO at a university Brexit Conference, Jan 2017

9.2.1.1 Inclusion and Diversity

In terms of the types of young people it seeks to influence and involve in politics, we observed that MLMS conceptualised itself as a space especially for young people who come from marginalised and/or minority backgrounds. The organisation’s focus on including young people from diverse backgrounds was easily observable at all of their events: young people from Black and Asian communities were often in the majority at such events.

This explicit framing of young people appeared to be closely linked to Coban’s own identity as a young ethnic minority citizen of Turkish descent, and to his inner London social and professional networks of black and ethnic minority (BAME) young people. Suggesting the significance of communities, and of having politicians from a range of racial and social backgrounds, many of these young people were personal friends recruited to either be trustees, occasional representatives, or attendees at his youth events. On several occasions in public speeches or presentations, and in private conversations, Coban explicitly said that MLMS exists to support youth voices not normally seen in formal politics – black and brown young people, young people from poor and marginalised communities, young people without expensive private education, and young people living in cities. During MLMS’ efforts to engage young people in research on their Brexit views, he also prioritised the engagement of young ‘Leave’ supporters, whom he identified as primarily white, working class young people, both in urban and rural
Perhaps unsurprisingly, in observations of their public events for young people and in photographs of sessions we did not attend, it was evident that the geographical location played a significant role in what kinds of young people participated. In general, sessions held outside of London tended to include a larger proportion of white young people than those held in London, although social class was less easy to estimate. As we did not observe any MLMS events taking place outside of London, nor were we privy to its youth recruitment strategies more widely, it is difficult to assess the ways in which MLMS attended to other aspects of diversity and inclusivity – for instance around sexuality, religion, and disability when recruiting participants in their events for youth.

In terms of gender, there was little explicit conceptualisation on the part of the organisation about the importance of gender diversity and inclusion as part of their work, so it is difficult to draw conclusions regarding an organisational commitment to gender diversity except by noting an absence of engagement with gender politics as part of their youth active citizenship work. In its own organisational representation, all of MLMS’ paid part time staff apart from the CEO were young women. Several young men acted as volunteers or interns during our study, but none were hired as paid staff. During our study at various stages we interacted with six young women who worked for MLMS either part or full time; three were White British, one was Black British and two were from British Asian backgrounds. At its public events, and with regard to speakers, there was usually a relatively even level of gender representation.

9.2.1.2 Youth and Organisational Relationships

In terms of relationships within the organisation, ‘for youth, by youth’ is the chosen organisational approach to their work and during our ethnography, Coban hired peers from his personal and social networks to work at MLMS, as well as the professional youth citizenship networks in which he operates.

9.2.2 Conceptualisations of Youth at Momentum

As a cross-generational grassroots campaign group and political organisation which at times verges on being a social movement, Momentum’s conceptualisation of youth is accessible through participant and non-participant observations but is never explicitly stated. It can be seen particularly through the ways in which young people under the age of 30 work within, are represented by, and become interested in the work of the organisation and of the organised, party-linked socialist politics it represents; and in terms of how the organisation’s campaigning and activism reflect and attract youth participation. Staff at Momentum showed a keen understanding of how ‘young people’ as a category are perceived both within and outside of the organisation. In particular, there was a clear recognition of the significant gap between the mainstream media portrayal of Momentum – as an angry youth movement of anarchic militants – and the perception within the organisation of a dedicated, politically compassionate, and professional group of youth activists working for egalitarian social change through institutional political change. There was also a sense within Momentum that it had become positively associated with at least a large segment of a generation of young people eager for a change to the status quo of British politics. Its social media team played an important role in projecting this youthful identity while also bringing in youth supporters. Led by young people who have grown up using digital media, smart phones and apps, and also adult professionals in filmmaking, its sharp understanding of effective social media video dissemination and telephone messaging for virality played a critical role in generating support for the Labour party in the 2017 general election. This
effort was allied to the understanding that clean, up-to-date and well-organised data from supporters of the labour party and particularly of veteran left-wing politician, Jeremy Corbyn.

One leading staffer who was 29 when he joined Momentum shared his view on the appeal of Momentum to young people:

> We do try to give that appearance of being young, youthful and vibrant and stuff like that. But it's also just a media narrative. Majority of Momentum members aren't young. The majority of Momentum's active members, people who actually get out, campaign, do stuff, are older. *Munir, 31*

The response of this staffer and others recognised that the **perception of youthfulness** was an important part of **organisational identity**. This was usually acknowledged in a visible way in two particularly important areas – within the makeup of the national office's staff, and as part of their organisational activism strategy, which included very, very low joining fees – young people occupied central roles. However, the local chapter structure of Momentum and its linkages with traditional Labour party local group activism still resulted in a majority of actual dues-paying members of Momentum being older citizens.

Our ethnography revealed an important connection between the age profile of the national office staff and the subsequent emphasis on using social and online media and other youth oriented activist and media approaches to generate support for Jeremy Corbyn and Labour during the 2017 general election. In particular instant-response virality, and of framing issues in ways which resonate with young people were used with what we consider to be significant success. One staffer shared:

> [W]e have ultra-young staff teams as you can see. Which then like played back into the movement through like the content put out... the way we frame things and the kind of tools that we design. *Jim, 25*

Because the national office coordinated national strategy and action, Momentum’s ceaseless creation of digital content (informational, satirical or motivational videos quickly turned around and sent either to members or posted to social media to generate hits or keep followers informed) combined with the presence of young people in the national office at high levels of responsibility almost always ensured that a young person would be the ‘face’ of Momentum in much of its public-facing media content. Excerpts from our field notes reveal a familiar occurrence:

> Earlier this afternoon I was upstairs on the roof doing an interview with Manny since there was nowhere in the new tiny office where we could go to have a private conversation. And wouldn’t you know it, when I first got up there, just like so many of the hyper busy days in May and June I spent at the Euston Office at the height of the campaign, there was Brenda, being recorded by one of the camera guys rattling off another inspirational message to the Momentum supporters to be quickly turned around and sent out either on the social media channels or in a supporter email. We waved to her and I said something like, ‘Is this all you do here, shoot promotional videos?’ A little while later in the office I heard Ernie and Tino joking about Brenda being ‘the young face of Momentum.’ Brenda was enjoying the debate and smiling. It was, of course, completely true, all I needed to quickly do was scan a few of the videos from the past few weeks. A 20-year-old who had been with Momentum from its inception, putting off her university studies to volunteer, and who each day showed up with a bounce in her
step, was the youthful face of the movement. **Field Notes, Momentum National Office, Nov 2017, Whitechapel**

In interviews with both younger and older adult staff at Momentum, some mentioned how the current generation of youth political grievances could be directly – and unfavourably – compared to the entitlements and affordances that were granted to older generations of British citizens during their youth. One of Momentum’s adult founders succinctly summarised the dilemma of youth discontent with austerity Britain:

> I didn't have [university] fees to pay. I got a grant. I could sign on and collect [a welfare payment], and if I didn't get a job in the holiday periods I could sign on and I didn't have to work at university. Whereas now people have to work all the way through university and may leave with debt the size of a bloody mortgage and they can't get any housing. [It's] generational inequality. **Jake, 60**

A 25-year-old staffer echoed these thoughts on generational inequality, attributing the rise of Corbyn’s popularity directly to his appeal in terms of young people’s desires for a different kind of society and to young people’s discontent with the current systemic inequality:

> Corbyn-ism was in in a large sense or in a certain sense a youth movement because young people are getting fucked and have been now for ages and obviously they wouldn’t turn up to vote so obviously no one cared instead of like putting forward policies that actually affected them. But then that spawned and influenced organisations such as Momentum. **Jim, 25**

### 9.2.2.1 Inclusion and Diversity

In terms of demographics, the young people working at Momentum are mostly white, many are university educated (some were involved in the UK Uncut movement beginning in 2010-2011 around anti-austerity action) and in possession of ‘spare’ time to donate to working at Momentum. This last point suggests both their choices and commitment to an alternative politics which leads to them donating time for which there are many competing demands; but also a level of financial independence amongst some of the young volunteers, in order to make it affordable to volunteer their labour at Momentum one, two or even three days a week for no compensation. One of the few full-time staffers at the national office **Donna** [in her 40s], in a hushed conversation with us in the middle of the Momentum office, referred to some of the young people working at the national office as ‘middle class.’ She made the point that young people who can’t afford not to work because their families and they themselves are dependent on those wages (even low ones) are unable to be involved in the same way as most of the Momentum volunteers. Her recognition of the connections between a certain level of economic privilege and political engagement were incisive and self-aware, and indeed were her first words of reaction to a discussion of how our research was attempting to investigate how young people come to get involved in politics.

Another key staff member, one of just three national officers who was not white, affirmed the central issue underpinning the lack of class, ethnic and racial diversity, and suggested that this applied even to paid staff:

> Diversity [at Momentum] is terrible, it’s really bad. In terms of our staff team and volunteer team, there’s definitely an economic issue. In that we pay shit. So, you have to be a person in an economic situation that allows you to get paid crap money to do
incredibly time-consuming work. So that a) takes out people with care duties, people with family duties. So, majority of people are young, single or in a relationship that hasn’t reached into that point yet. And then on top of that, so much of the left is based on people you know, people who get involved – it’s been dominated by white middle class people for so long. And that hasn’t been addressed. So, whereas Momentum as an organisation has that problem, we’re in the fortunate position [that this is] recognised. Munir, 31

Munir contrasted what he perceived as having been a severe and callous lack of attention and care for or about black and minority ethnic (BAME) citizens on the part of the Labour Party in the past two decades, to his perception that Momentum recognises its own lack of racial and class diversity as a problem.

A 22-year old paid staff member, a white female, also commented on diversity from the perspectives of gender, race and age:

I do see [diversity] happening but I do I think it could happen more. It could be more encouraging towards a different range of people. It’s always difficult to get for example women involved because it’s such already like historically it’s been a male environment. And that’s the same with politics. It’s been like a male a white male environment and it is always difficult to change that but Momentum probably could be doing more. Roberta, 22

This staff member’s response addressed a gender gap that existed in the national office staff, although there are many women in senior positions within Momentum. Like Munir and Jim’s responses, Roberta’s comments revealed a wider awareness within Momentum that their movement was not successfully addressing the issues of diversity and inclusion.

9.2.2.2 Youth and Organisational Relationships

In terms of organisational relationships, our study revealed that young people working at Momentum’s national office very often occupied positions of significant authority across critical areas of work, including communications and public relations with mainstream national news organisations, leadership of creative and digital media campaigns, online-to-offline organising of canvassing and get-out-the-vote efforts, activist trainings, and event planning and management.
9.3 Active Citizenship

9.3.1 Youth Active Citizenship at *My Life My Say*

At MLMS, active citizenship was an implicit part of the organisational mission, although the words ‘active citizenship’ were not a part of its discursive repertoire. MLMS describes itself in its promotional materials as:

A national, non-partisan, youth-led charitable organisation that stimulates young people’s engagement in politics by facilitating their involvement in decision-making processes and by evolving relationships between young people, politicians and key decision-makers.

* Taken from website: (mylifemysay.org.uk) *

MLMS’ self-positioning as ‘youth-led’ meant that young people engaged in civic and political participation through MLMS in differing ways depending on their relationship to the organisation. The small number of young people working for MLMS were active themselves in engaging their peers through its organisational events and initiatives.

9.3.1.1 Conceptualising Active Citizenship: Rebranding, not Challenging, Institutional Politics

MLMS’ conceptualisation of democratic participation appears to be largely oriented around giving young people access and exposure to institutional politics and political processes, and/or communicating to young people via social media the importance and impact of such connections. An October 2016 news feature on MLMS quoted the CEO:

When you say ‘politics’ to a young person – or anyone – the first thing you think about is
Westminster and MPs. But what we are trying to get people to understand is it can mean anything to you – whether you want your train service to run on time or whether the person making the coffee is getting fair pay.  

Although they do not explicitly self-identify as an educational organisation, this approach contains a pedagogic perspective that suggests a need to teach others that politics exists in the ordinary and the everyday.

Our study found that MLMS’ citizenship approach uncritically sought to bring young people into the current political system. There was little evidence of interest in challenging the normative citizenship approaches that socially reproduce political structures and processes in the UK, nor were there indications that MLMS, as an organisation, held any dissident views. Its sole critique of the political system was the systematic exclusion of young people, a cause that could be embraced – at least rhetorically – by adult politicians without any evident change to parliamentary or governance structures and based at least partially on a call to youth to make more use of their voting power.

While the organisational literature of MLMS took the above perspective on citizenship, during interviews, the CEO often expressed critical and incisive views about the role of government and capitalist structures in fostering inequality and harming marginalised communities. Conversations about a ‘rigged system’ demonstrated an interest and understanding of the role of institutional political power in disadvantaging certain groups. However, this personal critical perspective did not inform the work of MLMS – despite the fact that MLMS’ views were simply those expressed by the CEO’s at any given moment. Instead, MLMS’ approach to youth active citizenship appeared to reflect a political pragmatism that idealised normative political structures, mainstream political actors, and access to them, as the main conduits through which it could achieve its organisational objectives.

9.3.1.2 Enacting Active Citizenship: Connecting, Consulting, Exemplifying, Performing

In observations, interviews, meetings and at public events, it was clear that MLMS as an organisation enacted youth active citizenship in several ways: through bespoke public engagement events designed as deliberative spaces for young people to discuss politics, or share their views in a formal consultation or research capacity (e.g. figure 6); through encouragements (mainly via social media) to youth about the importance of voting in elections (e.g. figure 7); and by providing exposure (mainly offline, but sometimes online) for young people to networks and actors of political power as a means to facilitate forms of ‘youth voice’ consultative access to political influence. (e.g. figure 8).
Figure 6: young people at the ‘Better Brexit’ Launch, April 2017

Figure 7: Tweet during the 2017 election campaign encouraging youth to vote
MLMS’ primary work includes hosting Democracy Cafés (a format which, depending on the funders or the campaigns involved, have also been organised as Café Europe and Brexit Café), forums for young people to informally talk about politics in coffee houses across the UK. Generally, these events constitute the main form of youth engagement offered as a direct service by MLMS, and are almost always advertised as opportunities for young people to learn about politics and engage in political discussion. Practices such as direct action, demonstrating, sit-ins and/or occupations that were popular with the UK Students Against Fees Movement in 2010-11 and with UK Uncut in 2011-12 are not amongst the repertoire of MLMS’s active citizenship.

Quite early in our ethnography, MLMS turned their attention to advocating for young people to ‘have a seat at the negotiating table’ by creating the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on a Better Brexit for Young People, which is led by MPs and designed to create a forum for the reporting of youth concerns and demands regarding Brexit to relevant UK government policymakers and negotiators – in the case of Brexit, specifically the Department for Exiting the EU (DExEU). As part of the APPG process, in 2017 the organisation held several roundtable
public events (at Parliament, the European Commission London office, and in event venues around London) designed to inform and include young people in the process of consulting on its work to connect youth views about Brexit to decision makers. These events also served to raise the profile of their youth Brexit campaign and of MLMS’ partnerships with Parliament and the European Commission.

Through this parliamentary group and in collaboration with the LSE researchers on this study, MLMS in 2017 helped to coordinate over 40 focus groups across the UK. The APPG are currently in the process of communicating the findings from these focus groups with policymakers involved in the Brexit negotiations. They have reported to our research team that they have established communication links to the Department for Exiting the EU (DExEU) for future cooperation, creating a direct platform for transmitting evidence on youth views to government. Such efforts represent a form of youth active citizenship that is largely consultative and vertical.

We found that many of the youth participatory opportunities on display at MLMS appeared to have a lecture/audience dynamic and context, albeit with important interactive and participatory features. When we analyse our field notes, we find that MLMS occupies four spaces of citizen engagement in their delivery of event services to young people: connective, consultative, exemplary and performative.

As event organisers around youth political issues, MLMS’ connective strengths were in attracting audiences of between 20 (for the café events) and 80 (for official Parliamentary events, European Commission events, and other events where national figures were involved) people. These events often included a consultative function, as did APPG meetings in the solicitation of youth views (some formally reported, others not). At all MLMS events, the CEO began by offering a speech where he used his own life story, and also illustrated the processes of influencing national policymakers, as exemplary of what youth active citizenship is and can be; this example-setting was also on display via social media (see Figure 10). Finally, the format of MLMS’ youth events was almost always inclusive of opportunities for young people to perform youth active citizenship, firstly through attending the event; and through providing feedback that would inform MLMS’ reporting to policymakers, or by engaging in debates about specific political issues.

Youth active citizenship at MLMS could be observed in the actions of the all-youth staff members who are themselves engaged in political activism on behalf of other youth. However, apart from MLMS’ Chief Operating Officer (COO), such individual active citizenship was mainly exemplified in a particularly media and politically savvy form by the CEO. Throughout our study, MLMS’ CEO used his identity and status as a local politician, and drew on his own personal and professional networks and ambition to often operate as a one man (hyper) active citizen, performing the role of engaged political participation curator, and deft political networker linking young people to political figures of power and repute in the UK. He also positioned MLMS (via either himself directly, or alongside his young white female COO) as the main conduit through which youth recommendations generated through the organisation’s work could and should be transmitted to people and places of power.

A significant aspect of MLMS’ work beyond youth consultation was in direct civic or political engagement. This usually consisted of the CEO and/or COO attending high level meetings with policymakers and MPs in the UK and Europe, which included closed door conversations that were never shared with young people attending MLMS public events or who were connected to MLMS via social media (MLMS’ website is only updated via automatically-updating embedded social media links).
For the young people who encountered and experienced MLMS’ programmes or events in person, depending on the venue and event type, their roles tended to alternate between **passive audience members and engaged debaters**. The tension between these two types of engagement was most often observable at the meetings of the APPG held in the houses of Parliament. For the majority of these offline sessions the young people in the audience (a combination of youth from schools, local youth groups, and youth stakeholder groups or organisations) sat passively and listened mainly to adult Parliamentarians speak about youth issues. There was always at least one section of these events where young people would be encouraged to ask questions and/or voice their views, which they often did quite vocally. But these Q and A sessions were very curtailed.

### 9.3.1.3 Media Action: The Instagram Engaged Citizen

Media platforms played a key role in MLMS’ attempts to engage young people with politics and interest them in policy-making. During our study MLMS’ media usage strategies appeared to be primarily aimed at connecting young people online to both the opportunity to – but also the ‘experience of’ – being an engaged citizen. MLMS both advertised opportunities to participate in, but also performed their own youth citizenship online, usually through social media platforms (especially Twitter, Instagram and Facebook). They employed a mixture of inspirational videos and messages (created by others); informal ‘check-ins’ from the field (e.g. for high-level MLMS meetings) with the CEO and other MLMS staff; and links to national media platforms on which they appeared, or national political celebrities with whom they appeared.

Analyses of our field notes from observations of their Twitter and Facebook accounts suggest that MLMS were keen to publicise via social media their participation in important meetings taking forward youth views (such as those captured in the APPG research study conducted during 2017). But such posts – which usually showed access or connections to events or people of national and European political importance – only shared that such conversations and connection were taking place, and were never followed up in terms of networking outcomes. The posts in this case are their own forms of visible follow up to show young people who follow MLMS’ social media that the youth voice work they are doing is actually reaching important eyes and ears.
MLMS’ main repertoires of media action consisted of:

1. Advertisement of its own events, resources, and happenings mainly on Twitter and
2. The performance of status (celebrities, politicians, appearances on national media), documenting MLMS staff members’ personal journeys as active citizens taking forward youth concerns;
3. Campaigning via announcements or reminders, retweets of other media content relevant to the campaign, and/or publicising the campaigns of others (e.g. Bite the Ballot’s #turnup youth voter campaign).

Although MLMS consistently updated their social media feeds with new posts, their social media traffic indicate a lack both of strategic planning and of concern for expanding their social media network. They added less than 900 followers between 28 March 2017 (when they had 5,218) and 12 January 2017 (6,118). But at every event we attended, the imperative to document goings-on for social media sharing was paramount: usually the CEO found a staff member or volunteer who would be responsible for doing this throughout the events. The CEO or a MLMS staff member would take pictures, and post either staff selfies, pictures of important attendees, or pictures of MLMS or other organisational branding present at the event, and instantly upload to social media (in particular, banner placement for the portable MLMS banners was always important in order to achieve the best visibility for the brand). However, throughout our study there was little evidence that MLMS actively sought to recruit or engage more young people via social media, neither during the election campaign, nor across the lifecycle of the youth Brexit research project implemented on behalf of the APPG.

Overall, MLMS’ media engagement strategies were observed as: (1) highlighting engagement opportunities, organisational accomplishments, and encouraging participation; (2) networking with other people and organisations to gain influence in power circles (access, opportunity), which was ostensibly meant to be re-channeled into getting youth voices heard, but was also implicitly for personal/organisational profit (through the attraction of new partnerships and funding opportunities).

Analysis of our observations and interviews foregrounds that the young people who participate in MLMS events and follow its social media activities are intended to be recipients of a positive message of youth engagement. They are encouraged to see in the CEO Coban an example of youth citizenship success – in fact of empowerment – that can be emulated; and in light of this role model, to re-conceptualise politics and its relation to their lives as young people. Coban often brings young people from his social circles into MLMS as volunteers, staff, or emissaries. In one example, a long-time friend of Coban’s was recruited to participate in a focus group session when the session was low on numbers, and also called in last minute to represent MLMS at an event of a fellow British youth organisation that Coban could not attend. In conversation with one of our researchers Coban framed this as an opportunity for his friend to get more involved, in a way that celebrated the positive outcome of pushing his friend into youth citizenship action. It also suggested that for Coban, looping in youthful friends who could freely donate their time to help out their politician-youth activist friend was a well-tested strategy for extending the reach and visibility of his MLMS brand within the world of youth citizenship. This mix between Coban’s engagement of his personal circle of friends and supporters, and the wider view policy-influencing work that is achieved through soliciting youth voices in consultative forums such as the APPG, shows an organisation with a number of different active citizenship repertoires linked to organisational mission and personal participatory networks.

9.3.2 Youth Active Citizenship at Momentum

The concept of ‘youth active citizenship’ was never explicitly stated at Momentum during our
ethnography, although young people were frequently discussed. In fact, in several conversations with staff we gained the impression that the phrase was viewed with slight embarrassment as belonging to a normative lexicon of school textbooks and grant funding applications. Knowing that we were interested in the phrase and its connotations, all our key informant interviews were careful to be courteous about ‘active citizenship’ as a term, and to relate their activities to what we were interested in. It was certainly possible through interviews and observations to discern what might be called a ‘youthful’, creative and flexible approach to doing politics that permeated the organisation. Young people engaged in direct civic or political participation could be seen in practice at multiple levels throughout the organisation, and engaging non-engaged young (and older) people through discussions of the importance of voting and through the ballot box was the explicit goal of the political campaign work being done at Momentum. In its implementation of its clearly normative political agenda Momentum could be seen to be distinctly non-normative, promoting a progressive radical approach to inclusive citizenship (see WP8.1 report), both in terms of the policies it supported and in achieving people’s engagement with institutional political change.

9.3.2.1 Conceptualising Active Citizenship: Utopian, Disruptive, and Fun

In the majority of key informant interviews there was a strong sense of reflexivity and self-awareness about what Momentum as a political movement was trying to do and about what made it different from several other voting related campaign groups. This ideological transparency was also visible in how Momentum publicly stated its aims. Momentum’s conceptualisation of citizenship, which demonstrates a democratic socialist political perspective, is clearly set out on their website:

What does Momentum want to do?

✓ Organise with communities across the country to put forward Labour’s ambitious plan for Britain and secure a Labour Government that:
✓ Redistributions wealth and power from the few to the many;
✓ Puts people and planet before profit and narrow corporate interests;
✓ Builds a society free from all types of discrimination;
✓ Invests to create high-quality jobs and infrastructure;
✓ Reverses the privatisation of railways, the energy sector and public services;
✓ Provides protection at work and strong collective bargaining to end workplace injustices;
✓ Provides decent homes for all in both the public and private sector.85 Taken from Momentum website (peoplesmomentum.com)

In their explicitly progressive vision of the direction that political change of governance could bring for British society, Momentum’s first, second and fifth objectives are plainly inspired by Marxism and socialist principles. They challenge the neoliberal hegemony of corporate privatised interests and the wealth inequality that the current capitalist system and its advocates in the Conservative government, and on the right-wing of the Labour party, perpetuate. In its other objectives Momentum embraces an international vision of civic and rights-based values of sustainable development, non-discrimination, an ending of ‘injustices’ in the workplace. Their organisation resonates with a sense that inclusivity and equality should be central to all their efforts, and one of their stated actions is to ‘provide support, training and mentoring to help and encourage potential progressive and socialist Labour candidates, ensuring that there are more suitable candidates with a wide range of life experiences, especially working class, black, Asian,

ethnic minority, LGBT, disabled and women candidates.\footnote{Ibid.}

In terms of a guiding ideological perspective, we found in conversations with Momentum that concepts of activism were linked to a desire to bring about progressive social justice linked to equality and fairness. Being an active citizen was about acting to make the world a better and more socially progressive place, economically, socially and culturally.

A 19-year old female volunteer, who during our study became one of the most trusted members of the national office team, shared her thinking on what brought her into politics at the age of 14:

I was growing up in Essex and there’s a lot of, like, UKIP\footnote{UK Independence Party, a political party known across the UK for their anti-immigration platform. Their former leader, Nigel Farage, a former British Minister of European Parliament, claimed credit for the success of the Brexit campaign’s outcome.} rhetoric that happens in Essex. Me and my friends were like, that’s not cool. How do we get involved? Obviously, we can’t vote because we’re like fifteen and fourteen. Then we realised you can join a political party when you’re fourteen. I think it [my interest in politics] was a reaction to [UKIP] and also the fact that I didn’t have a voice. Like, all these grownups were being like [assumes deeper voice] ‘Oh we need to kick these bloody immigrants out.’ And, like, I’ve never been good at stating my opinions, so it was a way of being able to kind of argue without being like ‘No sir, you’re wrong.’ Just to say that I had an opinion. Khloe, 19

For Khloe the issue of cultural inclusivity and anti-immigrant sentiment in her local area was a motivating factor in getting her involved in political activism. One of Momentum’s founders (aged 28 when she co-founded Momentum) spoke passionately about how the issue of economic inequality motivated her to become politically active:

It sounds a bit corny, but I always had a real strong sense of social justice. From a really young age, I would notice if there were homeless people on the street. I think I had a sense of knowing that even though there was inequality within the UK, it was relatively wealthy compared to other countries. I grew up with the awareness that there was massive levels of inequality around the world, and always really wanted to try to do something about it. I wasn’t really politicized until I was at university when the financial collapse happened in 2008. I was just like ‘oh my God, it makes sense now’…I mean, not really understanding the detail, but just the principle that like a group of people, and interests have basically such a disproportionate amount of power on the rest of us. Esther, 30

Another staff member (in his late 20s when he co-founded Momentum) linked his ability to travel and experience different cultures at a young age to his recognition of social injustice, by highlighting economic inequalities of a global structural nature.

I travelled around South America with one male friend and two female friends, and we didn’t go on any sort of tour or package. We just travelled solo for six months. We were very young, I was 18. We had all sorts of adventures and we met all sorts of different people, went to Bolivia just after Morales was elected, Venezuela, and Cuba, as well as Argentina, Peru, Colombia, Uruguay. Travelled around for six months, I guess [that’s] politicising in its own way. I’ve seen a lot inequality and injustice in the world and also
seen a lot of difference and division. I’ve seen different ways people live, which I suppose is interesting and enriching and enables you to learn, but also seeing some of the structural, and cultural barriers that made me angry. When I was 18, seeing children, like 4, starving asking for food, you see homelessness all the time. Alan, 30

Roxanne also linked the development of an interest in political activism to exposure to different countries:

I travelled in South America for a bit when I was 19 in Venezuela, and then Colombia. [It was] very politicising in different ways, meeting lots of people with quite varied opinions. Roxanne, 33

Momentum organisers, staff and volunteers shared a strong sense of self-awareness regarding the need to make politics do-able and interesting for people, and this was often tacitly connected to the idea of being ‘youthful.’ This could be seen from the beginning of our study throughout the duration of the ethnography. It was apparent at the Momentum national conference in Birmingham in March 2017, where there was a sense of energy and playfulness about invigorating politics and getting involved:

There are two male presenters and one female. They seem in their 30s. They are very upbeat, very animated. There is a clear attempt to lift and energise people. A large container of chewy sweets is passed around and this gesture is received well by people. I am an experienced political activist, and it is unlike any political meeting I have been to. There is a big element of performance on the part of the hosts. It’s almost as if the organisers (the people wearing Momentum T-shirts) are trying to model and convey political energy; they seem to be conscious of the need to engage at all times. It’s as if they want the people in attendance, young and old, to want to come back. Field Notes, Momentum National Conference, 25 March 2017, Birmingham

This identification of active citizenship as being ‘not politics as usual,’ of being at least potentially enjoyable, and of being progressive in both content and style was apparent throughout the ethnography. Referring to an organisation closely connected to Momentum and explicitly set up to conduct events, one 22-year-old female staff member shared:

The World Transformed massively changed how politics is done with this kind of mix of politics and fun. I’m basically having socials, having musicians, having political discussions all in the same place. It’s like you don’t want to be at a conference all day and then not have some fun afterwards. Like if you combine that with the politics it makes people want to get involved and be involved. Roberta, 22

Momentum head office staff observed and interviewed for this study conceptualised their own active citizenship as a response to unchanged and unsuccessful institutional politics traditionally pushed forward not only by the Labour and Conservative parties but also by established leftwing groups. Roxanne, one of Momentum’s earliest staff members who joined in its second month, had at the time of Momentum’s founding recently left a job at a south London left wing political party. Friends from her old job encouraged her to look into Momentum:

My first impressions were very, very positive because the people, no, not just the people as individuals although that’s important, the culture of the operation from the beginning as I saw it was extremely refreshing because everyone came with a very proactive mentality on the whole, and a very constructive mentality. From the beginning,
it was just all very collaborative, and it was quite different from my experience with [former political party], which was positive in many ways, but there was still a lot of grandstanding, political people who argued for the sake of arguing, make speeches for the sake of making speeches, all of that stuff. In Momentum it was totally different, it was just people who desperately, desperately, desperately wanted to do something politically new. So even if it was very ramshackle at that stage, from the beginning I had this sense of being involved in something that was very important. **Roxanne, 33**

A Momentum founder echoed these sentiments and the positivity around both the aspirations of what they were trying to do, and the collective energy that galvanised around the idea to form Momentum:

> The idea was getting the various labour left groupings and getting them sort of all together to build the strength of the left and the party. Obviously, the campaign happened. This explosion of energy, loads of new people got involved. It was widely commented on how youthful and vibrant the campaign felt, really kind of optimistic and positive and hopeful and so many new people got involved. We had the registered supporters – I think it cost three pounds, there was a very sort of low bar of participation, so thousands of people [became] registered supporters. **Esther, 30**

Other key informants cited the camaraderie and sense of family that Momentum offered. 20-year old female staff member Brenda said:

> The people are a really important part of keeping people engaged. Why Momentum and Take Back Control and The World Transformed is special is because, we’re trying to make politics, like, fun [laughs]. And also, inclusive and diverse. And, that makes you want to stay, because it’s somewhere that you’re happy to be with good people who are doing good things. I think for lots of people–especially who get involved in the Labour Party–drop out quite quickly, because it’s not a nice atmosphere. It’s, like… there’s a lot of hostility. It’s very… old, very male, very white. It’s very boring [laughs]. And so even if you think you’re doing good work, there’s not… there’s no spark. **Brenda, 20**

During our study there was a clear recognition by the young people and adults who work at Momentum that their organisation did things differently from traditional political party campaign and support groups. Part of Momentum’s appeal to younger citizens was connected to this different way of doing institutional electoral politics. The arts and creative events held via The World Transformed in places such as Croydon in South London and at the Labour Party’s 2017 National Conference in Brighton, Southeast England broadened the appeal of socialist politics beyond those already on the left of the political spectrum. These events departed from an established left routine of (justified) excoriation against the rich to provide a sense of community and hope.

**9.3.2.2 Enacting Active Citizenship: Institutional but Innovative**

The Momentum staff members we observed and spoke with framed and enacted their explicitly socialist goals within the oppositional context of a split Labour party establishment that, up until their successful performance in the June 2017 election, had continually rejected Momentum’s politics and Jeremy Corbyn. In this sense their campaigning and activism work was initially characterised as radical in a negative way by mainstream media, by the Conservative Party in power, and by centrists within Labour.
Momentum’s success at active citizenship was about finding innovative and exciting ways to do what political parties in the UK have always done: try to get people to the polls to vote for their favoured candidate. The timing of our study allowed us to explore in-depth what kind of organisation Momentum became in the midst of a national election. Momentum’s fevered work in a short period of time between late April and early June during the 2017 election campaign focused on two areas: grassroots politicking (canvassing, door knocking, ‘get out the vote’, supporting labour candidates in marginal areas by volunteering time and energy) and online/social media engagement, particularly with an emphasis placed on digital and remote engagement. For instance, they created “My Nearest Marginal,” a simple but highly innovative website aimed at encouraging members and supporters to identify the marginal seats closest to them and to volunteer or canvass there. They engaged in traditional daily phone banking (using their time to call and canvass labour supporters over the phone) at the national office, but also used online apps that allowed Momentum volunteers and supporters to engage in phone and text banking from their own homes. They organised and invited Momentum members and supporters in particular marginal constituencies to attend local training and canvassing events. These were conducted quite theatrically and pedagogically in partnership with American activists from the Bernie Sanders campaign, who shared techniques on ‘persuasive door knocking,’ which proved to be an engaging and unthreatening way of training first time activists, while innovating on traditional canvassing approaches. In London these training sessions were so popular that queues formed outside the door on the training days, and their final two sessions had hundreds of attendees. Each weekend in the weeks leading up to the 8 June 2017 election, Momentum activists were traveling to marginals, working with local Labour party campaigners, and adding to the ranks of people on the ground spreading the Labour message. Theirs was an impassioned get-out-the-vote effort that tapped into the enthusiasm the organisation had generated in the year and a half it had been operating. Momentum’s eventual success in mobilising Labour voters across the country was accomplished through a savvy mixture of online and offline organising.

Momentum’s Financial Officer, a dynamic 31-year-old male of Asian descent, explained the logics that drove Momentum’s organisational model:

[During] the general election, we launched a phone-calling app; phone banking before that was an incredibly exclusionary system, right? You hire a room in central London, you put 50 phones in that room, and you invite people to give up four hours of their evening, two hours on the phone, and an hour to travel there and an hour to travel back. So, you can only do it with people who are willing to give up a whole evening. When we launched the app, we had people calling from their own homes. We found that the people who called the most were the people that lived in the most remote regions. People who had the least access to that in the past. ‘Cause it was the first time they were able to get engaged. We had like Lottie, who’s now in our National Governing body, she lived in a remote area of Scotland. She smashed it, she called more people than anyone else in the country, and her sole thing was “first opportunity, only opportunity I had to get involved, only way I could because of where I lived.” Munir, 31

This testimony is particularly interesting when contrasted with the laments discussed earlier regarding the lack of diversity and inclusion within Momentum’s activist work. In particular it points to successful strategies for inclusive engagement already in use by Momentum that could be explicitly directed at bringing marginalised or excluded parts of the population into their active citizenship network.

In May and June 2017, we engaged in direct volunteer work at the national office as part of our participant-observation of Momentum. One of the most interesting, and surprisingly, enjoyable tasks we were assigned was to use an online text messaging portal called Relay in which we sent
text messages to hundreds of Momentum members and supporters (anyone who had agreed to be contacted by Momentum) encouraging them to volunteer a few hours to either attend a door knocking or canvassing session with their local Labour group, or attend a local door knocking training event being held by Momentum in their region. The actual execution of this task was novel: one would begin by sending the same text message invitation to hundreds of different supporters, and then in the ensuing 2 to 3 hours engage in individual text conversations with whoever replied (via the website portal), either providing more information about the event, explaining why Momentum was contacting citizens via text, or in a small number of cases apologising for disruptions and removing names from contact lists. There were many examples of warm and friendly conversations with strangers that took place during this task, including the sharing of messages of solidarity and support for the socialist policies of Jeremy’s Corbyn’s Labour party. This felt like a much more interesting way of doing the hard work of contacting people individually, and could be done at speed and scale using the internet.

9.3.2.3 Media Action: From Online-to-Offline, to Social Media Virality

Apart from the digital tools being used to mobilise offline during the campaign period discussed above, Momentum’s national office had a dedicated digital media team of 4-6 young people in their 20s and 30s, who were responsible for creating, curating and editing a staggering amount of online content, much of which was made directly to engage young people. The digital media team responded to news in real-time and would quickly develop poignant and funny ideas for videos or memes to respond. This type of instant agility and quick collaborative response is a major reason their social media engagement efforts were so successful. One video in particular predicting life in ‘Tory Britain 2030’ (the ‘Daddy do you hate me?’ video mentioned in the list in Figure 9.11) reached over a quarter of the UK Facebook population, with more than 7 million views. During one day of observations we were able to witness the brainstorming and within hours execution of a plan to convince a few co-workers to use the dating application Tinder to campaign for Labour using an automated bot (similar in style to the Relay text-banking application). This would involve automating a process that mass communicated a casual political conversation instead of a flirtatious one! In a subsequent observation one of our team asked Brenda, who had been a particularly keen supporter of this approach during that day of brainstorming, if Momentum had actually tried it. She laughed and said, ‘yeah they did and it actually worked!’
Momentum’s key repertoires of media action thus included:

1. A repeated and subtle commitment to socialist and feminist politics and practical action to make this politics a reality across all content
2. Advertisement of its own events, resources, and happenings;
3. Creation, curation and distribution of online campaign activism tools to build offline mobilisation;
4. Repeated usage of a consistent and recognisable design aesthetic in its logos and communications;
5. The creative development of bespoke media content to support campaigns, initiatives, and strategies;
6. Emphasising output quantity and well as quality.

Methods like these – an open commitment to certain anti-neoliberal political policies, communicative creativity, instant response social media videos on Facebook and Twitter, Tinder canvassing, – displayed a keen understanding of the importance of direct communication with young people face to face and on social media platforms.

9.4 Local, National and European Dimensions
In part because of the significant generational fissures revealed by the Brexit vote (see Mejias & Banaji 2017), the timing of our ethnography ensured that the European dimension was at the front and centre of current youth active citizenship approaches in the UK. Curiously at Momentum, Labour’s careful political policies around how to address Brexit designed not to offend Remainers or Leavers within the Labour party, combined with Jeremy Corbyn’s somewhat well-known aversion to explicitly condemning or embracing Brexit, led to the avoidance of any political discussion of Brexit during the 2017 general election. This had the effect of eliminating Brexit and the European question generally from any of Momentum’s strategies or work. However, a focus on European citizenship was especially evident from observing MLMS’ efforts during 2017, when it deliberately shifted its organisational focus to concentrate solely on engaging British youth to participate in and influence the Brexit debate.

9.4.1 Local, National and European dimensions at My Life My Say

In its current work, MLMS mainly focuses on exposing young people to national and European political issues and political figures. In the past MLMS have also worked in the local arena, through collaborations with the London Mayor’s office. With the strategic decision in 2017 to focus exclusively on youth citizenship work around the Brexit negotiation period, a strong relationship between national politics and questions of European citizenship and identity emerged as a core theme of their work.

MLMS’ on-going work with the APPG and through other Brexit and EU-related forums offered a limited number of young people a chance to feed their opinions into the negotiation process by informing national policymakers how they envisioned their civic and political relationships with their European neighbours. Administrative control of an APPG and a close working relationship with the chair of the APPG, Stephen Kinnock MP, allowed MLMS to use the Houses of Parliament to convene several high profile official and public events. These events were explicitly focused on young people’s consideration of the impact of Brexit on their lives and future generations, and also invited young people to visit Parliament and engage in an official
Parliamentary meeting with elected representatives and youth policy stakeholders.

Because of its relatively small size and reach and its location and networks in London, the young people most likely to participate in MLMS events are mainly from the London and Southeast England region, connecting them to national and European policymakers based in or working out of London. MLMS prioritised reaching young people from parts of the city that were considered poor and working class areas for white British young people, including parts of east London such as Dagenham.

At the events we attended, it soon became apparent that many young participants were either friends of young people within MLMS, or were positively affected by attending a previous MLMS event and had become ‘return customers.’ At public events, but also in MLMS’ visual media on its website and social media platforms, it was sometimes easy to spot the same faces over and over. This lent to the occasional sense during our observations that MLMS had an extended ‘family’ of young supporters, and generally worked with a relatively small number of young people, mainly on a local (London) level.

9.4.2 Local, National and European dimensions at Momentum

During our study the relationships between the national and local dimensions of Momentum’s movement were the most easily observable. At the national level Momentum’s London national office coordinated overall organisational action and voice. Local groups had autonomy to participate in political activism locally while adhering to a nationally approved code of conduct, and in some cases had differing or divergent political beliefs or agendas. This sometimes would represent a challenge when it came to local views on national actions and strategies, but what generally appeared to happen in practice was an open and mutually supportive coordination between national office staff members and local volunteers and staff.

A European dimension was largely absent from the work of Momentum. This is not surprising. Momentum began as an offshoot of the many progressive left grassroots movements either affiliated with or operating in the same sphere as local, regional and national Labour party participatory networks. The primary concerns of Momentum since its formation have been local and national politics of the left.

In the aftermath of a Brexit vote upon which Conservative Prime Minster David Cameron had staked his political career, there was a political reckoning. However, this was not just within the Conservative Party with Cameron’s resignation. Vocal opponents of Corbyn within the Labour Party tried blaming the result on Corbyn’s perceived dissatisfaction with aspects of the EU and the alleged lacklustre campaigning job he had done for the Remain side. Although Corbyn survived the challenge to his leadership – a challenge which remarkably provided a significant boost for Momentum’s membership rolls and for Corbyn’s overall popularity on the UK left – there was within Momentum the perception that it was better for Corbyn to leave Brexit and the EU to the conservatives and focus on national politics and solving the problems British people were having at home that had been caused by austerity. Our team made many attempts during the spring of 2017 (when the snap election had just been called) to ask Momentum staff and volunteers their views on Brexit, and what they thought about Labour’s non-engagement with it as a campaign issue in the general election. We found overall disapproval amongst individual staff members with the decision to leave the EU and especially with Prime Minister Theresa

May’s handling of the Brexit withdrawal process.

With the release of the Labour party manifesto the staff members we worked with at Momentum were fully focused on persuading the public to vote for a socially radical and economically progressive form of national government, a socialist approach that would end the austerity years, nationalise critical services within the country, bring back free university tuition, and support fairness and equality amongst the population. Brexit was not a part of the manifesto and prime ministerial candidate Corbyn threaded a pro-leave/pro-EU needle with a focus on getting the best economic deal for Britain without explicitly backing a Leave or Remain perspective. Momentum was a vehicle for the ideas that the Labour party wanted to put forward in the country at the local and national level. Europe as a dimension of active citizenship within the organisation was therefore not a priority or focus that could be observed during our ethnography.

9.5 Organisational Issues and Individual Citizenship

9.5.1 Organisational Issues and Individual Citizenship at *My Life My Say*

9.5.1.1 Structure and Power

From our observations of MLMS, and during collaborative partnership with the organisation on a separate research study into youth views on Brexit, our team concluded that MLMS fit a particular mould of an individual – personality-driven – active citizenship. Although small scale in terms of structure and staffing, MLMS as an organisation relied heavily on the CEO’s almost preternaturally gifted networking skills and ability to secure cooperation with and participation of national and European policymakers. We observed a series of successful and engaging initiatives managed by a one-person hierarchy that paid very little attention to structural democracy or to building a sustainable movement.

Our collaboration with MLMS included a seat at the table observing all of their events (which often included directly participating in events as MLMS’ official research partner for the APPG), and regular office observations and interviews. However, our attempts at understanding the managerial and operational structure of MLMS were complicated by several factors: a lack of access to private MLMS meetings (as agreed upon prior to the study); the changing and sometimes revolving-door status of MLMS’ part-time, volunteer and intern staff; and a lack of clear communication about the specifics of its short or long term strategic goals. As such, our research team were only able to report on what we observed on two levels: (1) as a witness to and participant in the majority of MLMS’ public events about or for young people, where current and former MLMS staff would sometimes share with us details of their experience working at MLMS; and (2) as a close collaborator with MLMS on the APPG focus group research project, which afforded us a front row seat as an organisational partner throughout the duration of our ethnography.

On both of these levels, it was sometimes possible to observe inter- and intra-organisational issues which could be diplomatically labelled ‘hiccups’. Primarily these issues were related to task management around the large scale and changing forms of collaborative work within MLMS, and between MLMS and LSE. On the level of LSE’s collaborative partnership there were several instances where management styles and expectations did not cohere neatly. The partnership was nonetheless successful in its aim to produce a comprehensive and rigorous research report on youth views around Brexit, which would go on to form the empirical foundation for MLMS’ lobbying work throughout the remainder of the negotiation period (until March 2019).
Leveraging their youth stakeholder networks and their parliamentary networks, MLMS contributed to the sourcing of focus group participants and to youth recruitment across the entirety of the UK. Their ability to ensure the participation of other youth organisations in the research study allowed our focus group sample size to reach 40 groups rather than the 20 that LSE had committed to providing. However, their lack of organisational planning in certain situations presented real challenges and clearly highlighted their lack of delegated organisational structure and general reliance on one person for planning and implementation.

In terms of staff issues regarding hierarchy and power relations that were observable to us during our study, we noticed specific problems around the contingent nature of MLMS’ support staff and an obvious lack of clear or consistent management structures. We observed a tendency for the CEO to randomly delegate tasks without sufficiently informing his staff of their responsibilities to perform such tasks. An example was the young COO of MLMS, who when interviewed in February 2017 only worked for MLMS two days a week, and had to take a part-time job elsewhere three days a week. This affected her ability to respond quickly to internal and external requests regarding MLMS that would arrive throughout each week; in addition, such requests were often directed to her by the CEO without advance notice. One temporary staff member confided after she had left MLMS that she was not receiving sufficient guidance and instruction about what was expected of her as an employee, and would be asked to perform urgent tasks that she did not consider to fit the agreed-upon scope of work. A second staff member also shared a similar anecdote with our researchers. Our own regular research queries and requests seemed to confirm a lack of clarity around roles and responsibilities throughout MLMS. On several occasions our requests for information, clarification, or support from MLMS were met with responses instructing us to follow up with particular staff members, who when contacted expressed confusion or surprise at having been queried. On other occasions requests would go unheard for days or weeks.

Our assessment of MLMS’ management issues took into account the financial considerations of their business model, which appeared to be linked to the generation of funding for a suite of programmes and to pay only two or three key staff. The CEO often spoke of needing to solicit new funders, or meet grant deadlines to ensure that a block of funding would be available for upcoming months so that he could keep his staff paid and perhaps bring on more. This lent a sense of precariousness to staff members’ situations that CEO and staff members were all aware of. MLMS during this time also availed itself of the free labour of interns who were interested in gaining experience in youth political campaigning and participation; during our study two American university students had come to the UK to do 3-month unpaid internships for MLMS. This of course suggested that only young people with the financial means to participate were likely to have opportunities to intern at MLMS.

9.5.1.2 Emotion and Motivation

Much of the work that we observed at MLMS demonstrated an organisational tendency towards using political power and celebrity to motivate young people to become involved in politics. This outward-facing strategy was designed to make explicit and real for young people the ability to have some of their concerns raised at the highest levels of political power and authority. Within the organisation itself, one clear motivation observable during our study was that of an accumulation by the CEO of personal political capital through the enactment of a youth voice agenda through a youth politics organisational networking approach. The All Party Parliamentary Group events led to an increased number of public speaking events to which MLMS (and mainly Coban) were invited to participate. During the later stages of our study, Coban participated in speaking engagements in Malta, Austria, Brussels and Tunisia.
9.5.1.3 Challenges to Youth Participation

In terms of the typology of citizenship (Banaji, 2016) that CATCH-EyoU has been working with since 2016, we noted a preponderance of young people form the category of ‘socially conservative pro-democratic’ within ambit of this organisation. Although there was a slight spectrum, the general tendency was for there to be consensus on the ways in which social change should be enacted. We note this as a challenge since it also circumscribed the sorts of ideas generated and the creativity of the organisation. The youth active citizenship approaches – Parliamentary Groups, Brexit Cafes – implemented by MLMS may not necessarily block certain groups of youth from becoming involved, but by their nature and scale they do not reach a significant number of young people. In this way the active citizenship encouraged by MLMS is limited by the types of events held, by the conceptualisation of active citizenship as vertical political contact and by limitations in resources for scaling events. We suggest that this would encourage participation that would correspond to Typology/positioning number 3 (Banaji, 2016) of young people who engage with MLMS being generally active in conformist ways enabling social reproduction.

9.5.2 Organisational Issues and Individual Citizenship at Momentum

Momentum’s national office operates through a horizontal management and implementation approach. As it enters its third year of operation there is some evidence that it is beginning to function through a (necessary) hierarchy with notable horizontal and devolved features. The non-hierarchical working atmosphere and organisational ethos of Momentum appears to be one of the key attractions of the national office to many of the young people we interviewed who worked there. There was a feeling that one could arrive at Momentum and instantly work effectively and diligently, making a difference to public perceptions of social and economic issues regardless of how much time was donated, or one’s age and experience on arrival. The space was permanently dishevelled and hot-desked; no one belonged anywhere but everyone belonged everywhere, so there was a sense of comfort and ownership. During our months of observations there we became familiar with what was a remarkably self-sufficient and somewhat ideal working rhythm imbued in the national office spaces:

After six weeks there, the national office itself was still a curiosity. It was most often exemplified by a dozen or so young people individually crouched over laptops, on the phone discussing political strategies or logistics, or collectively consumed by either a very serious and focused work-related chat, or by the latest silly joke or flirtation bouncing across the room. But it still had that feel, every time you walked in, that you had better know why you were there, because no one was going to ask if you ‘needed any help’ or if you ‘had an appointment.’ In some cases, you might not even get acknowledged; it certainly happened on a few occasions that it was entirely possible to enter the office, take up a seat and begin working without anyone pausing to notice. This persistent and casual energy lent itself to social banter and other forms of flirting, and consequently gave off a ‘young’ vibe. Nothing appeared to be forbidden and it was fine to go on smoke breaks, chat randomly in the middle of work about gossip. It was a pretty ‘cool’ place to work and there was always the feeling that no one would be checking each other’s progress or task management as might be the case in an office, so in that sense it also felt like a pretty trusting work space. Field Notes, Momentum National Office, May 2017, Euston

This looseness in atmosphere seemed to both be based upon and contributed to positive
working relationships within the organisation, which itself seemed predicated on high levels of trust.

9.5.2.1 Structure and Power

At Momentum, LSE was given access through documents, observations and interviews to information about Momentum’s organisational structures and issues. Momentum’s structure is two-fold: at the national level, they operate a National Coordinating Group that directs the work of the national officers based in London; at the local and regional levels, Momentum local chapters work in coordination with, but are not controlled by, the National Coordinating Group. As Roxanne, one of the national organisers, explained:

[The National Coordinating Group, NCG has] just around 30 people on it. They’re not paid. They’re elected. Twelve of them are directly elected by members, and others are trade union representatives or representatives of other Labour left affiliated organisations. They’re the body that takes democratic decisions by voting, and we, in the [London] office work out how to implement those decisions. The NCG are on the older side because a lot of people were drawn from affiliated Left organisations. Here in the office, on the whole we’re younger than, than a lot of the people in the Momentum groups, so that’s kind of interesting. But I don’t think there’s a straight up generational dichotomy because you can have people with different views in all generations. I can think of people younger than me being there, with kinds of politics that are ‘old school’ and I can think of people who are in their 60s and 70s, who actually have really refreshing approaches. It’s more complex than just a generational thing. **Roxanne, 33**

Momentum as an organisation was transparent with each other and with us about structural issues, power, and individual citizenship. This ethos appeared to be at the heart of Momentum’s organisational identity. On any given day in its national office, one could find a poster hung on a wall that read ‘Core Team Organisational Structure’ (see Figure 13) with the subheading ‘please note that this structure is still undergoing a period of transition and evolution.’ On this poster part-time staff and volunteers’ designations are also noted.

Figure 9.13: Momentum Organisational Structure (names redacted)
In interviews with most of the national office staff that form the ‘core team organisational structure,’ respondents spoke positively and enthusiastically about Momentum’s system of structural democracy and horizontal management. Momentum head office’s progressive ethos of trust in even its newest members, and reflexive self-starting and self-completing activism, one of the critical ways in which the organisation attempted to do the politics of the left differently, became the foundation for how the organisation worked, and appears to explain its appeal and its success at creating a national movement of thousands of activists. In an interview during an observation session Momentum’s financial officer explained how the Momentum ethos worked:

My role and responsibilities are that of someone who has to try and action something. My primary role has to be actioning stuff. And a lot of the staff, like I trust the people around me, I trust their judgement. It’s quite an open. You know those traditional people who f*ck shit up with the big egos, who have a clear sense of what should be done, but aren’t actually willing to do it? We have like a steady supply of those people. Probably because of the way the organisation works, we’re like, “Oh, that’s a great idea, go and action it.” Those people actually filter out very quickly. Munir, 31

This is not to suggest that Momentum is an office full of people working on their own isolated projects. The organisation has a clear structure with roles and responsibilities, and volunteers are usually given options for how they would like to participate, which usually entails supporting an existing initiative or scheme for raising awareness and interest in Labour politics and in the relevance of political processes. However, anyone working with Momentum could suggest an idea on any given day that, if agreed amongst staff, they were free to devote time to enacting. We observed the self-actioning ethos in practice on the first week of our ethnographic volunteering during the general election campaign.

A white female volunteer in her twenties had begun volunteering early in the month, and we worked on the same ‘My Nearest Marginal’ portal inputting local Labour party events into the website so that they could be sent to activists in the corresponding region. As we sat next to each other slowly inputting data, the volunteer started to brainstorm out loud about how this task could be more efficiently completed, and decided to speak to the volunteer coordinator about it. He responded enthusiastically to the suggestion, saying ‘That’s a great idea, I hadn’t thought of that. Do you want to lead on actioning that for the whole team [of volunteers]?’ She responded with an expression that showed a pleasant surprise at the suggestion, smiled back and said ‘ok.’ You could tell that she appreciated being given a higher level of responsibility. When we came into the office a week later, we saw that she had actually followed through and had started coordinating the efforts of a new set of volunteers that had arrived later in the week at the national offices to help out. Soon thereafter she had her own Momentum email address. I saw her at an all team meeting a couple of weeks after that, and she was now providing the staff update on her management of marketing for My Nearest Marginal events. Field Notes, Momentum National Office, June 2017, Euston

In addition to the open collaboration on display at the national office, staff members we interviewed were also acutely aware of the importance of ensuring that all Momentum members (who paid dues, but may or may not participate in local or national events) were consulted on organisation-wide decisions. According to the finance officer:

Whenever there’s been a major political decision to be made, where possible we try to consult the members. And where that hasn’t been possible we have a really open process
at Momentum, we’ll have a big meeting, all volunteers, all staff, everyone gets to air their views. Because people do feel valued, like if people were told that you have a vote, and that’s all you have, they might not feel as empowered as by the fact that they’re allowed to discuss their views with everyone. If they disagree – you know some of those individuals have been on different sides of those arguments, and I think it’s a good sign that even though it’s a base political argument, they still disagree with it. They still come in everyday, they still volunteer, they still work, because they still feel that their view is given ample hearing, rather than ostracized or pushed out, which would’ve been all left up to “I shut the argument down.” Munir, 31

In another signal of its commitment to non-hierarchical democratic activism, local chapters are free to engage in local political actions without the consent or oversight of Momentum. One of Momentum’s communications officers provided a salient example of this in practice:

It's not a traditional organisation. Like you don't have... You don't have that message discipline that from a pure practise perspective we would desire because it's not an organisation it's more of a social movement where all these tens of thousands of people and all these local groups that to a certain extent have autonomy and have the ability to do the stuff they want to do. A good example actually is Bristol this week. So Bristol they launched their council [plan], which I thought was great but I had no idea that it was going to happen. (laughs) I was like, okay. Cool. Jim, 25, emphasis added.

The conversation above refers to an event that had happened the week before this particular interview, in which Momentum’s Bristol chapter had published their suggested plan for Bristol’s Council to enact, which included a call to increase council tax by 200% for the richest Bristol residents, a headline-making policy prescription that was picked up and reported in local90 and soon thereafter national91 media. The communications officer explained that there was no issue with Momentum Bristol having done this without getting national-level approval:

I liaise with them [but] it's like it's a mixture of formal and informal relationships. We do have a code of conduct and code of ethics which individuals and groups have to sign up to. If they breach it we’ll get in touch and say ‘this is not okay.’ But in that kind of instance you don't have any form of politics like what groups are able to do or not do. So if a group starts coming up with policy, like the local council does not have to enact like enforced Tory (Conservative government) cuts and they come up with a way of like avoiding that, I think that's really great. But it presents kind of like quite unique challenges to someone in my position in press offices of an organisation 'cause usually like organisations, think tank or an NGO have a lot more kind of policing. Jim, 25

Although Momentum’s atmosphere of collaborative and committed democratic activism was palpable and observed by us during fieldwork and in interviews, it was evident both to them and to us that the price for such a system was potentially troublesome issues and problems arising, and the need to limit damage when things did not go to plan.

We were told that this rather utopian structural horizontalism was also a function of necessity, and worked well with current digitally based approaches to organisational management. According to the finance officer, Momentum was influenced by current theories influencing digital start up organisations:

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Don’t have a business plan, have an end goal, and do whatever you can to get to that goal, and if something’s not working just sack it off and do something else. That’s the overall mentality at Momentum. The idea of the disrupter is so important, where you have an organisation that comes into the market, assesses the market, and says “actually it’s the market that’s wrong. We’re not going to pitch our product into this market, we’re going to change this market.” [Like] Airbnb, all these organisations. *Munir, 31*

In terms of power relations beyond the Momentum structure, key informants cited the relationship between the progressive socialist politics Momentum championed, and what might be called the British neoliberal political consensus of the right and centre-left. According to Roxanne, the radical progressive platform represented by Corbyn required defending from both right and centre political adversaries:

> Once you have Corbyn in, there was an obvious need for an organisation like Momentum that could be thinking about things that Corbyn, the people around him weren’t in a position to think about all of the time. So: how do you get people involved? How do you mobilise young people? How do you make sure that these people are ready if, when there’s an attempt to get rid of Jeremy? How do you think of the Labour party? Changing the Labour party and stuff like that. For me, that was the reason, basically, why it had to be left politics and Momentum. *Roxanne, 33*

One 19-year-old female volunteer argued that effecting progressive change had to happen, but within institutional politics:

> I feel like we need to work within the confines of the system we have at the moment, and that’s the best way we can achieve socialism. *Khloe, 19*

Staff members also spoke of the tensions surrounding Momentum’s relationship with and within the Labour party.

> The difficulty is our context, which is within the Labour party. It is that relationship between the institutional Labour party dimension and the more movement dimension that causes a tension. As time has gone on, we’ve drifted more towards the Labour party dimension because that’s where we see the most severe blockages, or resistances, to our politics. *Roxanne, 33*

These tensions were also expressed within the Labour party. As Momentum’s support developed from a desire by activists on the progressive left to break out of the bureaucratic hierarchies, aspirational middle-class conservatism and pro-privatisation ideology of Tony Blair’s “new labour” politics, they were exposed to criticism about why doing things differently wouldn’t work. However, according to one key informant, Momentum’s string of successful campaigns in 2016 (helping Corbyn to win his second leadership campaign) and 2017 in the general election (helping to give labour so many seats that there was a hung parliament) provided an ideal response to critics:

> People saw what Momentum could do in its current form without that whole delegate system hampering it. And people are now very much like, if someone turned around like “oh, Momentum is not a functional organization because it doesn’t use those democratic structures that were proposed a hundred years ago”, no one’s buying that shit anymore. *Munir, 31*
At the same time, one of its national organisers felt that an essential challenge was to thrive while still adhering to the necessary actions – the necessary work, in fact – required to wield some power within the modern Labour party, even when this often tiresome work contradicted the fresh and innovate ethos Momentum cultivated:

A lot of the stuff we have to achieve in the Labour party... for example it requires loads of discipline, particularly the stuff in the Labour party, people have to know like why particular meetings are important. And those meetings are not very interesting, and they’re not very user friendly or even friendly sometimes, and they’re not very attractive to go to especially for new members. But it is often in those meetings where a lot of power lies. So it is quite important to make that argument that people should be involved in that, and to be thinking, to some degree, in a disciplined way about how to address issues. That’s the balance, and it’s a difficult balance between those different things.

Roxanne, 33

It is important to note that Momentum’s tensions with the Labour party occurred in the context of a mainstream news media environment that had – since Momentum’s appearance on the national stage in late 2015 – sought to undermine and problematise its legitimacy, particularly through questioning the methods, tactics, people, ideological positions and campaigning approaches in much the same fashion as was being done by centre members of its own party. Media institutions also expressed this delegitimation of Momentum in part by creating a discursive association between Momentum and ‘troublesome’ youth. The image of the anarchic, balaclava-clad ‘militant’ young person was initially one of the most visible visual and descriptive representations of Momentum that could be found in media coverage of the organisation. This supports findings from WP5 that show how mainstream media organisations in the UK consistently represent young people as violent, and also de-contextualise and de-legitimise their successful active citizenship efforts if such efforts are found to be non-normative or in direct challenge to the political establishment consensus.

The nascent image of Momentum activists as ‘Corbyn’s shock troops’ (a term taken from a Guardian article about Momentum on 8 March 2016\(^2\)) went hand-in-hand with mainstream media narratives that repeatedly dismissed Momentum as an organisation whose ‘extreme’ out-of-the-mainstream politics were not only better left to university lecturers, but were endangering the existence of the Labour party as a viable political party in UK politics. The demonization of Momentum had become so firmly entrenched over the course of 2016 that Channel 4 television, for its news programme Dispatches, had actually dispatched a reporter to infiltrate Momentum as a fake ‘volunteer’ spy for over 3 months in order to uncover evidence of malfeasance and improper conduct. The reporter became a trusted volunteer at the organisation whilst secretly recording video and audio with a fake coffee cup camera. The resulting news story revealed little of interest with no ‘gotcha’ moments, but the damage in terms of trust had been done. When our researchers arrived at Momentum we were eyed warily for the first month of our ethnography, with many volunteers and staff directly referencing their distrust of outsiders due to their treatment by the British media. In the early days of volunteering, when our team made mention of our ethnographic study to staff and volunteers, many joked with us about our true motivations, saying things such as ‘you’d better not be an undercover journalist’ and ‘keep your eye on this one.’ These were all said in jest, but the very existence of such comments did reveal how powerfully affected those working at Momentum had become by the constant negative characterisation of their organisation and work in national media. Several staff members we

spoke with told us that they felt anxious at times about being identified as Momentum activists, not because they were ashamed but because they felt that it hindered their ability to effectively communicate their messages to citizens who might be ‘poisoned’ by the media’s deeply negative attacks on them. During the first week of election campaign volunteering we noticed these issues posed actual challenges to campaign activities:

Today I helped find out about local upcoming canvassing events in different constituencies, first by finding contact phone numbers for local Labour party organisers in each constituency, and then calling people to learn if there were any events. Four of us at a table were meant to enter these events in a spreadsheet. When he got to the part about making the phone calls, the volunteer in charge specifically instructed me not to say that I’m from Momentum. I responded by asking, ‘so if they ask me where I’m from, where do I say?’ He then asked someone at one of the other tables what I should say if they ask that. A woman behind me said, ‘we don’t want him to lie, but he can say that I’m in London and I’m interested in getting out to any canvassing sessions or campaign events, I’m just curious if there’s anything I can come along to. I’m just a resident from London.’

Before I started I explained to everyone else that I was a researcher and not just a volunteer, and that I would be writing about my experience volunteering here. At first I got a couple of very suspicious looks, but I went on to explain who I was, what I was doing here, and that we would be making everyone anonymous. I also said that if anyone wasn’t comfortable with me writing about this experience to tell me and I would exclude any comments about or by them in my field notes. They all said they were ok with this; I think I might have made it a bit awkward at first with my directness, but it seemed to be fine with everyone at the table.

A few minutes later I asked the people at the table what they thought about having to hide Momentum’s identity from Labour party members in local constituencies, and the responses seemed to all be about the fact that Momentum has a bad reputation amongst Labour and people are suspicious of the Momentum agenda. I asked them all how they felt about Momentum’s identity relative to both Labour and politics in general. I had felt from the interactions so far during my time there that hiding the identity of momentum was a massive thing; both Liam and Khloe felt that it had to be done. Liam said that it was a shame because we are all trying to do the same thing (elect Labour) but that Momentum’s reputation made other Labour party members nervous. Ellen also agreed that the stigmatization of Momentum within Labour was counterproductive, but said that personally she was tired of feeling like there’s something wrong with Momentum and no longer hid it from people when she talked about politics. She told us a story about a time she went to a pub in London with some friends, and she was talking to a guy at the pub about politics and was unashamed to say she’s a Momentum member even though the guy was being critical. She ended her story by saying “I spent three hours talking to this guy about Momentum and at the end he asked me for a date!” 11 May 2017: Field Notes, Momentum National Office – Euston, London

Although this anxiety and pressure existed and in some cases influenced how Momentum staff engaged in campaign activism, Momentum staff and volunteers we encountered appeared to be unfazed and worked calmly through both Labour distrust and the incessant media chatter about Momentum’s deviant nature.

During our ethnography we collected over 100 mainstream news articles about Momentum, and
over the course of 2017 it was fascinating to observe how, after Momentum’s successful efforts in the June 2017 election, different media organisations began to bestow legitimacy upon their movement. By the end of our fieldwork, an emerging consensus of Momentum as becoming ‘mainstream’ within British politics had been heralded by no less than TV journalist Andrew Marr, whose Sunday morning political talk show was considered one of the most important media platforms for national politicians, frequently hosting the Prime Minister and other top political figures. There was also an increasing acceptance within Labour of the primacy of Momentum’s progressive agenda.

9.5.2.2 Emotion and motivation

During our observations and interviews with young people working and volunteering at Momentum, it became apparent that many Momentum staff personally knew Jeremy Corbyn, or were explicitly inspired by his political career, and that the combination of the personal connection between Momentum and Corbyn, and the perceived ideological integrity of Corbyn’s political positions and career, were a key motivating factor.

In the following field notes and observational interviews, this was clearly apparent.

My best mate at uni, he calls me, says ‘mate, come down to the Unite building, we’re doing these phone banking campaigns for Jeremy Corbyn’s campaign. I went down there, and one of my good colleagues from work, he was there, who was also a union rep over there. So, I walked in, knew people already. Jeremy came down, went to all four floors, and spoke to everyone. There were four floors in that building of people phone banking, it was mad. He spoke to everyone. In queues, but he made sure like you know, rather than go ‘hey, hello, and like press the flesh, he was more like ‘hey, how’s the phone banking, what did you say?’ He had time for that. So after that I just ended up in the Momentum office, at the very inception. I love the guy, I think he’s great. But I was very aware, even at the beginning that Jeremy Corbyn was almost like the place holder for the movement. It – it begins with him but it doesn’t end with him. 8 April 2017 – Interview with male Momentum volunteer working at a London event

Brenda (aged 19, working with Momentum for a year and a half) says, ‘the video of Jeremy at the Libertines concert was the best thing I’ve ever seen.’

Alan (a Momentum founder) says, ‘Yeah that was real rock star politician stuff. He should do more things like that.’

Later in the meeting, Alan says, ‘Jeremy came to visit [the Momentum national office] on Friday, there was a nice vibe. He had a bit of time, he was just chilling out downstairs, reflecting on the campaign. [It] reminded me of what I got into this for. I think we all need to remember the why. It’s important to connect back to the why. That really helped me to reconnect. He then spoke so I thought that was really nice.’

At another point in the meeting when discussing the final weeks of the campaign, Esther (also a Momentum founder) sounds a note of caution: ‘I think all the attack pieces will be stored up. It could get quite dirty, that impacts on us. We could be used as another part of attacking Jeremy, we need to be risk conscious.’ This is a clear acknowledgment by one of the key leaders of Momentum that Momentum itself is not just a political asset but also potentially a clear political liability because of their reputation and the negative light in which they are often framed in the media and by both Tory and Labour politicians.

Roxanne (who joined Momentum two months after its creation) says, ‘One of the ones this weekend, one will be in Battersea, most people will tell you it’s unwinnable. The
candidate is a big candidate and supports Jeremy.’ 22 May 2017 – Field notes:
Exchange between staff members during Momentum national office team meeting

These four staff members all spoke about Corbyn in a very familiar, affectionate manner. It
should be noted that two (Alan and Esther) were founding members of Momentum, and the
others (Roxanne and Brenda) have been with Momentum since its beginnings. But by using his
first name and speaking about him in a protective and supportive manner, they signalled his
approachability, while simultaneously centring the purpose of Momentum’s work around the
success of a vision of society which drew inspiration from him and his close allies. In a meeting
two weeks later, Alan told another anecdote about Jeremy Corbyn during a full team meeting.

Alan provided an update where he, like two Mondays ago, invoked a personal encounter
with Jeremy to inspire everyone’s confidence in him and their efforts:
‘Just another bit of positivity, just seeing the debate on Friday night. I know he struggled
a bit on the Trident question, but generally he seems to be gaining, growing in
confidence all the time. Whereas Theresa May seems to be losing energy from every bit
of interaction she has. And you’re just seeing that contrast continually. And I actually saw
Jeremy after in York on Friday and Saturday morning. It was so uplifting. I remember
saying this a couple of weeks ago when he came in here on the Friday, but the guy is just
energetic and confident and Zen. He really has got this inner Zen about him. It’s
completely true. And yeah I think, we’ve only got three days but that’s just gonna keep
showing, and now it’s all about what we can mobilise as well. And yeah, I felt very
enthused again by that.’ 5 June 2017 – Field notes: Comments by staff member
during final national office team meeting before the 2017 election

In contrast to – but also complementing – the inspiring personal stories about Corbyn related by
staff during Momentum meetings, interviews with key informants during participant-observation
sessions showed a strong approval of the policies and practices of Corbyn the politician.
Corbyn’s personal and political calm, patience and integrity was cited in almost every
conversation where our researchers would ask members to talk about their reasons for working
at Momentum.

[Corbyn] was my MP actually growing up. So I knew he was good and it was the hope of
having something good of left wing happening in mainstream politics and it all seemed
like this great optimism. On the day that Brexit happened, I was like okay I’m gonna join
the Labour Party (laughs), without expecting the kind of cool things will happen. Just like
I’m going to show some solidarity with Corbyn. 24 May 2017 – Interview with a
female university student volunteer working at the national office

My parents used to be in the Labour Party and they left because of Blair. What’s the
point of being a member when actually you’re just following a political line you don’t
agree with and it’s quite a toxic place to be. When I heard Jeremy Corbyn speak for the
first time and what he was offering to members, that was incredibly refreshing. He was
describing a Labour Party that my parents first got involved with…it was stuff that I
wanted to fight for, definitely. 7 June 2017 – Interview with female Momentum
volunteer, aged 19, from Oxford

I really liked Jeremy Corbyn. I knew of him from Stop the War Coalition. His office was
literally next door to a Stop the War office. They knew Jeremy and Jeremy knew of them
and I knew of him, but I didn’t really know him. I just thought he was a really cool old
man. And I thought that if he is a Labour leader, that’s someone who’s honest. 8 June 2017 – Interview with female Momentum staff member, 19, from London

There’s something very satisfying about working as part of a team for a bigger outcome. You feel like you’re part of something bigger, supporting Jeremy, supporting people in the office, you know, what they need doing. You know, just get on with it. 8 June 2017 – Interview with a female student volunteer working at the national office

It wasn’t like I liked to follow Jeremy Corbyn for 10 years. I remembered from a few documentaries about politics or protest like Iraq war or something. He was quite well known for being someone who’s spoken against... that was really it and I looked at the other candidates and he was just offering something quite different, quite refreshing. 18 September 2017 – Interview with a male staff member, 25, on the national digital media team

Observations and interviews clearly demonstrate that Momentum as an organisation and collection of individuals is significantly inspired by both the authenticity of Corbyn’s longstanding work for progressive causes of all kinds – including controversial ones that earned him much hatred back in the day, such as anti-Iraq war efforts and speaking to Republican groups to get them involved in the peace process in Northern Ireland – and the personal connection that Momentum have with him as an individual. As the group’s inception was ostensibly and specifically to support Corbyn’s leadership and the ascendance of democratic socialist policies in the Labour party), it is logical that the movement’s members would feel loyalty and solidarity for Corbyn. But two years on from Momentum’s creation, it is evident that Corbyn’s personality, his ‘style’ of politics, is a style that the young people working at Momentum and many young people who came out to vote embrace, want to practice, and want to spread through the election of a Labour government.

From our observations, Momentum’s members, volunteers and staff appeared to epitomise the popular British press’ phrase ‘Corbybinstas’, while clearly being willing and able to separate his personality from the movement’s wider political and cultural goals, and showing none of the signs of bullying authoritarianism or infantile lack of understanding of realpolitik attributed to them by many adults from opposing factions and parties in the same popular press. There was considerable evidence that Corbyn’s principled positions and progressive policies as well as his resilience within the parliamentary institution provided a foundation for Momentum member’s optimism about a new kind of politics; while Corbyn’s political integrity was regarded as a particularly useful delivery mechanism for his progressive politics, the ideas and democratic style were paramount. This was reflected in the views and actions of the many young people at the front and centre of this movement.

9.5.2.3 Challenges to Youth Participation

One significant challenge to Momentum’s horizontal model of active citizenship was the very real possibility of tiredness and burnout due to staff members’ relentless and ceaseless working patterns, which can often be found in small grassroots social and political movements where a small number of people take on oversized amounts of responsibility. At Momentum we identified the potential for such burnout in its activists who spoke passionately about the difficulty of ‘switching off’ while also acknowledging the need for self-care. According to one of Momentum’s founders:
[I work] sort of non-stop. I have to react to live events, press and everything, it’s completely ’round the clock, whether or not you’re in the office. [Burn out] happens a lot [but] I think there’s always been an understanding of wellbeing. I will sometimes switch off, occasionally, we’ll have a whole weekend, [but] not really. Often we’ll have one day and a half off. I try to model that and encourage that for others. We have a WhatsApp curfew at 9pm, which is still late, but a little bit we’ve introduced along the way. But without there being formalised structures in terms of systems or processes, it’s impossible to operate. Alan, 30

It was during our study that Alan resigned from Momentum, indicating that he would remain connected to and supportive of the movement, but also showing a keen self-awareness of the importance of self-care as well as not relying on specific individuals to sustain the movement:

I don’t believe that organisations or movements should be reliant on individuals. I think I’ve done enough. I feel satisfied with being able to leave. I wouldn’t have written it exactly like this, but I could only be an agent as far as I could. I’ll be able to impact the world better [in the future] if I have a break. Alan, 30

Despite this admission, and the fact that several other key staff members (Esther and Munir in particular) also either took extended leave breaks or resigned over the course of our study, this challenge seemed to be mitigated by a strong structure and support for continuing and growing Momentum’s movement.

The main challenges our study identified to sustained youth participation in Momentum activism reflected a lack of socioeconomic diversity within the volunteer pool. The young people we worked with throughout 2017 were in many cases able to dedicate significant time to volunteering at Momentum without any dramatically negative repercussions for their lives – ie. they still had places to stay, and food to eat, as well as plans for what they would do alongside this or afterwards. As Banaji and Buckingham (2013) have argued, unpaid volunteering of large portions of time in civic organisations is not an activity equally accessible to all socioeconomic strata. Otherwise, in 2017 Momentum appeared to represent one of the most visible forms of active citizenship appealing to young people, the vast majority of whom were supportive of both Jeremy Corbyn’s Labour policies and of the Party as it was becoming under his leadership.

Regarding a citizenship typology (Banaji 2016) that would correspond to Momentum’s work, our observations of young people working within Momentum led us to categorise them as ‘anti-authoritarian pro-democratic,’ with markedly explicit views on how government policies and practices should work for social justice within a democratic framework. In line with this we found that Momentum’s work, and the young people working within the organisation could be classed in a number of ways that reflect the citizenship typology developed in WP2 (Banaji, 2016). They could be seen – particularly the volunteers during the election campaign who specifically single out Momentum and do small amounts of work with low commitment – as being generally active in pro-democratic and anti-authoritarian ways (Typology #5). However, a more appropriate category, especially for the young people that work full or part time or volunteer at the national office, would be Typology 6, ‘almost always active in pro-democratic, anti-authoritarian and non-conformist ways,” particularly in their framing of democracy as being important but subject to challenge and modification in the spirit of a fairer and more equal world. Somewhat ironically the influence and impact of Momentum’s work – generating additional support for Labour in an election – could be argued to also corresponding to Typology 3 of young people being generally active in conformist ways enabling social reproduction. It could be argued that, despite Momentum’s radical horizontal approach to
campaign politics, based upon progressive socialist ideas aligned within a social justice framework, the actual results of their work in 2017 did little to challenge the way that institutional political structures in the UK work. As Labour did not win control of the government, Momentum merely showed that non-conventional approaches to campaigning could strengthen the position of conventional politics and politicians. One could counter argue that if or when Corbyn is elected, his policies would actually enact the non-normative agenda used by Momentum to successfully build support for the Labour party. In either case, it is clear to see how Momentum offers several different categories of youth active citizen engagement.

9.6 Conclusion

Although ethnography revealed two organisations with significantly different approaches to and philosophies of engaging young people in active citizenship, there were some notable similarities. For example, members from both organisations made a point of identifying politics as connected to the ordinary as a way of making institutional politics less off-putting for young people. As Momentum’s Klhoe expressed it,

Politics is not about politicians, it’s about people. And it’s about the way you live your life. And that’s affected by politics. It’s just little things like the roads you drive on and the hospital you go to and the school you’re going to send your children to or the school that you go to. That’s affected by politics.

9.6.1 My Life My Say

At MLMS we were mindful of the organisational dynamics, in that sometimes seemed synonymous with one person, its CEO. We attribute this to our many observations of the CEO acting as sole decision maker for MLMS’ work; any policy and most actions we observed during our study was directly commissioned, conceived or implemented by him. However, for an organisation largely run by one young person, in an ad-hoc fashion and with a small budget, MLMS was immensely successful in terms of youth active citizenship and Europe in 2017. Using personal political networks, it developed and implemented a national parliamentary group consisting of parliamentarians, youth stakeholders, and academics. It successfully leveraged a research partnership with our LSE team’s free labour to implement a bespoke research study that has generated national press coverage and which currently allows them to advocate within the UK government on behalf of UK young people.

They could improve significantly by clarifying how their goals to engage young people in politics go beyond acting as a conduit for some young people’s public voicing of democratic concerns within networks of political power in the UK and EU. It was difficult to assess the influence of MLMS’ youth events on young attendees’ attitudes towards and action for political participation, as there was little or no follow up. There were also clear signs of an undemocratic structural approach within the organisation that in some respects contradicts the wider aim to empower young people to participate in democratic processes. In addition, while there was significant evidence of MLMS’ engagement in the politics of race and ethnic identity as it relates to active citizenship, there was no evidence that gender was a significant political issue taken up by the organisation, despite the fact that the majority of staffers at MLMS were female. Finally, the organisation’s short-term approach to sustainability presents challenges related to staffing that MLMS has recognised and is addressing in its current strategic planning, but which nonetheless

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may have played a role in undermining a public projection of stability and growth. Scaling up their activities would require a significant increase in resources in order to facilitate the delivery of a wider array and frequency of public events.

In policy terms, our direct contribution to the organisation (in conducting and providing an empirical research study to be used as a tool for youth advocacy) showed that organisations working on behalf of youth can influence policy. However, in the case of MLMS it does not point to sustainable methods of connecting young people to policy debates and outcomes, as the networking skills and connections used by MLMS are inherently inequitable and instead focus organisational success not on careful planning or collective training of many young people, but on the ability to exploit individual charisma and connections for temporary visibility. This suggests that MLMS’ model of active citizenship – particularly as it also performs and valorises via social media the ascension into rarefied and exclusive political networks – is not one that can be easily replicated.

9.6.2 Momentum

Momentum has been phenomenally successful since forming in an ad hoc manner in 2015. It has continuously increased its membership, engaged young people in authentic, reflexive, progressive and highly democratic activism, and acted as a major player in the 2017 general election surprise outcome. It was particularly successful at mobilising young people to work within its organisation and externally to respond positively to its efforts to engage, activate and persuade. As an example of harmonious, cross-generation and horizontal progressive citizenship action, it sometimes felt utopian in that its approach and ethos were so successful and resonant amongst not just committed Labour progressive activists, but the national population. Indeed, Momentum’s impact on UK politics has been profound, with various media and political voices on the national stage giving it credit for the hung parliament of 2017 and also for successfully bringing hundreds of thousands of young people to the voting booths.

Our observations of office life at the national headquarters over eight months, and intensively during the general election campaign in May and June, revealed an organisational harmony that was surprising in its simplicity and efficiency. There were no magic secrets to this success: just an office full of people, most of them young and over-committed, who worked ceaselessly; who were deeply committed to the Momentum project; who were casual and friendly within the easy and non-judgemental confines of the offices; who rarely had instructions barked at them by a stressed boss or manager; and who often managed to actualise a real feeling of fun while doing politics. They did this all while hunched over laptops, engaging in pacing phone calls, flirting, and getting things done as soon as possible. Remarkably, it was usually pretty quiet in the office too.

While they have achieved so much to bring non-normative, horizontal and democratic activism to the mainstream of British politics, the core of activists at Momentum Headquarters are not as ethnically or socioeconomically diverse as they would like, and carry with them some of the same problems with meaningful engagement of BAME issues and citizens that have troubled the Labour party over the years. Similarly, there are economic and social advantages possessed by many staffers and volunteers that have created distance from citizens from lower economic and marginalised backgrounds. Engaging on the issue of gender and politics also seemed to be absent from any strategic or operational work done by Momentum, although some staff members recognised and expressed a need for more and better outreach to ensure equal gender representation within the movement. Their political movement would be significantly strengthened if they could engage diverse populations more meaningfully. However, we did see evidence of a strong awareness of this by staff members.
In terms of scaling up, Momentum’s success in the 2017 election has led to a continued scaling of their activities, and in our final months at Momentum, we witnessed the opening of a second office in Manchester, and a hiring and expansion phase at the London office. We also witnessed the success of Momentum’s activists in beginning to use their stellar performance during the 2017 election to begin enacting change within the Labour party (which over the past few years, has been rife with division between left, center, and center-right factions of the party). At the time of the publication of this report, Momentum candidates had just swept a January 2018 election of three new positions on the Labour Party’s national executive committee (NEC). This victory continues Momentum’s positive climb within Labour structural apparatus, and gives even more legitimacy to its push to implement a progressive Labour vision across the entirety of the Labour party. The policy implications of Momentum’s dramatic and rapid rise are at present potentially transformative for the Labour party. In turn, these changes may in coming years eventually have an impact on the election of an avowed socialist leader whose policies would possibly reverse some of the political damage done to young people’s citizenship and political interests by successive anti-welfare state and neoliberal governments.

9.6.3 Typologies of Youth Active Citizenship

Finally, looking back at WP2, our study was able to identify distinct engagement of both organisations with a typology of youth active citizenship that was deeply pro-democratic, but that swung from socially conservative (MLMS) to anti-authoritarian (Momentum). For MLMS, we saw little evidence of a conceptualisation or enactment of an active citizenship that challenged the normative consensus (Typology 3 – see above) by any of the young people both working for and with the organisation. At Momentum, we observed a hybridization of typologies, as some young people working there corresponded to Typology 5 – generally active in pro-democratic and anti-authoritarian ways – while most in the national office more closely matched Typology 6 – almost always active in pro-democratic, anti-authoritarian and non-conformist ways – but found themselves operating within a political campaigning system that reinforced the political status quo (Typology 3). It appears that these youth active citizens and their anti-authoritarian perspectives require power to transcend the on-going social reproduction of British party politics (aided in 2017 by their horizontal and innovative efforts). Even if or when Labour comes into power under Corbyn, it remains to be seen the extent to which Labour and Momentum would be able to challenge the normative structures currently underpinning British politics and continue down a path of building a more socially just British democracy. Their work so far inspires hope that such change could be possible.
## Appendices
### Participating Organisations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Organisation Name</th>
<th>Website</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic / Masaryk University</td>
<td>The Idealists</td>
<td><a href="http://www.idealiste.cz">www.idealiste.cz</a></td>
<td>Participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic / Masaryk University</td>
<td>the Scout centre (“Thirteen”)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.skautskyinstitut.cz">www.skautskyinstitut.cz</a></td>
<td>Participant</td>
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<td>Estonia / University of Tartu</td>
<td>DD Academy</td>
<td><a href="http://ddakadeemia.ee/">http://ddakadeemia.ee/</a></td>
<td>Participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany / University of Jena</td>
<td>Greenpeace Jugend</td>
<td><a href="http://www.jena.greenpeace.de/">http://www.jena.greenpeace.de/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Germany / University of Jena</td>
<td>ArbeiterKind</td>
<td><a href="https://www.arbeiterkind.de">https://www.arbeiterkind.de</a></td>
<td>Participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece / National &amp; Kapodistrian University of Athens</td>
<td>Colour Youth</td>
<td><a href="http://www.colouryouth.org">www.colouryouth.org</a></td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Italy / University of Bologna</td>
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<td>Portugal / University of Porto</td>
<td>Cidade +</td>
<td><a href="https://cidademais.pt/">https://cidademais.pt/</a></td>
<td>Participant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Portugal / University of Porto</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Withdrawn from study</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sweden / Örebro University</td>
<td>Awesome People</td>
<td><a href="http://www.awesomepeople.se/">www.awesomepeople.se/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>UK / London School of Economics and Political Science</td>
<td>Momentum</td>
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<td>Participant</td>
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<tr>
<td>UK / London School of Economics and Political Science</td>
<td>My Life My Say</td>
<td><a href="http://www.mylifemysay.org.uk/">http://www.mylifemysay.org.uk/</a></td>
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<td>Living Rent</td>
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Research Instruments

Field Notes Observation Guide

WP8 Field Notes Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME OF RESEARCHER:</th>
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<tr>
<td>DATE OF OBSERVATION:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DESCRIPTION OF EVENT/ACTIVITY:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCATION:</td>
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<tr>
<td>WHO IS ATTENDING OR BEING OBSERVED:</td>
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**IN THE MOMENT (PARTICIPANT OBSERVATIONS)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Objective Observation / Facts</th>
<th>Subjective Observation / Reflections</th>
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AFTER THE MOMENT (POST-OBSERVATION THOUGHTS)
Key Informant Interview Guide

**KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

**Broad overview questions**
- How did you become involved with this [organisation or initiative]?
- Why did you decide to become involved?
- Could you describe a typical day at work? A typical week?
- Could you show or tell me how you usually go about organising a programme, project, meeting, or event?
- What kinds of tasks or activities are particularly enjoyable or rewarding for you?
- What kinds of tasks or activities are particularly challenging for you?
- When you come to work every day, what do you try to accomplish?
- How does your work fit in with the broader goals of your organisation or initiative? What do you see as your contribution to these goals?
- What do you think is the overall point of the work you do – how do you think it can affect young people’s lives?

**Questions about specific events, incidents, moments or particular days OR follow up questions**
- Describe to me what happens when you do [specific task/activity].
- Could you describe what happened at/on the [specific event, incident, moment or particular day]?
- Would you characterise this as a successful or unsuccessful outcome in the context of your professional and/or personal goals?
- Why do you think this particular outcome happened?
- Would you change or do anything differently?

**Example questions**
- Can you give me an example of a time where you felt particularly effective at doing your job, and why?
- Can you give me an example of a time when you felt particularly disappointed or frustrated with your work, and why?
- Can you give me an example of a time when you felt like your work was making an impact on young people, and why?
- Can you give me an example of how your work contributes to the political and/or civic participation of young people in your country?

**Active citizenship experience questions (developed from WP8 guidance)**

**AIMS/MISSION**
- How would you describe the aims and mission of [organisation or initiative]?
- What kinds of young people do you work with? In other words, how does the group/network/organization/initiative define and cater for young people?
- How do you choose and recruit/involve the young people you work with?

**LEADERSHIP/MANAGEMENT**
- How would you describe the leadership and management of [organisation or initiative]? Is this an institutionalized or ad hoc initiative? (explain these terms if necessary)
- Who initiates, leads, funds and/or runs it?

**ACTIVITIES/AUDIENCES**
- How are young people involved in the delivery of your work?
- What kinds of issues does your work involve? (e.g. austerity and poverty, racism, disability rights, ethnic minority rights, refugees, criminal justice, employment, drugs, migration, social justice, labour rights, voting and elections, human rights, women's issues, internet freedom, housing, government and politics, creativity and the
arts, education and schooling, inequality, LGBT, environmental and green issues, animal rights, public space, children's rights, militarism and peace, sexual violence

- Why has your organisation/initiative chosen to focus on this particular kind of work?

DEFINING AC AND CP

- How would you define active citizenship?
- How would you define civic participation?
- What is your understanding of the purpose of active citizenship for young people's lives?

EUROPE

- Is Europe a part of your work, and if so, how?
- [UK specific] Will Brexit influence or have an effect on your work with young people at all, and if so, how?
- [EU specific] Is your organisation or initiative affected at all by the current political uncertainty around the EU, and the possibility of member countries leaving the EU?

DEMOCRACY/STRUCTURAL ISSUES

- How is your organisation or initiative run and managed?
- Is there a membership structure? If so, what kinds of opportunities do members have to input into and decide organisational or initiative strategies and actions?
- Do you feel that your organisation or initiative is self-critical or self-reflexive, i.e. do you feel that there is a space to question and deliberate the decisions and actions taken to do your work?

PEDAGOGY

- Are there opportunities for you to learn on the job, i.e. to develop new knowledge and skills that will help you to improve how you work with/for young people? If so, can you give me an example?
- Do you feel that there is an atmosphere at your work that encourages you to learn new and/or different skills and knowledge?

MEDIA

- How does your organisation or initiative engage with or use media (including mainstream media AND social media)?
- How does your organisation or initiative draw public attention to its work?
- How does engagement with media affect or impact your work, if at all?

REPRESENTATION

- Whose voices do you think are represented in the work of your organisation or initiative?
- How do you know this, what is the evidence?
- How are these voices represented?
Sample Informed Consent Form

INFORMED CONSENT

We would like [name of organisation/group/network/social movement hub] to participate in research for the project CATCH-EyoU – Constructing AcTive CitizensHip with European Youth: Policies, Practices, Challenges and Solutions (Horizon 2020 project), funded by the European Commission and run [in the UK by the London School of Economics and Political Science]. We would be grateful if you could read this letter and contact the researchers for any questions or clarifications.

- Aims of the project
The project CATCH-EyoU, www.catcheyou.eu, uses different methods to investigate social and political participation by young people in the UK, Sweden, Germany, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Portugal and Italy. It also asks about factors that can explain why and how young people decide to participate (or not to participate) in their communities, with a specific focus on EU active citizenship. This section of our research study uses an ethnographic study of youth civic organisations to investigate factors and processes that change, build, facilitate or hinder young people’s active citizenship.

- Benefits and risks of participation
Participation in this research does not imply any type of risk for you or the people who work for or who participate in and/or receive services from your [organisation/group/network/social movement hub]. Indeed, participation in the study brings the opportunity to make a contribution to building knowledge and understanding of barriers and experiences of young people in relation to democracy and active citizenship, and could result in proposals and recommendations for local, national and European policy makers, educators, and politicians; and in interventions to benefit young people and civic educators across Europe. The activities and views observed during our time with your [organisation/group/network/social movement hub] will be invaluable for our project and for scientific knowledge on youth policy and democracy. In addition, as researchers who want to give back to your [organisation/group/network/social movement hub] for your time and commitment, we are committed to offering and leading group discussions with your young members on issues of young people’s position in [British] society and in Europe, at a time convenient to you. We can also present findings from other areas of our project, such as our analysis of the media representations of young people across the UK.

- Commitment requested from the participant - What happens if your organisation participates?
Your [organisation/group/network/social movement hub] will be asked to grant access to 1 or 2 university researchers to be physically present at your annual general meetings [AGMs], workshops, mobilisations, planning meetings, actions, and other events; and during the day to day working at your [organisation/group/network/social movement hub], or in outdoor or online spaces where you work, for a period of not less than six (6) weeks on the basis of a Monday-to-Friday 9-5 schedule but also on evenings and at weekends by your invitation. Members and coordinators of your [organisation/group/network/social movement hub] will also be asked to participate in semi-structured individual interviews times that are acceptable to you.

- Privacy and data processing
At LSE we are committed to the security of everyone’s personal information. The ethnographic data (i.e. field notes and individual interviews) will be analysed only by the named researchers.
without using any identification. In all cases, the data will be processed solely by the researchers specifically appointed for carrying out the analysis. LSE is committed to making sure that the subsequent stages of processing and storage of the collected data cannot identify individuals connected to your organisation: all data derived from the study will be anonymized at your request, and individual data will be anonymized as a matter of course. Unless you request that your [organisation/group/network/social movement hub should be named], the results of the study will be disseminated only in an anonymous form, and will be stored in a database accessible to project partners.

- **Withdrawal from and limits on the study**
  Your [organisation/group/network/social movement hub] will have the right to decide whether to collaborate in the study, and if you are unhappy with the development of the research collaboration, or your circumstances change, you are free to withdraw, with or without notice and this decision will not entail any negative consequences for you. Should you wish to withdraw participatory consent, data collection will cease. All the individual data you have already provided, which is not publicly accessible, will be destroyed at your request, and the case study will only be referenced in general documents with no mention of your specific [organisation/group/network/social movement hub].

In the case of particularly vulnerable young participants in the work of your organization, you may wish to opt them out of participation with our research, as below.

- **Further information**
  Thank you very much for considering our request. For any information and clarification about the present study, or for any request during the study, you can contact Dr. Sam Mejias, London School of Economics – s.mejias@lse.ac.uk or Dr. Shakuntala Banaji s.banaji@lse.ac.uk. We are at your disposal for any question or concern.

**Informed Consent Form for participation in the study**

[organisation/group/network/social movement hub] name:

Name of signatory one (at least two): _____________________________
Name of signatory two:_________________________________
Roles within organisation: _____________________________
Organisation address: _____________________________
City: _____________________________

Email Addresses for contacts:___________________________
We would like to be named YES ☐ NO ☐ in the research
We would like our [organisation/group/network/social movement hub’s] alias to be

By signing below, I declare that:

- We have read the Informed consent sheet, understood its content and all the oral information provided by the staff of the CATCH-EyoU project and we have had enough time to ask questions. All our questions have been answered satisfactorily.
- We are aware that our [organisation/group/network/social movement hub’s] participation in the study is voluntary, without coercion, and that we have the right to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason, and without reprisal.
- We are aware of the nature of the study activities.
- We are aware that participation to this study brings no direct benefits for us and no economic benefit (direct or indirect).
We AGREE THAT our [organisation/group/network/social movement hub]  DO NOT AGREE THAT our ORGANISATION can participate in the study, in the knowledge that such consent is given freely and may be withdrawn at any time without entailing any disadvantage or prejudice.

UK location: ____________________________

______________________________________

(name, signature and stamp if appropriate)  (name and signature of the person obtaining consent)

UK location: ____________________________

______________________________________

(name, signature and stamp if appropriate)  (name and signature of the person obtaining consent)

We DO NOT WISH TO OMIT VULNERABLE STAKEHOLDERS (details)  We WISH TO OMIT ______________________who are VULNERABLE STAKEHOLDERS from participation in this study, in the knowledge that such consent of omission or non-omission is given freely and may be changed or altered at any time without entailing any disadvantage or prejudice.

UK location: ____________________________

______________________________________

(name, signature and stamp if appropriate)  (name and signature of the person obtaining consent)
Example Letter of Contact

[insert your institutional logo in place of LSE]
[insert address and telephone number of researcher at top of the page]

Dear [name of contact person at organisation/group/network/social movement hub]

We recently contacted your organisation/group/network/social movement hub [delete as appropriate] in order to include it as part of our initial mapping exercise of a range of initiatives and organisations that are active in the youth civic sphere in [name of country]. [Name of university] is working on a research project about active citizenship for young people across a range of European countries. Our research is funded by the European Commission’s Horizon 2020 (Young 5a strand) and we really hope it will be useful for activists, policy-makers, young people and civic educators.

We have now concluded this mapping exercise, and from a list of 30 networks, groups and organisations identified as working in the field of youth activism and civic participation, we would like to select [name of organisation/group/network/social movement hub] to participate in an ethnographic study to be conducted between January 2017 and February 2018.

This ethnographic study is a collaboration between our university and your organisation/group/network/social movement hub. One or two of our researchers will spend extended periods of time with your [organisation/group/network/social movement hub], with your [activists/organisers/participants/members]. We hope to observe your activities and discussions in a participant-observation role. Our researcher will interact with as many of your [activists/organisers/participants/members] as possible, conducting face-to-face interviews where feasible, and keeping a diary in which we will make individual anonymous.

In summary, with your permission and with individual consent, we would like to undertake the following:

1. Observe and participate in day-to-day activities of [name of organisation/group/network/social movement hub] for a minimum of six (6) weeks, during a normal Monday-to-Friday work week and on weekends where you invite us, taking notes and recording interviews;
2. Formally interview a number of [activists/organisers/participants/members] connected to you, including: staff members, young people, benefactors for or beneficiaries of a service provided

In exchange for your commitment to our research and participation, [name of university] will offer to support your work and organisational needs through our areas of knowledge and expertise. Some potential options include:

1. Facilitating workshops on youth active citizenship/activism/mobilisation for groups of young people and/or adults;
2. Providing professional development sessions on the uses of research to assist with understanding and improving group effectiveness and organisational practices;
3. Presenting findings from our other areas of our research on youth active citizenship that can inform your work;
4. Providing support by donating our time if/when needed (e.g. occasional staff needed to provide supervision for youth programmes) during the research process.

We welcome your thoughts on further ways in which we may contribute.

We understand that you are extremely busy. Your participation is entirely voluntary – and we can guarantee to keep individuals’ participation anonymous and confidential if that is your decision and their wish. We want to learn from you about your [activists/organisers/participants/members], and about how you go about working to achieve your goals. Our aim is to provide a supportive presence during our time working with you.

We are also aware that not all [activists/organisers/participants/members] who work with you will want or be able to participate in our research, and so we also provide a clear opt-out clause for any [activists/organisers/participants/members] who do not wish to be included in the
study. The pages that follow provide informed consent and opt-out options for participation in this study.
Thanks again for your time and for considering our request.
Yours sincerely,
Signature
NAME
Affiliation…
ANNEX
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Czech Republic Appendices

Appendix A (Czech Republic): Interviews

The Idealists, R1, male (May 2017)

The interview took place in an office at work and it lasted about an hour and half. We were interrupted several times. This is the first interview; subsequently, another interview with the respondent was conducted.

You are meeting with the committee before the group meeting, is anything interesting happening?

Interesting? (uncertain laugh) I don’t know, we wanted to…. (thinking) Well, if fact yes. Because we haven’t had much time recently, as party leaders, to pay attention to it and it somehow affected the atmosphere in the group. Not fundamentally, but it became clear that we hadn’t been managing it well. Like, in some events where we didn’t agree with concepts originating from the member base. That wasn’t met with much understanding, so we have to somehow revise how it all works. To motivate ourselves, in my opinion.

But it seems to be related to the fact that you leave enough liberty for what other members can do under the name of the Idealists, if I understand it well…

There is liberty, given that it’s always approved by the committee. But those were two events that the committee didn’t like for some conceptual reasons. They were events done in cooperation with the Anarchist Federation and I think that that’s not our target group, so we have been trying to…Or to put it better, I personally think the Idealists should be more mainstream, and we shouldn’t mind the anarchists so much, but…

We somehow managed to make things work with them in the past and I think a number of members have kept the ethos of activism in them, which has persisted with the remaining members. I don’t know, there are about, let’s say 5 or 10 of those who prefer a more anarchistic genre.

And are these younger people, perhaps?

On the contrary, they are more senior people.

But within the Idealists – that’s about 35 years, so then yes (laughter). On the contrary, they are people who have been in the party for a long time, but they are people who don’t have much to say about the structure of the party.

And what’s stupid is that just that one specific case, when there was an organisation meeting (at an event) instigated due to the other organisations, this is how the left-wing scene works: it’s called a day or two in advance, and if I am not in the mood or I simply can’t pop in there and then what happens is that those guys who are into that thing do go. And then there is an unpleasant conflict in the group. We then even had a vote about what others think about that event and one is then… about 80% people thought it was really bad. So it didn’t even show in the member base, which was good.

Are you planning to introduce an approval procedure so that others can also have their say about it?

Well, we were rather thinking that… I would hate to demotivate people, because I want them to engage. So we will simply find the time and go there and perhaps we can somehow adjust it, because in my opinion, working with those other organisations wouldn’t be a problem, but perhaps there should be some concept of those happenings. Because you should know, there was this idea….
R1 describes a specific event.

So when you are recruiting new members, do your opinions concur?

I think they are not different opinions. That’s obvious. But I think that those who come to us, who met us in the street or on Facebook or online, are usually people who can’t perhaps identify with such a limited way of functioning, so usually it’s no problem there. That’s in fact like socialists, latent socialists, perhaps, or socialists who never joined the party, because x, y.

So that’s why that proportion of what I am thinking about. That it should primarily be mainstream and that’s what about 80% of the association supports. Such a view is understandable because when we were starting in the YS (Young Social Democrats, the YSD further on, interviewer’s comment), we were trying to form alliance with other organisations. The Young Socialists never wanted to revolt, and I am beginning to understand why they didn’t want to. I do understand that there is a history, which can be a valid argument for those who remember the Idealists as they were.

Are you saying that the YSD didn’t want to work with any other organisations? Have you had a bad experience with that?

With working with someone?

You said you understand why they didn’t want to revolt.

Well, I both do and don’t understand it. To clarify, those people are reliable because when there is an ideological issue, they take the right stance. For example, when we were organising with them…(thinking) that was against the TTIP, that transatlantic partnership. I think that works well, because the interest is identical and we wouldn’t mind being a part of the protest. But recently, as we are more and more in the media, I think it’s increasingly necessary to check what image is being formed. To be a bit pragmatic in not damaging it; some recent news was about the 1st May events, and that was that the anarchists started a fight in Prague and then our name turns up in between that, which isn’t very good for our name. There is some risk to our reputation.

XX said that you have been trying to keep track of the image being formed about you. Do you feel it shows that people understand who you are, what you represent?

Factually it is definitely distorted because if you say an urban liberal, everyone imagines the marginal themes, which is something that internally doesn’t agree with us at all. But we are the Idealists but we should be practical, so if someone does associate that with us, and it is at the cost of those urban liberals, then it is not such a big deal because we are in fact liberal. So we clearly don’t belong to the conservative side of the party. So it is not the main interpretation that we would like, and I also think that many more of us in internal debates try to accentuate…are represented by more central than…I think that’s mainly what it is. But I understand that the current conflict is mainly conservatives versus liberals.

... 95% of all media output is about the internal conflict in the party.

That must be tiring for you.

It is and it makes me cross but I hope that they will perhaps manage to ask me about some other opinions. I take it as the beginning of an evolution. We had no publicity before that. Now we do, because there is some tension in the party. That’s almost over now because everyone left that other wing. So later we’ll get to some right-left.

You are now organising campaign. What about that, what's going on there?
We’ve made a move because there is a circle of people who will be willing to engage in it more. What’s bad at the moment is that we are waiting for the result of the party primary election, where I will either confirm my post or will have to move. So I think that the campaign will be going on once that’s over. But we have a plan and we talked about what circles to play and what options we have with the media. It’s all affected by the law about supervising political parties campaigning, which is very strict, so I will mainly have to rely on the headquarters in Lidový dům.

R1 is talking about the new law about campaigns and the problems that came with it.

How are the Idealists perceived by the party base, by the members? How does the party approach you?
Well, I think they hate us. But it depends which level. But I think recently we have been able to gradually correct the image, also in the party. So for example the member base. I haven’t really had any bad experiences with the member base.

That became really tense, but thanks to the fact that I am standing as a candidate for the post and we managed to come to an agreement, the conflict is not so bad. Or, more precisely, it has shifted onto something else. So now, I’m not sure how much you care about that, but there was always one group where there was and those and they somehow split and there has been a fight between them so now it’s not them against us any more, but it’s between them, so we aren’t in the centre of the split.

Why did they have a problem with you?
It’s probably because we have always been critical towards particular situations in the ČSSD, even vocally, and we still maintain such an ethos and we are still capable of that. We openly criticised the Prague situation after 2010, because there was a big coalition with the ODS party and they haven’t liked us since. That bunch of capable guys have made a coalition and we protested against it because we thought we still have a programme.

So when you say us, you mean the YSD…
Yes, that.

Can you tell me a little about the history? How did you get to the party and to the Idealists?
I joined the party when I was 19. My Dad has been a long-time social democrat so it runs in the family. Also my Grandad, ideologically. So it wasn’t hard for me to identify with it.

…
(the interview is interrupted by people coming in)

I also started university at the age of 19. I started economics and public organisation at the University of Economics, which is a right-wing extreme, so it was a motivation for me to define myself, but I don’t really know. We have always talked politics in the family so it was never for me somehow…Simply, like some families talk ice-hockey or football, so it was not really hard at all for me. I joined the party and then I joined the YSD, but both were somehow dead. I joined something different than where I am now. I wasn’t really happy there and what’s more, I entered a club led by
and in 2010 it was the communal election and that’s where it happened, the thing I told you about the ODS party.

and then what happened was that we transferred to Dienstbier to a local organisation and I switched from the YSD to the Idealists, whom I got to know through Facebook. Those YSD did nothing at all, and the Idealists at least went out to a pub. There were about three of us, formally seven, but three in reality, and we went to the pub.

To hold meetings.
Well not quite, we just met on Friday, had a chat, got to know each other and then we started to recruit members.

I got to know the guys who were already in the local organisation of the ČSSD because that’s where it all started, but the Idealists in the YSD were never part of a particular club, we were simply from the whole of Prague. So more and more people were coming. Starting with three people we built up a thirty-member organisation, which was the second biggest in the YSD. And people were coming to the Idealists in the YSD from other groups too, like from the Young Greens, so that’s where the activist underswell started. It’s still present today. And then we had a conflict in the YSD, we wanted to be more critical of the party

Because even then there were some party members who were following us on Facebook and we knew they liked us; they were older and so we said we were not going to set up yet another youth organisation completely needlessly, so we got rid of the age limit and now we even have senior members.

But the average age is very low, isn’t it?
So it is. I think it’s about thirty.

Is that interesting for you in any particular way? That there are young people? Are you trying to work with it? I noticed you pay attention to more general themes, not something that would be specific to this particular group.

We don’t even want that. Or, in my opinion, we are pursuing the idea that there aren’t themes for the young but that there are themes that can be communicated to the young. For example, it seems a bit un-strategic to me if a young person only identifies digitally. That’s an agenda. In my opinion, the young have a lot of things to solve and so I think that’s why the Pirates have a young electorate, because maybe they don’t manage to convince other people who are solving the same problems. And we have the potential to handle work and housing, which I think is crucial for graduates. And I think it’s what everyone has to deal with, so, in fact…

So why do you think young people sign up with you? Do you think it’s because you are young too, so because of the social relations?
I think, to an extent, it is probably the reason, that there is a homogeneity that is somehow growing, I don’t know. Maybe it’s simply because we do social networks because in my opinion, the Social Democrats can’t formulate it and can’t be as active, so maybe that’s why.

So one can assume that as you grow older, your members will too.
I think so. So we are currently trying to recruit younger people. We have just had two guys join who aren’t yet 18.

And are they going to be there on Sunday?
I hope so. So those below 18…on the whole, we have 5 members below 20, but three come from Brno and those two are newcomers to Prague. Prague is older. So on Sunday those two should be there, if they turn up. One is in a boarding school so I don’t really know how that works for him. But it’s great and it was them who came up with the idea of organising seminars at secondary schools that couldn’t be explicitly political but where we could go public. They told me Feri does it as a lecture about Facebook.

He is doing it a good job with his target group [Feri] though I don’t know…no one will vote for him because those people can’t even vote yet, because they are too young, and first-time voters are no good. You can turn them a day before the election. Well, perhaps he will get in. I’d be pleased. I don’t really like him because he is a bit of a clown, but when we talked about homogeneity, I think the parliament is too homogenous and boring, so anything to liven it up would be good, and he isn’t from the right wing of TOP09, so theoretically.

So of course, I don’t know…that’s where I experienced the first conflict of the two worlds and realised the parliament is full of people who want the motorways. I’d like to contribute to Feri’s chances to get in, so perhaps he will shake it out of equilibrium a bit.

Do you not have any ambition to publish photos on Instagram and to visit schools (like Feri)?
Schools…I probably won’t manage that now. But we were thinking and I think my target group isn’t going to be the young young. As far as I know from the statistics, I mostly appeal to older women over 50 or people over 25.

How do you actually know this?
I know this thanks to Facebook statistics, where the demography is accurate. And also some personal experience. When we were running the campaign, they responded best to me…

Mums.
Yes, mums with kids or girls and boys my age, because they took it, simply, that someone younger is engaged in it. And they can be a bit critical, and even when I am a SocDem, I have never been told to go fuck myself by someone young. It’s usually older guys who say “you are too young, you know fuck all”.

I am going to do this, and secondly, I have done some geotargeting and I know where to go. Perhaps even online. Apart from social networks I’m going to have Google Adverts which will help me target it well and so I will choose the groups.

Did you do it all online, or did you also analyse physical places? I mean areas where your voters are.
Yes, we did. For example, in the Jižák [Southern City, Prague housing estate, translator’s note] I know exactly which blocks are social democratic.

R1 talks about older women and targeting social democrats voters.

Are you going to use your own Facebook page for communication? Have you thought about it?
Yes. It’s been working for a while and the hits aren’t bad. About 60,000 a week, which could, in theory, help me a lot. It’s going to be a very important part and I will have money from the party to put in it, but we will definitely also have an unpaid version through the Idealists and we can
promote that. And it will still be most important to go out to meet people and have well-targeted promotional materials.

What are you going to talk about with them?
I have no problem with that. I have got experience from about three campaigns. I actually love talking to people about anything. Well, of course, sometimes they throw in the immigrants and this or that, but you can often talk to them and they don’t get offended. Often, it is just about giving them the flyer, but with many we do talk for a long time and some don’t even want to leave.

How many people will be helping in the campaign from the Idealists?
About 30 have signed up.

Wow, that’s a lot.
But now let’s get real. I think it will go up as the election is approaching, and with it the demand. So now it might be five people for real, but with thirty, it would be quite doable.

But you probably aren’t going to try too hard over summer.
Not at all. I’m going to start working on it at the beginning of August I think.

…

Lots of young people are joining you. Do you have an idea what it is like in other parties, particularly in the YSD, or in Social Democracy in general? Do you know if the young join them?
No, on the contrary, there has been a decrease in numbers and the YSD lost a lot. What I am going to say now will probably sound awful but when I joined them, there were 2,000 people and now there are 300. So in the last years, the numbers have dropped by 200 people and before that…. A lot were just ‘members on paper’, inactive members. Those 2,000 included these inactive members, then they did a cleanse and it dropped to some 600 and now they have 300, so we are probably the only ones who’ve been growing in the meantime, and the party also lost some 2,000 members. They don’t campaign or can’t address possible new members, and don’t even want to because they won’t weaken their own positions.

That’s awful, this way they will become extinct.
Yes, or something will happen.

New parties.
Yes, or a period so bad that it will change completely, which is what I think will happen.

You said that once in a while you try to organise events like evening debates. Which ones were a real success, that you are proud of?
You mean any events? Yes, actually, yes. We have now managed to get Sobotka [ex-prime minister, ČSSD] into a hot seat in Krásný ztráty [Czech TV discussion programme]. We managed to get Sobotka in the pub and I think it had decent media coverage, because we were talking about the party. I am happy with these discussions about social matters, there might be usually about 50 people. I’m happy that the theme appeals to them and that our generation is starting to be interested in exactly this. Young people who aren’t in the Idealists come in the highest numbers, so I am pleased about any such event. I feel we do them quite effectively and there is always someone new. And I love the summer picnic and our summer meeting. It motivates lots of people and I’m happy it’s working and that it’s a success.
What’s your goal?
The main goal…When I joined the ČSSD, it was after Paroubek, so the most important aim was to cultivate the image, which did gradually change, I think. We simply want to be a social structure in a party which will influence the party’s image. And appeal directly to the public, but also have an influence within the party, and be able to have our say. Which is becoming successful, so the aims are two-fold. We would like to introduce a left-wing option that doesn’t look like Miloš Zeman. But I also aim to run for the post. Actually, the goal is to have as many Idealists as possible standing as candidates for the SocDem.

You have been talking about digging into the party’s functions and that it has to come from the bottom. How successful has it been? How has it changed in the last two years?
I’d say one of our biggest successes so far, and that’s also thanks to Jiří Dienstbier, was that we managed to make the party run a referendum inside the party to agree that the statute will include the primary election. So now thanks to us, the party has a primary election, which works poorly though. We criticised how it is run, but it doesn’t matter, the primaries are there and I think that’s one of the biggest successes in how we changed the party.

And how does that happen? How come they let you?
(laughter) So, Sobotka announced he wanted a referendum but the party leaders weren’t too keen, so we did a press conference in the parliament with Dienstbier. We planned it on Friday morning, made a speech and said there would be a referendum, that we wanted the primaries and on Sunday morning the leaders were deciding. And everyone was cross in the afternoon but they said it would have to be done now because we would have made ourselves look stupid.

That’s an interesting strategy…
So we actually made them do it. And I don’t know, we also had our say in Sobotka becoming Prime Minister. Back then, while still a part of the YSD, we organised a demonstration in Hradčany after that putsch, that was also a substantial change in the party.

But you have always used the tools that are protest tools, and that activist style, so you aren’t able to change much using the tools that are legitimate within the party.
Well, that’s only happening now (a mobile phone vibrates). We have established a structure in the party, because now we have the region of Prague, and thanks to that we started to function in the party in Prague. And thanks to the fact that we have that region and that it’s been working, we got a negotiating position, and thanks to that we are the 6th. When XX stood as a candidate, the structure wasn’t working very well, which pushed x down to 11th place. So I’d say there has been some qualitative move.

And how about the enmity from the social democrats? Has it changed a little, or do you still have any great enemies there?
We still have great enemies there but currently it’s perhaps mainly in the regions, because we are all from Prague, of course.

And maybe you are even less transparent for them, considering the way you work.
Of course. They lack information and they don’t even want to have it. Zimola once wrote about us saying that we are the worst thing that could have happened to the party. To be honest, I think it was actually him who was the worst. Mostly it is those who don’t matter because those are usually to be blamed for lots of other things.

And have you got any support from the members of social democracy in higher posts, that you know you can talk to and who like what you do?
Yes, certainly, I have a great relationship with who is also unhappy about the party and who is looking for some reasonable alliance. And of course, there is Míša Marksová, who is the deputy chairwoman. I also have good relations with

There are good relationships in the top committee, but then for example Chovanec, who hates us, has a strong voice so it’s always a zone of conflict, which we don’t mind though.

**How do you manage it time-wise, that must be quite a problem?**
That’s why we need to talk on Sunday. Until recently, I had a different problem, I was somehow burnt out. Which also meant that I wasn’t active.

**Because of work?**
Because of everything. My job is closely linked to politics, so when something happens in politics, it concerns me too, and I am not very cynical. In short, if something happens, if I don’t like something, I can’t just keep cool about it. So that’s why I was so burnt out, but now it’s better. I also think the election will give me a kick. But time-wise, we all do it in our free time, right.

**So that’s why it’d be good to have young people who might have more time and can also be good at setting things in motion.**
That would certainly be good. That’s what we have to work on. We don’t want to be leaders forever and so we need people who would be willing to invest time into it and to be honest. It has to be someone who is at school, at uni, otherwise it won’t work. A thirty-year-old can’t do it, because it’d have to be a paid post.

**Do you discuss any ideological points for the future? That you’d like to do more of something, or change something or do it more intensively. Is there any time to do this, or is it just dealing with what is imminently necessary? Is there an idea of an ideal state of being and how you’d like to function?**
We have drafted that. We have working teams who should be led by people who are engaged in these topics, but that hasn’t been successful so far. But we have established a structure for that. We also did another thing, that every year there will be one thematised campaign to attract people who can later be used later. So in the first year, we looked at education. And it was also thanks to these topics that we were able to attract newcomers for whom this topic is relevant. Last year we did some work. Though that, perhaps…in fact yes…we had some new arrivals. But the most important thing was networking with unions, which is alpha and omega. This year the theme is environmental and there have been some new faces who are taking part in it. But it’s true the topic isn’t a strong one, because it isn’t socio-economic. Or it hasn’t been successfully formulated in that way yet.

**Have you thought of the next year’s theme?**
We were planning to discuss that on Sunday. But given we said Babiš might win the election and become Prime Minister, we could use the topic of democratic structures and how democracy could work. Because if public institutions will be privatised, then only if there is a two-party coalition, one party being dominant. It would then be good to discuss that the majority system in the lower chamber isn’t right, because that’s Babiš’ topic. Simply to define ourselves and show a kind of ideal democracy.

(…)
That friend is from Belgium, Brussels, and he said there could be some funding from European institutions.
...cca 10-minute long free discussion about the currently running project and about other projects.

but I abandoned the topic. If you have any idea how it could work in an ideal case…

So there are working teams, as I said, that could work, some are thematic, and we prepared the structure so that there will be a leading committee and local organisations but nothing in between. No regions or such. So there will be a direct relationship between the units and the committee. Ideally, there would be plenty of local organisations running their own events and the committee would then supervise those done on the country level, so that’s PODEMOS style. Their structure isn’t typical of traditional parties, but they are very tolerant to let local organisations set themselves up, but at the same time the central section has quite a strong remit, so when someone doesn’t comply with the programme, they can close them down. So you strengthen both the lower and the higher levels. I find it to be a good combination. The regional structures that I know in the party are the biggest obstacle to things happening in the party. The committee can be ok, or it can be bad, that doesn’t matter, but perhaps the committee is fine and the local organisations are also ok because they want to do something. I don’t mean ideologically, that’s usually absolutely terrible, but then there is the middle that slows everything down a lot. It slows it down a lot from the lowest to the top and from the top to the lowest, so that’s why we used this format only. Ideally in about two years’ time we can let go of the reins a little and new cells can start up and sign up new members much faster than now, and that’s how it could grow. The trouble is that we’re still looking for a stable core so that it can all work well in the future.

You mean a stable core of members who will be active…

Yes.

And then we are also losing members because of various life changes. For example two of my friends, Idealists, are getting married.

You will perhaps start families and so on…

Yes, so it is all quite problematic. Maybe we do it the other way round and let go of the reins and see what happens. Of course, we might do just that. Because we have about 200 people who have signed up and wanted to become members, but we can’t really take them on yet. So maybe we simply let go and there will be members. I really don’t know.

Have you been working on it?

Not yet, no.

Because that has its own dangers, and you might not manage with everyone.

Exactly. I’d like to discuss this at the convention with everyone, that will be the non-election convention in November. We have to have one every year so we can discuss it there. And we can also discuss the relationship between activism and political power, to clarify it for ourselves.

And on Sunday at that meeting before the big one, what are you going to discuss?

How to make the communication in the committee more effective, and we’ll also probably discuss the campaign and how to work on it. I don’t really know, we have also planned to make it a bit less formal and have a nice afternoon.

Arranging a meeting and the end of the interview.
The Idealists, R4, female (May 2017)

The way the group works internally reflects what Czech society is like. It was my friend’s idea to organise this event, when he said, “a map of Czech distraint was published online, let’s do a debate about it, because the people concerned are not just the asocial uneducated, the research showed.” We wanted to open a debate about it because it usually only gets said that these people need to be better educated about budgeting and personal finances, they should have paid more attention at school and so on. But the research shows it concerns many people with university degrees.

And what kind of research was it?
It’s called The map of distraint. It was published at the beginning of April and it had extensive media coverage because it was the first time someone had mapped data about Czech distraint cases. The research was also supported by qualitative in-depth interviews. It showed that it is not only a matter of being economically aware. It also depends on what has happened in people’s lives and on life events, which is something we understand well because it’s a topic that is close to our values, while a part of the society might be just saying, “it’s their fault, they are stupid”, and we think it’s important to show it’s not like that.

So it’s not really a topic you had been working with…
No, no. This is how we work: we decided it’d be useful to pick a topic we could be working on for a year. One of the topics was education; last year it was work and this year it’s environment and urban planning. In that year, our activities are directed towards that topic, and we always publish a manifesto with key values which develops the topic in more depth (she adds that she can send it). But we of course don’t want to be too restricted by the topic, so if someone comes up with an idea and we agree it complements our beliefs and it’s interesting, a lot can be done. I like that about the group a lot, that everyone can express themselves. And a friend came and said: “Let’s organise a debate”, because he met some of the people who did the research, and I know a girl who did the qualitative interviews. So we thought it’d be interesting. We invited some lawyers to offer balance because our aim is both to debate and to find solutions. We see this as very important; a lot of the participants work for some government institutions, so we are very much aware that it’s very important to produce solutions, and not just engage in pointless talk. There is much discussions but few solutions.

Coincidentally, there has just been a new issue of Respekt magazine about distraint. That’s based on the research, right?
Yes, so we thought it’d be great. So that friend of mine and a colleague who took part in the research …. I said: “Invite her to that debate so that we have a girl there because he says he has friends who help people with distraint orders. We’ll invite XX who worked on the project, and I said: “Are we going to invite any women?” And that led to another of the discussions I often lead with the guys; not with all of them, definitely not with all. I think that we’re very progressive in that, in comparison with other organisations, which also share the same beliefs. So what happened was that that woman XX, who was supposed to lead the debate, couldn’t do it, so it was me who did it in the end, and there was another female researcher, so it wasn’t imbalanced in terms of gender.

So do you still follow your gender…
You see, we often talk about it in the club, because someone always brings the topic up. It’s typically us females but it’s not true that the theme would be secondary. In my opinion, women should have the same space, opportunities should be equal, not the same but fair, and if possible we should give women space and motivate them, because often they aren’t very keen. All that is part of the social-democratic outlook. I’m not too enthusiastic myself sometimes and then I chivvy myself and go for it, which is what happened with the debate, because the topic is interesting but I’m not totally immersed in it.

Did you have to prepare for it?
I had to prepare, which was also interesting, because a friend said: “oh come on, you don’t need to prepare, you are just going to lead the debate”. I believe he’d do exactly that, get there and say: “Hi there…”. I did have to prepare, and I was thinking, “I’ll be defending the women and I’ll get trashed afterwards”. That’s just an interesting anecdote, but it echoes what I like about the group so much. It constantly acts to develop me.
Because it makes you prepare for a debate or push some limits…

To get out of my comfort zone because that’s my idea of how the group should work. I’m a member of the board. We have an institutional board that has five people. One is a deputy chairwoman and a deputy chairman. There is a rule that there has to be a woman and a man. Then there are three more members of the board, male and female, and out of five three are women, which I consider quite…

I’d like to know whether gender issues are one of the main topics…

Not yet. I just strategically. That’s everywhere, in fact. It has been discussed several times. We do have guys who are extremely gender-sensitive and who really strive to let us girls be seen and have opportunities. They always say to me: “I don’t want to debate feminism and gender equality because that’s an implicit part of our outlook.” I think it’s important to talk about it to an extent, even if all of us behave correctly, there are some stereotypes that persist.

What I found effective in the time I’ve been taking part in activities, was that radical or controversial thinking can act negatively because it puts both men and women off any discussion at all.

So we have the group board, we have the statutes as any other registered group… as for how long the group has been active, that’s hard to say… sporadically, but we count it from when we registered it. The history is… at the beginning, it was the YSD, which is a part of the SocDem, a youth organisation of the party. SocDem parties traditionally have such youth organisations which work as forums and provide an element of progressive influence. The young usually criticise the party, formulate ideas, are a platform for recruitment and education of party members, which isn’t common in Czechia. The YSD is a kind of a pre-school and now I’m not sure how honest I can be. A Mafia pre-school where they recruit.

And the YSD members emulate the manners of the bad guys and are even worse. What’s going on there is laughable, because the organisation has no influence, the members are dropping out and there are things going on… or were going on… I’m a member myself but I didn’t experience that because the organisation was weakened. There were things like those non-existing ‘members on paper’.

So the core was recruited out of those who wanted a change…

Yes, initially it was a group of people who wanted to do politics differently, who wanted to participate actively but it wasn’t working because of those pseudo-mafiosi in the YSD. Whenever they wanted to do something, they were stopped and they were universally hated. The YSD has, like the party itself, local cells. The one in Prague 2 called themselves the Idealists, and accidentally, Dienstbier is the head of the local organisation, which is correlates to it because the kids supported him in the presidential campaign and…

So these people became the Idealists. At first, they were not an institution, and later they registered as a group. That happened two years ago, so this is the second anniversary. The Idealists were set up by a handful of people, I don’t know how many there were at the beginning, now there are about a hundred of us. So after two years there are ten times more, and the interest in us is obvious across the whole Republic. That’s why we wrote the statutes, so that it was possible to set up local cells or local Idealists.

There is a cell in Brno, and we are considering Zlín, Uherské Hradiště. (…)

…I came to the Idealists with my friend who took me to one of the events to find a boyfriend… (…)

I went, that was about two years ago, and up till then I had been a political virgin, and I made that clear.

That I had a political opinion, I followed political events but I’d never found anywhere appropriate to talk about it, where I could learn something about it, ask questions and not be seen as a nerd.

So the Idealists became the space where I gradually started to see what politics meant in Czechia. What SocDem means, how ministries and government work, and what state the party is in. I’ve been following this from the beginning and there are definitely moments when the public perceives the Idealists as idiots or as pointless. There have been many labels. There have been occasions when the party stands against us and for example doesn’t let us attend events as individuals. But that’s individual people, not the party as a whole.

It’s also complicated by the fact that the moment when the Idealists were set up dates back to the putsch in Lany. It was the Idealists who called a rally to support Sobotka. He was defending the position because he had been given a mandate to put a government together; so the Idealists were the organisers of the rally. We were just kids who met in the YSD, and it was an impulse to stand next to the SocDem and
defend the values of the social democratic politics. I think it’s on our website, though that needs to be updated. The group’s goal is to turn up or be vocal when something goes awry. The impression many people might have gained from the putsch is that we are Sobotka’s fans, but that’s not the point, because if what Sobotka does is not right, we won’t like it either.

That was obvious in the interview you did for DVTV; they are trying to pigeonhole you as a section and establish which party wing you belong to.

Yes, working with the media in the Idealists is interesting because the journalists can’t classify us. Some are more sensitive and they take us to be a critical platform that’s not dependent on the party. Others speculate that many of us are in the party, so then there can’t be any independence to speak of. Many of the people in the Idealists are in their posts because they are building a position within the party. But there are also many who aren’t party members and who don’t even particularly like SocDem as a party, and for whom it is unthinkable to become party members because XX is also a member. So based on the putsch people might think that we are Sobotka’s supporters but it’s not like that. Because if he does something we disagree with, we will also respond out loud.

And how do you communicate? What attitude do you take towards the party? Who do you talk to and who talks to you?

It depends who we communicate with. We communicate with those we like, to put it simply. Dienstbier and Valachová are members of the Idealists, I think many of us in the Idealists like Zaorálek but it’s not true there is much of a dialogue.

(…)

The party generally doesn’t communicate much with anyone, not even internally, which for us means we will never go against the system. Our view is such that we’d like to change the political thinking through the parties. We can’t even imagine any other different models for doing politics that through political parties. We talk about the election system because we often get asked or it is suggested that we should become an alternative party to SocDem. Every time something messy occurs, people write to us saying: “Set up a party.” But it isn’t a strategic project that we’ve been working on, and we all also feel that it’s more useful to cultivate the party which has such a long history and solid foundations, albeit shaken, not known or respected by many members; it seems to be a more useful position.

What’s your ambition?

We don’t even invite the party to lead a dialogue. That’s an interesting question.

Have you ever discussed it?

We always try. I’m going to give an example. In the primaries the board issued a statement about how the primaries will be run and that there would be equal participation of male and female candidates. But once it came to the primaries, this was suddenly changed by some other ruling, at which moment we stood up and asked why they were doing this. First we sent the chairman a letter, we got no reply, so we set up a debate and invited Téj, Dienstbier and Škromach. That’s how we are trying to cultivate the party so that it is truly democratic, so that was an example of how we do it.

You mentioned people were writing to you suggesting you become an independent party. What were the arguments against it?

The pressure to become an independent party isn’t so strong.

Do you mean the debate about the platform?

I think it’s very changeable and fluid. I often feel we could use a deeper debate about it because every time a moment comes when it does matter, that debate starts. For example the chairman will most likely be the 6th on the candidate list in Prague. We were talking about it and he says: “I wanted to ask you a favour, if you could help me with the campaign, but I mean the Idealists’ campaign.” Meaning that he as a member of the Idealists will be standing for the SocDem. So a conflict between those who disagree with the party, and increasingly so since he was to stand for Prague, which is corrupt. …there’s a range of opinions of this type. And there is also an opinion that Radim should do it like this, and that we should do it exactly like this, to reach a position in the party from which we can spread our belief in idealism.
So that’s the strategy; and apart from the two ministers, I mean one female minister and one senator, we have people in positions of influence. For example, we have a deputy head, Radim is the Chief advisory for Marksova; there are people in posts, either in the government or in the party. The party has a wider board, which includes 5-10 Idealists. That’s those who are party members; also, when, for example, weapons are discussed, one of us (usually Radim) comes and says: “I disagree that the programme should include weapons.” So that’s how the dialogue with the party is led, if that can still be called a dialogue.

Also, it is one thing to be a member but there also others in the party who are progressive and support the same values as us, but are not members of the group but help us form alliances within the party. In this sense the definition that says we are attempting transformation from the bottom up seems fitting.

Is it so even for those coming from different regions? Is it transparent to them? Do they agree with your beliefs?

Yes, we are very transparent and if by any chance we are not, someone always raises their hand and says: “Hey, hey”; and when we aren’t transparent, it isn’t deliberate. It’s one of the core unwritten values of the group, it is important for us to be transparent. We have the board as formal leadership, which is important in the moments when we need to be able to decide quickly, because it isn’t practically possible to call all members; so that’s why we have the board. But we’d be very happy if we didn’t have to control the members at all, which happens for example when an ordinary member comes and says: “I’m going to organise a debate”, and he or she does it.

And what’s good is that every two years we have a convention where the board is changed. The conventions should be held every year and once in two years. It’s hard for me not to adopt the party discourse, its rhetoric, but we were in trouble not having people apply, that people weren’t fighting for the posts.

Can you estimate how many people are linked to you?

I know we have about 6,000 likes on our Facebook page. We do well in the online space. The public meeting we organised had maybe about 150-200 people in attendance, it was packed to the rafters but I don’t remember the numbers, but it was a day-long event. I can’t really say. It’d probably be clearer if there was a rally.

Are they linked to you or do they visit the group?

Usually someone appeals them. Someone who is already in the group, but sometimes they come on their own, which I admire – the courage, because it’s hard to enter a closed social group. But I do see it in the events we organise. There are always newcomers that I don’t know. Apart from the members and our supporters, there are also others who come.

How do you communicate with them? Do you maintain any communication channels?

Because not everyone has Facebook, we most often use email. We have mailing lists split into members and friends, who are people interested in our activities and who have registered on the mailing list. We have also divided the mailing lists by regions.

Are there any events in Brno?

Yes but not many. We haven’t been very successful in motivating the kids here to action. (...) is really lovely but he has a bit of an issue with being organised, which is proving that it should be his key competence. You can’t achieve anything if you can’t get anywhere on time, send an email and invite people. We aren’t managing that in Brno. It needs time. There are lots of grammar school students. The average age is around thirty. Most of us are young but not everyone is very young. The initial group weren’t just youngsters. I’m recalling a photo from the establishing meeting of the Idealists and the people were around forty, but it’s true that it’s the number of younger members that’s growing, not the older ones.

How come you appeal to them?
I think it’s good PR on social networks, mainly on Facebook. There are so many things going on in Prague that the chances that we will target a large group are slim. Last time we had an absolutely full house was when we ran an event “The ČSSD at the crossroads”, where we invited Jiří Paroubek after the ministers were forced to resign, to Café v Lese; it was in a large venue but the people didn’t all fit in and had to leave because there just wasn’t room. So those are the moments when we can reach considerable numbers of people.

We can target people in this way…because when someone new and bright-eyed turns up and shows interest, we try to talk to them and give them a name to contact instead of just sending them emails, so the people say they have met us on Facebook.

Are the younger ones different to the older ones?
I don’t really know…They are interested in politics. It’s mainly boys, which I think is a pity. Two newcomers have just joined because they take part in debating contests; that’s done at grammar schools. They said they have been debating social matters, which led them into politics. But what will lead them to take an interest in leftist politics…

Someone else told me his parents are totally right-wing so he came to us to have someone to talk to about it. Maybe they are looking for a place where they can talk about it without fear of being judged; back then it was interesting. Because when someone new comes to a meeting, we want them to introduce themselves. We simply want to get to know a bit about them before we let him join. We don’t mean to be elitist, but we’d like to know who we have amongst us, and the person should also know what’s going on. So that they don’t think…and when I was introducing myself at that first meeting, I was working in a corporation and I was really ashamed to say it in front of everyone. But it was my own problem, because the kids come and talk. They simply have an interest in political debate and want to clarify their opinions; maybe it’s obvious in the way we present ourselves, that we also have an insight, and maybe that’s also appealing.

I think that the topics the SocDem discusses are progressive. It’s a progressive movement and the fact that some people discuss weapons and are against immigrants and societal diversity, is another matter. I think we keep to traditional themes. We’ve had educational topics, the topic of work but perhaps the environment and urban planning are more innovative, but that’s how society develops. There are more and more people, more and more cars and one cannot move easily in the street; that becomes an issue of freedom and solidarity with others. Say there is a mother with a pram who can’t cross the road, that’s, in my opinion, also a topic for social democracy. We definitely don’t pick topics to address young people. But we do pay attention to how we talk about these topics. We make sure we are accessible and easily understood. But the topics are clear for us. Number one is work – quality, remuneration, labour. Simply, if you work, you should have enough energy to live your life and impart something else to society.

Do you try to be pro-active in communication with the media?
Yes, we sometimes send them something. I don’t exactly remember what happens on what day, but yesterday we sent them a statement about the resignation and about Sobotka’s reaction. We put it on Facebook and sent it to the journalists, so usually there is a mention of it later; the journalists are hungry for it.

They love something controversial the most. Like the thing with Babiš, Radim sent round.

I saw how very active you are on that page and that Radim writes a lot on Facebook, you both write for Referendum Daily.

That’s right, yes, but it’s mainly when I don’t know what else to do. I don’t even write very regularly, and don’t really want to. It’s quite demanding for me, or, I don’t quite know, I’ve never thought about it. I was just writing an article about the gender pay gap, but that…(a waitress comes) But that was mainly because it’s what I do at work, because I’m working on a project about the gender pay gap.

It’s also because many people who work in the media follow us and like us – so they try to push us in. That’s how it was with DVTV I think. XX who works in XX knows Radim and I think it was his doing.
The interview in DVTV is a bigger achievement. It must have been connected to Radim standing for the election. Radim has been writing a lot because he started the campaign. He decided to let himself be seen more, so that he was more visible.

**Are you going to have a group for the campaign?**
Yes, that’s already happened.

(…)
We want the campaign to be in line with how people in the group see it. And there are more people from our group standing as candidates in the whole country.

(…)

**Are you also going to try to have the Idealists written next to their names on the ballot sheets?**
We haven’t discussed it and I don’t think it’ll say that. It’ll only be next to Radim’s name, because he is the Chairman of the Idealists group, but that won’t be the case for the others.

(…)
We said this election will have to offer new SocDem faces, which should be our goal – to offer faces that don’t evoke cheap sausage, weapons and theft…*(laughter)*

(…)
So simply *(she shrugs her shoulders)*. Sometimes it’s futile because when we have a chance to influence something and it has no impact in the end, and it harms the party, it’s not our intention to say: “We said so”. We don’t want the party to be completely dissipate, which is happening. I suspect that this happening is in someone’s interest that it actually happens because some of the things that have happened are beyond my comprehension.

**That has to be very demotivating, to keep the enthusiasm up.**
Of course. The group is…we have…so there is a controversy, or an event, and everyone calls everyone or messages and discusses what’s up, what we are going to do. And then there are periods when nothing is going on and nobody wants to do anything, which frustrates me, but it’s just normal. I say to myself I can’t get so frustrated by it, so…

(…) we were disgusted by it but I also think that if something like this happens, it becomes more dynamic and there is a potential for change.

(…) I think it can mobilise people to do something or to join the Idealists, or to think more about it. Anything that puts things in motion seems good to me.
The Idealists, R3, male (September 2017)

How did you first find out about the Idealists?
I first heard about them in 2013. That was at the time of the so called Lány putsch. There were rallies in Brno and in Prague to support Sobotka and a more liberal or progressive wing in the Social Democrats and I already was in the YSD.

I signed up on my 15th birthday, on the very first day it was possible according to the party statutes.

I was completely engrossed in that affair. I was interested in it and I actually felt somehow responsible and I cared a lot about the direction the party and the Czech government would take. So we went to Prague rallies; one was in front of the Olšanka Hotel where a meeting was held, of a wider ČSSD committee. It was a key meeting because a decision was to be as to whether Slávek will go, or if Hašek will take over at the helm. So it was quite a large rally organised or co-organised by the Idealists who I’d never heard of until then. They had a stall there and I took some flyers and started to follow them on Facebook, got in touch with a few people because the Idealists were initially set up as a club within the YSD so we had met before on Facebook.

And was setting up the Idealists discussed in the YSD?
Yes, yes, yes. Though as I said, I was just an onlooker.

You weren’t fifteen yet before that, right?
Yes, I’d never heard of them before that.

(abbreviated)
…I have to say I had done a bit here in Brno for the YSD; I was their first deputy head and there were lots of clubs in Brno around 2013.

We were always arguing, not just in Prague, but also in Brno or Plzeň; that difference of opinion between the more conservative and more liberal members has always been present. Though it has never been such an ideological matter, it was just that. Occasionally someone thought a post in the YSD would earn him a post in the ČSSD, so he engaged some of his friends, and the numbers grew. We were the strongest club in the Brno YSD, and quite a progressive one, so we shared posts on the Idealists’ Facebook page. It was all quite nice, nobody else did such things back then so we quickly stood out and people pointed us out – so for example in the regions, we were in trouble for it.

You are saying ‘us’. Were there more of you, the YSD?
I see…in the last year it’s…the YSD are quite paralysed as well at the moment but it just follows the same trend. As the ČSSD is weakening, the YSD are weakening too; it’s interesting to see how the member base is narrowing down. For example, when I signed up 4 years ago, there were 1,400 of us, and now there are 400.

(abbreviated)
I joined the ČSSD this autumn and it seems to me that the people there are much more mature; they talk naturally, there are no arguments. But it was quite rough with the YSD. We got ourselves into trouble in the YSD two or three years ago. The City Municipality issued a statement for the Year of Reconciliation, expressing regret about the Death March. We discussed that at a meeting and said we liked the statement. We didn’t say we agreed with it, but we
published a similar statement on Facebook, which usually nobody reads, but this time the journalists got hold of it.

So it was noticed in the ČSSD, and we were in big trouble. I was completely confused, so we were asking why it is such an enormous problem, reacting in the way that social democrats should do. And since then we’ve had trouble with the YSD, and totally pointless arguments. There was just a handful of us but we had terrible arguments, so we decided to join the Idealists because it seemed to be the only logical solution, so that we could do as we liked and others weren’t punished because of our actions.

Initially, we were just ordinary members and later we agreed to set up our own club here in Brno. I’d personally expected much more of it but it didn’t happen, mainly because of some personal problems.

**What do you mean by personal?**

Simply, the leadership here in Brno.

Well, XX is fine but she doesn’t have much time and a spokesperson is someone like the leader, so XX, who we had a lot of trouble with in the YSD, logically became the spokesperson. Because he was a strong personality in the YSD, but probably because of some…well, he’s now studying at university and has a partner; it’s bad when one is starting a family and doesn’t have enough time, so he does support everything but in reality, he can’t do anything because he doesn’t have the time.

So that’s why the cell in Brno is somewhat paralysed. It had a promising start, we had lots of people who were willing to join us, but we lost them due to that inability, and we lost contact with them, so that’s a pity.

It needs continuous work; what’s even worse is that they know about us but we’ve lost contact, so it’s harder to gain them back than it would be for a new organisation. So that will have to be done. The leadership is elected every two years, so that’s this coming spring, so perhaps there will be a change.

They are dropping out. In Czech politics, people under thirty are considered active young but they have almost the same problems as the older ones, maybe even worse because they are getting mortgages, starting families and so on; and to be able to be fully active and devote yourself to it, that has to happen before all this. So to be young in politics shouldn’t mean you are around thirty but around 18. I’d like to do more now, because until now I was at grammar school. You can think, oh yes, a grammar school, but you do spend whole days there, morning till evening, five days a week and then you do a sport or art, you need some time to do other things, you are interested in public matters, so there is no time for that. Intellectually, there might be people who are capable of doing it all but they just don’t have the time.

**At which school are you studying?**

I went to XX, the general branch, not maths specialisation, but the school is still influenced by maths quite a lot. We have the same teachers who teach those maths-specialised classes and are outstanding mathematicians but they only have that one opinion. We have two lessons a week of social science, which is laughable, but it isn’t so little compared to the situation in general. I chose social science for my school leaving exam and there were two of us who were taking notes in the last year, literally two, and those who were to be tested on it…and in these lessons the others were doing other things, studying for other classes, and the teachers weren’t even bothered by it. They gave up because it was a second-rate subject; the teacher did his job...
lecturing about something and then had a break. Maybe some just enjoy lecturing, not even noticing that nobody is listening; it’s individual.

And I loved the two hours a week; one year we only had an hour a week, that’s not enough. Especially when the teacher is 10 minutes late, what can he or she manage to do in the remaining half an hour.

**Did you study political science in the social science classes?**
Yes, one year. Every school does it differently. We had political science for a quarter of the year, then economy and then philosophy.

**Maybe it’s more varied, isn’t it?**
Maybe. So the young people here, I wouldn’t like to…they aren’t genetically predisposed for being apathetic about what’s happening around them, unlike Western youth, but the conditions here…. Maybe that’s a hang-over from the past regime - curiosity killed the cat…so maybe that’s the foundation for not doing anything in this country. But I have an opinion about that, that even if that could be the foundation, the Velvet Revolution brought about a… my grammar school believes that politics doesn’t belong to schools and state-run institutions should be apolitical. But I think that politics does primarily belong to schools but it should be impartial or non-party related, so that’s quite a substantial problem.

*(abbreviated, the interviewer talks about student election at schools)*

I’ve just taken my school leaving exams; before that I was a deputy chairman of the student parliament where we had this problem: it was some European election, maybe about three years ago, and what happened was that the results ...we had an agreement with the head of the school that he would give us his permission but that we could only publish the election results after the election, but somehow they got out and the headmaster then said he’d never give us his permission again.

**How could they have got out?**
Maybe the ex-chairman said something when he was counting the votes. And in 2016, it was the regional election and we wanted to do the same but had a problem again. We had a serious disagreement with the headmaster, and it was the final year of school and I was taking the final exam with him. So there were three or four of us, the more active ones, and all three of us were in the Idealists.

and we were all in the parliament, so we said: it’s our right and none of the headmaster’s business, and that we were going to publish the results before the election, and that in our opinion, democracy means discussion. And the main point is that the people are too complacent and they won’t engage in any conflict, which is a pity. So that’s one of the reasons why the young are so apathetic and that they aren’t, in comparison with other countries, interested. I was interested a lot.

*(abbreviated)*

When we have the convention, it’ll be decided which direction to take. If we are going to be more pro-active, more critical of the party, or more conventional and ready to work together with them. So that’s the question.
When the campaign is being discussed, there were discussions as to what concessions you could make towards the SocDem. What's your opinion?

We have…In reality, the Idealists are most active on Facebook where we have a group. I really like that heated discussion. There are people who are into politics, so we chat a lot and bicker. Some people. You probably don’t know him

our member who right after the revolution was an anarchist, a left-wing radical, and now he’s over forty, which makes him older within the Idealists. And surprisingly, even though he’s older, he is still a left-wing radical, even though he is older and maybe more centrist than before. But he is the one who suggests we give declarations and do rallies.

He always says we should be more radical and he had perhaps the best speech at the convention in the autumn. They were all thinking, “That’s the XX from Facebook, he’s a bit strange”, but he surprised everyone with a great speech, so now the question is, what’s next. It’s true that those who have a post with a ministry can improve things a bit, but they are much less controversial than XX, who can’t be blackmailed and who nobody owes any favours.

You mean that they are all connected.

He’s been active since he was young, and interested in politics, and he is a social democrat heart and soul. He said he’d suggest at the next convention that there should be a quota for female members, and that we should also always have someone not linked financially to any political party. So that there is always someone independent, which to me signifies a more pro-active approach in the committee.

I stand somewhere in the middle. I think that if we only publish declarations, who will join us? If there aren’t enough of us, all these declarations are good for nothing, and not even the rallies…We can manage to reach towards something by being loud but it has no real effect. Or the other extreme is that we only exist within those structures and vote as agreed. I think that you do need to work with the party but also criticise it publicly if it behaves badly.

And what XX said, that’s really interesting. It’s really sad that our political parties have extremely small member bases…(…). One might think that it’s been 27 years since the revolution, and it could have moved further.

It’s sad that we have so few members in the political parties but it’s also a great opportunity, because if we only got a thousand people to join Social Democrats, a thousand active members would give us a large enough say to be a strong, influential current. The ČSSD has about 19,000 members, but only 3,000 of those are active. The rest, the majority of the member base are extremely passive. If only we could find a thousand people…

Where would you look for them? What people?

What people? It’d be a great advantage if they were students because they are not dependent. They are not very much reliant on their parents or posts, they aren’t responsible for their children and nobody can blackmail them and they have a lot of time, so that would be fantastic. But unfortunately, in the current climate the young don’t tend towards social democracy – and I totally understand it.

Why?
Because social democracy doesn’t open itself to them. We’ve resigned completely for example at our regional conference of the ČSSD, where we were selecting candidates for the chamber of deputies for Brno.

…and we were voting and then there was time to lead the debate and nobody registered for it. Even I thought that’s very unusual. So I entered the debate and I was spitting fire because what the people were saying was just nuts.

…and had no idea what social democracy is. The only thing he said was “we should make a gesture to the retired and give them a one-off pension payment of a thousand” Once, in one month! And after that it will all just be as it was before.

(abbreviated)

It’s a vicious circle. But they hold some antipathy against them. They said we’d waste too much time and energy and it might not even work so why not do something that will definitely work, to please old-age pensioners and the socially disadvantaged, and that’s for certain, that will be good enough for us.

Do you consider the Idealists to be a way of overcoming this?
When I joined the social democrats four years ago, I thought that they could be like that. But even young people who incline to social democracy are tetchy about the words ‘social democracy’. It’s not that social democracy represents traditional politics. It’s almost as if it was a synonym for something corrupt. It’s simply the political mainstream.

I wouldn’t put my name to this but young people mind the Idealists less, so we have a different logo, different colour, we are called the Idealists, so it’s a certain…we have higher chances to attract people to whom a progressive social ideology appeals but who are worried that they are too influenced by society; for whom the ČSSD and the ODS parties are just wrong and they don’t want their names to be connected with them.

(abbreviated)

…we’ve been waiting for what is coming, in the 2017 election, so it will be something fundamental. The cards will be shuffled now and we will have to approach it in one way or another, and take a stance – so I think it could be the right moment to begin a new chapter for the Idealists and have a better winning match plan.

How could it work in the next year or two? What would be the best-case scenario?
That’s the thing. We have a goal to attract young people to politics and even better, to the social democratic or green politics. That’s close to us but as I said, we don’t have the know-how.

It was totally natural for me, because I have some ideas and I will get myself involved, but I know that not everybody works like that and there are multiple options, but maybe so many that we don’t know what works for our people and what doesn’t. It’s true, as we all know, that the young generation responds well to social networks or new media, so we should focus on that. But the Idealists’ leadership is sceptical. They want to be more responsible…

Do you mean that they are creating a distance between themselves and the young?
Yes, mentally, a little. They for example say “We have some results on Facebook and in fact we have…and it’s true, the numbers look good. We had a picture there and it had a fantastic reach, but some 30 likes?”

So in Brno we thought it’d be great to start using videos. Once I had an idea when I saw a video on a Facebook page. There is a page that posts videos, they are democrats. Something like Bernie Sanders or Obama, and they are lefties and make awesome videos so I thought…we have a PR group on Facebook, so I shared it there and asked if someone could subtitle it. So we had it subtitled and it had 700,000 views and thousands of likes, and it was something even my friends shared and didn’t think twice about.

And do you think that people understand who the Idealists are? Are you not somewhat difficult to understand for them?

I think we aren’t the ČSSD youth and not even youth, because it’s not just the young there. The only thing we share with the ČSSD is the ideology, but we aren’t dependent on the ČSSD. If the ČSSD goes, the Idealists will stay; we have said several times: how about setting up a new political party? Maybe something like PODEMOS in Spain. People have some idea what establishing a party means but you still can’t do much without money in Czechia.

We’ve started to make the videos and our chairman translates a lot, so it spreads like wildfire. Really well. It gets thousands likes and millions of views. He has been keeping his foot on the pedal. It’s a blast. And it’s because we kick-started him. He didn’t trust it at first. We had a meeting in February and he kept saying: “I don’t believe it.”. Because he’s young, but he’s 26.

Even I feel…for example, I’ve never seen a YouTuber in my life, so I feel…basically what attracts at the moment, the mainstream, that’s 15-16-year old kids who were born into it. But I didn’t know what the internet was until I was 11. So he was sceptical about it even though he is young.

He has just shared a video about kindergartens in retirement homes.

(abbreviated)

Can you see any risks? What, in your opinion, doesn’t work?

Of course, we are still a democratic group and now there are more of us, it’s a larger group and everyone has a slightly different point of view, which is a weak point. Maybe having different perspectives is a positive. Another weakness is regional cells; Brno wasn’t a success so we’ll have to work on it.

(abbreviated)

There is a bunch of great young kids in Prague who are my age and we are opening a club. We have got thematic groups; I’m in the PR group, and then there are also environmental groups, urban planning and human rights.

We’ve gradually been setting up a group for the young from 15 to up to 21 or 25. There are just a few of us, maybe 6, and some of the boys are brilliant. For example XX, that’s a really smart kid. He’s just been to the World Debating Championship, which is a similar group like the summit one, and he is ambitious and really good. So it’s super to have someone like him in the Idealists. We were thinking we could set up something in the same format and visit grammar schools to address young people. That’s one of the challenges, because I think we do address
people through the media but personal contact is useful because you can ask them to fill in the registration form or tell them to come to a meeting or an event.

*(abbreviated)*

**So perhaps in four years’ time you will set up a new party?**
Well, that’s well possible.

*(abbreviated)*

We’ve got enough people on the ballot sheets even though some stand very little chance to be elected, but even that is great progress because the party was tremendously set in its own ways that…

*(abbreviated)*

**Do you discuss other major things with the Idealists? Do you lead any ideological debates?**
I’d say we do it a lot. There are lots of people from the humanities so it relates to them. Yes, we do talk. Discussing details brings out the major topics. We still need to take a stance on certain things. What’s strange is that the primary goal, which still hasn’t been clarified yet, we wanted to clear the ČSSD party of thieves and the amoral and to reintroduce an ideal. And that’s always something that is more interesting.

There are people who are in the Idealists because they are even more left-wing than the ČSSD.

…and then there are people who are more liberal.

…or those who are in the Idealists because they liked Václav Havel, or those who didn’t like the direction we took after 1989. So everyone is slightly different and it doesn’t clash. We simply know what we want, though everyone has different priorities.

**What is it like for you, is it hard to be away from the centre of activity in the group?**
It’s a pity that there is no personal contact but Facebook is enough for me. And if I have an idea, I just put it forward and either it takes root or they convince me it’s stupid. People respond regardless, but the personal contact is always better but I didn’t mind it because I was taking the exams and had no time for personal contact.

**And did your friends stay active?**
Yes but the same applies to them too. We are all sad that Brno didn’t work. We had a few events but that was just once in three or six months.

We had an urban-planning event in Bajkazyl and then there were a few more events. They went quite well but it wasn’t possible to manage it, people didn’t have time.

*(abbreviated)*

It’s actually fine…. When the ČSSD entered government, even people who worked there. It’s good they asked us too. They asked many people who are educated and knowledgeable, and it’s great that they succeeded. It’s good for the ČSSD and for this country. But it’s a pity. It’s a
question…if they had been working somewhere else, they wouldn’t have had any time to do it, so it’s actually good.

They are right at the heart of the topics which interest them.

And in Brno, we are more specific and we don’t have that, we aren’t linked to the ČSSD here at all. I’m probably the only one who’s in the ČSSD and I don’t keep any contact with anyone, and if someone knows about us, they hate us, so we’re in a completely different position, which is perhaps why it failed.

How did you get working for the Labour Party?
I got to it because an Idealist XX, in the last and previous election, that was still under Ed Miliband, when he was standing against Cameron, got there because a man from Ipswich who has a flat in Prague and is one of his Facebook friends found the YSD, he asked if he’d like to go there and that’s how the co-operation started.

That means that it’s always 4 people to help with their door-to-door campaign. And he offered that this year again and even managed to arrange that the YSD paid my air fare. So I’d just passed my school leaving exams and 2 days later I flew to Britain for 5 days in Ipswich. It was fine, and something completely different.

(abbreviated, he is describing how he did the door-to-door campaign)

You waited to be 15 so that you could start to be involved. Where does that come from, from your family?
No, not in my family. The only one who was interested in politics, was my Grandad. He was in the National Socialist party around 1945 and he was the one who was renewing it in ‘89.

But my parents don’t care about politics at all and if I didn’t make them, they wouldn’t even vote in the election. I have been interested in it since I was kid. In 2006, I was nine. That was the time of that tense campaign, Paroubek against Topolánek. And I was nine and I started to collect election flyers and read them, because it captured my interest. It was like looking into the shop window but later I felt I tend towards social democracy. But it might be more irrational than rational, if you want to know why, but it all built up from little pieces and I have always had a leftist way of thinking, so as a result I tend towards social democracy.

Was there anything you could share with friends, if you couldn’t share it at home?
It was my hobby, I talked to those kids when I was thirteen. For example, we talked about whether our parents voted for this or that. What I think drew me to it was history, I was so much into it, millions of books, and from there it’s only a little step to politics.

Was there anything else you took part in?
At my elementary school there was a Mensa club, I liked that, but that was about it. Then the YSD and the last two years I attended student summits and the American congress model. We are going to have the congress in September, I really like that. I enjoy the congress much more than the summit. I attended the summit last year, I was acting as Russia and that was fun, I was the bad guy, and this year I was France, and I didn’t like that, that wasn’t controversial.

The summit is based on diplomacy – you say something different to what you think and you follow the social conventions… that’s handy if you want to be a diplomat or a salesman. It’s
good for dealing with people but the congress is fun because you fire off arguments, construct analogies, make comparisons. It’s a thousand times more creative and you argue, invent strategies and it’s a game but it is pacey and much snappier than with the diplomats, where there is a protocol, so I really like the congress.

How did you find it?
It kept popping up on Facebook so I clicked on it.

How long have you been going there?
I’ve attended the summit twice and the congress once and in September, I’m going for the second time, and I’d like to keep going there as long as possible.

Do any of your friends go there with you?
I’ve made lots of friends there. It’s all people who lean towards Dominik Feri and many are in TOP09. Though I disagree with TOP09 completely, I’m pleased that people join anything at all, though compared to other countries it’s awful. But it’s good that at least individual people do it. It’s good in the Czech context.

(abbreviated)

What do your parents say about you being active?
They support me. And broadcast it. “That’s our XX, he is into politics.” and I’m the person who has a different lifestyle and is interested in politics.

And do they ask you about it at home?
Yes, for example my Gran gives me books about politics. “So, what shall I give XX, let’s give him this Masaryk book.” I’m determined by it, it changed my life a lot but I don’t mind that people give me political presents, I really enjoy it.

(abbreviated)

Can you imagine that you would stand for a post in the future or would you prefer to remain to be an ordinary member?
I have to say, the older I become, the less I want to enter everyday politics. I thought when I was 14 that I’d like to be a member of the local government or that I could stand for mayor or president but I feel like doing that less and less. I had plans about going to Prague but I want to leave Brno less and less. Which is sad. That’s what happens after university, that one settles down. So I’m less and less willing to do something but I can imagine I could stand for the local government if I found that interesting, if there was anything I could offer, if I knew something well, so that would be good.
Scouts, RI, male (August 2017)

Last time you started to tell me how ten years ago the transformation came by…
In our centre

Exactly. If you could tell me more about it.
That’s the reason we work as a Scouts centre as one community and aren’t divided, as it is commonly done, into troops. That means that we are simply one group. What happened was that the previous generation that the leaders were from got into trouble, and they chose to leave. SO we lost a generation that is nowadays in their forties and the leading was passed on a guy who was then between 18-20. So the centre was rejuvenated; de facto it also meant that we lost some members because the parents had been told. Rather than keeping it all hush-hush, it is better to say: this is what’s going on and this is what’s being done about it”.
We lost some parents, or to be accurate, children, so for about three years we went to centre camps. That means that we only organised one camp instead of two, which had been common before. Those three years affect the community so we got used to each other and we have been working very well as a team, and are, apart from exceptional circumstances, able to agree on everything in the centre.

You were very young when it all happened, is that right?
Well I was, I’m guessing now, about 9-10, so that’s about ten years ago.

I remember that Mum went to a meeting, but I don’t know if it was just a coincidence, I stayed there and have been there till today, even with some other trouble.

I wasn’t at all affected by the cause. I was young and I was focusing on other things rather than noticing that something was going on.

So it wasn’t a sudden, immediate change, when things started to happen?
Probably not. It was…(pause) the kids, me as a kid…I don’t know, I think it’s not so great to completely disappear from life. I think some kind of leaving ritual is needed to make it clear that the person has gone.

How did you decide, after a while rozhoupat se, to become the leader?
I don’t know, maybe it is in my nature. I don’t know if it is the challenges, or some of my bad qualities concerning the career of changes, but when XX was the leader After about eight years he said he doesn’t want to do another term, that it doesn’t fulfil him any more. It’s no surprise after nine years, that’s a long time to be doing the same thing, but it’s true that he had to come to the realisation gradually. At some moments, it was quite funny. But for about a year it was dormant and everyone was thinking about it, and then we discussed some options at a meeting, whether we can find someone. I don’t even know how we got to it but then we went out for a drink and I finally decided that I will take the post. And XX, who you spoke to, is one of my assistants, so we agreed to do it together.
We were saying that the centre is quite small; there haven’t been many adults there recently. How demanding is it in terms of time?

Perhaps occasionally. It’s hard before camps. When we go on trips or such… I still work with a group and even though I don’t lead it, I still go on trips with the kids and it depends. When there is trip every two three weeks, then sometimes we go, and then throughout the year it is general admin, people calling or writing, and that’s either someone from the centre or from the outside.

We are so we deal with public greenery and what’s not, so perhaps about four hours a week for the general admin, maybe less or maybe more – I can’t really tell exactly.

What changed when you became a leader?
You learn to communicate with partners and with other organisations, so that’s a substantial change, and you start to think differently on the whole because you have a responsibility, which grows as you become the head of the centre. The change is definitely the amount of responsibility, and I don’t know now what the first thing was.

Did you accept the post hoping that you can change something, do something differently?
Because we are so community-based and we can always agree on something, we often have a common goal. Even before we were elected we had been thinking about it and were setting priorities that, after a year and a half, we are going to tweak based on how we’ve been doing. One priority became more urgent and some less so, so we had a group goal. My motivation … I’m thinking about it… is to continue in what XX was doing and to move it forward. Even though XX was learning the things, we didn’t notice some things. Or, we are an organisation with 60,000 members and there is an amount of paperwork, not just for the organisation but also to comply with the current law, so we’ve been putting it all together and we are finding out that we’ve been doing something incorrectly and that it has to be done differently.

What about co-operating with other centres?
The organisation…the centres are grouped under a region, which is about 16 or 17 centres. Their leaders meet regularly every four months and they manage the region. There is a kind of a pyramid, but on the other…
The cooperation is quite strong in the region and I know a lot of the people personally. It’s not that we’d be calling each other every evening but if need be, we can discuss options at those meetings. The cooperation is sufficient.

What is usually solved at this level?
There is some formal programme needed for the organisation, where budget, finances and so on is discussed. And then it is more…the region has a supportive role. There are no groups or educational units, where there are most members, so it is methodology support for group leaders, seminars or organising events and so on.

So there are also some social events?
There are postupové races in Junak. So on the regional level, that’s the first round, then it is kraj and then the republic. The same is organised by members in the individual centres, so it is one of these competitions or seminars; I’m trying to think what else. Some help concerning acquiring base camps. It depends who is in charge in the particular region. Us, our region, is the largest Junak region and it is behind the environmental centre in the river valley Kapráľův mlýn. The
region got a massive EU grant, and it is based on the number of members, so we are quite active. Compared to that, Kutná hora region has 500 members, we have about 300, so they are not so ambitious there.

That must be a great sense of responsibility if you are not just a member of an independent group or organisation but you are a part of this huge whole…

Definitely, but we all call ourselves by our first names in the organisation, whether they are eighty or a kid. If we know each other by sight we call ourselves informally by the first name. The responsibility, when you know the people, isn’t as terrifying as in any other multi-level society or group. I don’t notice it any more that the responsibility should be bigger; or I’m actually enjoying it but someone else might not. It must depend on a specific person.

You said that the ideological conceptual points are planned in more people, are they planned more often that with the board once a year?
The large off-site meeting is once a year and then de facto the same group meets regularly at smaller meetings. That’s in the evenings for about 2-3.5 hours, where we discuss current issues. That’s about once every 6 weeks.

Do you not plan the camps there, for example?
Not really, because the board meeting involves, let’s say, about 15-20 people and when we organise camps, then one group would be discussing one camp for some time, and then the second camp would be discussed, meaning that for a while the other group would have nothing to do. So as a centre, we try to only discuss the most important and basic stuff when planning off-centre events. A camp is a large event and as a centre, we have to approve it, so the basic stuff is discussed here. Specific programme-related points or educational aims are later discussed with the camp team, where the people generally are those concerned. So the board only discusses the most elementary points.

You said there about 20 people involved in the discussions. Who, apart from the board, is there?
The way it works is that except for the centre management, which is me and my deputies, there are group leaders or club leaders, ideally so that there is at least one leader per unit. it doesn’t matter at all if more come, because they are getting used to how the boards work, what goes on there and once they take over a group, it is to their benefit to know what is expected of them, so that they don’t turn up at an evening event from 7-10 pm not having a clue about what to expect.

The group was allegedly given over to younger girls in the camp. What’s the current situation at your centre and has anything changed there?
We are getting ready for a take-over. It’s going to happen within a year or two, depending how busy the current leader will be. It all depends on him, but when I say take-over, I don’t really know…I don’t personally see it as a sudden change that would mean that whole board changes; the younger ones will stay but will be promoted. The management has been changing gradually. Out of those who were just assisting perhaps one will mature and become a group leader, and then it will be filled by some of the advisors, who are 15-16 year-old boys. As they grow up, the leaders’ group is gradually completing.

I’ve seen there are quite a few girls. What about the boys?
The truth is that we haven’t had that many boys but if I focus on the older boys’ group, then there are…In a camp we’ve just taken over seven boys from younger groups, so all together there are now 16 of us. We have two 15-year-old advisors. We are going to have two deputy
advisors at the age of 13-14, who are very enthusiastic about it, and then there are younger boys of 10-12 years of age.

What is the drop-out rate of boys?
There has been a bit of a problem but in general, when the teen years start…
It’s also caused by having a mixed group, and when the girls grew older, they moved over to XX, which is about half or three quarters on the way to the centre. Even though the kids were holding on to start with, once their teen years came, it all totalled up and it didn’t work, which is one option. Hard to tell whether that was fortunate or not, I can’t judge that.

The motivations are probably varied.
And everyone has a different one…
Then it’s very hard to capture it and to engage everyone. A lot depends on how the peers get on and whether they form a peer group, because it can be said that…I hope I still count as one of them (laughter).
There was a 5-6 member group of boys about two years younger than me who bonded with each other and got on well, and now they became young leaders, so…now I lost my track.

Yes, I know that they bonded right at the start and it lasted, and they probably didn’t miss things that others did. In short, it’s all about the social group and how they get on.

If a kid would like to leave, how does it come by? Do they simply stop coming, or do you discuss these situations?
Their participation tells. We are sometimes a bit slow and only notice it later, but we first ask the boy, then check with the others, if there are more like that in XX. We were investigating what was going on there and we found out that one of the boys would take his kick-scooter and ride around XX, so he skived off Scout, which made us laugh.

I know that when I took part in the final pre-girls’ camp meeting, they were discussing with the girl Cubs whether they were looking forward to the camp, or whether there was anything they were afraid of.
Was that spontaneous, or asked by the leaders?

Asked by the leaders. They played is as a game and discussed these topics. That’s interesting.

Do different leaders prioritise it differently?
Definitely. It’s partly affected by a different quality of Scout courses.
A lot depends on the teacher, because you keep learning and trying new things. This year we were experimenting with a motivational, or more motivational, scoring evaluation. Earlier, the kids scored points for taking part at a group meeting, or doing well in a game and so on. We realised it hadn’t been very effective several years ago when we started to do something about it, and so we completely rejected that.

He is describing the new method.

It’s about how each leader approaches it and what they come up with.

What about the permeability between the groups, is there any exchange of experiences?
That’s what the centres at high level are for, to share experiences. That was one of the things that mainly girls thought don’t happen too often. That’s why we decided to give it more space and we
are trying to move it all forward a notch. So that each of us doesn’t have new ideas but only keeping them to themselves, to make the sharing work. This stems from the fact that our board is one community, but other centres might work differently. I’ve never been to a board meeting in another centre so I can’t really judge it.

**It’s not too common to visit or share experiences except on regional level. That doesn’t happen very often, does it?**

Yes it does. I’m not saying it happens most times, or not even for a substantial amount of time, but definitely some small proportion of time; but there is room for asking questions or asking a favour, or to share experiences, and so on.

*Respondent speaks about a day camp that didn’t run for the first time after several years, because there was no time to organise it. [abbreviated]*

That’s a standard commercial matter, when us as a de facto one of the first centres came up with the idea to organise day camps. It’s a bonus for our leaders, because it’s a paid summer job, because let’s be honest – spending the whole month in a camp plus planning it all June and May is not really something to leave you any more time for another paid summer job.

Until last year, it was XX’s responsibility, and before her it was someone else’s, but people age and I made a bad judgement.

**When did you realise you are not going to make it happen?**

Some time in May, probably, at May board meeting or just before that. I agreed to do it provided I could find someone who’d be responsible for it. It could be someone external member doing it for the centre, and I failed in that. So I just washed my hands of it, which probably wasn’t the best thing to do, but it was the best solution for me at that moment.

It’s going to be discussed, and we did talk about it at the last board meeting in April-May, and it was like, “yes, yes, something will be done about it”, and then all of a sudden the parents get this e-mail…I don’t know; the girls are going to do something about it; I don’t know. It probably wasn’t called off in the most ideal manner.

*Respondent talks about dropping interest. [Abbreviated.]*

I don’t know whether we didn’t manage to advertise it well or what, so the interest is dropping. That was one of the reasons why the board changed. Even though I see its meaning for the whole centre in the three points I listed, the others don’t share the same opinion.

**That must be a lot to organise, mustn’t it?**

I’ve never been a part of the communication with parents, though on some days you manage to ask some parents, to call them…The set-up was that one person was in charge of communicating with parents, and each camp term had a leader and 2-3 other people. The main camp leader had the most demanding job, that communication and co-ordinating the preparation. The leaders in each camp term organised particular points to be discussed on set days, with a planned programme and so on.

In the busiest year we ran about 8 camps, and each camp term had between 15-20 children, which makes it 160 parents, each asking about a different thing.
I had never been in charge of the day camps, but it is true that as the main boys’ camp leader I leave the responsibility to communicate with parents on the group leaders; I’m mainly in charge of the technical points. Of course if someone asks me a question, then I reply. My job is publicity, others work with parents.

But you used to do it, didn’t you?
Yes, yes.

What was it like?
It varies a lot. Depends if it’s a parent of one of our kids and we are on first name terms, or a parent of a newbie, then you have to explain a lot, or if it’s a day camp parent who you meet in the morning and in the evening five days a week, each time you communicate differently. When I was leading a day camp, a child was injured when they were fencing with sticks, and he was hit under his eye, so he had a bruise. We managed the immediate situation with the child well but it’s a different matter with parents. I was very much afraid, and found myself hiding behind a shrub first once they turned up, only coming to meet them a little later. You just have to be brave enough, and it all ended well. We explained what happened. You can’t always keep an eye on everything.

You have started the topic of Scout being perceived by some parents as a free time activity that is simply meant to keep the child busy for two hours. Is this so, and do you do anything about it? It depends on the particular parents. If they have experienced…a hiking group or something similar, or a Scout group that wasn’t openly Scout, those know what it’s all about and act accordingly. That’s very simple, because they know what to expect, they know what Scout is. As for the children who are new to Scout or whose parents are not familiar with it, it depends on the particular parents, whether they are interested and whether they care about the child, and whether we or the group manage to kindle some interest. Sometimes we manage and sometimes not. It then manifests itself in the child’s attendance. Talking to them sometimes helps, and then they are surprised because they think we are paid to do the work, though apart from day camps the centres do not make any money.

What does Scout mean to you?
It’s been the same since I was a kid: the group of friends I was growing up with, knowing each other, having tons of experiences from camps, like when we got lost or when I was stung by wasps…After all that time, it makes no difference whether the experience was positive or negative, but whether it was strong, so it all amalgamates. Another thing is that once I became a part of the board, my motivation is to pass my experiences to others and enable them to try it out themselves.

So if a child leaves, not continuing to become a leader, what should he or she, as a 16-year old, take away? What do you aspire to lead the children to?
That’s the goal of this research, what leads people…it all fits. I’d like them to be active and interested in the world around them, to be friendly and open-minded.

How did you get to Scout?
My parents signed me up when I was nine. We lived on a housing estate and the truth is that I was a lively kid; I preferred to run around the estate rather than doing my homework. So instead of finishing my homework, my Mum sat over them with me for 3-4 hours and I was really stubborn and tried very hard to get out.
Later we moved to the centre and I lost friends. If I remember it well, it was my Dad’s idea. I lived in XX then, so they took me there and I joined in. Back then, I didn’t really quite understand what Scout was and I took it to be a kind of an after-school club. It all starts to come together when you reach the advisor age, between 14-15 years. When teenage years start to be more bearable and you can establish some priorities.

Can you tell early enough that a child might want to be active later in their life and become an advisor?
You mean if when I see an eight-year old boy and…
We travel with the kids and have plenty of opportunities to observe what they do, and in the games that we often plan with a more serious reason in mind. Yes, you can observe how they behave and whether they learnt something from it. I don’t really dare to say whether I can estimate their potential but I think some people can.

Did you know when you were 10-12, that you are going to continue?
I didn’t think about it then. I had a crisis when I almost dropped out, and instead of not doing my homework I didn’t want to go to Scout. It wasn’t a good match and when I was between 10-12, it was resolved when my Mum dragged me to a meeting with a long-time centre leader who was not to be argued with. He started to convince me, it took about 15 minutes, and since then I re-joined and went to the meetings regularly. Whether I knew I will become the centre leader – not at all, till the final year, and it wasn’t even something I’d planned even though it was an attractive proposition for me.

I’m interested to know when one starts to take it seriously.
I think it’s between the age of 14-15, when you become an advisor and the leaders spend time with you, there is a bond between them, you attend some special events and discuss more things – not personal, but…

You are leading kids so to what extent friendship that reaches outside Scout forms between you and them?
Hmm…At about 14-15 years. It depends on who is, for example, wild and how long his teenage years behaviour lasts. Once they start to become advisors, and sometimes even earlier, you start getting on with them. One of the advisors is now 15, so with him I…he looked quite mature, when he was 12 he already looked 15 and behaved like that too, he probably didn’t go through his teen years’ behaviour…so it depends on one’s mental development.

Have you ever thought about the role Scout played when you were deciding for a university?
There were several other reasons. I had no particular interest in leaving, simply also because it would involve looking for accommodation and I was too lazy, given you live in Brno, which is packed with universities. So I looked around here.

If you had moved to study at uni, how does it work then, transferring as an adult to a different Scout group?
It’s more likely that you stay with the original group, over the distance. If it’s, say, Prague – Brno…when there are higher numbers of uni students, non-formal university clubs form where those people meet.

That’s probably your advantage, that young people don’t leave your group so much.
That’s a problem for any other children’s organisation. When someone lives in a small town and would like to study in a city, be it Prague or Brno, the problem becomes prominent. You are at the age when you should become a leader, at least it’s a natural step in our group, and then suddenly, he leaves. It sometimes work even from the distance, when there is a larger group of younger people, but sometimes it doesn’t work successfully. It depends on the person.

The conversation turns to a young female Scout who took part in a neo-Nazi rally in Brno and to the debate that rose about it.

I don’t know, I didn’t particularly mind about her participation but if I went there, I wouldn’t wear Scout uniform.

[Abbreviated.]

I’ve had a conflict with an ex-centre leader from Western Bohemia, we had a real clash. I almost suspected him of not being real. I even looked him up in the business registry to check if he’s a troll or some such, so in spite of the direction that for majority means democracy and a degree of tolerance, he was contradicting and really rough, I hate to say it, pseudo-patriot.

Those labels, like good-doers or proper Czechs, I don’t like any of those.

How do you talk about these issues with the older – or do they ask such questions? I feel that unless they get to it in connection with some modern trends, for example when following a YouTuber who addresses these issues, they usually don’t bring it up at that age. It’s us who tries to initiate some interest and thought in them. The two of us in particular try to teach them to think critically about what is and what isn’t right, so that they don’t fall for neither side. Even though, of course, given how most Scouts in Brno or in our centre work, we influence each others’ opinions, which means that we don’t differ much and that we lean to one side. That’s why I had the conflict with the leader from Western Bohemia.

Can you give an example, what do you address when you discuss what’s right or wrong? I can’t remember anything specific but we have a range of popular topics that stem from our ideology, we have a Scout Law, our Ten Commandments, where it says that a Scout has to speak truth and so on. and then we illustrate it by giving a model situation. That’s one option, and another is that we stop at a specific thing, and about three years ago we had a programme to develop media literacy, or to be accurate, critical thinking.

The conversation turns to the Scout Institute.

I like going there because the topics and direction is rooted in my own ideology/opinions and it is very close to me. I can’t say I’ve been to most of the events but I do turn up there once or twice a month. The idea pleases me and I like each of their programme themes, and the seminars too.

Who is in charge of that? I don’t know, but it’s usually Brno university students or those who started working. They are registered in their centres, be it Brno or another town or a village, and they put it all together. I just found out that we had a university rover’s club Dýchánek, which transformed into the Scout Institute, so it was a group of 8-10 people who started it and found a venue.

We talked about that your centre is quite specific. Why?
It’s only my opinion, but it comes from the past events, and that, under their weight, we had to stick together and work as one group, because there was a decline in the number of children and there weren’t many leaders either, and those who stayed were not many and they were quite young. They took it over and shared experiences, or tried to, and it’s now growing thanks to the generation that’s growing up.

Has the centre changed their style of work since the generation change?
It depends. We mainly used to deal with economy and organisation at the centre level, so we are trying to be more helpful to each other and work on the educational parts too.

You learn a lot in different courses and by practical experience, and even passing it over to someone is learning, because it’s very hard to find a successor. Learning things yourself is great but teaching someone else is the next step.

What do you enjoy about it and what makes you carry on?
It’s the group and the second reason is that it has left something in me and I’d like to pass it on, at the centre level or elsewhere. They say one shouldn’t be paying back but I don’t know how else to express it.

If I asked you about the day-to-day running, what exactly do you enjoy?
I simply love being with people. Not long ago we talked to children who work in the region, and we mostly agreed, and I agreed too, that when I see my centre, I wouldn’t do it if it hadn’t been for the group of people there. The group does so much and it is the foundation for carrying on and for meeting the people again and again. I’d be doing myself harm if I said I won’t do it any more.

We’re interested in the political activities. Are you interested in the issues in the city?
I can’t tell if it’s in the city but in the country, I definitely care about what’s going on and who represents us. In the last year, to or three I live with an expectation of what will come; it all seems to be closely related/ hand in hand. My Dad is politically active and in the centre, not that we discuss politics with children, but the topics do address politics. The politicians are discussing the same things as us, except they say it out loud in front of cameras and we talk about it in the centres. I am interested in politics, though I don’t know if it’s at our level; Scout caused that I care about the social and political dimensions.

When you were little, or a teenager, did you watch the news with your parents, or was there anyone you talked to about it?
When my Dad watched Events, I was very little and I didn’t care about it, or didn’t notice it. I most likely wanted to watch a different programme running at the same time. I started to be interested in it naturally, I started to read the news and articles and it’s a natural thing for me.

You said your Dad is politically active?
Well yes, partially…he is, but it’s my Dad, so that’s that.

I can’t discuss certain topics with my Dad, for example…
It’s not true that we can’t agree or differed strongly in opinion about certain topics, but I gradually did not built a respectful opinion of my Dad as a role-model, and I strongly disapprove
of some of the things he does, and I disagree with many of his opinions, but I always avoid that and hide.

**So that you didn’t have to discuss it with him?**
That I don’t mind. I can easily give him my opinion, but I do mind the impact of his actions. So Daddy is partially politically active, but thank God he isn’t very successful.
Scouts, R3, male (September 2017)

Respondent speaks about a yearly meeting.

We met on Friday between five or six; some were late, so the program had to be changed, because some were missing... Camp feedback takes place when the group or the camp meets up. They talk about what worked and what didn’t work, and there is methodological support from Junák. It’s called quality control and it’s quite an interesting thing. It’s a questionnaire in our information system divided into several sections, like education or technical support, and child safety, and each has separate points that are evaluated.

The respondent is describing particular tools. (abbreviated).

In our camp, we met before the quality control and had a chat; one point we came to was that it was all done at the last minute. I was sitting my final exams at uni. Two guys were taking their school leaving exams. And it wasn’t a top priority for us, so we had to do it at the last minute. And we only managed to run the camp well because we have experience and were able to improvise.

We lacked information access. I was carrying everything with me in my head but somehow I forgot that not everyone shares the knowledge. So then I was chasing people on the camp ground who were meant to be in charge of programmes but didn't know about it.

(abbreviated)

Did you discuss any conceptual issues?
It has been restarted now. This year, we should start a system of educational reporters. That’s two or three people who have different educational roles. The groups can consult about behavioural problems with them, and it’s up to the group and the consultant how they will work together.

We also sometimes took part at board meetings and when we needed a consultation, we discussed it. It gave us an external opinion. It wasn’t just from our group.

What worked well but doesn’t any more because there’s probably no will, were regular reports. Once a month the group leader filled in a form called ‘A group activity report’.

It was supposed to work, and it did for about 3 or 4 years... for quite a long time; at the end of each month it was sent to the educational reporter. He saved it and other groups could read the reports. It was run by the centre, so everyone had access to information about the groups if they wanted it. But eventually it became a burden for me to write these reports every month.

The truth was that I did think about what happened in the month, but with hindsight, later. And as I was getting experience, I didn’t need to write it down every month any more. I carried it with me ‘in my head’, no need to send it over to someone. So consequently, only one of the more responsible group were sending their reports regularly. It hasn’t been working for 2-3 years.

Did you talk about renewing it?
We did discuss whether we should start it over again and whether it suited everyone. But we agreed that it won’t be a centralised board decision but it will be a private arrangement between the educational reporter and the group, because everyone might have different preferences.
Most of you have been doing it for quite a number of years, haven’t you?
Yes. You know XX, they have been doing it for much longer. They have just passed the group onto someone else. I’ve lead it — formally, for about 4 years but I’ve been a board member for about 8 years. I’d had it up to here with it after four years, so I started to be lax about it, but then I said to myself, what’s the good of that.

(abbreviated)

Did you discuss any conceptual points?

Last year we defined the priorities of the centre. The direction for the following three years. It was about 6 areas, to stabilise the member base, to communicate with the public, maintaining the centre board; and teams of about 3-4 people were established for each of the priorities to supervise the development throughout the year. Because we had often planned things at the beginning of the year but easily either forgot about them or didn’t find the time.

A year has passed and we reviewed them, and we realised that we need to add a very important point: not to try to doing things that we aren’t competent for. That sometimes, people are too keen to agree to do things but later don’t find the time to do them. And the same applies to the centre. That sometimes we agree to do certain things but we don’t have the capacity, and someone could have said right at the beginning: “Hang on, we might not be able to do that.”

We reviewed the priorities and got a more realistic estimate of what’s manageable and what’s not.

(abbreviated)

So I feel this was our biggest conceptual error caused by combining different functions. Because people often overestimate themselves, take on too many things but can’t manage to do them.

That’s a common problem of all Scouts, that they are all too keen. They’d love to do a lot of things but then they find out they really can’t.

(abbreviated)

I have a feeling that we’ve been paying less attention to communication with the parents. On the other hand, more attention is paid to stabilising the member base and the centre board. There have been lots of newcomers, the girls were handing the group over and so on, so the board was significantly rejuvenated.

What about passing on experience and good practices?

It is linked to the output from the group leadership. The girls approached the main camp game innovatively. The children were not competing amongst themselves as usual, but it was focused more on individuals, to challenge themselves, or to (incomprehensible) overcome some obstacles. But they weren’t comparing themselves to each other.

So I asked about it and we discussed it for about ten minutes. Or rather, he was trying to explain the advantages to me. So it was a good impulse for me which I wouldn’t normally get, because I wouldn’t meet the person elsewhere apart from the board.

I’d be interested in that. What about getting stuck in a rut, does one not have the tendency to do so?
There are several solutions that can be used or that I use. Firstly, there are younger board members to whom I give enough space, because if they come up with something new and I make too many comments about it, it’d not move forward. So I’m more open to their ideas. It’s not a problem any more for me but it used to be, I’d reject it out of hand before they even tried it out.

**Was that because you understood everything better?**
Not really, rather - it was strange because it’s not how I’d ever done it. That’s a completely wrong attitude. I learnt to change such a way of thinking. I discovered some experience sharing between groups, completely unrelated to the centre. A friend called a meeting in Brno that had participants from, for example, Břeclav. So we were sharing experiences about anything that interested us. It was completely unrestricted. A bit of chaos but I took away many new ideas. Tips for doing things differently or better.

Of course, if you go on a trip with another group, that’s perhaps the best because you can observe the group in action. You see how they interact with the children. You see how they have planned the programme. Another source of inspiration is the Internet.

*(abbreviated)*

I grew up under XX’s leadership and in hindsight I can see that I do a lot of things in the same way as him. Because no one else had taught me otherwise.

**Have you ever had a ‘Eureka’ moment, thinking, “Why am I doing this in such a stupid way”?**

Yes, definitely. Though I don’t remember any specific instance right now…

Actually, I was strongly against merging groups, because I was stuck in that rut. And I liked the Scouts to be self-sufficient.

*(abbreviated)*

And one year we just didn’t go to these large combined events. And it had a bad effect on the Cubs because they had never met the Scouts and for example didn’t want to be transferred to us.

*(abbreviated)*

It’s easier to recruit young kids. And once you train them in Cubs and shape them a bit, you get the right type of boy for Scouts later. It isn’t a boy who’d be going through difficult teenage years at the age of 12 but you have known him for 4-5 years. He also knows the group and has his friends there so it’s more likely that he’ll stay. The environment isn’t new either, he has some routines and a kind of a code.

**What about leaving?**

The boys have very difficult teenage years. So then what happens is “I don’t care about Scouts and I don’t want to be there any more.” So they lark around, don’t come to meetings and they stop completely. Or they have different interests, or have no interest in anything except for
sitting at home playing computer games. We’ve had a few guys here who stopped coming because they were simply utterly lazy.

**How does this happen?**
They might have a spark in them but I don’t know what happens. And then we had a boy who just stopped coming. *(abbreviated)*

Suddenly it all is too distasteful, it all becomes too embarrassing. I won’t be doing that. I won’t be making an Easter whip. But they wouldn’t even respond to the most attractive activities.

**Do you notice this?**
Yes, I can identify the problem. You can tell. I takes me a while to recognise it.

One year, this was even our main aim. It was called member activation, and we said at the beginning of the year that the boys were passive. That they accept and ‘consume’ everything but they don’t make any effort to make the group gel well. And some only attended the events and just let things run. So we wanted them to participate more in the decisions about the programme and on the group’s activities. To make them more responsible. That was even through some games, in which they were in charge of the group for a while and had to organise things for themselves.

**You were always in charge of older boys, Scouts, not Cubs?**

Only in that year.

Everyone probably prefers a different strategy. When I started to work with the little ones, I could see they listened to my every word. And they were so enthusiastic about anything.

*(abbreviated)*

That’s the difference between the younger children. I also noticed that they are much more motivated to do anything, even simple silliness.

On the other hand, the older boys are easier to talk to, with some, even about their opinions and hobbies. When you go out on a trip with them and chat, it’s less tiresome than walking with a Cub for three hours who talks about Minecraft.

One more thing about the Cubs. I like that you can shape them much more.

*(abbreviated)*

The way it’s always worked was that the leaders who grew out of Scouts became their leaders, but they were also offered the option to go and lead the Cubs. I had more friends between the Scouts who grew up with me.

As for the responsibility, I haven’t thought about it very much. It was handed over to me gradually, so I didn’t really notice it. Only once I took the group over formally, did I think that I mightn’t be fully ready – but it has worked all right in the end.

*(abbreviated)*
I wasn’t aware how great a responsibility it is to the parents and the children. And of course, to the other leaders. In hindsight I realised that we perhaps…

**You have been doing it for a long time, haven’t you. One changes, learns and gets older.**

And as you grow older, you are more cautious. A witticism. I’ve always been quite cautious when I was with the children but I did slip a couple of times. Later, I say to myself: “Jesus, that could have ended really badly.”

*(abbreviated)*

**Is that something that the leader who was handing the group over to you discussed with you? How much attention is paid to it? How much do you learn before that?**

I think I only realised once I was leading the group that he had been doing it gradually. In my opinion, he did it really well and added responsibility little by little. In the final year, he wasn’t even attending the group meetings.

That sometimes made me quite cross. I don’t know whether it was just an unconscious decision, that now he can stop. On the other hand, we went out for a drink as friends. Maybe he just did it so that we got to know each other for the hand-over. So we sometimes talked about Scout-related stuff and I think he prepared me very well. And what’s more, he knew me and if he’d said: “You’re going to take over the group in two years,” I’d have got scared and perhaps left.

**And how do you go about it? Are you training the boys?**

I’m planning to hand the group over in about a year or two. I thought I’d just pick someone and start inconspicuously, like it was with me. And then I went to the opening party in the Scout Institute with a girl who was in the same situation as me, and I asked what she had done. She told me she had three girls as leaders, took them on the side and said: “Girls, in a year or two you will be taking the group over, so you need to agree how to go about it, and that’s how it will be done.” The outcome could well have been that they’d completely lose interest, it’s quite a risk.

*(abbreviated)*

So I did a similar thing. We were sitting in a tee-pee in the camp in the evening and I posited a question, that I’d like to hand it over in a year or two and that I’d like to know this year who is going to do it. But I didn’t want to point at someone and say that they were the only option

*(abbreviated, be talks about leading different groups)*

It didn’t occur to me. It’s the rut you are stuck in, or you simply don’t even realise that you are so focused on that particular view that you don’t see other options. And the solution is very simple, that you don’t have to be doing both at the same time.

**So is it up to them now? Or what’s going to happen now?**

What’s going to happen is that I gave them time to think it over. And then I’ll start talking to them and ask them where they see themselves in ten years’ time. In fact, when talking about it, the starting point was that each of us said where they saw themselves in a year or in several years’
time in Scouts. That gave me very good feedback – no one wanted to quit and everyone was very eager, which was important for me to know.

(abbreviated – a conversation about the research and contacting the respondents)

We are speaking about some of the results of the research – that students feel that no one speaks to them and they often lack basic information. The respondent returns to the topic:

It’s bad if that’s one of the main purposes of school. For example, I left school with zero knowledge of economics. As for politics, we were told how the parliament works.

If only they’d tried to involve us in some small local projects where you can start – as in Scouts. We once signed up for…It was about choosing a location in your surroundings and trying to improve it or beautify it. We wanted to build a seating area in XX but it’s never been finished. I do think though that if the kids have an opportunity to do something locally…it’s most obvious at school, for example in the school parliament. You can instigate changes – like a five-minute longer lunch break because they don’t have enough time otherwise. Or they change something in their neighbourhood. Clean up a spring, or later they can try something more global.

Of course. Do you ever discuss these things?

Not much. It usually comes up when we organise an event focused on these matters. For example last year we went to Let’s Clean XX. That’s a part of Let’s Clean Czechia; and XX is one of the neighbourhoods where one of our groups is based. So we went there to do some cleaning, because there were greater numbers of Scouts. There were retained firefighters, Scouts, and some other people, so we joined them. Previously, we discussed with the kids why it is good to recycle waste. Or we’ve done a charity collection. That was for leukaemia, and it’s window cleaning and the drivers put money into collection boxes. So we were explaining to the kids why it’s good to help in these ways.

Do you mean you have met for this purpose?

We invited people to the event on Friday and Saturday at our group meeting. And lots of kids signed up with me; it’s a Republic-wide event, aimed at rovers and rangers – 14, 15 plus. And I suggested that if they like, the bottom age can be 13-14. And what happened was that the thirteen-year olds couldn’t take part and so I had to reject the very young ones, eleven-year olds.

And then I had a disagreement with the petrol station, having young kids running around, so I had to call it off. They wrote to me saying they were sad about it. I should have just said no at the group meeting.

(abbreviated)

Also, in the camp when we were helping the locals, we were pulling up old fences. We had an agreement with the forest workers about an old tree nursery where the trees have grown, so we removed the fences there. We also picked wood so the forest was cleaned up thanks to all this. And the kids loved it.

We also practise emergency scenarios – we simulate an injury, we use make up to fake it and send the kids out in groups to find the wounded person, treat the injury and maybe transport
To what extent are your weekly group meetings alike, when do you make them special or add something?

The meetings are led by the advisors who are fifteen, which makes them close to their peers. They lead three meetings out of four and we lead the fourth.

When in the camp, I’ve just had some feedback from the boys about the meetings and that it’d be good to add some games. In my opinion, some probably felt that they’d been doing the same things over and over again. But I think it’s often because it’s a popular game or the advisor remembers that it worked well, so they repeat it ad nauseam. But it’s not true the group meetings are all the same, but simply and logically by repeating the same activities.

I think the programme is quite varied. We also have some educational targets for each year, it’s six fields. We try to include activities from each of these fields every month. Mixing it up like that means that at the moment we are learning about first aid, so in October we learnt basic stuff like how to bandage a knee or sprained ankle. In November, we’re going to learn something else, and so on, so you eventually get to treating shock and so on.

Several topics combine – first aid with knot craft, and then always some games, throwing UFO around or so. Each group meeting is a combination of playful activities and also learning activities. But even that is done in a playful form. Ideally, the meeting should be filled with activities that support our aims.

Do you mean mixing those six activities?

Exactly. It’s not really things to study. For example one of the goals is group teamwork. So it can be team games and the members can’t even see that they are doing something to meet our aims. Any game can be led with this intention but it’s hard to always think about it, to remember it. It’s hard to make it fit other things and fine-tune the meeting so that it makes good sense.

The interviewer asks whether the concept has changed or been revised.

Planning too many things to do and having trouble with the individual tasks has always been an issue for us. Not just because we don’t find the time but also that there is less willpower to do it throughout the year. I can see it in myself.

After the month off we are eager to start the new school year. You’re going to do this, this and that. That’s in September, October, November and also in December. But the breaking point is March, April or May when everyone is a little too ‘full’.

And the same happens with the plan. We should meet once every couple of months and evaluate what we’ve done. We should pay more attention to it. Or change the aims in the course of the year because we recognise that it’s not a problem any more that the advisors were late for the meeting and had discipline problems. That improved, but maybe bullying occurred as a new issue. So we can direct the energy to something else. That’s how it should work, but in reality, it’s different.

Talking about repetition (abbreviated):
It is so. Scouts have a fantastic method, which is that the younger learn from the older. The older became role-models for the younger, so the older teach the younger how to bandage a leg.

**Legs are always bandaged in the same way.**

Yes, or it can become a part of a game, or that you do it with a stranger, or that it’s always one teaching two.

**Are you going to be here when you hand the group over? What is your role going to be? Or do you know that you’ll be working and that you won’t have much time?**

I’ve just graduated in June. I moved away from my parents’ and we are setting up a business. I knew this was all going to happen but I didn’t know how much free time I’d have. And I don’t know how much time I’ll have in two or three years for Scouts either.

The last three years I’ve been really enjoying it, also because I’m leading it with the young guys who are around 20. We make a really good bunch. And they are responsible and I can see that they are moving on. And I want to use that potential while I still have the energy, so I want to hand the group over.

I saw that with my partner who was giving it everything but she was completely exhausted in the final two years, or the person was unable to carry on and was unhappy when handing the group over, like get rid of the group, I don’t want to do with it any more.

That’s why I’d like to hand it over now, while my approach is still ok and am not broken. When I hand it over in a year or two, I don’t intend to leave completely but I’d like to be at hand if I am needed. To give them some advice.

And I’d like to focus on other things. Organising large events, organising Republic-wide meetings and so on. That’s a challenge. So maybe in the future, when I stop doing Scouting or leading a group, so maybe later.

**What do you enjoy doing? You said that working with the young is great.**

Exactly. The best motivation is the bunch of people around the group that met when they were 12-13. We do things together outside the group too. We’ve just been to Poland, trekking in the mountains. We meet outside Scouts, which, in my opinion, is important for both members and us. Apart from that I get satisfaction from seeing that a programme I’ve planned moved the boys forward…not that it changed them but opened a new perspective. So passing a bit of me onto them, passing my experience onto the younger ones.

And I love the connection with nature. I’m getting to know new nooks of the Republic.

And the last thing – I was able to practise what Scouting gave me and taught me. Because I realised that if I hadn’t been in Scouts, I can’t really tell what I’d have done instead. I’d have probably found something similar, but I learnt so much. I even found some temporary jobs, or just now my Scout friend and me are setting up a business. We have so many contacts thanks to that. And I don’t know, I simply think it’s given me so much, and I want to return it to the kids.

**What should a kid take away from Scouts, in your opinion?**
The active approach to life, I think. Not to be a passive player, and that also concerns things like voting in the election. I’m an active Czech citizen, or I’m an active member of the community where I live. The active approach.

And to be able to work well in a team. I think I learnt that and thanks to that I didn’t have problems at work when I started 3 years ago. So, co-operation and leadership. If a member becomes an advisor or a leader, he learns to maintain a team. Even though it is completely different from a leading post at work, because the people here are doing it out of choice, and they are all friends, provided it works the same elsewhere as it does in our group. But you have to work with the principle that it’s their mindset and you have no leverage like, you won’t get paid. Do it because you have some responsibility.

But some people in the centre don’t realise it. They take it that we all have been doing it without much thought.

And the skills. That they find solutions, can light a fire, pack a rucksack. That’s the most visible part of Scouting. That they aren’t afraid to help a stranger in the street if someone has a fall and hurts their head. That they aren’t just someone in the crowd watching and wondering who is going to come and help.

**Do you receive feedback from the kids and the parents?**

We collect feedback after important programmes, when we want them to have an impact on the boys, then we ask. But we are generally quite bad at getting feedback.

We have learnt to give feedback to the advisors when we come to group meetings or to each other when we are preparing the camps. But we haven’t learnt to accept it or to request it.

We don’t really try much but it’s one of the important things. So sometimes we do ask – boys, what did you like today? And we tell them we need it so that we can improve it next time.

We’ve had a few activities throughout the years when the boys were giving feedback to each other. It was for example in the camp, where they wrote to each other about what they didn’t like about them and how that person could move forward in the camp. And we copied it anonymously to prevent some…

And each was given a letter, read it and half way through the camp we had feedback, on whether they thought they had improved on that point.

I revised it because some of the comments were nasty and I didn’t want to hurt the boys. I tried to include only constructive criticism, and that was how the programme was planned and we also told them. Not to put down things that cannot be changed. Like snoring is probably impossible to change, but if someone stinks, that can be changed.

We were sitting in the tee-pee and discussing whether anybody was surprised by any of the comments. And whether they will take it to heart and try to work on it. And yes. Most of them thought about it, I think it fulfilled the purpose of the programme. But it was hard for some.

**Have you had to solve any bigger problems?**
Yes, we’ve certainly had to deal with bullying. But I’m not very good at solving such things and I even know that a boy left several years ago.

**Because he was bullying someone?**
Yes; I didn’t notice it at first, and then I took it to be just some boys’ silliness. And it wasn’t that but I didn’t see it.

**And you were told only after he’d left?**
Yes. By friends or by the members.

Well, you do notice some signals but I don’t manage to keep an eye on everything.

*(abbreviated)*

We aren’t teachers. We’ve been dealing with lots of things so you get the experience gradually. It’s complicated…

**How did you get into Scouting?**

My Mum signed me up. I didn’t want to.

My Mum signed me and my friend up when I was in the 2nd grade. That was the limit, minimum of 2nd grade. I attended the meetings here but I didn’t want to and I didn’t even go to the camps in the first three years. And then I somehow got used to it…I didn’t cope very well with changes and new environments. And two or three years later I got used to it and I started to enjoy it. So Mum had to make me at the beginning.

**And why was that – was anyone in your family in Scouts?**

I don’t know. They knew the Cub leader. Mum and the leader. They were colleagues at work so Mum knew the group and so she took me there. I think she was in an outdoor group. Maybe they were something like Scouts but back then Scouting wasn’t allowed so it had to be an outdoor group.

*(abbreviated, incomprehensible)*

Of course I vote in the election and talk to people about who I’m going to vote for. But I think I don’t do much.

I don’t know, concerning the election, I was listening to a pre-election debate because I had some free time, I was going through some procrastination phase. Or I read interviews with party leaders.
Scouts, R2, female (August 2017)

How did you find out about Scouts?
I heard about Scouts from my brother, so it was a relatively obvious choice. I joined them when I was about seven or eight. Somehow, my Scouting career was quite complicated, shall we say, rather unusual. I started as a Glowworm, which is how it works here, then I was a girl Scout and then I led a patrol. And when I was 16 or 17, I really wanted to quit but there was this affair…the leadership was replaced and XX became the centre leader, which was an impulse for me, because the girl Scouts were dissipating, so I stayed and have been the leader for 10 years.

Was there a link between the intention to leave and the way it was organised?
I didn’t enjoy it; until the age of 17 I wasn’t a particularly good Scout. It needs to be said that our leadership wasn’t particularly good, or to be accurate, there was none. I was a stranger to the idea of Scouting, I didn’t really get it and attended the meetings out of habit. My peers had left but I only became a Scout when I started to lead, so…

I had to start from scratch as someone who’d had no experience and who was probably the last person who should be doing it. I started something I didn’t understand and have been developing it for 10 years. It wasn’t until after 5 years when I could actually say I was doing it fairly well and stopped making elementary mistakes.

What mistakes, for example?
At the very beginning I made an incredible number of mistakes. Some people even left because of me, because they didn’t like the way I was working; I simply had no idea and I admit it now because it was done so poorly. I really suffered. We didn’t know many things, we didn’t know how to do many things, how to plan activities so that they were enjoyable, we didn’t know how to deal with people and so on.

I found it interesting that you involve young girls who learn to prepare the programme for others.
No one taught me anything, so I didn’t know how I should teach others; and I didn’t even realise that it was important. Or to be accurate, we were too busy surviving, let alone teaching someone and approaching them in a particular way, that was absolutely…

Many of the young ones are growing up. Is this the first large generational group, or have you had larger groups before who’ve left?
They have both grown up and left; that’s how our group in particular has been developing. It’s also about trying this…that a generation grew up but didn’t stay. There were girls who were leading it for a while but who couldn’t do it, so they left. But that may also have happened because they hadn’t been prepared very well. I don’t know.
Have you ever had any intention to drop everything and leave?
Many times. We had a great advantage, or I had a great advantage: for 9 years out of those 10 I’ve been leading the group with XX who is the leader you have seen. She is the reason I stayed even in the most difficult situations, because I knew that if I’d left, she’d have stayed and vice versa – if she’d left, I’d have stayed.
…and it needs to be said that apart from the kids and all things Scouting-related, such strong friendships start and grow, which is unbelievable. It’s really difficult to describe – it’s a kind of a relationship based on unbelievable sacrifices. The friendship started in dreadful conditions, we were both absolutely desperate and had to find our way to each other not to kill the other one. Unbelievable.

Is the current situation ideal, and is it sustainable?
It’s nowhere near ideal, and it needs to be said that we won’t ever reach that point. There are lots of things that have to be changed, in my opinion, or we have to work on them. I think the centre still has serious communication issues, which I really mind, really…

Between the adults?
It’s killing me, because lots of things don’t work. Often because problems are needlessly created.

Is that something that has changed in those ten years?
A lot. We didn’t work with people in the past. Firstly, we did try but we didn’t know how to do it, and secondly, in my opinion, it took us really long to realise that we need to train people below us.

Scouts for me …is an organisation where…what’s beautiful about it is that, first, it’s world-wide. The idea is shared by all Scouts around the world. What’s very important for me is the moral law, which is nothing new as it stems from religion, from Christianity and from chivalry. It’s nothing new or innovative invented by someone here and now. They are classic moral rules one can have but Scouting is strongly focused on self-development and maximum tolerance. It’s an incredibly strong motivator for me, to be part of such a movement.
The whole idea is based on self-development; it stems from you teaching by your own example, the basic concept being that if you learn something yourself, you can teach someone else. And thanks to this, one can change the world, thanks to this idea. It’s all done in an absolutely non-violent way, so I don’t quite get those reactions, if a Scout believes something like that. I don’t get it.

**Do you feel the public sees them in a similar way?**
I think there is a lot of discrepancy; those who haven’t had any contact with Scouting can’t grasp the idea and it doesn’t surprise me. It’s very abstract. Or God forbid, a friend of mine who came to my female instructors’ meeting but who isn’t a Scout said it was a bit like a sect. That’s perfectly legitimate, because there are things that are different or that differentiate us from others. But because it is built on a kind of a belief, in quotation marks, it’s incomprehensible for some. It’s still true, even though the image has been improving, that at least here in the Czech Republic, Scouting is seen as purely a free-time activity.

We teach parents, that’s how it works in our group. We teach the parents what Scouting is, we explain it to them; I have relatively good relationships with the parents.

**Which seems to me, as you started to talk about it earlier, is one of the things that they didn’t anticipate at first…**
True, probably not. We started to do it about three years ago; we’d always kept in contact in one way or other, but I clearly remember three years ago when we had the first meeting with parents at the beginning of the year. And it was the first time we agreed with XX that we would tell them about Scouting, what it is, that we are a non-profit organisation, that we aren’t paid for what we do, and we just wanted to, you know… but we found out that even those whose children had been with us since the summer didn’t know much, nothing, and since then, that was a turning point. Since that moment even the parents we’d known started to act differently with us, totally. They used to make excuses for their children and now they write to us asking if we need anything; before a camp, they offer help, they want to organise things, so the relationships are totally different.

So this is the way the awareness that it’s not given and automatic that we do these things. And they are really very forgiving, very much so, about things that we don’t manage to do well or have to call off and we then email them, and they always forgive us because we do it in our free time.

**What motivates you to carry on, what do you enjoy about it?**
It still makes a lot of sense for me. To start with, my responsibility doesn’t allow me to leave, which I can’t (in inverted commas). Secondly, I love those kids, I really love them and I’ve created a very strong relationship with them, so I can’t imagine leaving. We have handed over most of it now so our hands will be less tied with XX and we’ll have more time for the other levels…

**So it will be a joy to observe?**
Well, I do feel that they expect an easy ride, but they will learn their lessons quickly.
They do have quite some experience, don’t they? They were spending time with you.
It’s one thing to see how I do it without realising the depth of what’s behind it, and another to
try to do it yourself. Once the weight of the responsibility falls upon you, it’s completely
different and you find out that you have to bear so many things in mind, that there won’t be
anyone else to take over when there is a problem. And that if you don’t organise things no one
else will. That’s…
(…)
Respondent talks about listening to children.
(…)
This is what we are trying to cultivate, to a great extent: to have a grown-up who cares, because,
honestly, I can imagine myself what it’s like, based on my own family situation. It’s crucial for me
that they don’t lose trust in adults. Of course, there can only be a few to trust, or they might have
a bad experience with some, but that shouldn’t lead them to think that no adults can ever
understand them. That there is always someone to be found. So it’s really important for me that
they don’t get a distorted image of adults, because of course the children are burdened by
different things, from divorced families, or dysfunctional families, or they go to schools that they
don’t like, or are bullied, all these different things and sometimes the stories are quite scary.

Do you come across problems with the children that are habits they have acquired at
school or in the family that become a problem in the group?
Of course, there is no doubt about that. That’s usually with the older ones, that’s the kind of
habits that make you want to pull your hair out, really hard to change, particularly if you
contradict the parents. Because we are bringing the children up with a goal, one of the rules is
that we don’t use offensive language about anyone, we don’t use rude language, which is, of
course! – but even this is a problem for some. Or many times the kids make racist comments,
and they get that from their families. And to explain that what they get from their own
environment which they trust is not right is to say that the parent is wrong in your opinion, so
that’s not particularly easy.

Do you get involved in this?
Always, because you can’t let it slip; we simply can’t afford to relax the rules. Once it’s set that
this and that won’t be tolerated, then that’s that. We explain it, because we don’t punish them, it
is not punishment-based, but we explain everything.

Is there anything that is discussed often?
I am more invested in this, more radical I’d say. More than others or more than the majority. So
I discuss things that boys won’t usually be bothered by, but I only deal with what I see as a real
problem. They often overlook certain things or what I see as a problem seems ok for them. But
we always talk about it and they either explain their opinion to me, which I respect and
acknowledge that it’s fine then, or I say: “Yes but it’s a problem for me so I need to solve it.”
That also happens.
(…)
What makes the camp different, with respect to the activities?
The group can be shaped there very well, it is a test for the group. Firstly, the length, and
secondly the problems that occur. It’s all quite demanding to bring it all to a final shape. Often, a
lot of what’s hidden is revealed, things that one doesn’t notice throughout the year are
uncovered. That the way something is done is unsuitable, and you can’t overlook it there.
(…)
Yes, it does happen to me, not very often but it does really happen. And it’s, no doubt, caused by
the fact that I do many things that others disagree with.
What, for example?
It can be any decision that you come to in a situation when you see a conflict and have to make a
decision. But someone observing it from outside can have a completely different opinion,
perhaps an even better one, but it doesn’t have to be. It’s all very sensitive, or a particular
approach to children might be sensitive. Sometimes the limits have to be carefully considered, as
in what’s too much. I personally have a very strong relationship with the children but there are
borders I wouldn’t cross because it’s not appropriate. There are others who base their
relationship on physical contact, which for me is something to consider seriously, to do or not.

We have an agreement, or rules, that everyone has to follow. And also an agreement that you can
never go against someone else’s decision.

(…)
There is a lot of emphasis on the responsibility for your own little group, obviously age-
appropriate. But even that is too big a package for them. It’s quite demanding. The truth is that
we have to pay attention to this thing: if there is a bright, able child in the group, which we
definitely have – all the kids are fantastic but there are some, some girls who excel at anything. In
Glowworms, it’s XX, a fantastic girl, bright, very skilful. So the trouble is that you might have a
tendency to ask too much of such a child, because you know you can expect a lot from her. (…)
(…)
It must have been awfully demanding when you started those 10 years ago.
Awfully. I had no idea what I was supposed to be doing there so it was absolutely awful.
I had no clue about what to do with them, of course.
(…)
How do others manage it elsewhere? Are the centres larger, so are there more people
who share different duties?
Partly, and I also think that it’s a little unusual here. Many of the functions devolve to one
person. Mine was the most demanding one: I was leading two groups, a camp, a day camp that
was running side to side with the camp, that was fantastic, and I was a deputy head of the centre,
and I was training the instructors which I had to prepare for. So that was five things I was all
dealing with at the same time. I thought I’d die, I really thought it’d kill me.

Won’t you miss contact with children?
I certainly will, or to be accurate, I will but I will find something; I’m not afraid of it. I won’t be
so easy to get rid of; I don’t think I’ll just say Bye and leave. I will seek out the contact.

It ran in your family. Or so you said – that your brother was a Scout and that he
motivated you, was there another family influence?
No, my brother started it; he found out about Scouting through a friend. I found out about it
through him. My Father supported Scouts, that’s true. He doesn’t any more, or perhaps he just
simply doesn’t care. But when we were little, he supported us in it.
(…) There was no fundamental support from the family.

Do you do anything else apart from Scouting?
Not as actively; work, Scouts and then some hobbies but a lot of my scarce free time was taken
up by my partner. I’m single now, but not been for very long. Because I wanted to spend the rest
of my free time with someone, I had to divide it between him and perhaps some of my personal
interests, I risked doing that.

I’m not particularly strong in that; I am interested of course, because I do care about what’s
going on, but not deeply…
our team always works together, always; when it’s a small group activity, we never contradict each other. (…) the group doesn’t allow that someone should be a weak link or problematic; nobody is problematic, everyone is different and everyone has to tolerate others. Everyone has to be able to respect others and understand that person is different, thinks differently, works at a different pace but not that he or she is weak. We strongly support this view, particularly in a team, so that they empathise with each other, with the fact that someone isn’t in the right mood or just has a bad hair day. That’s what we aim for in educating the team. We often discuss moral dilemmas with children and conflict between them. We organise programmes where we set rules, where we talk about values, for example the Sixers. What it means for me, why friendship matters, what should a true friend be like, whether they can consider themselves true friends for someone else and why not, what are their weaknesses. So we lead them to personal awareness and try to cultivate it from an early age.

**Did you have any briefing meetings after the camp, or something similar?**
We are having one next Monday, really late. We wanted to meet earlier but… We have a camp committee, everyone who was leading the camps meet. There was no space because we were all… I personally think the ideal timing would be a week after the camp but what can you do; doing it at the camp isn’t ideal either.

(…) It’s not ideal there because you are still affected by particular… firstly, your physical condition – you can’t not be exhausted after the three weeks, and secondly, the emotions evoked at the end of the camp mean that it wouldn’t be ideal to do something like that there. That would be needlessly emotional. (…) So there was a huge problem, not dealt with for several years, with the member base. That we have groups that prosper and are on the rise constantly, or at least maintain the same numbers – Glowworms have 20 members, and 5 leave to girls’ Scouts, but the gaps get filled in plus more join, so there are 25 of us and we renew the group every year like this, so every year the curve goes up. But in contrast, there are other groups, the Cubs in particular, where there are newcomers every year but they always end the year with very few people. (…)

**And did you find the cause, or is it simply because boys are less motivated?**
I dare to say it’s caused by bad leadership. When I say bad I don’t mean to criticise the people who are leading them but the problem was the leadership was young and inexperienced. And as I see it, they were left to their own devices, unsuccessfully, lacking in interest in the kids and unable to retain them. If a kid doesn’t attend once or twice, I call the parents and ask what’s up, whether everything is fine and the child isn’t ill and I keep in touch. Which all links to how satisfied the parents are, and the children; if children are happy, they tell their parents, so the situation changes and when parents are happy, they tell other parents who bring new children to us. And if just one of these things stops being done and you lose parental trust, that’s always a problem.

**To what extent do you keep in touch with other centres in the area?**

Keeping in touch…we meet occasionally. Myself, we aren’t a particularly open centre for doing that; there are others that are and they meet very often and organise events together. We meet at various competitions in Brno or at similar occasions, but directly…I meet with some leaders working on projects, or at open meetings
where centre representatives meet, so you get to see how other centres do things. But I think that we aren’t particularly open to other centres.

(...)

**Is there no external quality control? Do you have freedom in what you do?**

It depends. There is always external quality control set by the hierarchy, in inverted commas, because a Scout cannot do anything at random. It’s all backed up by paperwork. In particular, if you want to be in a particular position, you have to take a course to learn how to do it, and those courses are controlled and have fixed rules. So if you want to be a leader you have to take a course for advisors, which is optional but you can send your advisors there if you want them to learn how to work with a group. That’s really good but not obligatory; the particular format isn’t given. There are also courses for aspirants, which you have to complete if you’d like to lead a group one day. There’s a whole suite of competences you have to acquire and if you don’t have them, you can’t become a leader. You complete the course for aspirants, take the leadership course and a first aid course. Once you’ve completed all these courses, you can lead a group.

**Do you do any focused work with the girls to help them complete these requirements? Do you help them on the way?**

The courses are a fantastic thing; the system that Scouting has developed is incredible. In my opinion the courses are great, perhaps not all of them. I think it’s fantastic that someone can afford to do that for us. No other organisation has that, worked out in so much detail. It is well thought out, the conferences respond to what is needed, so it’s all very well done. We support them to take the courses; mine were awful – when I trained on the aspirant course and on the leadership course, they were terrible and didn’t teach me anything, nothing at all. But I just trained the instructors and that changed my life immensely, literally. It was extremely beneficial for me because I want the girls to get experience from it.

**What should children take away from Scouts?**

I’d like them to be prepared for life, in particular not be afraid to live, to make decisions, to stand up for their beliefs whatever they are, on any life path. To know that their decisions carry weight and that they can value themselves. That’s really important for me; I want people to be worthy in the sense that they respect each other, thanks to which they can make the world better, just simply by being who they are. That’s the most I can wish for.

**You’ve had a different experience than the kids. You have experienced catharsis in the last ten years. What did it give you, how did it change you?**

Scouting literally changed my life, which is what I’ve been trying to show others. I am a living example of the Scouting ideal. I wouldn’t otherwise be here. And I’m very clear about what Scouting has given me and what it has taken away from me, incredible, but it can’t compare. It gave me an incredible opportunity to change, to feel relevant, to do something meaningful, to make mistakes and improve myself, which in today’s world is an incredible opportunity.

(...)

There have been things I’m not pleased about; they were my fault though on the other hand, they have been a part of my development and I know I couldn’t have done it any better because I simply didn’t know how to; and even that has taught me a lot. There are things I could really do without; I have hurt someone, unintentionally of course and not on purpose, but such things can happen and they do happen, which is bad.

**What do you most enjoy about your day-to-day work, which of the activities do you like the most?**

When I can create new things, when I can have some input and invent something new, that’s super.
That's probably always before the camp or before the new year.
Before anything, really, you just find the opportunities. You have to look for them, which is super, you can bring lots of crazy ideas to life, but also lots of great ideas. You have fantastic means for making it happen, a group of people you can engage.
Appendix B (Czech Republic): Field Notes

Idealists/ 29.3. – The discussion “About contemporary state of political affairs” with Ondřej Cisař and Tereza Stöckelová, Café Kampus, Vinohrady, 7 p.m.

Coming to the Café a while before the discussion starts, we go to the very back room, sitting with the vice-leader and leader of Idealisté.cz, who form a couple.

First, the host introduces the discussants and also the association Idealists.cz. There are two hosts: one is introducing the speakers and leading the discussion, while the other one is just sitting by the stage. Then the discussion starts by Tereza S., ruminating over the words in the title of the discussion – the word “populism”. She stands up and introduces herself. Theatrical gestures. The discussion is being recorded.

The organizers – two hosts on the stage, XX and XX – look at the door and try to see if there is something that can be done against the noise from the café. The doors are closed, but the café is really noisy. Then, Ondřej C. continues with his introduction of the debate. He mocks Tereza a bit by saying something like “Well, what to say after Tereza’s entré?”.

The debate is mainly on populism. Ondřej’s parts of the debate is more factual and fruitful, while Tereza is more theatrical and speaks about obvious things. Then, questions from the audience follow. There is an older man, who poses a question; I ask XX who he is. She replies she does not know, “some leftist pensioner”, but he always asks something. Apparently, the audience repeats itself.

The discussion is heated but the host skilfully leads it. First, the questions from the audience are shorter; after a while, people just speak without permission. When a member of the audience asks a question, XX significantly whispers to me that “he’s a feminist who does statistics”.

The hosts change their roles. He asks the guests a question related to Idealists. I ask XX, “why don’t you host the discussion?” She replies that “Well, when I found out today that the hosts are two men, I said, are you kiddin? And they just mamama (smacks).” Now, the discussants are speaking about the potential future of social democratic politics, considering diverse possibilities.

Petr Bittner, a leftist journalist, enters the discussion. Then, Radim goes to the stage. He articulates the trends and Idealists’ standpoints. He gets, through some joke, to gender issues. “Gender. Yeah, we do that as well.” The audience laughs. Then, Radim mentions Klinika. “What does Radim have to do with Klinika,” I ask XX. “Nothing,” she replies, “they hate us”. Then, she explains me the conflict between systemic and anti-systemic orientation. Then, the feminists ask again. After that, Radim invites the audience for the informal part of discussion.

Idealists/ 2.4. – A monthly meeting of the Prague (main) cell of the association, Prague, Vinohrady, 6 p.m.

People gather in a former headquarters of Social Democratic Party at Prague 2. One room with a kitchenette and bathroom. Mostly young (20 – 30) people, some 40 in total, some coming in groups of two, but mainly alone. Good looking, well dressed, some 90 % are men. Look like middle class. I sing the list of participants. Then, we move to another corner of the room – XX explains that there will be live broadcast and the camera requires us to rearrange the place. As people gather, they utter political jokes – for example, someone wants a pen, another one lends him one, the first one says “great, thanks”, and the second one replies “no, it’s not great” – it
turns out that the pen bears a name of a social democratic politician who discredited himself.
Etc. Of another person asks XX about limits of something. She replies “we are the limits” –
which is the name of another youth initiative.

XX and the first host from Wednesday lead the meeting. XX outlines the program of the
meeting.
Among the members of the audience, there is XX, a top level social democratic politician and a
former presidential candidate) and XX (a journalist and a political scientist). There are some
other occasional journalists/authors.

We wait for XX, who comes after six. At the beginning, they vote about the programme – and
let it pass. Then, they plan the May 1 – their activities. XX says, and don’t you want to do
something more activist-like? I miss something more activist-like here. Some activism. People
suggests happenings, performances. They plan some videos with people working in a
supermarket at Anděl.

Then, there is Jožka Patočka – a young spokesperson of the Limity jsme my, an environmental
initiative. They discuss cooperation on some letter to politicians. During the discussion that
follows, the Idealists negotiate their relation to green issues – there are many opinions but the
result is indeed that Idealists will cooperate with this environmental initiative.

Radim then introduces his plan to run for Czech Social Democratic Party in the autumn
elections. He introduces his campaign – the main topic is cheap labour. There is a discussion
among the audience about the extent to which they should (not) be part of Social Democratic
campaigns/politics, and to which extent they should be autonomous. Some members radically
criticize Radim’s intention to connect himself with the Party. Radim accepts but speaks about a
political and systemic nature of Idealists – that he wants to change things from within, and if he
did not want to do it in this way, he could go to Klinika. He wants to get to the Parliament in
order to change the politics, the social democracy and its policies from within. He appeals to
others to try to change the party and politics in general from within. He argues by saying that
despite all the “maťošs” (mafians), it is a democratic party. XX then supports him by referring to
the initiative’s statutes – the Preamble says that they want to change the politics.

Míša always introduces the topic and then leads the discussions. The people debate in a very
disciplined way, give rational arguments. Surprisingly constructive and factual. They criticize each
other, but it means nothing personal. Obviously, there are very different opinions for example
on the system vs. antisystem orientation. These manifests itself in particular during the debate on
Radim’s candidacy. Someone makes a transcript of the meeting.

The next point is the presidential election in 2018. The people discuss who to support – whether
they will support Jiří Drahoš, a former head of Czech Academy of Sciences. They speak about
the possibility to organize a discussion with him.

Then, they give me space to introduce the research and agree on becoming a part of the
research. When I offer them the access to the research results (WP5), they look interested.

At the end, new members introduce themselves. Then, Míša outlines close future, planned
activities. She also criticizes the share of women in the organization. People laugh more and
more, speak informally, then Míša says, “so let’s go to have a beer”. Then they gather in front of
the building and go for a beer.
Idealists/ 1.5. – May 1st (International Workers' Day) at Špilberk Castle in Brno.

The event is organized by the Czech-Moravian Confederation of Trade Unions (ČMKOS), in Brno (the second largest Czech city, in the courtyard of the Špilberk castle). Sunny and cold day (Sunday), many people in city, walking (many other events – e.g. blockade of neo-Nazis march in the city centre at same time). This event visited mostly by families (with children – program for children, balloons) or seniors. Several concerts and dance shows as parts of the main program.

Accompanying program: stands of several regional high-schools (vocational), VIDA science centre and Idealists. Idealists had stand with the banner with poll on cheap labour (and deck chair with logo). The visitors had opportunity to vote for the minimum wage height (by using coloured stickers), for the shortening of working hours (from five to four days a week).

Two young (male) Idealists (stand) and the leader Radim with Miša (vice-leader) stayed here for several hours and talked with people. The visitors mostly didn’t know nothing about Idealists, but they were quite willing to discuss about the quality of work and wages in the Czech Republic. The Idealists didn’t promote their association – they were rather focused on the topic.

Radim and one of the young Idealists had clothes or accessories in red colour of Idealists. Radim had red glasses and shoes, Vojta wore cap and sweatshirt.
My first meeting with Radim and Miša. They introduced themselves and we briefly talked about the associations and their activities. The Idealists also participate at similar event in Prague. But they also mentioned that Brno is more interesting because there are more visitors (people are used to walking around the Špilberk castle) - therefore it is worthwhile to go to Brno from Prague. Idealists are rather focused on Prague, their events mostly in Prague (there is the core of Idealists) – the expansion to other towns is problematic.

It is obvious they know many people from event (ČMKOS).

We spoke with Radim about communication. They communicate mostly via internet (Facebook), they don’t meet often face to face. Radim highlighted the role of new media and social networking sites – as able to gain attention of people. We plan to meet in Prague.

Some young guy (journalist or from ČMKOS?) was making photo of the event and also of Idealist – Radim knew him and asked for the photos (for Facebook).94

16:15 - The Czech prime minister Sobotka arrived and walked around with the leader of ČMKOS Středula. They visited also the stand of Idealists, they friendly talked with Radim (they asked on their poll) and they posed for cameras (spend about 10-15 minutes there). It was obvious they know Radim and they were very friendly.

The photo with the poll appeared in mainstream media: https://www.novinky.cz/domaci/436581-sobotka-chce-zvysovat-minimalni-mzdu.html

Note: The event of Idealists was held under the label #KonecLevnePrace (#EndofCheapLabour). #KonecLevnePrace is broad national campaign of ČMKOS, supported by other organization – e.g. by the social democrats https://www.facebook.com/cssdcz/photos/a.118416571527391.8318.111041662264882/1331074966928206/?type=3&theater, and Idealists.

**Idealists/ 4. 5. – Meeting with XX, restaurant, Prague, 5 p.m. (Thursday)**

The meeting with XX lasted almost 3 hours. XX talked with me about Idealists, their organization, events, history. Part of the meeting was recorded, and some important parts were also transcribed.

XX is working at Ministry, s/he joined Idealists about month after its foundation – as her/his first political engagement.

XX is very excited about the Idealists. – when s/he was describing the organization and communication, s/he makes schema of their working groups. In description of the structure of working groups (communication via Facebook, everybody can join if s/he is interested) XX was uncertain about their number and activity (some of them inactive for long time), some of them was founded ad hoc.

Jobs and loss of time as barriers for participation.

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94 Later they shared pictures on Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/pg/idealiste.cz/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1304167646285519
S/he talked about “immersion” and tiredness. S/he spoke about planned summer meeting of the I. as necessity (informal meeting, chill out).

The participation in the Idealists perceived as something stimulating, as something new, challenge.

XX pays attention to meaningfulness – in her/his job and other activities. S/he spoke about enthusiasm experiencing when s/he joined job and loss of this idealism and enthusiasm after some time (in her/his case, in case of colleagues).

Regarding to the Idealist, s/he mentioned periods, when the participation is very stimulating – and about periods of demotivation, when nothing interesting happens and activity of members is quite lower.

**Idealists/ 4. 6. – Management meeting, 2 p.m., Prague (Sunday)**

XX informed me about this meeting via Facebook, it should last about 2-3 hours. The necessity of the meeting was highlighted by criticism from some members; also strengthening of different wings in the association (e.g. soma members wanted to participate in some more radical event under the Idealists label)

The meeting takes place at home of the leader and his girlfriend in Prague (they live there for a few months in an apartment building and Radim grinning that his parents are close but not too close). Others were there for the first time.

They prepared a barbecue for us (in the kitchen due to rain) and I learned that the last member of the management, will join Skype because she has no time and is ill. During the meal before joining skype they plan programme of the meeting - what they needed to solve and especially the role of of the missing member and the strengthening of the regions at all, because so far the Idealists is concentrated in Prague. They fight with the fact that members do not have time (work, weddings ...), and that it would probably be necessary to raise more members - hope put in students (they have a lot of time).

They speak about the current criticism of the leadership - perceived weak leadership (by some members), they agreed that such criticism is unconstructive.

They agreed that the regions would not deal so much now, returning after the elections. The activities will probably dampen over the summer.

XX joined Skype.

They deal with the campaign - XX had mainly concerns about how they could set themselves against the party. XX - some things should be dealt with more in leadership - for example, when someone writes the article to the media.

The division of competences - who is in charge of the management and how it works. It turns out they do not really know what they agreed to a year ago.

They speak about the situation in Brno - being very passive, and probably not better in this year. In the last year there were events on urbanism in Brno, but besides one member, there are passive ones. This is one of the reason why next congress will be held in Brno, to stimulate activity.
They should be more careful what they want to do and what do they really able to do. "What's comfortable for everyone," not at the expense of personal life. XX comments that she wants to do it for Idealists until her is stressed, it has to be fun, it's supposed to be voluntary.

XX mentions the possibilities of cooperation with XX, who should support XX in the autumn campaign - the creation of a common platform? Another thematic year should be the year of democracy, XX would take it in charge (along with XX thanks to his non-profit organization).

Radim wants to be more involved in PR activities of the group - even inside (currently for campaign mobilization) - PR is also needed inside the party. Cooperation does not mean working together with others at the union.

XX - How to improve leadership management - how do you keep an overview? Especially when you need speed, creating statements. XX speaks of himself as a creative inventor of ideas - he will have more time.

Radim wants to write more (in media) during the campaign to make himself visible. XX talks about the theme of campaign personalization - statesmen should be associated with people

Topic: moderating discussions on Fb - an effort to let people know that their opinions are interesting and that they are reading them. Radim admits he does not have much time for these things. XX says she has no such overview and insight.

They discuss the key topic of meeting and cooperating with other organizations: who represents and who decides? Who has the mandate? Who can represent the Idealists? The decision does not fall.

Another topic is the agenda for the next months. Planning of barbecue party in Prague and Brno. XX deals with the summer meeting of the Idealists and its financing (two days - casual, barbecue, make it cheaper for students). There is also a recruitment campaign - about 200 people waiting for the membership in the Idealists. However, it is a matter of communication – poor communication with these young people.

Note: it is obvious that they do not remember much how they shared their powers/tasks. The big issue is mainly communication among them. They originally had a group, but they started chatting on the chat (Facebook - but it's harder to find and follow the communication. They promised to renew the group, in addition to approving something, 3 of them (out of 5). More on what they agreed to do instead of telephoning. Every two months, they will meet at the management meeting. It seems that so many things have recently been dealt with ad hoc - now trying to set some rules.

Idealists/ 4. 6. – A monthly meeting of the Prague (main) cell of the association, Prague, Vinohrady, 6 p.m.

Most people come late. XX places the chairs. around 25 people came and 4 are following meeting on Skype. There is a pile of Idealists in the corner of the room. Chaise lounges, the banner, magazines, etc. XX gives me the oldest issue of the magazine.
Half of the participants are young. One very old member of the club sits in the corner. They discuss the program - approved. One of the leaders of local organization in Prague starts speaking.

One male interested in joining the Idealists is present. He knows Radim from YSD. Then, another male asked about membership - he asked for membership about half a year back and does not know if he is a member - he has no info. Radim explains the rules that he has become a member. Something went probably wrong in this case. Now they have another system of communication.

XX speaks that it would be appropriate to take up the theme of same-sex marriage - that the party is not interested in and populist YES party is stealing this topic. To deal with the LGBT community more, to participate in Prague Pride again.

Radim speaks - and XX tells him that he did not say, he commented: "then we will democratize it!"

Others want to join the discussion and XX manage the discussion. Agreement. XX (which addresses specifically the Prague Pride) speaks about the Prague Pride and about the petition for parliamentarians to deal with same-sex cohabitation and marriage. Members can sign the petition (almost everyone sign).

Possibility to have a stand at Prague Pride?

The debate on the creation of a LGBT working group, but XX points out that the human rights group is already created.

Creating left block at Prague Pride? Criticism of the Green Party - that they usurped Prague Pride. XX delegates tasks - besides XX, the second candidate XX of the Idealist in election will also participate (as a human rights lawyer).

Radim opens the topic of the campaign and he discusses the funding problem. He talks about doing geotargeting in a smaller team. He wants to focus on the housing issue as another topic that the party does not address - experts are missing. The campaign will be heading for the last 3 months before election, the goal is not to tire people. Another distinction from the party, according to Radim, is the international overlap - the EU. In Czech as an unpopular campaign theme.

Radim talks about the target - the party mainly chooses women 40 +, but Radim wants to reach the younger - thanks to the online communication.
There is also the argument that Prague is specific.

XX (the second candidate in election, female) wants to address the issue of civil society in campaign - rebellion against a party that is ill and is hostile to the OS

They return to the financing problem

Note: During the meeting, groups occasionally have fun, jokes. XX occasionally glosses. The mood is very good. Several people are systematically involved in the discussion.

Idealists/ 15. 7. – Ideopicnic, Prague, 3:30 p.m. (Saturday)

Note: Ideopicnic is an event that has already taken place last year and it was successful. Last year's event also took place in Brno - and this year they did it too, but nobody did not come.

Ideopicnic was planned about 3-4 weeks in advance. Saturday afternoon/evening in the park in the centre of Prague. As with other events, this information is spread on Facebook and also via mail (members). The event is open to all members, supporters, friends, friends, kids-friendly.

There is no official program, it is about talking about politics with Idealists. The action begins at half past four, I'm here about four, about 20 people in the park on blankets (the grass is wet),
there is meal in the middle (fruits, finger food, cheese, cakes), a few red Idealist folding chairs, a string with coloured flags across the trees, toothpicks with flags in a meal. There are two young people running around with cameras.

People chat in small groups (mostly staying), flag of the Idealist on the ground, and XX immediately complains that the police have forbidden to have the flag (XX explains that it was for people to find them easily). She tells me who is there, and I met with young girl (26), who is applying for membership and another female. I tell them about research and some results.

So far, other people come and Radim mentions that Zaoralek (the leader of the party in the elections) has come. At the same time when he comes down from behind with Zaorálek (and his two or three bodyguards), XX comes up with his family. Almost everyone got up and standing, it takes a while for everyone to get hold of it. It’s less than an hour from the official start, a camera is on a tripod, Zaorálek is also tapping on the recording equipment

https://www.facebook.com/pg/idealiste.cz/photos/?tab=album&amp;album_id=1380701695298780

Image 6-7: Ideopicnic. Source: Facebook.

Radim takes the introductory word, joking, it is informal (some are lying, drinking wine, their shoes removed) the sun shines. He gives the word Zaorálek. There is about 30 and some people come in the hour. About half of the young people under 30. Several members of CSSD (Mp, member of the European Parliament, form the party). XX admits (to me) that she do not know some of these people. There are two children.

Zaoralek has speech, talking long, joking, he highlights his own experiences. He talks about the campaign, the elections. About the defensive atmosphere both in the party and in society. He does not feel that way. The current state is a challenge for social democrats. Risks = chances. He talks about unpredictability, institutional instability. About fragility in the middle of Europe. The need to understand the risks and work with them. Not only evaluate - but keep looking. He talks about going around the region and talking with the candidates.
Grant Agreement N. 649538

Image 8: Ideopicnic with Zaorálek (the election leader of the social democrats). Source: Facebook.

The opening speech is quite long, and quite a lot of people stand. Some drunk Britons are interrupting us with the question who want to roll cheese down the hill.

Zaorálek continues (Radim sits beside him). Just do not complain that we're stupid, we're good at it. There is a need to raise wages, but it speaks of a general national strategy that is forgotten. Radim asks him on the position of the Czech Republic.

Zaorálek speaks a lot about the EU, the need to negotiate. Scepticism about "listening" as a historical experience. Czech distrust. Non-communication in the case of a migration crisis. EU technical-bureaucratic apparatus, malfunctioning, senseless formality. He mentions possession of weapons.

Questions. XX ask Zaorálek on his childhood and biography. It seems that it was planned. It seems that Zaorálek is training for campaign (he is recording and several weeks ago these "stories" are published).

Meanwhile, the drunken Britons with cheese return. They run (in underwear) uphill and they get into a pile of food, chairs and blankets of the Idealist and the ruined everything. XX is very sad - unfortunately the Britons are so drunk, they do not understand what they did wrong (holding the cheese!). Some Idealist are cleaning, packing... Others moving to the pub, where discussion continues - Zaorálek still speaking, other opposing, discussing.

During the discussion, Radim tries to moderate, giving clear time, but the participants in the discussion do not respect the rule. At each table, groups start talking together. They deal with the issue of migration, where some members clearly disagree with Zaorálek, and they accuse Zaorálek of populism, when he expresses concerns about migration.

Idealists/ 28. – 29. 7. – Ideoretreat, camp near Pardubice

The weekend "teambuilding" without an explicit, structured idealistic agenda is held in Sek near Pardubice in a camp. We meet on Fridays around 3 at Vršovice, we drive with XX, XX, XX and XX, who did something about FB events as production - informed about ways of transport, eating, sleeping, possible program, etc. (FB events served as seen by the event, including the name "recreation", the organizers parodied similar earlier events, mocking the bondage while creating a parallel between past organized entertainment and contemporary teambuilding).
There's a lot of fun in the car, we talk about personal things, especially about love and sexual relationships.

(...)  
It is said that there is one woman in the Idealists sleeping with everyone - also several couples, and that their formation or breakups may have implications for the functioning of the association. Now it is said that one has broken up and XX expresses curiosity about how it would resonate.

Stop for shopping. We buy food for breakfast and bonfire. Everything is carefully calculated for portions and for money (it is paid by the association, as well as the accommodation).

We come as one of the first. People are arriving, stopping for a small group of talks, among the participants there are several couples with children. In one of them, XX tells me that it is "the first idealistic child", pointing to the little girl, who was apparently born to two Idealists.

Nobody knows the plan - if we go out for dinner, make a picnic, have food, etc. No "start" is going on, people around the age of fifty are more likely to act organically, discuss and they enjoy themselves as if they were not seen for a long time.

I prepare (with XX) a table in front of our cottage for people to bring their own meal for dinner (picnic). Not everyone has got something, but the big table is full of food, beer and wine. Finally, we are gathered around our cottage - where we sleep with XX, XX and XX, all cottages are with four beds - mostly of the Idealists, and the party begins.

People have fun in small groups, sometimes speaking about autumn elections, but mostly about relationships and sex. I join the guitar. We sing. After that, I talk with some people just about personal things. One of them - some high-ranking young social democrat tries to bring a more political topic into the group, but no one seems to be too responsive, the politics of the conversation acts as a killer of entertainment. Only political jokes are working.

(...)  
The whole evening progresses with a lot of drunk alcohol, the people are getting louder and lazier, around the midnight the company is smaller. Talking in groups. We go sleep around 2.

(...)  
In the morning everyone, even in groups, meets for breakfast from pre-purchased supplies. In the morning, everyone is sleepy and lazy: someone rolls on the grass and the sun, someone drinks coffee from breakfast and talks about summer holidays. XX tries to organize potential trip to nature, which eventually really goes. But we are leaving with XX; we go in a car with an Idealist who needs to buy something in Seč for his sons.

After the weekend, FB events is filled with photos, ratings, and thanks.

Idealists/ 5. 11. – A monthly meeting (the first after elections) of the Prague (main) cell of the association, Prague, Vinohrady, 6p.m.
I'm arriving ten minutes before the 6. There are about 10 people including leading persons. People are coming and looking for the attendance list. A lot of older people. The table falls apart. XX: “It is metaphor for social democracy.” Within ten minutes the room is full, about 50 people. The people do not want to sit in the first row.

XX introduces the program of the meeting.

Firstly - the introduction of people interested in membership in the association. But he immediately is interrupted by XX who talks about the frustration of the meetings. He emphasizes the informal role of the meetings - to establish relationships. To prevent situation where the new members are frustrated.

The potential new members introduce themselves. A lot of the people they think are coming from the result of the election. There are 20 members interested in membership.

The next point is campaigns evaluation - both candidates in elections. XX: they were active. Face to face campaign, nice. XX has 700 pref. voices. XX has 1200 voices. XX wants to evaluate the result. 90% of people eventually voted for Pirates instead of him. XX is delighted that people (at the meeting) care about the results of the party. We do not have to look for offenders.

Sobotka asked Radim to apply for the seat of vice-chairman of the party. Still not decided whether to go.

XX discuss future party congress.

There is male from the Platform for better CSSD. He wants to cooperate with the Idealists. He reads the manifesto of the Platform. They want to change the party.

Radim encourages XX to speak about the situation in the party. XX speaks about the problems. The party does not have any new members. The party seems to be happy about their own failures.
Discussion. Discussion about the reform of the party. There is an evident divide between conservative and liberal wings in the party. XX ridicules XX (party member from conservative wing) that he quoted Corbyn. XX says there are not any new topics and issues in the party. The social issues as stolen by populists ANO and Andrej Babiš. There is also issue of local organizations and membership.

Members of the CSSD are talking (mostly). Males only.

Radim asks how to bridge the gap between liberal and conservative wing. He discusses the issue and potential of “Lidový dům” (the palace where the CSSD seats). To open the seat for NGOs, coworking space, hotspot, fight against poverty - to work on real social issues there.

The Idealists should offer the strategic vision about the future of the party. How to reform the party.

XX encourages me to speak, because only males are talking.

XX says that problem is they do not know what do local organizations think - if they do sympathise with the conservative wing or with the liberal ones (like the Idealists). They should have common topics.

Many people want to discuss. Repeating. Everyone is saying the same things. But everyone has to speak. Mansplaining. Criticising the conservative wing again and again. That conservative wing against social values and social democratic values. What did they wrong. The relationship with president Zeman. Semi-fascist rhetoric of the party.

People are not reacting to each other (almost).

Two hours later - XX opens the topic of the future of the Idealists. XX invites to meetings.

They formulate some supporting statement for the Platform for better CSSD and they voted for their support. Then they vote for creating of the election analysis.

XX ends the meeting and offers to answer questions - of people interested in membership.

**Idealists/ 8. 11. – A meeting of Idealists in Brno, 6 p.m.**
At 6 there just few people. Two representatives from Brno and two members from local organization in Prague. First meeting in Brno since we started our research. The Idealists in Brno do not have any own place to stay, meetings are in pubs and cafes (but I am the only one who order beer).

We start late. There is about 20 people (only four women including me and my friend), 4 of them are interested in membership. XX start the meeting, introduce themselves and ask to visitors to introduce themselves (only 5 members of the Idealists, there are also some members of the CSSD).

There are 4 young males interested in membership - 20, 17, 25, 20 years old. Two members of CSSD, one sympathizer of the Green Party. Educated, critical to the CSSD, they want to discuss the election and future of leftist politics. They want to be active. One of them is speaking for very long time, about different topics. The strong moderator of the discussion is missing. Nobody does not interrupt him.

Representatives making pictures, they are glad the are people. New males ask for the Idealists. What is their aims, what the memberships do include? The representatives struggle with the answer, but the males seems satisfied. They also ask for the communication platform.

XX is speaking about the election and about the situation of the CSSD. About the gap in the party.

They are speaking about the relationship between CSSD and the Idealists. About issues - more pro-european, LGBT rights. Two guests are speaking about the situation of the CSSD and local organization - as corrupted, with dead souls (fictive members), passivity, animosity. There is need to start again - from the bottom.
After two hours they still discuss. The discussion does not have rules and still missing moderator (and not following the program of the meeting). I am leaving, and I am shortly talking with representatives from Brno. Another Idealist came and points out that the discussion should be moderated because it is changes in chaos.

**Idealists/ 2. 12. – Ideosjezd II., Brno; Field notes from the second Congress of the Idealists**

The Congress takes place in Brno, not in Prague - as a strategic decision of the leadership (not only about Prague).

However, it turns out that just because of the place did not come many members from Prague and only 4 people arrived from Brno. It looks like the congress is surprisingly closed and intended for members only (Radim shared the invitation to his congress as a private event). After the congress, an open meeting with beer is held. Beer with the Idealists.

On the event on Facebook, XX highlights the call to fill in the members' questionnaire. People are arranging accommodation and traveling there.

I am here about 10 minutes before the start - almost all of them (almost 35 people) are there. There are vegan snacks, coffee, water, tea. Everybody talks in small groups. Large papers with club logo, posters, question papers for members (from the questionnaire), stickers, flipcharts, are on the walls; papers with notes on the chairs (redefinition and club goals). Everything prepared by XX.

XX complains that only 18 people completed questionnaire for the Congress. XX also says that membership fees are a problem and that this will be addressed. XX points out that there are only few members.

Leading persons sits in the front (left). The individual blocks of the program are moderated by XX (one of the leading persons), Radim and XX.

At the beginning, we talk about the good financial situation of the association. Acknowledgment of ecotourism working group for last year's actions. They address the redefinition of the association's goals. XX uses a flipchart and presents what has come out of the questionnaire.

Radim asks what is missing from the left, what should the group deal with: different people, predominantly men, are being registered. XX writes themes on a flipchart. They mentioned discussion rules, each has a maximum of two minutes to respond.

**Discussion:**

Poverty - they do not address the issue. Gender

What is missing? Freedom to live your life, leisure time, public transport

Young people

The problem is not about ideas - the problem is personal - CSSD - a new force, other people (steal, not social)

How to change this?

Offer of common identity. It is confused by nationalism.

What should be there - Europeanity

Social Justice - Gender, Minority

Credibility is missing - about the left, about soc. movement, motivation is low.

Social change - poverty, family - family support - but not to discuss what a family is, but actually to support those partner entities.

The left is lacking everyday social democracy, a lot of ideologies, once again the credibility of people,

Local politics.
We do not have to respond to the CSSD, common identity - interconnection with other topics, multisectionality - different environments (connecting those problems of different identities), partial solutions are nothing.

Differences between Brno and Prague, the opinions in Prague are more liberal, in Brno it is really hard to work with social democrats. Inclusiveness, human dignity, education, free of charge - public services - education (aids, lunches, etc.)
The program for people who work hard, leisure time, cannot admit that there will be no pensions, collectivity, general basic income - anti-social democratic solution, cultural hegemony, the prevalence of soc. democratic discourse frames.
Language, naming, credibility
Internationalism, humanism, religious tolerance
Language - public services - broader scope - housing - coordination, local politics - green urban areas - they search for housing for people.
Inner education - silly - argument, training for local politicians, something for the public, critical reflection of capitalism - to name - income inequality
Inspirational State to People - Left - Great State - Authorities - Problem
We are the movement of those who are weaker.
Social housing: People from CSSD are not interested - important for young people, seniors, Work, salaries.

People do not react to each other (mostly). The discussion is rather general. Everyone says something and go on.

Radim concludes: We will create “Ten Principles”. They should be provocative for the left alone. Create - Team - Write - Communicate. Redefine the left. Faces are important - but they want the packaging. They will create working group to work with ideas and to create “Ten Principles”.

**Who do we want to do?**
There is a debate going on.
Radim: The type of communication. Targeting specific groups. Who we want to pull in and who has the sense of pulling. We cannot do catch-all.

Reactions, discussion:
Do not assign catch-all. SPD - Saxon - right-wing, liberal-conservative. Though targeting but addressing all. Both the traditional and the left.
Radim: Will idealists be credible?
Question of the target group. Offers everything to everyone. Finding themes for everyone.
Who is the target group: party members, young people, journalists, voters and a wider audience.
The change must be fundamental. We have to change. It should be great.

Party - catch all - winning the election
Society - Credibility - Traditional people would not believe us - We’re getting rid of fairy-tale voters - There are so few people who are solidary, those people are angry.
The club is meant to target young people - they have time to engage in politics, it takes time,
Older people are hard to reach.
XX - We should define target after we decide who we want to be.
XX: target young people, students and leftist intelligence. These can get hegemony in the debate.
XX: We do not have to think about the voters - we are the association!
As an association, we should focus on addressing people who want to change things, or on people who want to go to politics. There is no organization that would do that.
How to do it? The workers will vote for us, a program for someone who has higher maturities and lives in a regional city.

XX: I think we should target unionists. Target women. The environment is not supportive.

**How do we want to do it (the platform, who do we want to be)?**

Radim: Do we want to be political party? Do we want to be a lobbyist group? Do we want to be the CSSD's tail?

**Discussion:**

XX: Pressure group - in what environment? If we were in the environment of several left-wing parties. Political vacuum on the left. Having an open gate to the side, there's plenty to do. Today the CSSD brand does not have any advantages.

There are 3 variants: - 1) tail of CSSD - no, 2) lobbies - this is what we are essentially, 3) an independent political entity - we have to build infrastructure, build capacities, network of people to mobilize them and create a movement / party in good time (energy, timing, motivation).

XX: Lobbyist group with socdem interests - definition of tools - social networks.

Party - senator - public funding - must be ensured.

XX. - lobby group in the party. The ambition to reform CSSD should remain. Networking, etc. To create a party - thousands of people needed. For example, a few people and money.

XX: When do we have to make statements? What if the CSSD is against migrants etc.?

XX: The Congress of the party in February - we will see which way do CSSD choose.

Local politics. It is necessary to prepare potential candidates with local influence. We are supposed to get and promote our candidates.

XX: There are more parties - Pirates, etc. It is necessary to clarify our relationship to these parties. Reach potential coalition partners.

XX: Oligarchs abuse the term “movement”. We have both “parties” and “movements” in the law. Babiš has no movement - it's a party. We will name what the movement is.

Creating a new party is not fun. The party must establish - more people - senators, deputies.

Transformation of some mass movement.

Large corporations - Establish a party of movement - for example, trade unions.

XX: local level, housing issue, municipal elections - great potential. Nationwide level. E.g. in Prague the theme of housing.

XX: How will we achieve the goals in the sense of the association? The association should be more open. Informal events. Sitting, movie evenings, lectures.

XX: We are thinking about "how not to embarrass you and you". We have to be critical. And we have our own agenda.

The party is a terrible structure. Rather do what we do and it should be better organized.

XX: These entry costs are not so high. Rather, it turns out there is not a lot of things to be done. Unsettled parties are successful. Pirates have success - they did not have money, people,

Party criticism: People expect us to criticize us. It makes no sense. And rather, the old cadres will confirm.

XX: We have a brand that disappointed - if it has any benefits. There is no debate. Rationally justify whether it makes sense to go to the party or go out.

Perspectives - a vision, some assessment of the situation. It is necessary to do so.
XX: I have a dream. This is not about a form. It's our activity. We have to put strong positive principles.
XX: The foundation of the party - the data - are not. Lobbyist group. Should we be? The CSSD will have possibly under 5 percent. The question - whether to lobby in other parties.

Radim ends the discussion and concludes: Rather the position of XX. It does not make much sense. Focusing on the communal. Generation of cadres. The community aspect of our activity.

Several members continue in the discussion during the lunch break on Christmas markets. There is an evident divide between younger and new members and some members from the party - regarding to the perception of the future of the association. Many members seem to be more open to leave the party and be more independent than before.

Image 11: Most of the members of the Congress, lunch break on Christmas markets in Brno. Source: Facebook.

Afternoon program, topic - communication:

Working Groups on Facebook vs. search for another platform? Why do most of the working groups (teams) not work? Should they be cancelled, left or transformed? Missing responsible people.

Radim - Proposal to leave FB - communicating on a forum - as more inclusive

Discussion:
Groups led by two people did a good job, it would be a shame to cancel it completely. It wants "ownership" - "the feeling that I am responsible."
It is good to have spoken persons who are active
It would be good for these people to vote for these speakers to be responsible.
XX - The questionnaires show that the club should be more active, but it follows from practice that people are not motivated to engage; organising an event is, for example, very time-consuming - The question is not whether to cancel or not; but where do you get motivation?
Work often on one person.
People badly estimate time.
Everything is solved on Facebook, but there are not all - a better open forum? => how do mobilize structures that are now inactive?
Informal events for new entrants, e.g. lectures where we can get to know each other
People have Facebook; a lot of event reminders come through emails late.
The argument that there are no defined processes - the role should be clearly defined, everyone should know what to do and what is responsible (when someone does not do anything, nothing will happen). Are teams vague? Do not have goals and assignments (get people? Spreading information?).

They should say what is expected from the teams.

How do you guarantee team expertise?

Radim opposes - everything was tested. Nothing worked. The goals were clear.

Teams are quickly exhausted and there is no one to deal with issues. No one goes to the action.

Everyone is talking about how teams should work. Ideas are usually confronted with the reality of how it did not work until now. In particular, leading persons point out that people do not have time (and according to the questionnaire they want to spend twice a month at most). No long-term motivation. It's about volunteering - the activity cannot be enforced. XX points out that we need to say when we have no time.

Vision of leading persons that communication should take place at different place than Facebook. The topic of the open forum for discussion has already appeared. The vision that teams will open more through the forum.

The discussion is quite stormy - the teams are said to be open already. The newcomer reports that he does not know how teams work and that they did not get the information (they do not know how to add them).

Result: lists themes to which they will be able to sign up.

Moving from Facebook to a forum?
Radim want to engage more women and newcomers in discussion at the Congress.

Finally, the forum is being voted on, it will be tested, and Facebook and the forum will work in parallel for some time.

Afternoon program, topic - local organizations:

The next point of the program is the functioning of local organisations, in the regions. Local organisations are actually two, Prague and Brno. Brno does not work. In addition, they appear to have failed to fulfil the obligations written in the statutes of the association (several meetings per year). Brno is completely passive. Cancel? According to the statutes, it should be cancelled.

Representative from Brno - There were 3-4 people at the informal meeting. Nobody motivated. People and potential lost. The situation in Brno is different - not possible to cooperate with CSSD as in Prague (corrupted). No sense to focus on the party. They don’t have the support and background like Prague (no job at Ministries, no place to meet, etc.). Everything is in Prague.

XX: We organise events in the regions, concentration in Prague is not a goal. Other members are talking about whether to concentrate on the regions as well. Some are inclined to cancel the local organisation, others argue that if the organisation wants to grow, they need regions. Leading persons are rather inclined to cancel.
There is evident animosity - from XX toward the spokesman from Brno. The spokesman from Brno is also very critical toward to association, as misunderstood, aggrieved. He is against the connection with party.

Others argue that structures need local organization - but not working?
Double leadership in Prague is also solved. Does Prague need local organisation when it is as well as Prague?

Representatives from Brno: they made mistakes, failed to mobilize and keep people motivated.

XX is in a dispute with a spokesman from Brno, who claims he has not fulfilled his duties. He defends that communication with the leaders did not work (e. g. he required a list of members in Brno, etc.). The dispute became more personal (later it continues with a stormy exchange). Most people do not follow him because, as it turns out later, most members do not know about the situation in Brno.

Voting: the local organisation is not cancelled (although the leadership was for cancellation) and Brno gets a second chance - in March a new leadership will be elected.

Image 12-13: The end of the Congress. Several members are making photos for the global campaign for tax justice (#endtaxevasionnow). Source: Facebook.

Scouts/ 13.6. – Tuesday with Girls Scouts (5 p.m.)

My first meeting with girls and with the female leader. She is very friendly, in my age. There are already several young girls (age 12-16) and some sitting in the grass (3, some of them older). XX admits that older girls are rather lazy, but they have to move. XX ask how I want to be engaged. I participate in greeting in the circle, but rather observing their games.

The girls are very friendly and the are hugging with Girls Scouts and with the female leader as well.

They play “football” and the leader plays with girls - several of them have very bad shoes for that (flipflops).
The next activity is prepared by one of the girls sitting in the grass before. The girls get several
tasks they should accomplish - they should e.g. tie some knots blindfolded. It lasts quite long
time, but I have time to speak with the girls in the grass. They are very friendly, and they explain
me some rules, hierarchy, they speak about activities outside of the centre - courses, trips or
different magazines, about the role of the older Scouts.

**Scouts/ 14.6. – Wednesday with Glowworms (5 p.m.)**

My first meeting with Glowworms I introduce themselves and young girls are very excited. They
think they will be in newspapers. One girl sad to me: “And you are researching how crazy we
are?”

XX call the small girls “ladies”. It is obvious that young girls really love their female leaders.

We are in the park, playing games. The girls are too loud. They have one rule - if the leader raises
her hand, the girls should stop talking and also raise hand. But sometimes it lasts so long because
they are not watching the leader.

Many people are watching us. I am the only one with small bag (they get their bags and cell-
phones in the cabin). It seems inappropriate when I am checking the time on my phone.

The girls get task to write their friends on the paper - those friends they want to sleep with them
in the summer camp. It lasts very long time to decide. Some girls are not going to summer camp,
so they are just waiting for their friends to finish it.

After this activity I have to leave because I am pretty tired to keep up with the girls.

**Scouts/21.6. – Wednesday with Glowworms (last regular meeting before summer camp; 5 p.m.)**

My second meeting with Glowworms. There are two older leaders and XX. The first hour is
devoted to games in the park. XX tried me to engage in their activities (games, greeting of
Glowworms).

The youngest girl in Glowworms brings to me pictures she painted with her sister and she is very
happy I like it. The girl is very shy, and she does not talk with other girls yet (she is new), she
rather talks with leaders. It is very hard to involve her in games, because she does not understand
the rules.

There is about 20 girls and they are very loud. Chatting and giggling.

The leaders try to involve some other activities on their games (firstly some motion, girls are
running).

After one hour we moved into the cabin and the activities continue. The leaders are asking for
feedback for this year (because is last meeting). They use papers with different emoticons on the
floor and they are asking different questions. Girls should choose of the emoticons and stand on
it. They ask for different activities and how the girls enjoyed them. The young girls are rather
positive. They do not get negative feedback.
They use similar method for preparation for summer camp. They ask girls what they are looking forward to - and not. Every girl should say something, but it seems they are repeating and they want not to say anything negative to their beloved leaders.

I have to leave, but the last activity they mentioned should be devoted to relationships with their friends. They should write something nice about other Glowworm.

**Scouts/25. 10. – Wednesday with Glowworms (regular meeting, 5 p.m.)**

It is 5 p.m., the leader talking with some mom, 3 older girls around (16-19 years old?) - I've never seen them before. The young leader explains that two older scouts who are supposed to help could come. These girls come to visit, to look accidentally - so they will help. One of them was a scout somewhere else and she is interested to join the centre. XX just told me these two are probably some psychic support. One of them is obviously little bit nervous and shy when playing with children later.

Girls are on the playground (about 50 meters from the cabin). The leader calls them and introduce them older girls. Glowworms are sad that the older Scouts are missing, however, with new girls, they are immediately in talk, and one of them (the Scout) takes the initiative and introduces the game. Leaders explained the basic rules (nicknames, greetings). She admits to me that it's actually a happy coincidence that they are here just when the older girls are missing. There are 20 young girls.

Playing in a park. Girls introduce themselves in the circle. Then XX with girls plays two games. Self-conscious. Girls seem quieter than ever. Walking around the park, collecting leaves. The Glowworms are not ashamed to talk to the older girls. XX comments that the girls had gone quite far.

The XX explains that she teaches them to care for the elderly. That they did so in the summer camp. During the previous game, however, XX lets one of the girls explain the game's rules to others. She is a little nervous, but she does not stop.

During the last game outside, one of the older Glowworms stops and talks about the election and Babiš, she was so angry that she wanted to chop the bed. She wants to talk about it. Another younger Glowworm joins and says her mom has chosen the Pirates.

When girls collect autumn leaves for their "creation" in the cabin, some of them also give the leaves to us. In the group there is a little girl (she has been on several meetings), who does not go out, does not understand, does not understand the games and does not want to join them, she was crying today, and she had to deal with each other in the past. XX admits to me that his mother made appointment with XX. XX complains that no one has told her and that she will have to talk with her mother because it does not work and she does not have enough capacity to keep the girl all the time (she is younger than other girls).

Note: from previous discussions I know that the number of girls has increased a lot, in total there are 30 (last year was twenty). After an hour, the girl heads to the cabin. I leave the group and I think I'll be standing next week.
Scouts/ 7.11. – Tuesday with Girls Scout (regular meeting, 5.p.m.)

I arrive at five o'clock and it's already dark, XX is just changing shoes, other girls and XX in the hall of the cabin. There are several new girls. There should be 18 Girls Scout in the centre, at the meeting there are about ten. Girls take their slippers (some leave them there, others wear them).

They get task from XX. In the park, they have find papers with indices, they have to accomplish the task and be back as quickly as possible. With the leaders we stay in a cabin and we talk. Later there is another Girls Scout. XX is angry because, the girl has been there for a long time and she knows that she should let know. XX comes about 20 minutes after five.

XX tells me the next day will come a new girl from the last meeting I was in. She's supposed to take care of the Christmas party. Children prepare a program for parents. XX invites me, but I can still see a little nervous when she talks to me (but she is very friendly).

Both younger leaders talk to me normally, and they are not nervous. They talk about things at school, party, dance lessons, boys (even though the girls are two years younger). XX talks about her brigade in cafe, the girls promise to visit her. Everybody talks about other plans, they plan to go to the city with girls at the weekend, but they have a problem with the lack of time, they also talk about the ball. Ball is made in February for adults (15+ of Scouts), friends, renegades from Scouts. Girls have a very busy program, XX finds she has promised to go to the theatre and does have time.

XX talks about his exams (Scout). XX has new patch on the uniform (after my arrival, XX and XX dressed in uniform and tied the scarves,) and she is very proud. She also gained a new scarf it, she enjoys it.

XX adds that she has to go home after an hour because of the exams in school. Girls occasionally mention some other Scout members, joking about the organizational failure of one of the leaders. It is clear from the interview that girls are very active, they have a lot of friends and they are busy outside of the centre (especially XX). XX admits that they need help and that she is quite happy about the new Scout (see above).

After 45 minutes, XX has picked up the girls from outside because they have not yet arrived. They sit in a circle and XX leaving, the initiative is taken over by XX. Later there is one older girl (I see here for the first time). XX asks for a task (6-7 questions). As a form of teaching the Scout rules. For example, Scout law (values and character of Scout) or Scout promise. However, girls do not know much. Some elders are reprimanded that they should know it. Especially one of the older looks bored - and neither writes anything nor knows anything (it seems to me that XX comments on XX, I will only hear "I will see at the end of the year").

XX turns to look at new scouts after a while, with the fact that they probably do not know what they are doing and why. She explains what the law is for, what is the promise ... The girls wrote. XX explains that they should have a Scout diary. XX looks tired.

It seems to me that XX tried to save the situation, because younger leaders did not find that new girls needed the foundation and context. I have to say goodbye and leave.

Note: Some phone rang during the game. Girls should turn it off.
XX also mentions that her younger sister will come to see her tomorrow (as a friend's support). She talks about her as anxious, she has one and many tries. But the scouts think that it's just running in the woods.

**Scouts/ Field notes from the last meeting before the Christmas party (regular meeting of Glowworms, December; 5 p.m.)**

The girls got a clear assignment a few weeks ago. They had to prepare a performance that would combine several elements: there must be something Scout, there must be a fairy tale and there must be Christmas customs. The leaders of troops do not interfere to the content of the performance, just advice.

The girls are invited work in their patrols (sixs) - to train their Christmas performance. They are in charge of young leaders of their patrols (each with 6 to 10 children). Little leaders (mostly the oldest ones in the patrols, I the age 10-11) thus lead their friends and coordinate their performances. They know what to do.

(...) One of the leading guys tells me that one of the young leaders has even brought the completely prepared performance printed on paper (for others). Among others, they are perceived as a great authority and listen to it.

Their performances (three) are great, they work independently (just leaders sometimes give them some advice). They already bring their costumes and props.
Estonia Appendices

Appendix A (Estonia): Interviews

Interview 1

DD team member, young women in her early twenties (November 2017)

R: Before joining DD Academy, how much experience did you have with this kind of voluntary work, had you taken up any other similar social responsibilities before?

P: Well, as to volunteering in general ... I've volunteered at some events and, well ... I'm a/-year student, I was a pretty active member of the student council in high school, I was the vice president and worked on/-/ for a while there, meaning that if we had any/-/-/ then I had to/-. I also organised a discussion group at the Opinion Festival on/-/-/, from the point of view of/-/-/, that is. So I've had this kind of interest in education issues since high school. That's the way it was, then, I was active in high school, then came the university and I was thinking of what my new thing should be, and then came the DD Academy.

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broken where it is, stuff like that. It has given me... DD Academy has given me a lot in this sense.

R: So it has encouraged you to ask these kinds of social questions – like why is something the way it is?
P: Yes, that, and maybe the fact that so much... The programme has also given a lot and the people ... the people participating here have, after all, done a lot more than me and then the fact that oh my god how much these people have done and how much more they still want to do and how young they actually are and how they see the world. And then you start to see such great examples there that you also start to want to think at this level. So ... DD Academy definitely gave me this kind of an environment.

R: But when you came to DD Academy, you surely must have come with some expectations. How much has DD Academy met these expectations, and what I mean is, has it met these expectations from the start or was there a moment when you realised that oh, now that’s my kind of thing?
P: Well, it was definitely from the start, the first weekend ... they try to advertise it so well that you develop this kind of enthusiasm, so I never had any moment of doubt. But what actually scared me the first week was, at the time, I used to identify myself as an introverted person who gets exhausted really quick when they have to talk, stuff like that. And then I remember how I did become exhausted – I just couldn’t chill out in the evening or simply talk to people any more, it was just so exhausting. And then I really hoped that DD Academy would give me an opportunity for this kind of development as well, that I wouldn’t become so tired of people – and it did. And maybe not back then, but I wasn’t disappointed about what it wasn’t giving to me but I was more like scared about how much it would actually give and whether I would be able to take it all in.

R: But when and how did you get the idea that you would be willing to contribute more, and actually as a member of the seasonal team?
P: I definitely got the idea back in March. I clearly remember this, I was at another conference back then, in /-------------/, it was about the development of rational thinking and more specifically, about learning these techniques. And I was, like, oh my god, that would be so great, using these things in DD Academy. And then I slowly started to come around to this idea that yeah, I should be running the programme. And back then, it was also, like ... back in March, I had two months until graduation and then it was also the question of what will happen next year, because I had grown so used to this DD Academy stuff. Like, meeting people every other weekend who I would be spending two whole days with. And then I started worrying about what I would be doing next, so joining the seasonal team seemed like a pretty good thing – like, I would be able to give others what I got this year, and I would be able to enjoy this environment for longer.

R: So you got this idea yourself and nobody – like, from the previous year’s team – had to goad you?
P: Nobody goaded me. When I was back from that conference, I sat down with N for a bit and he was really interested in what we did there – and I gave him a summary. And then I talked to him about whether we could use this at DD Academy and how I would be quite interested in doing it. And then he wasn’t exactly against it [laughs], against my joining the next season, but nobody exactly came with the offer, either.

R: That’s great, getting the internal motivation to do something. How’s the experience so far? I saw that June is a pretty intense time for you and then you had the development of these blocks and now intense preparations every other week and running things every other weekend. How well have you settled in? Has there been more responsibility involved than you expected?
P: There has definitely been more responsibility, but settling in was actually pretty nice. Like, when I was at the development festival last summer, I really enjoyed it when people go through things bit by bit and when they’re interested in every single detail. Like, starting from what we do
to people who are late, and up to what we would have to change in an entire course. They look at things at such different levels and the only goal is how to fulfil our goals the best we can and what we can actually offer. And it’s so great to see how you have a whole group of people who can be bothered to spend a whole week in a room with nothing to breathe and discuss these issues ... I see how people are putting their heart into this and it just gives you so much more energy. And I saw how this summer ... the rest of the summer became, like ... you had to work and some deadlines were established for when we would have to finish something, but there was no longer this feeling of doing everything together, it became more like, okay, I will go and tinker on this myself and then we’ll get back together again and see how we managed. And it was motivating how... all right, we’ll get together in August and I will have to talk about what I came up with over the summer, meaning that I will actually have to come up with something over the summer. But now ... this summer was, like ... the work load did not seem that great, but it was quite meaningful ... and that was expected. But what actually scared me was these first weekends in October – how I was actually, like ... I mean, you spend four months on putting together a programme and thinking things through, like when you would be doing something. And then you’re suddenly, oh my god, I will actually have to pass it all on and stand there and talk about the substance of this thing, and ... it must be meaningful. I can’t just say that, see, here’s the slide, you all know how to read, right; I must actually be, well, maybe not an expert, none of us are experts, but ... the person transmitting this information, and we always have to react to these things somehow and that’s a bit scary. But now – well, it’s still a bit scary, but a very pleasant challenge, I like it a lot.

R: How much support have you received from the previous year’s team and the development team in this regard – like how to handle some fears or prepare your workshops?
P: If you know that the subject matter is great then this also reduces some tension. Well, that’s, of course, different for different courses. For some courses, the partner from the development team is quite involved and is good at conveying this – like N and L – they have all the substance and materials done and they’re basically just discussing what to do next year. Whereas I have this kind of liberty that we redid this course a lot and added a lot more content. And then... My partner is L and L herself is extremely supportive actually. Namely in the sense that when I come up with an idea then she’s like, of course, it’s just so good, everything’s so great, I would maybe only change this one little thing. And she’s never been the kind of annoying person who’s like, you must include this and you must include that. I’ve been given a lot of liberty, although she’s also very supportive whenever I need it. And the other members as well, of course ... /-------------------------

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So this support that you get from other members and each seasonal team member is actually enormous.

R: So you mean this mutual cooperation not only looks good but is actually good?
P: Yeah, it’s great, and I also like that even though, for instance, I should technically only discuss things with the seasonal team and I shouldn’t really have anything to do with L and others. But at the same time, I know that I can go to others as well and discuss something, like I can discuss course stuff with people who may be new and may not have had any experience with something, but I will still get some input from them that I needed. And everything ... like, I know I can always go to someone for help and see if they can recommend or do something. And I feel that, or I hope that others can turn to me for help as well.

R: But how much have you grown together as the seasonal team, or do you still have this more general sense of also having the development team around you...?
P: We’ve grown together as a team more, as we’ve been meeting each week now and the meetings have been quite exciting. And we also talk and get together outside all this and I think
this has made the bond even stronger, and that’s how it actually has to be. And although ... yeah, over the summer we have got together more and supported each other and discussed things more, so this has maybe made the bond stronger. But I wouldn’t really compare things like this ... I mean, it doesn’t mean that it’s bad with the development team, it’s just different.

R: The question was actually more about whether the team has started to function well.

P: Yes, it has, and in this sense, we can be quite straightforward to each other, actually. I know that people can tell me if I’ve done something wrong and I can tell the same to others. And it’s not about offending and it’s definitely not like the world’s all falling down but it’s critical feedback on the one hand, and support on the other hand. We do all this not because of our own ego but to improve the programme and I know, for instance, that L is always saying, please give me feedback about how my workshop went – she always actually wants to improve things.

So ... yeah ... in this sense, the team’s been really great.

R: But looking back, then what’s been the most difficult moment for you as a member of the seasonal team since joining the team back in summer?

P: I still think it’s the first weekend. Although ... /-----------------------------/ I had the feeling that I might be responsible for this part of the programme failing simply because of my inability to run this workshop. And it was very difficult, even though people were supportive and always there for me, but I always got this feeling that what would happen if something like this happened again, I started to worry about things like this. These three days were actually quite rough, they caused a lot of stress, I mean, in addition to meeting 35 new people, of course. And the programme that you have been preparing for four months and that you had gone through yourself – so those expectations were pretty high. I think this weekend was definitely one of the most difficult things, actually.

R: This feeling of responsibility and fear of letting others down?

P: Yes, exactly.

R: But not to get stuck on the negative side, then what has perhaps been your main success or what has really warmed your heart or made you happy?

P: Well, the most heart-warming was the previous weekend when I had a workshop. I felt good energy when I was doing the workshop, but the most pleasing thing was seeing the feedback afterwards, how everybody liked it. This, then, gave me the assurance that yes, I’m on the right path, I’m doing the right thing. And the way it always is when you’re running your first workshop, first substantial workshop, then you’re always like, maybe it’s actually all wrong, maybe they all know this already or maybe nobody can understand anything. But this gave me the assurance to go on. And of course, back in summer ... well, I actually really like DD Academy meetings. Meetings in general can be really boring, but if I see that we get together and get things done then it’s exactly like, everyone’s really putting their heart into this, nobody’s looking at their laptop or Facebook or discussing something pointless, so it’s all, like... It gives you ... I always get more energy here, it never sucks my energy away.

R: You already talked about how much you have received here, but what would you like to give to this year’s participants? What should they take away from the programme?

P: The simplest answer is, as much as possible. Well, the programme will definitely give you the environment and give you the time to actually get so close to these people that you can sometimes just speak complete nonsense or you can actually speak your mind about what you think. And this environment is so difficult to find, maybe some people never actually get this. But if you can create this feeling here then maybe they will also learn to create these situations with other people. But when they graduate from the programme, then I would like them to have this kind of courage to keep on doing things. So that it wouldn’t be like, the programme’s over, I got so much here, but how will I now be using these things, what will I do next ... so that they’d, perhaps, have courage to initiate things.
R: If you’re currently putting so much motivation and responsibility into this then how do you imagine your next year will be like? Would you like to keep on contributing to the work of DD Academy the next year as well, whether on the seasonal team or in some other fashion?

P: I have thought about it, but it would be so weird to place any bets on this right now because I might see things in a completely different way in the spring, as I will actually have repeated the entire programme, then. But right now, it does feel that I would very much like to keep on working on this, but maybe on the development side, then, or perhaps help run some other kinds of training. And it’s not because of giving others the same thing ... because if I did the same thing the next year then it wouldn’t be this kind of a challenge any more. I would much rather like to seek something new and exciting, but then what I like about DD Academy is this greater purpose that the organisation actually has. So it would be great to contribute to this.

R: But speaking of the goals of Domus, then what could the impact of Domus on the Estonian society or in general be, either right now or ideally speaking?

P: Well, right now, it is pretty low-key, because if you say ‘Domus Dorpatensis Academy’ to your parents then it will tell them nothing. So it’s pretty low-key at the moment, but at the same time, so many young people have actually been involved here with so many different programmes and activities and I hope that they have also continued to be just as active, at least the ones I’ve met. I think that in the future, it could, ideally, expand somewhere ... like Tallinn and abroad and ... just to give a maximum number of young people this opportunity. We may call ourselves the World-Changers School or whatever, but you can’t actually get this kind of an assortment of things you get here anywhere else. All these small details – we have not actually come up with any of this ourselves, but what you get as a result is actually great. And this knowledge, these skills you get here – I hope that in the future, there will be so many more places where this is possible than just here.

R: What do you think the phenomenon of the DD Academy is about – why does it work so well for the participants?

P: I think it’s definitely the people who are here and definitely the people who have come up with and put together this programme, what it should actually include and all, but also the participants themselves, like maybe you won’t actually remember the contents of a workshop from some weekend, like what you did, but you will remember what you actually discussed with someone. And that’s just what ... like ... although, yeah, those who come here have pretty similar personalities – this is also a result of the selection process, how we recruit people – but then again, every person is still different, every person is one of a kind, and every person is simply great. So yeah. I think ... I think it’s the subject matter, what the programme provides, and these people. There must be great people involved in other programmes as well, but it’s this phenomenon, compared to other organisations in Tartu ... although N doesn’t want to call it a school or anything, it’s still one of the most intense things out there. Other student organisations are like, maybe we’re organising some events, maybe we’re collecting money for a trip – they may also have other goals, of course – but I haven’t met any other organisation in Tartu who were like, let’s get together each week – that we have some ideas and follow-up activities and you will be giving all you have and you will want to give it all you have. So that’s what makes DD such a special place.

R: But speaking of intensity, have you ever had the feeling, whether as a participant last year or as a team member this year, that it’s maybe too intense?

P: Oh yeah, definitely [laughs]. It’s easy to think that it wouldn’t be intense at all if I didn’t have school. But unfortunately, I also have other things going on and then it’s maybe sometimes difficult to choose which one of them is more important and if I can manage it all. That maybe ... on the one hand, it’s about actually giving 12 of your weekends away. At the weekend, you would expect a student to either work or study, but you will have to do all this at some other time and plan things, which was actually pretty difficult for a while. And for a while, it was also like, if we actually had a chill Saturday then I said that I would still be going home and studying in the mean
time — because this is also important to me. And that’s where the intensity became apparent. And then there were all these preparations and follow-up activities that also took up time and then, for a while ... it was sometimes difficult to compare things because you didn’t want to compare these things to school work because they were actually more important to you, and it’s your personal development and you’re not doing this not only for yourself but others as well. I mean, people are counting on you — so you’ll still have to prepare and come here prepared. Whereas in school, you always have to ... in school, it is easy to measure that, if I do this and I get a good grade then I did it well. But at DD Academy, measuring could be difficult sometimes, in some cases, it was just ... the entire programme is actually extremely intense and then you sometimes start to think that maybe I took a too big of a bite of this pie. It can seem too hard, but in the end, you still think that eh, it was nothing — that you still managed everything you needed to manage.

R: And you didn’t break?
P: No, I didn’t. Maybe last year, there was this moment of exhaustion — because if you’re like ... well, for the whole month, you spend one weekend at DD Academy, then the next one at your own apartment, trying to do homework for the uni, then the next weekend at DD Academy, and then your parents call to ask you why you don’t come home [laughs]. So it sometimes seemed as if it takes a large chunk out of your life and it was tiresome ... or, well, it wasn’t tiresome but it did completely block out my personal life for a while, in the sense that it made it more difficult.

R: How about now, as an organiser — is your life even more intense now?
P: It isn’t, actually. After all, I’m not running the whole programme, just a quarter of the whole thing. So the intensity each weeks comes from usually having two workshops to prepare, meaning that you are thinking it through what you will be doing minute by minute and you prepare the slides and you look up the questions and think about the follow-up activities that they have done. So it is, definitely, different kind of intense, but it’s more like ... I know that this is my course and it’s what I’m responsible for. Whereas last year, I maybe had four different things and it sometimes became difficult to keep track of things so it felt like a lot more. Although right now, I’m working a lot harder for DD Academy, it does give you a different kind of freedom — like, I don’t have to be present 24/7 during the weekend, I can sit in a corner for a while and do my own things or maybe even ... maybe I can arrange my timetable so that maybe I can go and visit my family in /-------/ if I can the timetable sorted to allow for this. I usually can’t [laughs], but at least the possibility is there. It is intense the same way it was last year, but different, more flexible, giving you more liberty.

R: Earlier, you talked about the feedback as one of the positive sides. But what I wanted to ask was, was it a bit scary at first as well — I mean, the feedback, were you afraid to read it?
P: Yeah, definitely. I remember that we had this practice workshop in August: the participants had to run the workshop the way we would and then we got feedback. And I didn’t have the guts to read this for a whole week [laughs] because I knew that the workshop didn’t go well and now they will be writing why it didn’t go well and it would be so horrible. But I’ve got over this fear now because I know that the people here are nice. But of course, those who gave feedback before were nice as well — but I know that even if they do give you feedback that’s negative, then it’s only so that I could do my workshops better the next time. And it’s not about telling you that oh my god, you’re so ugly and stupid and whatever — it’s not really derogatory in this sense, reading the feedback forms is actually quite exciting, like what they’re commenting on.

R: Continuing with feedback. If you were to give some feedback to Domus. If you were to give feedback to what this programme is like right now and where it could be going, then what’s the short-term or maybe even long-term outlook for Domus like? Where would you like to see DD Academy going?
P: I would be happy to see it expand to other places. This can’t be rushed, I don’t think it would be all that logical to be like, okay, the next year, we’ll have ten more places in Europe — that’s rushing it. But it should slowly start expanding its roots and thinking of where to go next. And it
depends on the goal. Is it intensive training Tartu world-changers? Is it to spread the idea and
give this chance to as many people as possible, even abroad? And let's say that I feel like it's
more about the second one. Okay, all the general idea of defending the open society and so on,
like how to spread this idea, but it's also about doing this maximally well so that it didn't go off
the rails somewhere else. But any general advice as to what to do next year, it's pretty ... I
couldn't even tell.
R: You don't have to. It's more like a question of dreaming, like where this programme could be
going next.
P: Yeah, N would immediately respond that all 100 places. His response was something like, I
wouldn't go to China right away, they'll lock you up for this. He's the one with the bigger
picture, but then it's his programme.
R: Is there anything else you'd like to say about your experience or maybe the programme in
general that I have neglected to ask?
P: I would say that the programme itself, both from a participant’s and an organiser’s point of
view, gives you the feeling that you’re doing something you can only do here. And this
sometimes makes it difficult to explain someone from the outside why you are doing this and
what you are doing; they especially tend to ask about the second one. If someone comes to ask
me what I do here at DD Academy and I respond that oh, I run workshops about learning
habits and self-control then it gives you the impression that it's bland, like how is this even
possible, and what's the whole point. And that's really hard to explain and it sometimes what we
are sounds like a religious sect, like some people come together and talk about some things that
are really hard to comprehend. But then, that's what it is, that’s what makes it so awesome, that
it’s kind of different.

Interview 2

**DD team member, young women in her mid twenties (October 2017)**

R: How did you end up at Domus in the first place? Where did you develop the desire to
participate in this programme?
P: Some years back I, and this was several years ago now, I studied at the /------------------------/ and I wanted to do ... /------------------------/

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and then I wondered what might be a great organisation and then I either asked /----

------/ or looked around – I wanted to do this in Tartu – I looked around if someone knew a
great organisation of this kind in Tartu. And then I think someone told me about this Domus
Dorpatensis, this foundation for science and liberal arts, and I was studying /------------------------/

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/ and I was interested in cultural issues. /------------------------/

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/ anyway, that’s where I got this from and I looked at what the foundation was doing. I was not aware of DD Academy at the time. And then I had, I had seen some opinion pieces by N and L from their time at the /----

/-/ on Facebook and in the media in general and I wasn’t actually aware of things – so I liked the
points they were making, they sounded very much like how I think. And then a year or two later,
a few years back now, I happened to read about this programme – DD Academy. And then I
really wanted to sign up, not last year but the year before, but I think I ended up not signing up
the year before due to some other reasons. I had several projects of my own going on and I was
just trying to see if this was simply the next step. If I do something, I want to do these things
well, I didn’t want to do it half-heartedly, it seems to be this kind of truly right thing for me and a
big thing and if I’m doing it then I want to do it well. I don’t know, does this answer your
question?
R: Yes. Have you ever been in other organisations before or done anything with a social impact?
P: Hmm, social impact... Back in middle school, we cooperated with /------------------------/
we created it, this was my first experience with non-profits and the like ... there were societal issues there, for instance, we did a joint party with youths with a mental disability to draw attention to something, to show that there are different kinds of people, so maybe this was my first experience...
R: Meaning that you had earlier contact with similar activities?
P: Yes, in high school I was made ... and in general, I was a ... Social activity is such a broad term. If you live in a small place then you do all kinds of things, represent your school all over Estonia, then in a sense, you're being socially active. So I've always had this bug, I've watched politics and so on, I'm interested in these kind of things...
R: But when you joined the programme, what were your expectations or what did you hope to gain here?
P: I would add another thing regarding social activity, namely, back when I studied in /--------/, I organised /-----------------------------/. And so

Okay, but could you repeat the question now.
R: I asked about your expectations when you joined the Domus programme as a participant last autumn. What did you expect to gain here?
P: Well, in the sense that, thinking of the sign-up form, well, I read it, I looked at it with interest – I evaluated it using the same criteria that we evaluated this year. Back then, I wrote that I’ve always had the feeling that I want to make the world a better place and I want to improve some kind of a system. That I don’t want to just keep working on the consequences of something, I don’t want to keep doing tiny projects. I want to start from a system and look at how it’s built and understand how I can make one system or another actually function more efficiently. My expectation was, well, I felt that I have this crazy ambition and I’m environmentally and socially sensitive, I care a lot about what’s taking place around me, how people live and how others see them. And then I was, well, what it said was – change the world, although I don’t know how, yet – this phrase fascinated me and when I read the website where it also talked about Popper’s philosophy – that no ideology can be dominant because the world is so complex – and these main ideas really spoke to me. And I was hoping that I can – all these modules spoke to me – and I hoped I could learn to be more aware of the world around me. Because otherwise, the world seemed so complicated, like you’re standing in a draft and there are trains passing you by and you don’t know how to get on. These were my expectations.
R: And now, the next question may be a bit redundant, considering that you’re a part of the team now, but how well did the programme meet your expectations? Did you get what you wanted?
P: Yes, yes, I did, I did, absolutely. I basically became a much calmer person. I’ve always been this way, I’ve been told that I do well in critical situations, whenever I’ve had many projects – as I also did when I studied in /--------/ – then I was ... made fun of, because I had this thing where I never simply lost my nerve. Like when a speaker had gone missing or some things were, something took place or someone turned you down at the very last minute, then I was ... I never lost my cool because everything can always be solved. But what I got here was this – and this is internal – something related to my personality – but what I got from DD Academy was this external confidence, something I have difficulties explaining, but I’m very certain in many things internally and I strongly sense what I can change and what depends on me. But I used to feel that what is outside – the society around me, that is – I felt that I cannot control it so well, but I can control myself and my emotions and thoughts and everything. But now I feel that this outside society and conceptualising it or something ... this picture has become a lot clearer. And now I can also better control my surroundings.
R: Did this kind of personal development also motivate enrolling into the team and taking responsibility there?
P: This is an interesting question in the sense that this personal development component… to be quite honest, it was already in the middle of the year when I was thinking that oh, we can also come here to the team. And then I was certain I wanted to do this, even though back then I didn’t really think of personal development but felt that I had finally found an organisation and a vision that I believe in. So basically it has helped me put into words something I’ve always felt – that this is exactly what I want to do, help young people better understand the world around them and actually create changes and a better world. And now there was suddenly this organisation and this programme – so it was more like my sense of duty telling me that it is exactly the kind of thing I would do, that if I couldn’t... I also have difficulties finding my place in the society. But this is definitely one of these places where I feel that it is so like me. And then I thought, sure, I certainly want to join the team because I knew I would do it well, I would put my heart into it and then I can give the same thing to 35 more people, give them the same boost and keep them from falling out of the loop. And there was something else I wanted to say ... well, regarding this personal development, then when we were supposed to be signing up for the team they asked me what I wanted to do. And this year I think it was the first time they wanted to do one course per person, but initially when I was signing up I wrote this crazy long e-mail, I always write long e-mails. And I sincerely wrote them, I wrote that I sincerely think in the sense of personal development, it would be the best for me to run the programme. And that I would certainly like to, I already starting thinking of systems thinking ... what I was teaching, started reading the recommended literature and it’s what interests me in the sense of personal development. But I also felt that as I’ve done so but been on many different teams, worked in extremely different organisations places like that, some of them pretty absurd...

R: Quite different.
P: Yeah. And so I wrote that I feel like, and I’m studying and I feel like I am a good communicator. At least that’s the feedback I’ve got, I don’t actually sense it myself but I’ve often got feedback about how great it is to talk to me, how I’m a good communicator. And I felt that last year, was the weakest block in the programme for me. Which made me feel like I knew I could do this well, not great but well. And then I thought, okay, in the sense of personal development, I would be more interested in or, but I realised that I could give more to the programme – and that’s again this sense of duty, making the programme even better. I felt like, okay, I’ll do the course, that this is what I would probably naturally manage the best. And I have this organisational experience that I can give examples from – I’ve already received feedback about how great it is that I can give examples from personal experience. And I’ve basically completely reworked – the things I’ve tried so far have already received great feedback. Then there’s the – I have quickly patched something together along with N and E, it is interesting and awesome how we managed to introduce these things. And then, – I have the least experience in this but I already feel that I’ve given ... yeah, I’ve kind of neglected myself here a bit but it’s this paradoxical situation where everything I’ve done – even what I’m doing right now – has developed me a lot.

R: From what I’ve heard you say here, I understand that for you, it is vital that the philosophy of Domus speaks to you, but on the other hand, also the fact that you can give something back in return.

P: 

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I feel like for the new generation, it is pretty important to be able to do something that gives me – that what I'm doing day by day is me. That it's not something separate; what I'm doing every day is something I want to do. It's my job.

R: Would you see yourself doing this for longer? Is it a one-year project for you or would you like to keep doing this for longer?

P: For certain reasons, I'll have to think a bit on this. I can actually give you the short answer right away, that I would like to stay connected to Domus ... DD Academy for as long as possible. But there are certain 'buts' – I wouldn't go any deeper into these right now, but for me, the DD Academy and Domus Dormanians are currently the closest to the kind of organisation and method and ideas that I would personally like to do, work on or something like that. I am always speaking from the perspective of working. If it were possible to create some jobs here at some point, then this would be especially great, but yeah. In a word, I would like to remain involved for longer – as to how, in what form, then there are some 'buts' here but I feel that I would certainly at least want to help this thing succeed.

R: I would then move on to the practical side of things right away. As a bystander, it’s been quite clear that the work here is pretty intense for you. When you took over as a /--------/ team, you basically had no time for vacation the whole summer. How do you manage this?

P: Well, the summer was a bit miserable in this sense /----------------------------------------/ and I just checked that I can take a month off to take a break from everything next June. But then I ... in some cases, the notion that I had of coming to work on the /--------/ team, I simply didn't imagine how involved it would eventually be. And this is partly my own ... not fault but my own decision that we wouldn't be doing /--------/ this way this year ... or /--------/ /-----------------. It could have been much more low-key, but I instantly felt that I want to do a lot myself. And on the one hand ... there’s two sides to this, on the one hand, there’s the demand, but I didn’t actually have to fulfil this demand this way, I simply just set the bar very high. And I think the first weekend was probably the hardest – all this self-doubt and how do you know if you're good enough – questions like these are inevitable. And it was exhausting, but now I feel that I have gained this strong inner balance – take, for instance, everything happening in the team and how all the other members are taking it and all such feelings. I always feel that I’m the balancer – that if the team is anxious then I get calmer and calmer. The more anxious it is, the calmer I get, but when people are all calm then I'm like, are we thinking this through enough. So I have an inner thing with this. I don’t know if I answered your question. Can I manage? Yes, I can. /--------/ /laughter/.

R: But how did the handover of those workshops go from your perspective as a new organiser? Did it seem like more like a painless process or did the previous team members hold on to their 'baby', as they had run it before?

P: It's interesting in the sense that it's such a loaded question. It's one thing if you only ask how the handover was carried out. There’s this. And I can give an answer of sorts. But if you put it like this – how did the handover go – did they hang on to their 'baby' – then it narrows it down a lot. And now I don’t know if you want the broad answer or are you interested in this narrow question?

R: Both.

P: Both? Okay. It’s easier to start from the more narrow one. Did they hang on to their 'baby'? Well, I would say that, err ... /--------/ – the block that we had before /------------------/ – used to be under /------------------/, I think, or was it? I can’t remember, but doesn’t matter, anyway, /------------------/. /laughter/.

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/------------------/ – even though it was a shared attitude, as we had this development festival and we discussed what required developing, this was one of those
things, it was easy. I just took it upon myself and did it. And we discussed it with E, so in this sense, we have really good cooperation with E, we have a good, dynamic duo. I hope she says the same thing [laughter].

R: Well, what I was going for was ... I was trying to use this kind of reverse psychology, because to me, when I was sitting here at the development festival, it seemed in some cases that the old team tried to hand things over at all cost and the new people were like, ‘I don't know if anyone but L can do anything here?’ That's what it seemed like looking at it from the side, which is why I'm asking what it felt like from the inside.

P: /-----------------------------------------------/ Hmm ... what I think is ...
what I felt about the handover ... and now I'm specifically thinking of my own /---------------------
------/ course... So the /--/ remained more or less the same, we cut it down a bit, but it was normal to make this decision. And /---------------/ is also natural. I already talked about /----------
----------/ is something like, it was basically created from scratch anyway, so there's this ... there was this kind of attitude that there should be more /-------/ stuff because what we really want is to make leaders out of people and we actually needed to put more emphasis on this. So this was also natural ... although I personally was the most stressed about this because I'm not so experienced in this field and for a while I thought someone else could run this who is more competent in this field. And I actually spent a lot of time taking myself to a basic level in this, so I don't know if this was the most rational way of doing things, but it doesn't matter, it's not the worst. Anyway, it's now over and done with and nothing too bad. /---------------------

---------------------/And it's not only my team mates but ... well, simply put, some people that I talk to, people who have had some contact with either N or L, they will often say that I would like to do things like them but I can't. Whereas I am always trying to stress that yeah, N and L are, without a doubt, great presenters and they talk really well and what they say is really meaningful and they are themselves, but the point is, everyone can have good presentation skills, good substance, and good subjects. They can achieve the same kind of output; they will just do things differently. So I've tried to tell everyone not to compare themselves to them. Like, if you want to be like them ... if you want to have this kind of impact and strength then you need to find what's inside you, what you can give. You also have some strengths, this is why we are analysing them right now, like what are the strengths you want to use to reach people. /---/

R: It's actually pretty interesting how some people are always very important in an organisation and it's interesting how some people become very visible and influence others.

P: Yeah, and I think it's also one of the things we really must ... it was actually one of the central issues this year how we must let go of L ... you heard it yourself. The programme must function without ... without these people. And this year has been a test. And we actually have the substance now, so we must now see how it works without this kind of personal authority. And I can actually sense it – maybe I'm jumping ahead to some question about the future, but it's been interesting to note this – like, when I think of how last year when I sat there in the crowd – was a participant myself – then I did feel that the participants did not test the speakers so much. Because there was this N and L brand of quality, people knew them, people tend to know them. And they give this aura of authority. Whereas this year, there are five completely unfamiliar faces,
five insignificant young people and it’s interesting to look at how people tend to regard – or so it seems, to exaggerate a bit – they tend to regard ... the participant tells the speaker that they explained this wrong or they explained it bad, not like last year, like, would you please go over this again. And this is ... it’s interesting ... and I’m the one noticing this. Maybe I don’t quite sense it in my own case, but if I’ve been to others’ workshops then I can sense how people tend to be kind of ... let’s say, rough. Whenever you see the speaker is a bit hesitant somewhere, you’re immediately like... But I think we’re still getting to know each other and it’s okay.

R: Have you noticed any other differences compared to the previous year in these first sessions?

P: /-------/

R: /--------------------------------------------------------/

P: I do sense that last year, I thought it was funny how I seemed to hit it off with the team members pretty much right away ... I got along well with them, although I felt that many of the participants didn’t even try to make contact with the organisers, we were very focused on the participants. This could be completely untrue, it may only have seemed to me like this. So it’s not really objective at all. But ... thus year, I feel exactly the same way, but I also feel that ... compared to last year, I feel that maybe nobody has the guts to talk to me [laughs], that maybe I’m perhaps outspoken and kind of ... well, maybe I’ve managed to, as an organiser ... I’ve managed to create this image of authority. And then I see how people can perhaps get a bit nervous when they have to talk to me and it’s funny. But maybe I’m overthinking this. Or maybe that’s how I see things. I feel that people are so picky ... it seems funny because I’m actually so chill, like, you don’t have to pick your words perfectly with me. So it’s an interesting experience, being authoritative, yet at the same time, affable with the participants. I think we are currently in this probing phase where they see that okay, we are just the people running this and it’s the same thing at chill-outs, I’m, like, an ordinary young person.

R: How much support have you received either from your team or past organisers in finding yourself as an organiser? Or comments regarding your doubts and hesitations?

P: Yeah, well, they certainly back us up. I’ve personally relied more on this /--------/ team, so I’ve talked to L more about some stuff. I’ve also written to him, I also had this ... maybe self-reflection night when I wrote him a long e-mail. I understood things, I was simply reflecting on my first weekend, like why was I so nervous. Because I was, like ... the team were like this as well, like /-----/, why are you so nervous, you have no reason to be. This puts even more pressure on you, because look, you’re ok, but I’m nervous as well. And then I feel this pressure that I have to do really well because then the team members come and are, like, hey, she’s doing so well, this completely puts the pressure on you, but then it will be okay. ... I’ve talked to him and then I’ve also sent some ideas to N as well from time to time and he also says it’s okay. And of course I work and communicate most closely with E and I’ve talked to her as well. And E also says she feels like I sometimes ... that I set the bar too high. And E also said that if I did at least half of what I wanted to do then this would be great. But if I wanted to do some 100% but only did 50% of what I wanted to do, then that would be good enough. I am currently trying to wind things down a bit myself because otherwise, school and everything will be ... and I’m like, I really tend to get into things and if I agree to do something then I want to do it really-really well. And I don’t want to ... I feel this responsibility and I kind of want to give others what I expect from them. And as I’m rather demanding then I’m quite demanding to myself as well. But it seems like the feedback has been, knock on wood, at least so far, it’s been more or less okay.

R: How much do you get in return from this? Especially the feedback – when you see how people care about what you are doing and saying?

P: Yeah, it’s great. Especially when in /----------/ ... I’m simply very emotional about this, I was also like, communication is such an important part and cooperation, but how can you convey this, how do you teach people to communicate. And it’s interesting that these things I was so worried about ... and the second weekend, what I was doing there was completely new, I had not tested it on anyone, I had gone through all of it myself and then I didn’t come out of the
session quite so confident, yet the feedback was still okay. So it was, like, good. And then I was like, I got this, and that's what actually matters. And it's interesting how you asked about ... because it's one thing – when you're asking questions, that is – for me, it's one thing how I feel personally, but I can never quite switch off thinking about how it might seem to everyone. I always try to think about what's the average over everyone. And then I think that yes, it's okay for me personally, I knew what I could get in the feedback, I often feel like I'm trying to convey too much information and want to give it maximally well, and then I put too much information in there and I was afraid it might be unclear. But for some people on the team, maybe this initial feedback when they're doing something not so well may influence them more and have a worse effect. I'm empowered by feedback because that's the way I am myself, I always give a lot of feedback. So ... so I always take feedback really well. I like it if people are constructive in what they write. I also want to do better. But I sometimes also have this suspicion that I feel like I want to do well at a session and maybe I'm given good feedback simply because I'm, like ... let's say I'm simply a good speaker on some subjects ... in some cases, I can feel it myself if I did well. But sometimes I wonder if I'm simply given good feedback because I'm, like, confident and it's like, 'oh, I felt safe with /-----/', but then am I actually receiving any substantial feedback ... like, did they actually get it. I mean, for me, the most important reason why we do something is to convey the substance of the material. /----------------------------------------------------------

The substance – it's really important to me. And then reading feedback, I'm always wondering if people simply value my confidence and the sense of security they had with me or more or less like ... or ... I would like to know what substantial feedback is like. Like, if I could maybe somehow improve the /-----------------------/ ... because looking back, it seemed to me I was maybe rushing a bit but...

R: It's probably completely human to overthink in certain situations – how I think, how others think... And I will certainly ask other team members as well about the effect of the feedback, how they've perceived it.

P: Sure. And if they all say that it's great then it's all good so in this sense, there's no...

R: Speaking of the participants, what do you think is the main thing this programme should be giving them? Or what would you like it to give them?

P: Well, the programme has four courses, each course gives something. Changing the World gives you skills, Understanding the World gives you knowledge, Open Society gives you the background – the philosophical background, the idea of the open society as such, and Personal Development then gives ... being ... physically and mentally one with oneself? I think there probably was a more exact ... well, basically, this kind of general thing. But if you're asking in general, like what I'm seeking from this programme or what I want it to provide...

R: Yes, what is what you would like to give these participants? What could they go and do after this?

P: Well... I would mainly want the participants to get this feeling that people come and go, problems come and go, conflicts come and go, and certain issues come and go. And this, well, this constant changing nature of life and not being intimidated by this – that's what ... I think it's this kind of sense of life, positive attitude towards problems. That our everyday life is actually resolving conflicts and problems – it's like a natural part of this. I've told this story everywhere how there was this guy called /-----/ at /---------/, from the /-----------------------/, and he talked about how interesting it is for him and how he doesn't understand why people think if you have a problem or a conflict in your life then it's something bad. It's just a natural part of it, so it's kind of chill. And if there are several people in a group then you simply just have to spend this energy to get everyone on the same wavelength. So I mean ... that's what I want, this kind of great and stress-free attitude towards any difficulties you might encounter, so you're not struggling under the load but you know that sometimes things can simply be difficult. And there's a solution to everything, that's one, there's a solution to everything, and second, you can
find your place of involvement, you don’t have to remain passive, just find a place where you want to improve something. And you can intervene anywhere. And then there was this important thing I was just thinking of, we were just talking about it ... like finding the balance between substance and humour, but ... something important, let me see... Another thing is the ability to better comprehend the surrounding world, that’s definitely one thing, understanding the world. That you no longer get this feeling. And the understanding that the world can be a complex place but we can still model or comprehend it somehow, that it’s not like I’m completely lost – that’s something I want – and there’s another important thing I haven’t said yet, I would know if I had... [thinking, mulling things over]. Oh, now I remember! What I’ve built the /---------/ block around is, you don’t... well, again, starting from a way off as usual, when someone tells you something, says something to you, you don’t respond at once, you don’t react at once, instead, you take an extra step – you reword it, reflect, figure out if you’ve correctly understood the person, if you’ve correctly understood the problem the way they see it. And only then you react. And this is the main thing I emphasise in the /---------/ block, that you don’t react first... It’s not like, something happens in your life and you immediately react but instead, you take this extra step. I would like them to get this feeling that you take this extra step in your everyday communication, just a bit more often, that hey, is this what you had in mind, did I get this right. And this is such a small thing, yet this allows you to tone down so many conflicts, the fact that you don’t instantly shoot back. And that’s one of the things I want, for them to get this conception that you don’t have to react right away, like, take some time. And only then, like ... that’s really important to me.

R: Let’s close up with something broader. What could be the broader purpose of Domus in the society? What do you think where Domus could be headed with this programme?

P: /-----------------------------------------------/

R: /---------------------------------------------

P: Yeah, I get it. I mean, well, right now, the programme is geared at training or preparing the initiators of changes in the society – so let’s go with this – changing ... well, improving the world, initiators of change. There’s this. And then the more global goal, I think, is geographic expansion. And I also think this kind of an organisation who says that their main point is, the ideology is, there is no more ideologies in principles, no dominant one, that this is something sufficiently crazy and good to have more of. So expansion is definitely one of the main goals and it is definitely important for me, I wouldn’t compare it to human rights in this sense, I’m not saying there’s an analogy here, right, but it simply seems to me that it’s a great example, that the way how the human rights are written down, you know, a more or less limited number, well, they as well are currently being tested in various cultures and areas, like how they actually function there. The same way, it’s interesting to think of how the main point of DD Academy would survive in different situations and all over the world, up to, and this is what N once said, half-joking, that he actually had the idea for a while that there should be a small self-defence module, how to physically protect yourself – and I actually believe that if you take DD Academy to, say, Russia, sorry, somewhere more tense, then it’s completely relevant that we really have some kind of a self-defence module. That’s one thing. Or a second, third or fourth thing. And maybe, or at least I like this idea, maybe if we could have it so that the participants as well are even more diverse in the sense of their background, that they come from very different fields. I find it interesting how some go to change their field in psychology, some go to change education, some... This year it’s pretty interesting that we have, for example, quite a few computer scientists, last year there were many psychologists, this year, it’s computer scientists, there’s at least five, I think. And it’s really interesting – that if you go into computer science with this kind of knowledge, then what can you do there. The more, then, we get such case studies or cases of a defender of the open society going back to their own system, of how they managed to improve the system and what they used from this programme. Like whether it was some kind of modelling ... systems thinking, well, what it is that this person takes from this programme and
can actually implement in their field. It would be interesting to learn more about this. And then either change the emphasis somewhere, like maybe at some point, this kind of care for your mental health has become so normal that we don’t need to have Personal Development take up a quarter of the time. Like this year, we have this Mental Health block, right. But maybe it will become so obvious that we no longer have to spend so much time on this in our programme, maybe we could then introduce something more complex, well, so to say more complex and important. I think that would be interesting. Something like that. I will definitely be thinking about it, it’s a good question to think about.

R: /--------------------------------------------------------------------------/
P: /----------/ 

R: But would you like to say anything else about your experience that I’ve neglected to ask? 
P: Well, I must have already written about this in personal feedback or maybe I wrote about it when I was exchanging thoughts with L ... or maybe I was talking to L, in a word, I’ve already told this to someone. Maybe E. That what we should have is, the /--------/ team, us, should be better prepared for the season. I can imagine how if a new /--------/ team comes next year then they would be mentally ... and better prepared, maybe they might have role-played the first weekend’s sessions. This would mean they would get the confidence, because you’re already scared as it is because it’s 35 people, all smart people, that you don’t break right away. That’s what I feel right now, and after the first weekend, there should be this kind of supervision, allowing you to vent and discuss things – this kind of professional work with your employees or the new team, there should be more of this. That would provide a more solid foundation. And more things should be in writing, like what the DD Academy vibe is about, we discussed this on Slack, we had yet another discussion and I wrote about this at length again, that’s something we can’t assume that people who join us will be able to grasp this on the go. Or take the way we discussed whether we should call homework the ‘cookie’, well, we were like, homework is a stupid word, let’s call it ‘preparatory and follow-up activities’. But then H improvised and said, hey, let’s just call it the ‘cookie’, so that’s what he said to the participants. And this grew into a discussion of whether we are patronising the too much, like come on, real life is just hard, what do you mean they can’t handle the word ‘homework’. But then I said I think it’s a philosophical issue, that it conveys this kind of a balanced message, that yes, we want, we demand your presence during the weekend and we demand you to do homework. Meaning that for me, this shows that we want to do meaningful things, we are practical, yet there’s this, yeah, there’s this humorous approach, taking things lightly, that there’s a solution to everything. And that’s the way it is, I mean, let’s call our homework cookies or whatever, fuck it, it gives you the feeling that everything that is complicated or unpleasant to you, you can just rename or make palatable. Literally. So maybe something in this vein.

Interview 3

DD team member, young man in his mid twenties (November 2017)

R: Let’s start from a bit further – namely, your life before Domus. I actually know a bit about what you have done, that you have been /--------/, but maybe you can give a short overview of what you did before Domus from the perspective of voluntary or societal activity?
P: /-------------------------------------/

R: /------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------/
P: /---------/ 

R: /---------/ 
P: /----------/ 

R: /----------/ 

P: /------------------------------------------/
I got the feeling like I could do something else with my life, I had all kinds of weird side projects at that point. I thought of how it was pretty great working with N, that we had, kind of, we tend to think alike, indeed, very much alike. And then we somehow, I can't remember whose idea it was, but we got this idea that we should come to Domus to run this academy thing. And then I considered it a bit and then, I don't know, that's the gist of it.

R: You already answered question number two. It would have been about how you ended up at Domus.

P: Yeah. Let’s just say that it’s interesting because I used to detest active people at school, they mostly seemed like such pompous brown-nosers, and then the university sparked me off to become an activist.

R: /-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

P: /-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

R: /-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

P: /-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

/- But what have you done at Domus yourself? /-----------

P: /-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

-- So I mainly came here because I simply love working with N and it seemed that, how to put it, to start the Academy would be like, well, in a sense, we have this, you know, setting a standard that isn’t exactly low. There are all kinds of student associations and youth associations here and they usually tend to be, you know, pretty mediocre in how they think and how they are run, and so on. And let’s say that in polite company, you always pretend that everything’s all right, you can always half-do things and, well, maybe not always, but you know. But on the other hand, N and I, well, I think we have a pretty shared vision of who does things well and who doesn’t and what it means to do things well. So in this sense, I kind of knew that everything’s all right, you can always half-do things and, well, maybe not always, but you know. But on the other hand, N and I, well, I think we have a pretty shared vision of who does things well and who doesn’t and what it means to do things well. So in this sense, I kind of knew that he probably wouldn’t tolerate this kind of joking around, that if you do something, then you must make a serious effort. I kind of didn’t feel like wasting my time somewhere, I can’t tolerate this type of role-playing. As a result, then, it seemed quite sensible.

R: Who does things well and who doesn’t?

P: Now that’s a very good question. Is this going to be recorded somewhere?

R: /-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

P: /-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

R: /-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

R: It’s a typical pattern for these kinds of youth organisations, that a lot depends on who is running things and how capable these people are.

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P: And I actually have an entire theory about this, about how these organisations are sinking deeper and deeper into this mess that you can get yourself tangled in. Well, it's a rule that however bad people can mess up, that's how bad they will eventually mess up. It doesn't matter if things were good for a while or they had some kind of special people running things or you got financial support from a project of some kind, it doesn't matter. What matters is how badly those people can mess up who eventually end up being those who mess up. So at the /-------------=/, for instance, looking back now, the most important work maybe revolved around raising the bottom a bit, so to say, so that maybe your feet will not get quite as dirty. In other words, blocking our successors from doing all kinds of foolish things. And then it seems to me that there are some organisations that are perhaps better than others at avoiding getting themselves into such a big mess, but there aren't that many of them. I think Domus is one of those, simply because of N. Because he thinks.

R: But how much were you aware or had heard of Domus before coming here, other than N?

P: /-------------------------------------------------------------/ Well, Domus went through so many different variations all the time, but I did see how they organised all kinds of events back in the days of this....

R: Team system.

P: Yeah, I have witnessed this and heard about it from people who had been involved that it was great, and ... And when my /----------/ came to the university, then I told her as well that hey, you know, here's this cream of the crop of organisations that are worthy of sticking your nose in, so go and look at Domus, for example. And she was here for the first year of the Academy, for example, so I heard a bit from her as well. So I had an idea of what was going on, basically. And I think N himself as well, although this wasn’t maybe an important issue. Or you know, maybe I ... Although I can’t really say I was an expert on Domus or that I knew a lot about it.

R: But when you came here, then what were your plans coming here or what did you want to do here?

P: Hmm... Finding something interesting. I'm, in this sense, motivated by having interesting problems to solve. And I knew that this programme would be a canvas, that there would be a lot to tinker with to provide the best programme of this kind in this time frame. And I would then have both the opportunity to work on the contents of the course and then give the course afterwards. And, well, I don't know if I had any other major expectations. Of course I may have had a topic in mind that I imagined stuffing into the programme, like some kind of /----------/--/ or whatever that's now a part of the /----------/ block. These are some methods that I was already familiar with myself.

R: Yes, and you also said that you started to seriously rework the programme right away, so you must have also had ideas about what the programme should provide to the participants; what do you think the participants should gain from the programme?

P: Well, the main dynamic is, of course, that the programme is long enough, longer than any other programme I know or have heard of, but this time-intensity is kind of an illusion. Because the fact that it takes up 25 days, this year even 27, plus homework – it seems like a lot. But it actually isn’t a lot, because if we want to give people, you know, something that changes their life or, let’s say, provides them with the tools and provides them a sense of direction, provides them, let’s say, skills for reflecting on the world and themselves, then it’s completely crazy, it would actually take, like, a multi-year programme. Let’s say that it would definitely take up time. So for me, it was pretty much immediately clear that the participants should most importantly be provided with a minimum package and an impulse, a prod in the right direction. What they initially learn here in the programme, well, it’s kind of the first step of a learning process that will continue after the programme. But what the hell are you, then, supposed to give them as this first step? /-------------------------------------------------------------/
And then, having this knowledge, with the help of this experience and these skills that they have in relation to the philosophy discussed here, their development will then continue, they’ll be able to learn themselves and teach others, reflect on life through this experience they’ve had. So I would say that it was pretty much instantly clear that, well, we can’t simply pile up things here that seem good but they must be this kind of things that if we didn’t provide them, then the people probably wouldn’t pick them up themselves. Meaning that they would have to get them here and then develop with their aid.

R: But how many of the participants do you think are currently able to take this away from the programme?

P: I would say that I’m a realist, that I think we have a great programme and we’re perhaps even at 20 or 30 per cent, but we have a long way to go yet to providing the best programme possible. Meaning that at this 20 to 30 per cent level, we are better than all others but this doesn’t automatically mean that we should now... Well, it isn’t really a competition, I think that we still have a long way to go, that some things already click while others are still wide open, and this also kind of applies to my own courses and blocks. But other things that currently seem to be in place might turn out to be impossible when we start to escalate. I guess /----------/ is currently the block with the best feedback this year, but at the same time, it requires funds for buying tests and, let’s say, some kind of expertise in running the discussion circles. And let’s say that I currently have no idea how to maintain this type of quality in a situation where there are several programmes where I’m not present, so I’ll have to think about this as well, don’t I. And if it turns out to be impossible, then it will have to be rearranged or thrown out or turned completely upside down. So the things that feel as if they might be great may not actually be so in reality. But I’m not really worried about it, because I think that if we keep on developing the programme for some 10 or 15 years then we might be able to say that we can be pretty satisfied. And I’m perhaps also not quite in this kind of a rush like ... well, I wouldn’t really accuse N of being in a rush, but he’s projecting this image as if we had already made it somewhere and already established our landmark and could now begin expanding the programme. I mean, like, we’re so early in the going here that there’s really no point in dreaming that we have come up with something really great and this could make us better than others – it doesn’t really mean anything.

R: But how well do you think does this system work where the alumni of the programme are already running the workshops and the programme itself the very next year? You mentioned expertship here, but you can’t really become that kind of an expert anywhere in only one year.

P: Well, this has been one of the most fundamental debates for me and N, whether the system itself is actually viable... We both can make great arguments for both sides, but in reality, we simply haven’t tried for long enough. I personally tend to think that the main problem isn’t actually in the lack of this so-called expertship, but me and N disagree on the viability of a programme where you only pass on methods, transmit them; this isn’t really ... teaching and education do not work like this, I don’t think you actually can aid a person in all issues they encounter on their journey towards knowledge or understanding without a deeper perspective of some kind. Okay, this definitely does work in certain matters, such as the blocks, but if we founded all our blocks on this kind of initiative, then I don’t think it would work so well. And then there’s the question of how good does the programme actually have to be. Although for me, the main issue is actually that if you have just taken the programme – let’s say that your 21 or 22 or something like that, and you could be just 20 as a first-year student, then if you come to run the programme, you will actually lack the experience, lack the examples, lack – how should I put it? Maybe intellectual backing? – that you don’t simply speak about these things but you are part of what you are passing on, you have actually tried and used them yourself, that you have the courage to say that yes, I’ve done this and it works. And the fact that you’ve been
through this programme is just a tiny fraction of this because, well, while you can tell others to believe you because you participated in the programme for a year and heard exactly the same thing from someone like you, but it wouldn’t be quite as convincing in the end. Plus, it could also be difficult for yourself to present examples and respond to questions and so on. Let’s say that if the seasonal team consisted of, say, slightly older people who have perhaps spent a few years looking around after graduating from the programme and then come back to run the programme, then this would perhaps be better. But then there would be different problems, such as would they be coming back after two years or whatever. It’s complicated. I’m afraid that, well, not afraid but I think that in the end, we will be running this type of hybrid system where we have some people who do this for several years and must be paid and some will be returning and, well, it wouldn’t always be like, let’s take five people from the last group and tell them to run things. In my opinion, five might also not be enough, currently it’s like walking on thin ice because if anyone should fall ill or leave or if something happened to them then the programme would collapse. Okay, perhaps it wouldn’t collapse at this moment, as other members of the support group could come to the rescue, but if it was in Brazil or wherever, then there would be nobody coming to the rescue and it would simply be messed up all the time. And this is something we really can’t afford, but it’s also looking a bit too far ahead, there’s currently no need to worry about things like this.

R: But how do you think this season’s team has managed?

P: I think they keep doing better and better. It may have been a bit shaky at first, but the feedback shows both good and bad; in the case of my course, things are continuing to improve. And they are, and you can also see that these skills, know-how, and confidence are also improving bit by bit. Which is, you know, exactly what you need, something extra, that it isn’t just giving or transmitting.

R: But how easy or difficult was it to pass your blocks on to the next person, how much did you need to guide them, coach them?

P: Oh, well, I don’t know, for instance, L and I currently work between each session and each weekend. And she actually does a very large part of the work, she also prepares the slides herself. We tried the method where I give her the slides, but then the feeling just isn’t… In order to present someone else’s slides, you have to be quite an experienced trainer. She brings her own, mostly finds her own examples, we do discuss these first, what kinds of examples could be used, but in the end, it is important that she phrased these examples herself, rather than just read them from a page, that the example came straight from her mind and was understandable and convincing, and articulate. So it isn’t too much in this sense. Well, there are some where I have to come to the rescue, where, for instance, we have a part of a lecture that could perhaps at some point come from a recording and we could have some instructional materials to come with it, but we don’t yet, haven’t had the time to do it, so I currently go and help them do these /----------------/. So maybe it’s been even easier than I thought in this sense. Last year, I also burned myself out doing all these things so I was maybe nostalgic for this training but maybe not so much that I would do it all the same way I did last year. Plus, it was emotionally so exhausting, learning to know all these people like this and giving personal feedback to their extremely personal work at the and it was like ‘phew’, pretty crazy. Learning to get to know 35 people through and through again would be extremely exhausting.

R: /---------------------------------------------------/

P: /-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

R: Looking at it from the outside, then there was the development festival in the summer and if you look at all the work and preparations the seasonal team had to do over the summer then you look and think about how they have school in the autumn and some have jobs and then become worried because they might start burning out one after the other at some point.
P: Yeah, this is our reality now. This is why we warn them that they must really work as a team. I mean, okay, they do, you know, get some help from the support team, each of them from their so-called partner, but they also must give clear support to each other as well, especially after the first weekend when I had a meeting with them, then I gave them the message that they can’t really afford anything in this sense, well, like burning out. That you have taken the responsibility and you must be honest to each other if you can’t do it and help each other if needed, that there’s no going solo... That you can’t do it solo. And some, well, some are giving off some smoke, but they are, as I understand it, already making corrections in their work load, and, well, L quit her job, right, and it is a big deal in the sense that you can’t do it just like that.
R: /-------------------/
P: /-/-/
R: The other thing why I definitely wanted to talk to you specifically was that you have mentioned the participants’ mental issues at different meetings. How frequent is it, and is it burnout or something else, given that they tend to be pretty active people in some cases?
P: /----------------------------------------------------------/

R: Yes. But to elaborate further on the participants and their backgrounds, then I have heard extremely different opinions from different people regarding who should join the programme.
Who do you think is the kind of person who is welcome to the programme or an ideal participant?

P: I think we actually don’t know because there’s this... Well, one of the main debates, of course, is whether they should be people who have already done something or experienced something, or whether they should be green. And I think this year’s experience also shows that it’s – how should I put it? Well, if people are a few years older and have done something, been to places, and experienced things then if they come to this programme then they don’t have equal levels of experience, some have worked a lot on one thing and others have worked a lot on others and then in these matters where they are already better than others, they become bored. This is clearly visible from the feedback because, well, they maybe don’t give you a low grade but they will say that they have already got this elsewhere and they get that others need it but if you get the same thing 13 weekends in a row, then it becomes lame eventually. And it is much easier with these green ones, they don’t know anything and everything you tell them will be new to them. And, well, the kind of complexity or the level the programme should have for training experienced people is extremely high, we simply can’t manage this at the moment, we don’t have that kind of money. You would really need to hire some people for this and maybe it isn’t actually possible to do this kind of a programme. So they tend to be younger, or the kind of people who haven’t done much in their lives, although they have always ached to do something, and then you also must have some kind of capacity to... /-----------------------------

So I don’t know, maybe it simply isn’t the time yet for us to decide and nail down the participant profile. I would much rather take more of these promising young people with little experience and then see what the programme can give them. But we also need to do, well, some type of post-course measurement, because while I can have all these ideas about what the programme gives them, if we do, say, a survey three years from now and see where these people have got to, and say that they don’t do anything of the kind we expected them to do, then in this sense, there wouldn’t be much to talk about, everything would have to be re-conceptualised.

R: /--------------------------------------------------
P: /------/

R: But to continue on the subject of the selection of participants, then how does it seem to you, how well has the selection worked so far? Have the right people been accepted to the programme or have there also been any major fails?

P: /--------------------------------------------------

Last year was quite okay, I think, although there maybe were a few participants who didn’t gain much from the programme. But then the main selection is actually already made by the participants or candidates themselves, meaning those who decide not to run. Because if you consider that we get 35 participants and /---------/, give or take a few, then it is absurd to talk about selection in this sense, because there are some people who have some obvious red flags who we rule out, and then there are some people in whose case we have to give it some thought and then maybe there’s some people in
whose case we do actually have to make the difficult decision that, well, we’d really like to but there’s no more room. So I’d say that the first reaction from the people themselves is simply so strong that it makes things easy for us. If we had 500 candidates each year, well, then we could definitely start thinking about how good the selection has been and so on, but right now, it maybe just isn’t so important.

R: We have now mostly talked about what the participants get, but what is the most important thing you have gained from running this programme?

P: ... There’s this saying that you will learn the fastest by teaching. I think that in this sense, some of the things I’ve tried to convey here have become clearer and more comprehensible to myself as a result of the preparations and workshops. And there are some things that I maybe wouldn’t have, that I wouldn’t have immersed myself into so deeply if I hadn’t started doing this, such as the /--------/, which is great. And the aspect of getting to know people has also been fun, because the /--------/ block has this pillar where you watch these 35 people and you realise how different they all are, how fantastic they are in their difference and how they all still have some things that could be cultivated to grow into something wonderful, that you will then be able to guide them to see it and you learn to see it yourself even without doing any tests, so this is great.

R: It was also quite interesting to watch the /--------/ circle from the side.

P: Yeah, it’s just so great because I don’t know if this a local cultural thing or something general that people actually know damn all about themselves, they stumble through their lives and don’t use their, what they, what’s inside them, what they could be using. This is why I always keep prodding people at job interviews to talk about what they’re good at, or what they’re better than others at. People simply can’t answer this question, they simply know nothing about themselves. Well, how come you don’t know, how is it possible that you don’t know, you surely must know what you’re good at, or what they’re good at, or what they’re better than others at. And it’s so depressing, which is why I’m very happy that at least our participants, after they graduate, and this was reflected in last year’s writing tasks, everyone actually understands themselves and can point out things about themselves that are awesome. And that’s actually huge because people in general don’t know.

R: But what’s been the hardest or the most difficult, the biggest challenge?

P: I don’t know, some kind of self-discipline, perhaps. Because last year, with a few exceptions here and there, I basically had no weekends off because I had school on one weekend and Domus on the next. And then making myself to properly prepare these things in the meantime, well, it got out of whack in the end. So a general question of self-discipline.

R: But how long do you think you could keep doing this programme at Domus, as a part of the development team, for instance?

P: As long as there are interesting problems left /-------------------------------------------------------------
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R: But speaking of sustainability, where do you think this programme could be going next, because many people here have been talking about Brazil and China and other corners of the world, but maybe...

P: 

R: This was, of course, meant more broadly, rather than just geographical terms.

P: 

I would simply say that let’s keep doing this and if we feel that it has reached the level where we aren’t rewriting a quarter of the programme each summer, if we only change, like, five to ten per cent, then it’s doable, although ten per cent is already pushing it a bit, then we could start copying it in some other places. But this will come with a **tonne** of problems, we actually can’t even imagine how crazy difficult this expansion would be. And if we finally can do, can run two programmes in different places then we’ll try with five, then with ten and then with fifty. This will take ten years, or fifty years or a hundred years, well, it will take as long as it has to. In my opinion, then, there’s really no point in setting these kind of visions because it’s an endless game, you don’t actually reach a state where the game is over, where someone’s won, where we have, like, reached a kind of state and there we are now. This moment will, well, it’s all pretty theoretical when this moment could come, or if it could come at all. So we should instead take the resources that we have, do the best possible programme or programmes using these resources at any given point in time, depending on the resources we have at hand, and invest some of the resources into getting more resources to do more and better programmes. And the quality of the programmes should be maximised at every point in time, in other words, the quality of the programmes, the number of programmes and the capital we have for this, this ratio should be optimised. Because if we tried to, well, ‘maximise’ maybe wasn’t the right word, tried to maximise the quality then we probably wouldn’t be able to run so many programmes. And then we probably wouldn’t maybe be investing so much money into having more money in the future to be spent here, these figures need to be balanced in relation to each other somehow. Meaning that the quality scale, the quality, quantity, and capital are in a reasonable balance, that is to say, I think everything’s pretty good for us right now, but if this somehow becomes unbalanced then it’s bad, then we’ll have to rebalance it somehow and then we’ll be going as far as we can keep going.

R: There must be some differing opinions within the /-----/ team regarding the priorities of development?

P: Yeah.

R: But that’s what I actually wanted to move on to next, the /-----/ team – how well does this new arrangement function now? /-----/ How many different visions do you actually have?

P: I don’t know. /-----/ So this is why I think we tend to have this kind of dynamic that you described. I can’t really tell how well the /-----/ team functions because, well, let’s say that in my mind, the /-----/ team is no longer something you tinker with as a hobby on a voluntary basis because ... okay, I’m currently doing this as a volunteer because there’s no other way, but it should actually be paid and you should be devoting yourself to this like a job, like if I can do it
then I will. Because I have my own personal issues and my own studies and things right now and all the things that should be developed, there’s really no time. Plus, there’s also working with I between two weekends and then also reflecting on the feedback and all this takes up so much time that the kind of development work that we currently need is not happening at present in my opinion. Because we simply can’t buy ourselves this kind of time and commitment.

R: Is there anything else that I perhaps have neglected to ask, something that you’d like to say?
P: Regarding the programme?

R: Regarding the programme or your own experience, or...
P: ...I don’t know, I think it’s a nice thing that’s already good but could be so much better. It would take much work, a bunch of money and resources, it would take so much experimentation and learning. And I maybe might be bothered to participate in all this, maybe not, but if I can’t be bothered then someone else will and in the end I think it will speak for itself. So yeah, even considering all that’s been said here, I’m optimistic about it. /

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Bachelor’s studies, and I was there for three years in total. So I don’t know, I left the /---------/ last spring. It felt like it started to get somewhat repetitive, if you’ve been doing the same thing for three years already – well, there’s a lot of paperwork and formalities. And other than that, well, I’ve also been a tutor for foreign students. /---------------------------------/ for instance, as I’ve been abroad with Erasmus and I’ve been to other places as well. And I’ve always done these small things here and there. The thing is, if you give the devil a finger, then the professors will realise that this person can be used elsewhere as well and all kinds of things have come up like that. And I’m currently /---------------------------------/. R: /---------------------------------/

P: /-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------/

R: But how did you end up at Domus? Where did you get this information and the interest to join?

P: I had been keeping an eye on it for quite a while. Although this information ... well, the circle of active people isn’t too big in itself ... but this kind of information still tends to spread, meaning that while I hadn’t specifically been to the homepage, I still saw that they were organising some kind of events and there were interesting people there who I knew that were very active and committed and seeing that they were involved in it, I thought that, oh, okay ... so I started to look into it. And when I saw the campaign then I thought, I knew right away that I wanted to join and the timing was convenient as well, as I had /---------------------------------/. R: /----------------------/

P: /-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------/

R: What were your expectations like when joining the programme? What did you expect to get?

P: I think I basically got what I expected. But my expectations were actually pretty high. I had the feeling that I really wanted to do something, but this /---------/ stuff had wound down as well. So I had the feeling that I really needed some kind of a boost or supportive environment and this was exactly it, it would give me a better foundation for moving on. Like ... skills and some kind of support, people to do things with. I think this is exactly what I got.

R: What was the most important thing you learned the first year?

P: Hmm, let me see ... maybe this environment, having to present your opinion all the time while also being required to substantiate what you’re saying – these kinds of group discussions really helped me develop the ability to express myself in such complex matters, not just simple chit-chat. Maybe this, I think. Or maybe simply gaining some confidence to actually go to the trouble or have the courage to do something. Rather than always dreaming of something but never actually taking the first step. This, basically.

R: But when did you get the idea to join the /--------/ team and continue your involvement in Domus?

P: They announced the recruitment campaign at some point, but ... I kept thinking ... at first I kept thinking that it might actually be too much for me. But then L wrote to me and said, hey, you must be considering this as well. And then I said that I have considered it but I haven’t signed up yet. But then I thought that oh yeah, I actually should try. And so I did.

R: But did you have any communication with other people running for the /--------/ team beforehand, like, who was going to run and so on?

P: A little, perhaps, but not a lot. It was more like, people were wondering by themselves whether they should and after the recruitment was over, they came and said, oh, I was thinking of it, too. But by that point, it was already too late.
R: You already said that it seemed quite a responsibility. How simple or how difficult has the /--- -----/ team work actually been for you? Starting from, say, back in summer when the preparations got under way?

P: It is pretty intense. You really feel that if you mess up, then it’s pretty bad. There’s a lot of responsibility and I guess this makes things pretty tense. But it’s become a bit easier in the sense that back in summer, /---------------------------------------------/ was quite difficult. Which is what made me realise that I will have to quit my job because otherwise, I wouldn’t have had the time for this. So I quit my job in /------------------/ and, well, it got a lot easier after that – I can actually focus and do it properly; otherwise it would have been a side-line activity and I know that the quality wouldn’t have been the same. But the first weekend was, well, it was a huge initial shock. After that, the pressure has actually become a lot less, you realise that you can do it and you don’t need to stress about it so much. And then you can focus more on the subject matter and you really know what you need to do.

R: But how can you afford it, quitting your job to do volunteer work?

P: /------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------/

R: /---------------------------------------------/

P: /----/

R: But returning to the /-------/ team work now and the initial preparations, then how much support did you get from the previous year’s team in preparing your workshops and reviewing this year’s activities?

P: Well, the main support was L, him being the other half of the development team. We got along well with L, but he had a really long summer vacation, and it’s logical that people need to take a vacation, but the collaboration wound down for a while. Otherwise, though, it’s going really smoothly at the moment. We have learned to know each other, how to divide things and like that, so the collaboration is getting better and better right now.

R: So you mainly collaborate with L? Whereas others ...

P: No, the others aren’t ... I felt that maybe the /-------/ block, given that it was divided between a lot of people last year and nobody was directly responsible for it, then the situation there is unclear, so I’m a bit hesitant there in the sense that who I should turn to for this information, and this is a bit vague.

R: But how about the /-------/ team – how’s your teamwork, is there someone more specific there who you more in touch with and get more support from or is it the entire team?

P: /------------------/

R: /------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------/

P: Well, not regarding the subject matter of the course, as our topics are pretty different. It’s more like, if we maybe see a point of convergence somewhere, then I’ll go to this specific person and talk about it. Otherwise, in general, not really. Basically, if it’s about organisational questions, then clearly H. And, well, I’ve discussed more things with L than others. But otherwise, we simply discuss things at meetings.

R: But I also get the impression that this communication can get pretty intense from time to time in some web environment, on your intranet? Is there a point where it becomes a burden?

P: In the first weekends, it certainly did, as there were all these organisational matters, going out of town, this created so much more extra work and extra load, and then our Slack was always overflowing and this over-abundance of information got a bit overwhelming for me. Now, though, Slack has calmed down and people have realised that they shouldn’t quite spam it, you become pretty critical about what you write and where you write it. So this flood of information has become more manageable. At the same time, I’ve also seen how these group chats and things can really get out of hand and you must really make sure that the thing is functional.
R: I understand, then, that cooperation within the team has also maybe become more settled and the work load has become more reasonable?

P: Yeah. Actually, the way it is at first is ... like, oh my god, what are we doing and there are so many questions, but now, though, you already know where you can find things and you don’t have to ask about them all the time and the flood of information tends to slow down.

R: But the third important communication partner besides the development team and your own team is the participants. How much communication is there between them and the /--------/ team? Or you specifically ... I don’t know, between the sessions, for instance?

P: Well, the only thing I have going on right now is, I’ve only had /--------/ for three times, meaning that I’ve also been there less than others. And I feel like I’ve had less contact with the participants and I really should have more. But it’s also become easier now, as I do have more workshops now, so I can also be there more often, whereas right now, I’ve only talked to ... two people who I knew from earlier anyway and then my contact person’s group. I’ve mainly talked to them and haven’t really established such a good contact with others yet, but I guess I’ll get there over the year.

R: How did it feel like last year, did the team interact with the participants, or were there some specific people who did while others were more distant?

P: I would say that at least to me it seemed that this team is ... a bit, I don’t know ... in a different kind of position. Because I didn’t go and talk to the team quite so readily. The way it is right now, though, we interact with the participants more willingly and they, in turn, talk to us more readily. Because to me, or at least last year, it did seem that some interacted with the team, but I didn’t think it was a general thing. Or at least so it seemed. I don’t know if this was actually the case.

R: You already talked about what this programme has given you. But what would you like the current participants to take from the programme, what do you want to give them?

P: Well, the people, of course. And ... you should take all you can out of the programme together with them – communicate and learn together. Because a large part of the programme is the environment that we are actually creating here. You can work your way through the course materials at home, it can be done, but the people here are something you can’t do at home. And this is exactly what you must make maximum use of here. And in general, if you have already joined the programme, then put your everything into it. If you, well, somehow half-heartedly get through the year then it’s like wasted time and you could have done so much more to develop yourself. /----------------------------------------------------------------------------------/

R: /----------------------------------------------------------------------------------/

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R: /----------------------------------------------------------------------------------/

P: /----/

R: But if you look at Domus in general, then what do you think, how visible Domus or DD Academy is from the outside? How well-known is it?

P: It seems to be going pretty well right now. When we talked about these people here about how they are doing in the programme, then I constantly heard about how the campaign was extremely good. And I also heard that we’ve really hit the spot here. Our alumni also promote it a lot – they’ve had a great experience. And all this visual side, we actually have a really well-
planned campaign, the visuals are all there and where we promote our campaign. So this planning actually helps. And all these people who come here – they are very committed and this is the main selling point. Because when people see that something works and it pays to be there, then more will keep coming.

R: What do you think could be the value of DD Academy for the society? What should the Estonian society be getting from this either right now or when you move on to the outside world?

P: This is exactly what it should give to the society – raise these kids, so to say, who will make something better in the society. I would say that from our class – those who graduated /--------/ – I already see that people are actually kind of ... I didn’t really know them before, so I don’t really have a good basis for comparison between how it was before and how it is now ... but I already see how so many of them have begun working on something worthwhile. Whether the programme gave them the impulse or were they like this before, I don’t know, but I do see that they are actually doing things that are very good for the society – some are doing some training, others have started leading their own programmes. And I find it great, this is really what we expect, that we actually inspire people, that you actually have the skills and have the network, so go and do things.

R: But when you think about the future of DD Academy, then what do you think could change here over the next few years or in the longer term or what direction could the programme take?

P: What could change is ... well, we constantly evaluate the substance of the programme, we are constantly refining it and then the development team is also doing their thing. And the thematic side of the programme could always keep developing, of course, but ... I think ... maybe for me the thing is that I could quit my job, but some others maybe don’t have this option – so some kind of financial support could perhaps be increased. Okay, it is voluntary work and it’s great, but I would actually have to make pretty extreme changes in my entire life to make it manageable. I managed it, but many others perhaps simply wouldn’t be able to live on their savings only. It’s a noble cause you are doing all this for, but this material side could maybe be supported a bit more.

R: Speaking of the intensity of the programme, then have you sometimes felt that it can be too intensive to either certain participants or team members, that it’s starting to become overwhelming, especially taking into account other things they may have going on?

P: Yeah, there’s always the issue that you have other things going on, then it could be an overkill. I was only yesterday telling one of my contact person’s people to review what else they have going on and maybe consider dropping a few things if they can’t do it because I saw that were struggling with the load. And maybe we, too, we did 13 weekends this year, so maybe that was a bit too much. So we simply have to be more critical and think of something, rather than stretching things out even more, like, oh, we still have some extra time here, let’s do another one. It’s a much more intensive programme than any other anywhere around here. So maybe make it a bit easier on them. Because it’s really not our goal to see people fail to pass the programme and maybe really drop out because of the work load. It’s not what we want at all.

R: Have you had any critical moments yourself where it feels like you’ve reached your limit?

P: Well, I did at some point last year ... although this was back in autumn; I had fewer classes for a while and then it was all right. But back in autumn, there was a point where I was up until four in the morning and read Popper and then had a session in the morning and if you need to be there for 12 hours or more on Saturday, then you’ll basically fall asleep on a couch while chilling. At some point, the load was quite huge. And I also think we did, we messed up a bit last year as well because the exams ... there was this period of exams and tests that overlapped with when we had higher workloads during our session, so that was a period when things got pretty rough. And not only for me, I saw that it was the same for others as well. And some of them didn’t show up at the session at all because ... well, I don’t know, maybe they hadn’t done some major homework so they didn’t dare show up any more.
R: But what have been the biggest problems, whether as a participant or a team member? What has been the most difficult or the biggest challenge?
P: Well, as one of the organisers, definitely the fact that you were only a participant yourself just a while ago and now you’re in a completely different role, then you start to think that it could have just as well been any other person – that I’m not some very smart or very clever person who … that it’s not something only I could manage. This kind of role reversal was the most difficult for myself … it really needed getting used to, the fact that you really are competent enough and can manage. But there’s simply this self-doubt. But as a participant … maybe the work load and how much time it all took up and maybe some other things suffered because of this or … Well, what I mean is, my life got pretty DD-centred at some point … and maybe some other things were left aside, things that I would have maybe wanted to see more.

R: But to avoid getting stuck on the negative side so much, what has been the most positive and brightest experience?
P: Well, the people in general, I would say. And the fact that you really come here on the weekend and, well, I would really say that I felt like after the programme, after it was over, I really felt like I was wasting my time. Because I really liked the fact that I got so much out of that weekend, that it was, like, very, very intensive, great. And really, when I got back from the weekend, I had this smile on my face, and it was so great … that you are very tired, but it was this good kind of exhaustion. Because you feel like you’ve actually done something useful, you feel like you are dead-tired and will fall asleep in a minute, but it actually feels great. So yeah, I thought this was a great feeling.

R: And now, as a team member? What has given you this great feeling or feeling of success?
P: Well, it’s when you realise that people actually, like, got what you wanted to tell them. Then you also see that they are interested or they see and understand how useful it is. Then you do actually get this feeling of success, that I nailed it this time.

R: But do you also think about whether you would like to involved in Domus for even longer or what?
P: Well, I have thought about it a bit – there will be a new /----------------------/ – and it’s possible, but I’m not too sure, either, because I’m currently more likely planning to go abroad. And … well, I signed up for this programme and I don’t know if I’ve been accepted or how it is, but yeah, I would rather go elsewhere for a bit and then come back to Estonia. And then it will be more likely that I’ll maybe want to get involved in a new collaboration with Domus.

R: Is there maybe something else that you would like to say regarding maybe your own experience and plans or those of Domus?
P: Hmm, let me think about it, it’s such a broad subject. Maybe what I would like to see is that in some five or so years, this thing actually has expanded and many people know about it. That these plans really come to fruition, that DD Academy goes to Tallinn or maybe even abroad, well, this would be something really-really great. And I actually feel that the society currently really needs something like this. And the people who have gone through the programme also really see that the society requires improvement. If this way of thinking spreads, that you can manage, you can do it and you will do it, and it isn’t just something Tartu-centric, I think it will be really great if DD can do it.

Interview 5

DD team member, young women in her early twenties (November 2017)

R: How much interest in such societal issues did you have before joining Domus, or had you done any volunteer work or been active in some other organisation? What’s your background like?
P: Well, basically, when I entered the university, I joined the /----------------------/, for example. I organised all kinds of events there, like forums, seminars, volunteered at some conferences. Back in high school, I did the state exam in History because I knew that I wanted to
do something societal. And I was ... I was certainly interested, probably watching the news more closely than the average course mate, but I wasn't very active, I was in this association, but I can't say that my participation was very active or anything.

R: But how did you end up at Domus, or how did you find Domus?
P: A course mate of mine actually found it for me. Domus ran a recruitment campaign on Facebook and it was, like, 'tag a friend' or something and my friend tagged me and I was like, oh, that's interesting, why not, I'll sign up. So it was pretty much accidental actually, a coincidence.

R: But if you ended up here semi-accidentally, then what were your hopes, what did you expect from the programme when you signed up?
P: To be fair, then I didn't really have any hopes, I came here very sceptical at first. And I had also just switched subjects, meaning that I had just transferred over from my /---/ studies, I had spent the year as a first-year student again, this time in /---------------------/, and I had made the decision that I'll be starting my /-------/ from scratch again, that this time, I would take all out of this academic year. And then I thought that I would probably like to participate in some student stuff, so yeah. I had very little expectations and these probably weren’t like this, they didn’t quite correspond to what I ended up getting here, but in the most positive sense, meaning that I got something from this that I didn’t even expect or anything. Clarity regarding what I want to in the future or something, or supportive people behind my back, probably.

R: Is there anything else that you found here?
P: I don't know, I think self-confidence is probably another thing that I got, in the sense that I have always considered myself a modest person who doesn’t like being on stage or speaking up, but after coming here, I realised that I actually do. So, yeah, there’s this kind of experience, without a doubt.

R: But how did you come to this realisation or how did you come around to signing up for the /---/ team?
P: I already discussed this a bit, but when it was announced that they were looking for members for the /---/ team, then I talked to L a bit and I talked to N a bit, but in the end, I didn't actually sign up, as I thought, well, I didn't have the courage to takes this responsibility. I was thinking, well, I don't know what's going to happen to me the next year and if I have time and if I can meet their expectations. And then N wrote to me and asked if I had considered signing up and I told him that I have. And then I thought, oh well, whatever, I'll sign up, then. And I did.

R: And what were your expectations, so to say, when signing up, /-----------------/?
P: I don't even know what my expectations were, what I did have was, I felt that I had got so much from this programme, that it had been a an important or instructive year, that I would like to return the favour to the programme, so to speak, with my contribution. And on the other hand, this open society course had, well, I somehow felt that I get it and the fact that I had just started studying /--------/, meaning that I had had, well, this fresh acquaintance with /--------/, so I felt that I had managed to build some kind of a bigger picture from these two fields that I could perhaps, well, convey with the help of examples in this programme. And so I thought, well, why not.

R: But you mentioned here that you didn’t sign up right away because you doubted whether you were good enough, which is why I would like to ask you what kind of doubts or fears you had in relation to this new experience.
P: I think we simply have pretty big shoes to fill. Because when L and N spoke in front of us last year, then they, well, they are, they have so much experience, they’re basically professional public speakers. Which is why I thought that I would perhaps not be able to convey this material in
such an interesting manner and maybe I don’t exactly understand it the way I should, that it may seem to me that I understand, but then there’s the fear that maybe if people ask me some questions then I maybe can’t put them in context or can’t answer them. I guess I still have these doubts, but I guess I have learned to overcome them in a way. And now there’s no stepping back either.

R: But to what extent have these expectations, but also fears come true, or in other words, what has the participation or experience in the /-----/ team been like for you, so if you think about what’s taken place since last summer, then what has been the biggest challenge for you, on the one hand, and the biggest joy, on the other hand?

P: Well, the work we did over the summer was pretty intense, of course, and, well, the challenge is in preparation, this actually requires a large contribution from all of us and a lot of free time. And not only do we have to prepare our own materials and read everything several times, we also have to do workshops, this workshop ... Leading the workshop is pretty exhausting in itself, I never would have thought that I would be so exhausted afterwards, but at the same time, I feel that I can actually manage better than I thought I would, or I feel in a sense that I have gained some kind of confidence in front of the whiteboard, I feel that I can answer people’s questions. And on the other hand, the members of the /-----/ team are really supportive toward each other, and there’s also the development team covering our backs. And I have, after all, prepared all these things with N, him being the person responsible for the development team for the /-----/ course, so in this sense, it isn’t really just the /-----/ team and everybody having to build up everything by themselves; it’s all in collaboration with other people.

R: You have already mentioned the workload and I understand that aside from school, you also go to work, which is quite a lot already. How do you manage to contribute here as well?

P: Well, the job I have is /-----/ and, well, it’s actually a pretty tough question because I have many questions and everything’s extremely open and it is pretty tough and I’m a bit worried about the future, as I don’t know how I will manage and if I will manage and where do I have to make these compromises. /-----/ it’s quite tough. /-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------/  

R: And you’ll still have school, yes?

P: Yeah, I’ll still have school, /-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------/  

R: Now, the next question is going to be extremely personal /-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------/  

P: /-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------/  

R: /----/  

P: /-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------/  

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R: Some of the people here have stated that their workload was even larger as a participant than it is as a team member; how do you feel about this?
P: Well, I think my load is larger as a team member because, well, the fact is, when we were here as participants, we had to prepare all these ... There were tons of materials to read, but our responsibility was not, well, if I had not read some of the stuff then maybe nobody basically ever found out if I had only leafed through these things, as I could still participate in the discussion. So in this sense, right now it is still, like, if I haven't done something then this will have certain consequences. If I had left something undone back in the day then, well, it didn't really affect anything, so, yeah.
R: So in this sense, you feel a pretty great responsibility?
P: Yeah, I wouldn't want anyone to have a worse experience as a participant because of me.
R: But what kind of an experience would you, perhaps, like the participants to have, what do you want them to gain from this programme?
P: Well, there's been a lot of talk about the DD Academy experience that we get here and then I want that they would leave the programme so that this bubble, well, we always talk about breaking the bubble, how we're sending them back to the outside world, back outside, so to say. But I would like this bubble to remain and that they would simply draw more people into the bubble. And I, well, I actually do feel that I got this ... This, so to say, stupid confidence from this programme or I don't even know where I got this from that you learn to talk to people and discuss things and so on. And now I actually feel that, well, when I used to think that maybe it's stupid then now I no longer have this kind of fear because I understand that people actually think that everyone has some kind of erroneous thoughts and everyone, or, you know, adults, it's so funny to call them adults because I'm an adult myself now, that when I have done some work then I see at work how people who have been working for years, even decades, they still make the same silly mistakes as the younger people perhaps do. And there's no such situation where someone is really smart and someone is really stupid, you can always state your opinion. But you should still be open to criticism to gain any value.
R: You have mentioned here this Domus bubble; this term keeps repeating all the time in both the interviews and the discussions at the meeting and everywhere else. What's the Domus bubble like for you, or what does it stand for?
P: I actually can maybe even tell that for me, what it is about is last year, we had 12 weekends, Saturday and Sunday, when people usually have a day off, and we came here every morning. We had done homework for coming here and we then came here in the knowledge that I want to come here, there are people here who I like, we do great things here, we can discuss things, you actually come here feeling great. And it's not really something that you could take for granted, but I didn't really have a single moment where I would have thought that oh, I really don't want to go there. I don't know, it's just such a nice and great place where to be and discuss things, to come here and feel that you are doing something substantial.
R: And this feeling has persisted as a member of the /-------/ team?
P: Yeah, it has. The thing with the /-------/ team is kind of that I know that if I need to go anywhere then I can go, that I don’t have the obligation, well, not obligation, but, simply put, I can take a break during the weekend, and then I sometimes have to remind myself that this doesn't mean I can always do something else after my session is over. I sometimes do feel like I would maybe like to go and have dinner with a friend, but I can't. It's not really a bad thing in itself, it's just something you get when you are given a bit of freedom and then you start to feel like, oh, I could go and do something else now.
R: Yet you have still decided that this is a priority for you that you want to keep doing?
P: Well, yes, because, well, it’s only every other weekend, it’s not every weekend. And then the other thing is, it’s only one year, and I can go out with my friends on Friday night or Thursday night, for instance.
R: But when this year here comes to an end at some point, what do you think, could you remain involved in Domus for longer or do something here?
P: That is a difficult question. Well, in principle, yeah, I think I could, but I have so many uncertainties yet and this is why I, well, whether I can finish the school, whether I will stay in Estonia for /----/ studies or go abroad for my /----/ or if I will go to Tallinn or stay in Tartu or ... It is still completely unclear what will happen, so this is what makes it difficult. I would definitely love to stay, but I feel like I should go on with my life in the professional sphere and I’m not sure I can contribute to both in such a way that I would be good at both.
R: So from what I understand, a lot depends on how much of your life leaves you space for volunteering?
P: Yes.
R: /----------------------------------/
P: /---------------------------------------------------------------/
R: But what do you think, then, where Domus could be going in the next few years or in the longer term, both with or without you?
P: Well, I hope that they will make it to Brazil and Hong Kong, these are currently used as examples half-jokingly, but I still hope that this is where it’s headed. I do foresee that it could have potential to grow really big, I hope, even if it takes a hundred years.
R: This kind of expansion is one thing, but have you thought about the subject matter of the programme, what could change there or what else the programme could give to the participants?
P: I don’t know, well, at the moment, everything seems integral to me, it seems that we are fine-tuning it here, how to do certain methods or how these materials could be condensed a bit more or something added or something left out, but it seems to me that in general, everything is so well in place and well thought out that I currently don’t see that there was anything to add. And I also don’t see that there’s anything to be left out. So perhaps the matter of volume is one of the things, it’s something I would reduce, but regarding the substance of the programme ... I guess the image I have in my mind is so organic that I wouldn’t know how to change it.
R: /---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------/
But if there’s been quite a lot of such feedback, then how easy or how difficult is it to deal with the feedback?
P: Pretty easy. First of all, there’s been no such bad or extremely critical or negative feedback, everything’s very constructive, quite like I’ve expected. And of course if I feel it myself that the session went well, then it’s usually also reflected in the feedback and when it’s gone not so well, then it’s also there. So I’d be more inclined to say that I like it; what I don’t like so much is actually when the grades are all five, five, five, because five is like ‘excellent’, but then what is excellent? It always feels as if I could do even better, so I actually like it if there’s some critical remarks and some lower grades.
R: /------------------------------------------------------------------------------------/
P: /----/
R: /---------------------------------------------------------------/
P: …
R: So we talked about preparation before, but …
P: I mean from time to time, yeah, for instance, if someone doesn’t understand, you know, that especially for me, given that I have such a philosophical course, there are no right or wrong answers, then I’ll have to explain why I think something’s the way it is, but in this sense, it all depends on the argumentation. If you argue one way or another, then it can be unclear from time to time where to draw the line between where a person is completely misunderstanding
things and where they’re simply proposing a different argument, then maybe this is... And then another thing that can be difficult is maybe the fact that we have this /----------/ block that is new, that I didn’t take as a participant and is actually N’s idea, so I actually get the feeling that I feel as if I understand but do I really understand it? Is what I’m communicating in this section actually the way it is, well, I really hope it is.

R: But I get that you have really good cooperation between you and N, that you prepare things extremely thoroughly together?

P: Yes, but I guess it’s also because N is like a very dominant person, meaning that he, well, as he’s actually built the entire programme, then he has an extremely clear vision or understanding of what he expects from the course or from the programme in general. And I can always ask if I have questions, and he always answers, and then I can propose some things of my own, and he actually takes my proposals into account, so in this sense, yeah. I get the feeling that as it’s maybe his programme, then this is why it’s so simple to work together with him.

R: So for you, it’s basically as if you were carrying out his vision?

P: Yes, and I try to do it in a way that it was also a bit of my contribution, although I get the feeling that in reality, he does have, well, he has already done quite a lot by himself.

R: /---------------------------------------------------------------/

P: /---------------------------------------------------------------/

R: Then you can actually also answer the question about the transition process. Were there any other activities following the development festival that supported this transition?

P: Yes, we went, we basically read the whole book and met with N every week, sat down for some two or three hours, went through the whole chapter we had read, went through everything chapter by chapter, established some concepts and some... And then we had, well, basically the principles of the sessions, how we would start running the sessions and we did actually have these very thorough meetings like this. But we basically went through the book bit by bit. And as this Popper’s book is actually the core of the entire course, then it was good that, well, a lot of got done over these meetings.

R: Yes. So the preparation part was, like, pretty well supported... But afterwards, after a workshop has already taken place, will there be some mutual discussion as well or do you even have the need for, I don’t know, discussing or venting on the subject?

P: I’m the kind of person who needs to vent a lot all the time, so I’m always expecting a lot of feedback. /---------------------------------------------------------------/

R: /---------------------------------------------------------------/

P: /---------------------------------------------------------------/

R: Let’s come back to the general position of Domus now. We already mentioned future plans, but how does it feel to you, what the current position of Domus is like, for instance, how well known is it in Estonia?
P: Oh, in Estonia? I don’t know, really. I didn’t really know myself before joining the Academy. Although I did, in the sense that I knew the, I had read about, I knew about the existence of Domus Dorpatensis, but at the same time, well, it was ... The DD Academy programme was so new then, so to say, I was part of the, wasn’t I, so I maybe don’t really know how to answer this question in these terms. And now, thinking about the earlier programmes, I don’t know much about those either. But at the same time, when I’ve talked to people the people, some have heard but at the same time, many others haven’t yet, for instance. This circle is slowly expanding and I don’t really even know, because the current class is the third one, yeah, and Domus has actually been active for some seven or eight years before this, yeah, so what was the name of the previous programme of DD Academy or how do people connect these two, well, I don’t really know, to be fair. But I have the feeling that people from the third sector already know, thanks to the fact that so many of those who have participated in this programme are active somewhere in the third sector, and looking at these people, I would say that we are slowly establishing our position in the society.

R: /-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------/

P: /-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------/

Interview 6

DD team member, young man in his mid twenties (November 2017)

R: First of all, could you perhaps speak about what you did before joining Domus and if you had had any experience with volunteer activities of this kind or any other ways of contributing to the society?

P: The short answer is, no. I had not done much anything before. Before I came to Domus, I went to school and then I stayed at home. As there were not many extracurricular activities and if I wanted to, I always kept thinking of the people who are activists – where they began or what the first step is in getting your life going. But ... I had not come up with an actual answer to this and I kept thinking that I would talk to people and see what happens. And as I’m more of an introvert, I had nothing against spending most of my time home alone, as this was the time best spent, or so it felt. And that’s the answer to this question. As to how I found my way to Domus, then, I went to study /-------------------------------------------------------------------------/ and I had there ... that is to say, I went to /---------------/ in the summer before that academic year and I met a person there who was a student mentor in /----------------/ and then there’s an organisation called DD Academy where I could perhaps sign up. And then it was nearly autumn and I was thinking that I was not going to bother because it’s so much nicer at home, but then when it was just one day left they said, come on, fill up the form and I did, and I ended up at DD Academy where I initially was ... I was a bit critical at first because, well, it is obvious that I was critical when I had never been in an organisation before and was thinking that I could manage the best by myself. But yeah, I started to like it more and more as the year went on, and then this first year here was up. /----------------/ 

R: /-------------------------------------------------------------------------/

P: /-------------------------------------------------------------------------/

R: But how long did you maintain this critical position and when did you really begin to like this programme so much that you decided to stay?

P: /---/

R: /-------------------------------------------------------------------------/

P: Yep. It’s interesting that looking back, I would say that I really started to enjoy the programme in my second year. For the first year, the programme was a bit all over the shop, it was, like, I met some new people the first weekend and the next weekend, eight or nine of them had
disappeared overnight. And then, well, the events were great and everything, although sometimes, it was obvious to me that the people doing them were not yet ready themselves, that they had only started to think about what they would be doing after they woke up that morning, that ... It was a bit upsetting, of course, but the programme was great in the sense that, and this was the main thing, I got to establish contacts with the participants. And for me, the most valuable thing about this first year was that I began to open up to people. And this is an extremely egotistical approach to why I liked the programme, but the subject matter was relatively unimportant. I honestly can’t even remember much about what I specifically gained from my participation, as there was no Popper that first year and things like, it was much more vague, there was no course system, no Popper, just some stuff, and things that were great and all, but ... none of it was something that would still make me think that oh, I’m so happy that I was there for that. But what it was, though, I started to open up more to other people and for the first time in my life, I felt that I trusted some people and I even wrote in my diary at some point, and this was perhaps after the third or fourth weekend or something, that it is completely unimaginable that I spent the whole weekend with other people and enjoyed it and I never would have thought this could be, well, it can’t be me, can it. That I, this ‘me’ familiar to me, would have enjoyed being alone a lot more, but how is it possible, then, that I enjoyed intensive socialising. And this is when I realised that this programme had really done something special.

R: So from your perspective, the main value of the first year was in this personal development?
P: Yes, exactly, it was learning to trust other people and this understanding that other people could also be great. And this is, of course, more of an introverted person’s problem, that whenever I socialise with someone, it makes me, well, not exactly distrustful, but it still makes me question how great these people actually are. Everybody wants to talk and talking is rubbish.

R: /-------------------------------------------------/
P: /------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------/

/ But yeah, the main thing in the first year was this kind of personal development. /

R: But how did the opportunity arise for you to start developing the programme yourself in the second year, for joining the organising team? Was it something you were proposed or did you propose yourself or...?
P: No. Let me see. All in all, well, the bottom line is, N talked me into this. Because I, again, I ... The first thing, then, was that I heard a rumour somewhere, from someone from the team, that I was being considered for the team. And this was a surprise, and I wondered whether I had really stood out throughout the year, and now to be honest, then I felt like I really had and I, well, it was like blooming and I felt that at some point, I really had been leading some discussions and it was obvious that I was enjoying the programme. And I realised that yeah, I had actually stood out, but was it really what I wanted to do? Because it seemed scary. Again, being like a springtime flower fresh in bloom and having not had led anything before or been on a team of any kind, I was wondering if I should do something more, like, another year or so. Like, doing another year of the Academy was not possible, but do a year of something else somewhere and then see if I have the courage. It was, in hindsight, I was a bit too insecure. Afraid of overdoing it. And the fact that I suddenly had more obligations and for the first time in my life, I had started to truly take school seriously, and for the first time, I had an actual partner which also took up more of my time, so I was afraid I wouldn’t have time for it. And then it happened again that it was the last day for submitting applications and N wrote to me personally, asking if I would perhaps consider applying. Because, well, I also took this as a hint that ... perhaps that my ‘yes’ or ‘no’ would also be a deciding factor in whether I would be accepted or not. This is what I got from his personal approach.

R: So this pressurisation worked.
P: Another problem that I had was that the academic programme I had joined, /-------------------/
, it went down the drain for me. /---------------------------------------------
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It became pretty depressing in the second semester when I simply couldn’t manage it any longer and at some point, I began to think that all right, when this year of the Academy is over, I’ll go abroad. I had always had this tradition my whole life that when I felt that something was not working, I would flee abroad and do a restart, to use a computer analogy, that when something froze, I would go somewhere abroad and rest and spend a year or half a year there, and I’ve gone off to restart things in this manner quite often. But then, to continue the computer analogy, just when I told N that I would like to go abroad, some new drivers began to install, personal development drivers. Like, is it a good idea to restart your computers when the installation of some new updates has just started. And the answer is, probably not, because if you have started installing them, then continue the installation because otherwise, well, it might re-install them later, but they could also go missing and the whole system could crash. And based on this analogy, I decided that I would keep installing these personal development drivers and join the team.

R: But how did this installation work in the second year? What was the experience like – blending into the team and taking responsibilities could have been pretty scary initially, especially these first weekends, just to take the example of standing in front of a large crowd.

P: Concerning the public speaking thing, it didn’t scare me at all, I had done this before and I had been in a drama group and done presentations back at school. What scared me somewhat was working with authority figures, perhaps the fact that I knew L and N from before and ... I was a bit afraid of how smart they were. This was from back in school, from how I had come from a rural school where I had been the best in class and used to being the smartest boy in the classroom, and I had developed this illusion that I would be the smartest everywhere else as well. And then I suddenly realised that it was, first of all, this thing was not quite as one-dimensional at all and second, I realised that it isn’t the case at all. Because I’m here and I feel that each person has some fields, some broad fields where they know a lot more than me and then there are some people who know more than me about everything. And this was a bit scary at first. So maybe the most difficult thing initially was that I was afraid of speaking up in meetings because maybe I would say something wrong and they would think I was stupid. Like, this opinion is so false, how can you even think like that, don’t you know anything about it. So this scared me at first. As far as responsibility is concerned, I basically am, well, there’s a development festival coming up this summer and there’s not much responsibility as such involved there yet. And then over the past year, I haven’t had too many responsibilities; in hindsight, I have perhaps had even less than I should have. Perhaps there’s even been too little responsibility. Well, I had this bit for a while where I was responsible for /-------------/ functioning in principle. And I was a moderator for a while. But yeah, it happened that as the year went on, L took the responsibility for more and more things and ended up being responsible for something like a third or even a half of the programme, it turned out that way. But yeah, the more difficult part was, what I gradually worked on the whole year was keeping in mind during meetings that it is actually great to be there, with people who are more talkative, more intensive and smarter than you, and it is an opportunity for development. And of course it is still a struggle, but I’ve managed to get over myself a lot in this sense. But yeah, this personal development, installation, installation of personal development drivers, it went on at full speed. And these different kinds of updates started popping up. If the first initial update was how to learn to trust people, then this driver finished installing. And then the next one appeared, about how to organise something or how ... how to deal with responsibility in front of other people, like in front of your own team, like when I am responsible for getting something done because otherwise, everyone will suffer and then, well, now, this year, there’s also the fact that I have taken the responsibility in front of 35 people for getting something done. So dealing with this responsibility is the most recent driver.
R: So you are saying that last year, you had no course or something that you were responsible for?
P: Well, what I had was, there was /--------/ basically, it wasn’t exactly a course, it was a block back then ... overseeing that /-------------------------/ would work well. There was supposed to be something more, but we did, you know, we were making plans in the summer and I was supposed to be responsible for one course and another bigger thing, but it turned out that we made so many changes on the run and some things got merged and I had something that got merged with another thing and then someone else became responsible for this instead. For instance, I helped L with /--------/, but it wasn’t my block in this sense, I just had a small role in running it.

R: /---------------------------------------------------------------/ Moving on to the third year now, how did it happen that you are now leading this /--------/ team? Did someone talk you into this again?
P: This time, what happened was, several months before this actually began, N indicated that someone from this group could work with the /--------/ team. Back then, my initial thought was that I would not be the one; again, not that I wouldn’t be chosen, I actually believed that they might even choose me, I was simply a bit scared again. Like, I could keep working in a smaller role for another year; it’s like a fear of bigger responsibilities. That aside, I have actually developed this kind of a system that when something scares me, this is exactly what I must do, as it is a great way to develop myself. But ... And then at some point, I also told N, when he directly suggested me to do this, I told him that I found it scary but this was exactly why I might do it, even though I might regret saying this. But yeah, so he first suggested that someone from this group might do it and then I suddenly saw that so many other people had so many other obligations that in the end, there were just a few people left who could be the one running it. And finally, it was only between me and L. /-------------------------------------------------------------/ And one of us would be getting the webzine and the other one the /--------/ team.

R: A pretty tough situation...
P: /------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------/ And it wasn’t even a conflict or anything, it was more like, ‘After you! No, after you!’ something like this. And what we also had was, we were also in a pretty even situation because we both had had a minor role the year before. Now, as far as the webzine is concerned, we both had had some /--------/ in the past, so looking at the CV, we both should have been equally suited to both roles. And, well, we did make up our minds and I decided at some point that this /--------/ team thing was so scary to me that I really wanted to do it and there it was.

R: And how does it feel now, has it turned out to be the right decision or has it been too difficult and horrible?
P: It’s turned out to be the right decision, although at the same time, it hasn’t exactly been easier than I thought. That is, at some point, I thought that it would be a continuation of last year’s experience, but I haven’t really felt this year as if I was doing it for a second time or, being /--------/ or /--------/ is sufficiently different as a role, so for instance, after our first weekend, what I felt was ... I also felt as if it had been the first time, just like the rest of my team, those who had been speaking in front of a large audience for the first time, and so did I, I had tried to show confidence and some authority, but in reality, I also had this thing that I was doing something for the first time and was I managing and ... And that’s the way it’s been throughout ... In a sense, my role is a lot smaller this year, I have no courses to be responsible for, I only have a few individual blocks. But it stressful enough to think about it all the time, about how if you have accidentally overlooked something or if suddenly something, some small detail is not
working properly then it is probably my fault. Others have their own courses and they don’t have
to think about some other additional details. And it does cause some stress all the time, but this
good kind of stress, and it’s what comes with being a leader. And the other source of stress this
year, at least initially, was this huge question on my mind as to whether I would have to be N.
Well, the fact that everyone who heard about /-----------------------/, the first thing they remarked
was than man, that’s quite a pair of shoes to fill. And this was hardly encouraging because N is
truly like a great role model in leadership and then I would be taking over his role and ... You
know, to what extent should I be doing things just like him and to what extent should I be
coming up with new methods. Because at the same time, his methods have all been refined over
a long period of time and I could simply copy them, but then I would lose my personality. So I
have been trying to find some kind of a balance, like using some of his stuff but not trying to be
like him. So for me, N is more like a, we also have these mentoring meetings from time to time
where he gives me advice, but I do feel like I am actually managing. Being myself in front of the
participants, so to speak, showing my personality to people, what it is like ... What it means to be
H, rather than N.
R: But have there been expectations from others for you to be the new N or, you know, when I
was here last summer, you got a lot of this attitude, especially from the new team, that ‘Oh, we
are not like N or L at all, I don’t know if we can cope’, a sense of this kind of doubts. How
much, for instance, do you get the feeling of these kind of expectations from the participants?
Or are they simply so new that there’s really no difference for them?
P: Regarding the participants, well, they haven’t really done the programme with L or N and they
do know N and have seen him, but, that’s the assumption that I started with, that they wouldn’t
know, for instance, that last year, the programme was carried out by N. That they would simply
be coming here and there would be someone and my leadership skills aren’t perhaps quite as
good as N’s yet, so that could show a bit in the programme. At the same time, I have no such
fear regarding the participants. I am concerned about the team, though; again, about what my
role in this /---------/ team is. In a sense I, well, I don’t have much more knowledge or anything, I
have participated /----------------------/ longer, I have been on the team /---------/ longer
than them, and in a sufficiently small role, at that, but at the same time, I want it to be just like it
is between the members of the /---------/ team, I want to be equal, although with some manner
of authority. And then there’s also the fact that I want to be equal but with some manner of
authority and perhaps this is the biggest challenge this year, this talking to your own team,
because everyone on the team also has their own quirks – who speaks more, who speaks less,
who tends to talk out of turn, who tends to be more quiet and ... /------------------------
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meetings of the /--------/ team and afterwards, I relate everything we’ve discussed to the /------
---/ team. At the same time, these meetings where we all have to participate are relatively
infrequent, so the importance of this role is becoming more and more diminished. And then it’s
also the fact that, as the persons responsible for a course include one from the seasonal team and
one from the development team, then we all facilitate and they all do meet with each other, so
there’re so many levels that to keep the communication going and to ensure everyone knows
about everything that’s going on, they all meet with each other and in individual pairs and we
also have general meetings from time to time and we have meetings where I represent the team.
So in this sense, we don’t quite have the structure in place for how this is supposed to work. And
this is completely all right in the sense that we have already taken it into account that this is a
transitional year, that this is what we are doing this year, but there’s always the analogy that we
use, about a Brazilian team, that if we had a team from Brazil coming over, then you couldn’t
have it so that everyone on the team communicates with others and then also through the
contact person. It will probably be like this starting from the next year or the year after that even
if the seasonal team is in Tartu, they will still communicate with the development team only
through a single person. At the moment, it is simply because the seasonal team is pretty closely
involved in development so we are forced to do this, but ideally, in a year or two, the seasonal
team will no longer be doing development, they have the entire programme finished and the
course materials ready and they are simply carrying it out. And then, the roles would be clearer,
but at present, communication between the teams is a grey area. Although everything works in
principle, we don’t have any conflicts, the leadership thing is actually working quite well and, you
know, N leads the other team and I lead this team and it’s actually pretty well established so that
even if we get the two teams together then we, well, sometimes it’s one person running things,
sometimes it’s the other one. Works quite well, you know, although there’s the thing that N is
the highest level leader and I’m one step down.

R: But from what I understand, N still works to facilitate you leading at your own level so that ...
P: Yeah, he’s working pretty actively for this, and that’s also the reason why I …
if another one or a fourth one should appear or if any one of them should crumble, so to speak, for instance, if I suddenly no longer manage in school or in personal life, well, I hope and don’t foresee that anything like this should happen, but if there was a major conflict of some kind, it could throw up the whole system and it’s a bit frightening because the schedule is really set out hour by hour. And the load that I have means that I can manage but there’s always a slight concern that if you keep blowing up the balloon, then it might end with a bang at some point.

R: But how does it feel at this point, how long you want to continue at Domus? Is it a one-year project of leading a seasonal team, or would you like to keep doing it longer, perhaps taking on a new challenge the next year?

P: That’s a pretty relevant question for me, as I have actually been thinking a lot about this over the past weeks. And now there’s also the fact that I am studying for a degree, I’m in the /----/ year of my /--------/ studies and in theory, I should also start looking for internship opportunities and, well, /--------/-year students start working in their field in the summer after the /--------/ year. At the same time, I wouldn’t want to cut myself loose from the Academy either, as I get the feeling that there’s something about the Academy that is here to stay and it will be large. And then I imagine myself reading about the DD Academy on Wikipedia someday and it will list the founding members and then, for instance, state that one founding member, he left after the third year, for instance. And then everyone will be like, look at what he missed. It’s like when you’re reading about a company like Apple, about how someone left in a few years and think why.

R: A very poor decision.

P: And I have a feeling, well, one thing is that it will be large and I really want to be a part of it ... It has in no sense exhausted its potential for me. I am, again, in a new situation in this sense that I have never been a part of an organisation for this long and it’s my first and only organisation, but I get that people simply leave from time to time; for instance, we had a participant who started a mini-company after high school that actually went international and this person said that they suddenly felt after three years that were no longer getting anything from it and so made the huge decision to leave, so that ... Well, I keep thinking that I might suddenly feel at some point that the Academy no longer has anything to offer for me and do the same thing. Probably not at the moment, as my role has been increasing year by year, but you know, anything could happen. For the upcoming year, however, I have a feeling, well, off the record, so to speak, there’s this idea of maybe opening an English-language programme, and I would then be the programme manager. This was proposed at some point and, well, /--------/-year students start working in their field in the summer after the /--------/ year. At the same time, I wouldn’t want to cut myself loose from the Academy either, as I get the feeling that there’s something about the Academy that is here to stay and it will be large. And then I imagine myself reading about the DD Academy on Wikipedia someday and it will list the founding members and then, for instance, state that one founding member, he left after the third year, for instance. And then everyone will be like, look at what he missed. It’s like when you’re reading about a company like Apple, about how someone left in a few years and think why.

R: And of course all this /--------/ knowledge naturally comes handy at DD Academy as well.

P: Yes, it definitely helps and you’re right, this education will not be going to waste. At the same time, if I used this education and went on to become /--------/, then I would quietly /--------/ in Tartu for years while the DD Academy would be growing larger and global and then I would certainly begin wondering if I could come back and then I would have to knock on N’s
door and be like, ‘N, can I please come back’, like ... I keep leaning towards DD Academy because it simply seems too good to leave.

R: Now this already takes us to the subject of the future plans of DD Academy in general. Where do you think DD Academy could be going in the upcoming years, but also in the longer run?

P: Now what we have coming up in the next few years is, I basically agree with the plan we officially have for the new few years, precisely to begin by launching more programmes in Estonia, like an English-language one in Tartu, like a programme in Tallinn. And then move on to launch programmes abroad. Logistically, it is a nightmare, of course, like how to launch the first programme in Latvia if we want to launch a Latvian-language programme, for instance. We don’t have any people here who were Latvians or spoke Latvian and who had gone through the programme, and we can’t send our own people, like, you have a life in Tartu, eh? Well, not any more, you are moving to Riga now. So I don’t know yet what the plan will be, I guess we have to think about it a bit more, but I see that in the longer term, this is what it will be like, that there’re little dots here and there all over the globe. At the same time, it is not as massive as to create some kind of saturation because this kind of defence of the open society only covers such a small fraction of the whole mankind, like those who people gather around and who lead the way, but if everyone went to DD Academy, it wouldn’t work. We take only those who are ready to defend the open society and who are ready to change the world and there are very few of those. But then for instance, if we do only have a single DD Academy programme in each European country, then that would be great. And then the thing is, clearly, if things get this big then there will be more than enough work and as at the moment, DD Academy is based on volunteers, then there’s also this other dilemma between /--------/ and DD Academy, namely the fact that DD Academy currently doesn’t exactly pay my bills, but then the thing is, if things get bigger in the future, then it would also be possible to find paid positions and then it would pay my bills. Because, well, my personal goal in life is, I don’t dream of getting rich; as long as I can get by, I’ll be extremely satisfied. So money is basically a pretty low priority; the main thing is that I wouldn’t have to do things that I don’t want to do for this money. So the way it is, then, I wouldn’t want to dig ditches for this money and if I can do some DD Academy things so that it just covers my bills without allowing for any extra luxuries, then that’s great, I’m already satisfied.

R: But other than this kind of expansion, do you have any dreams related to the subject matter of the programme? What else could you be giving to the participants?

P: Well, what I currently feel is, what we have right now and what we could have in, say, 50 years, is like the skeleton vs. the complete person. Meaning that it could basically be similar in shape and have the same elements that we have at this point, but the skeleton is quite different from the real person when you look at it and it is pretty difficult to judge what the face or hair of the person would look like based on the skeleton. So ... There will, without a doubt, be many changes, we will be refining things, but fundamentally, the core will still be Karl Popper and the open society and this, well, it seems that this will remain unchanged. And these four courses are currently pretty logical right now, but the subject matter of the courses is exactly where we are currently still experimenting with new things. The fact that for the upcoming year, we changed something like a third of the programme, this in itself goes to show that nothing is quite ready yet. But still, if someone joins the DD Academy programme, say, in Switzerland in 50 years, then it will still be, they will still have these four courses and the focus is on the defence of the open society and this is how imagine it will be.

R: Is there anything else you would like to say regarding DD Academy, something that I neglected to ask? Or something about your experience here?

P: /---------------------------/

R: /----------/

P: I don’t even know what I want to say with all this, but one of the keywords that this reminded me of, and this is an enormous issue, it’s mainly about expansion and the teams, it’s the fact that,
well, the plan is, what this year’s experiment will show is that we have a team who were all simple participants just a year ago. So what it’s about is whether a team like this can manage the programme, and do it as volunteers, at that, on a voluntary basis. Let’s just say that looking to the future, this is frightening, yet it can be done. So for instance, we will eventually have this Swiss programme and okay, we will, for instance, find the organisers here in Estonia the first year, but then the next year, we could do it so that there’s one team of locals and maybe one team leader who is, again, well, more experienced, but yeah, the team running things is composed of those who took the course last year. And ideally, they have these excellent materials at hand, something we don’t quite have yet, but the way it is, then, is that they will study these materials over the summer and understand exactly how they have to do something. The main issue, however, is how are we going to manage quality control and how to account for cultural differences, for example, the fact that we can’t do exactly identical things here that we do somewhere else. Like, you know, there’s these cultural differences that I can’t really specifically point out, but there’s so many things that could potentially play a role. Starting from the robustness of democracy in different countries, so to say – or whether it exists at all. R: And what kind of skills does the participant need for defending the open society.
P: Because, well, what we basically have right now is, we keep talking about the open society, but it is pretty strong here in Estonia and democracy is in good shape, but if we go and launch the programme in Turkey, then in what way do we have to modify this concept of the open society for them to benefit from this, well, it would have to be represented in a slightly different manner. Or if we go to a country where it is dangerous to be protecting the open society at all, then there’s again the issue of how this should be reflected in the programme and the fact that we will have to find ... well, to run the initial programme, we will need to learn about all this and it seems a bit complicated. But this is exactly where we would be needing people doing this and I would like to be one of these people.

Appendix B (Estonia): Field notes

**DD Academy team meeting on 5 April 2017 starting at 5.45 p.m. at the Domus Dorpatensis HUB**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17:44</td>
<td>As I arrive, Norman, Vanessa, Elise and Nora are seated at desks arranged in a circle; conversation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>17:45</td>
<td>Waiting for two people who are running late; Norman introduces me to two team members I have not met before; those who I am already acquainted with joke that they have not seen me before, either; four people present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17:52</td>
<td>Lennart arrives; to start off, Norman asks everyone to talk about the highlights of their week; everyone talking and laughing (pretty much over each other); I am asked to speak as well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17:58</td>
<td>Norman asks me to give an overview of the ethnographic study. I speak up, Norman and Vanessa ask questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:02</td>
<td>Norman introduces the first subject: spring recruitment. Norman and Lennart discussing what should be written in bold on the poster, Vanessa and Nora muttering something. Iris speaks, Norman asks questions, Nora is the first to answer, Lennart comments; Iris jokes – general laughter; Norman talking about things; alternative proposals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:13</td>
<td>Norman and Lennart speaking, Vanessa and Iris cutting in; Iris asks for a clarification, Norman responds, Lennart cracks a joke; discussion concerning the budget – everyone speaking out of turn; discussion concerning how long the sign-up form should be kept</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>18:16</td>
<td>Norman speaking, Lennart and Iris commenting. Lennart asks Norman to take notes. Everyone speaking out of turn.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18:17</td>
<td>Norman moves on to the question of the new season and pre-signups. They start discussing the scheduling of the sessions – Norman, Lennart, and Iris talking; Norman commenting; different proposals regarding the scheduling of sessions; everyone but one person speaking; slight disagreement over the number of sessions – Iris is against having 13 sessions. Norman taking notes on his computer.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18:20</td>
<td>Elise, who had been silent up to this point, asks a question; people muttering in agreement; Norman responds; Nora speaking. Elise agrees to take care of the new task – responding to candidates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:25</td>
<td>People joking – movie references.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:26</td>
<td>Upon Norman’s proposal, the next subject is feedback. Lennart: feedback is getting more negative; Nora: feedback is getting more positive. Nora speaking, Lennart speaking; Norman talking about feedback, Vanessa muttering something; Lennart joking: nobody can hear what you’re saying.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:29</td>
<td>Norman asks everyone to talk about their highlights in the feedback. Lennart, Iris, and Nora speaking; Ingrid speaking; Lennart covering his experience with self-affirmation trainings in more length; Iris and Nora getting excited, asking questions; Lennart responding; Nora reacting emotionally in agreement; Iris applauding – general excitement, laughter and shouts, everyone talking; Norman and Lennart joking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:37</td>
<td>Norman moves on to the next subject; everyone commenting; Norman taking notes on his computer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:38</td>
<td>Norman introduces the next subject. Norman speaking. Argument between Norman and Iris over whether there will be a meeting the next week. Everyone speaking out of turn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:41</td>
<td>Norman talking about things, Nora commenting. Lennart speaking. Iris, Lennart, and Nora speaking out of turn. Lennart speaking; Norman doing something on his computer. Everyone speaking out of turn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:44</td>
<td>Norman announces that Lennart is about to leave. Norman begins introducing the next subject. Lennart getting dressed. Lennart leaving – Nora angered by what he says in farewell. Norman talking about plans.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18:46</td>
<td>Norman ends his monologue with a question. Vanessa, Iris and Norman speaking out of turn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:47</td>
<td>Norman moves on to the next subject. Iris commenting. Norman talking about his ideas; Nora asking questions; Iris responding; Norman speaking; Iris asking questions; Norman responding. Norman speaking, Iris speaking – general laughter, people talking out of turn. Elise says something; people talking out of turn.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18:50</td>
<td>A woman with a kettle enters the room and goes to the kitchen corner to do the dishes; the discussion continues.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18:51</td>
<td>Elise makes a proposal; discussion over the proposal; Elise advising Norman on what to write down. Iris and Nora making proposals in turn; Elise says something to Iris – laughter; people speaking out of turn; different proposals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:58</td>
<td>Norman proposes dividing the tasks between those present; people talking over each other about which organisation they will contact.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:59</td>
<td>Nora speaking; Norman commenting; Elise making a proposal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19:00</td>
<td>Norman announces that they’ve gone through the list of subjects. Iris complaining about the timing of the meeting: Thursday night is not good because this means she can’t go back home to /-----/ on Thursday night.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19:01</td>
<td>Norman ends the meeting; everyone speaking out of turn.</td>
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</table>
DD School of Change, 9 June 2017 starting at 11.30 a.m. at Tartu Health Care College

Elise and Lennart are ready at the registration desk a bit before half past ten; the young woman and young man organising the coffee breaks are ready at the covered table nearby. Name tags are laid out on the window sill, sorted by the first letter of the first name. Elise collecting signatures in the registration form; Lennart hands out envelopes for the wall and pens and notebooks for taking notes. A few participants have already arrived. More people start arriving after half past ten. A queue forms at the coffee table.

At noon, Norman enters the lobby and asks everyone to move to the hall. The last of the people remaining in the lobby move on to the hall, where most of the participants are already seated. Nora and Norman stand down by the screens.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12:02</td>
<td>Nora standing in the front of the hall, starts speaking. She is speaking without a microphone because the microphone is not working. Nora introduces herself, Domus Dorpatensis and the DD Academy, and gives an overview of the rules. Laughter, people raising hands. Nora talking about the icebreaker game. Chatter. Nora raises her hands, so do others in the hall. Nora reminds people that they should also talk to someone else. Continued chatter. Nora raises her hands, so do others in the hall. Nora asks the participants to talk about the interesting things they have learned from others. Nobody speaks up. Nora starts pointing to specific people and asking them the same question. People are relatively reluctant to respond. Nora’s questions, responses from the hall; laughter.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:14</td>
<td>Nora gives Norman the word. Applause. Norman walks to the front, speaking to the microphone. A young man from somewhere in the hall cuts in. Norman responds and continues talking about how the world is out of joint and gives examples of things that are wrong in the world. Norman talks about his theory that for things not to be wrong in the world, you must continuously act and take responsibility.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:18</td>
<td>Norman ends his speech and wishes everyone a great conference. Applause. Norman announces that he will not be leaving yet but keep on talking. He introduces the session on the third day, where the participants themselves can talk about world-changing initiatives. Ingrid shows in the first guest speaker, Auditor General Alar Karis. They move back to the control panel, where Hugo puts a headset on the speaker. The speaker and Ingrid leave the room.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:20</td>
<td>Norman ends his talk and gives the microphone to Nora; Norman returns to his seat. Nora takes the microphone and talks about how the Leadership School has become the School of Change.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:22</td>
<td>Technical talk from the loudspeakers. Nora jokes about it and how whether she should try talking over it, etc. Sporadic laughter. Nora continues speaking. Karis and Ingrid return to the hall. Nora continues talking about how the School of Change is organised and what will take place on the next few days. Lea walks around with a camera and takes photos. Nora goes over the rules that must be followed; sporadic laughter. One of the rules is that whenever a speaker says ‘School of Change’, the audience must clap. Nora tests whether it works. Clapping and laughter.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:29</td>
<td>Nora talks about what to do with the envelopes on the wall of the hallway. A clarifying remark from the audience: people could write others why they are cool because not everyone always knows this. Nora continues talking and goes over the schedule for the day.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:32</td>
<td>Nora introduces the first speaker, Auditor General Alar Karis. Applause. Karis walks to the front of the hall and begins to speak. He speaks standing up, without using notes; plays with the remote for changing slides. People listen in silence.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:37</td>
<td>Norman stands up and leaves the hall. Karis continues talking.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:39</td>
<td>Two young ladies arriving late enter the hall and sneak behind the last row to the first</td>
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</table>
empty chairs they find. Karis continues talking about the problems Estonia is facing; people listen in silence. A young woman with a large headscarf moves around with a professional camera, taking pictures. Some people are taking notes. Karis clicking between slides. Sporadic laughter.

13:37 Karis ends his presentation and announces that he will be taking questions now. A young man in a suit from the back row asks a question; Karis takes a sip of water while listening. Karis responds with a joke. Laughter in the hall. Karis speaking.

13:41 Silence in the hall. Karis announces that he will now be taking questions one by one and gives the word to a young man from the front row. The young man asks a question. Karis moves closer to him and responds.

13:44 Karis points at the next person with a question. A young man from the second-to-last row speaks up. Karis moves closer to him and responds.

13:45 Karis gives the word to the next person with a question. A young man from the back row asks a question. Karis responds. Laughter. Karis continues talking. Karis asks for a clarification – the young man had another question before. The young man reiterates his initial question on the efficiency of the state sector. Karis responds; laughter in the middle of his reply. Karis moves back to the centre of the room.

13:50 Karis gives the word to the next person with a question. A young man in a suit from the second-to-last row speaks up. Karis asks why he should be the one to answer this – they should line up the entire government instead. Laughter. Karis speaking. Laughter in the hall. Karis continues talking.

13:53 Karis gives the word to the next person with a question. A young man from the middle of the hall speaks up. Karis speaking. Laughter.

13:57 Karis gives the word to the next person with a question. A young man from the front row asks a question (regarding Rail Baltic). Karis moves to the desk. Karis responds.


14:01 Nora walks down the steps to the front of the hall and takes a large paper bag from under the desk. She stops in front of the Domus Dorpatensis stand. Karis gives the word to the next person with a question. A young man from somewhere in the middle of the hall speaks up. Karis talks about his experience in why it is important to do something in your home country. Nora has picked up the bag. Karis continues talking.

14:04 Karis finishes talking. Applause. Nora moves close to Karis. Nora speaks. Laughter. Nora talks about the contents of the bag and thanks Karis. Karis jokes that he has been said that an auditor should not actually accept gifts, but he will anyway. Laughter and clapping. Karis leaves the hall. Nora announces that the next speaker is scheduled to speak in ten minutes; until then, there will be an activity outside the hall; she asks all participants to move to the lobby.

14:06 Participants begin spilling out of the hall. Chatter.

14:07 All participants have exited the hall. Nora organises icebreakers while standing on the stairs in the lobby. Chatter. Participants move around the room following Nora’s instructions. Some young women are waiting in line for the toilet.

14:15 Nora announces that the President’s talk was supposed to begin at 2.15 p.m., but it will take her a few minutes to enter the building. Nora asks everyone to return to the hall. People start returning to their seats in the hall.

14:17 Two bodyguards in suits appear at the door, followed by the President, escorted by a uniformed adjutant. Norman leads the President down the steps to the front of the room, talks to the President, introduces Nora to her. The participants continue returning to their seats. The President takes a seat in a yellow chair in the front of the hall.

14:20 Nora takes the microphone and gives a brief introduction to the President’s talk. The President stands up, takes the microphone and starts talking about how the world will
change regardless while walking up and down the front of the hall. Nora takes a seat in a yellow chair behind her. Several photographers are taking pictures; one of the photographers moves to the front of the hall to take pictures.

14:31 The President finishes her speech and announces that she will be taking questions now. Applause. The President takes a seat in a yellow chair. Nora tells people that they now have the chance to ask the President of Estonia questions. A young man from the middle of the hall speaks up, asking about universal income and social benefits. The President responds.

14:34 Nora gives the word to a young man from the back row. The young man asks about the big picture. The President responds that big pictures are meaningless in the 21st century.

14:37 Nora gives the word to a young man from the front row. The young man talks about the age and education level of teachers. The President responds, addressing the hall, not specifically the person asking the question.

14:40 Nora gives the word to Norman standing by the wall in the back. Norman talks about what big societal changes have historically resulted in and asks about avoiding people accidentally blowing themselves up due to discontent caused by the changes. The President responds that the solution is open discussion and giving communities the best possible opportunities.

14:45 Nora gives the word to a young woman from the front row. The young woman stands up to speak up and asks a question regarding the poor funding of education and science. The President responds that curricular duplication in higher education should be ended and some subjects should not be taught at universities at all; a large number of overly narrow curricula should be eliminated. The President admits that in order to make real changes, politicians need to be slightly suicidal and not care about votes. She notes that she has ever only received 81 votes. Laughter.

14:50 Nora gives the word to a young man from the middle of the hall. The young man asks a question. The President talks about global prosperity and security. Laughter.

14:55 Nora gives the word to a young woman from the back row who stands up to speak up and asks about how to avoid poorly planned reforms. The President responds that they are impossible to avoid because the world is changing so fast that changes must be made in the knowledge that oversights will have to be corrected on the go.

14:58 The young woman from the back row stands up again and asks a follow-up question. The President responds. The adjutant stands up, walks over to Nora, whispers something to her and returns to his seat. Meanwhile, the President keeps on talking.

15:00 Nora gives the word to a young man in a suit from the second-to-last row. The young man presents a specific example of problems with higher education and asks whether belief should trump knowledge. The President responds that civic courage to draw attention to problems is equally important in both the university and the society.

15:02 Nora closes the discussion and thanks the President. The President speaks. Applause. Nora takes a gift bag from under the desk and hands it over to the President. The President hands the bag to her adjutant and leaves the hall, escorted by the adjutant.

15:04 Nora continues to talk while standing, going over the rest of the schedule and rules.

The participants start pouring outside the hall for the lunch break. Lunch is served in the lobby. All food is vegan. Due to the small number of serving personnel (3), a long queue forms. People who have received their food move over to eat at the round tables on the wide steps. The participants of DD Academy gather around the same tables. The chatter is pretty loud. Meanwhile, the President is shown around the Health Care College. By the middle of the lunch break, many people have finished eating and are chatting in groups in different parts of the
A few people (including the organisers) are in the hall, doing something on the computer. Some participants occasionally ask questions from the organisers. Near the end of the break, participants move on to different workshops taking places in smaller lecture halls. They are mainly waiting behind the doors. In the room that I go to, two people are sitting in the back row, doing something on their computers. The other people in the room are the workshop supervisor and her small son, who is drawing something on the whiteboard. I ask T., supervisor of the People’s Assembly workshop, for her permission to observe her workshop and make notes. At the last second, a large crowd enters the room. There are approximately 25 participants in total.

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<tr>
<td>16:20</td>
<td>The supervisor of the Cooperation Assembly workshop proposes that the workshop be carried out standing. The participants stand up, slightly hesitant. Meanwhile, more participants arrive who have to be individually informed about the workshop would be carried out while standing. T., the supervisor of the workshop, introduces herself and the People’s Assembly.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16:23</td>
<td>The supervisor asks the participants how much they know about the People’s Assembly and what they think about it. A single response from a young woman participating in DD Academy. People are not too eager to respond. The supervisor thus continues talking about what the People’s Assembly is, where it came from, and what has been changed in the society as a result. Meanwhile, she displays the People’s Assembly website on the screen. Participants listen in silence while standing; some are leaning on a desk or a wall. The supervisor reiterates that she is not actually here to give a lecture. No questions or comments are coming, however, and no discussion initiated, so the supervisor keeps on talking. The participants still listen in silence while standing or leaning on a desk or wall.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16:34</td>
<td>The young woman who was the only one to respond to the supervisor’s question from earlier asks a clarifying question regarding the organisation of the work of the People’s Assembly. The supervisor brightens up and responds. One of the young men in the audience is looking at his watch intently. The supervisor keeps on talking and shows information about the People’s Assembly from the Cooperation Assembly website. A few young women are taking notes in their notebooks. The supervisor’s son is spinning the chair at the front of the room so that the back of the chair turns on the lights, with his entire face covered in the hematogen bar that he is eating. Mother forbids him from turning on the lights and moves the chair slightly away from the wall. The supervisor keeps on talking. The participants listen in silence while standing. A young woman is playing on her phone.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16:43</td>
<td>The supervisor keeps on talking and hands out cards of the new Cooperation Assembly initiative. She shows the homepage of the new initiative and continues to talk. She observes that the subject of old age and retirement is extremely unsexy and young people never think about it. A young man from the back row responds that he does because he has a disability which forces him to think about it. A couple of young women speak up in agreement. Active discussion begins. The young man who was the first to speak up speaks in length. The supervisor gives a longer response, showing the website again to illustrate her talk.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16:50</td>
<td>A young woman from the front row asks about the target audience of the messages of the Cooperation Assembly. Discussion between the young woman and the supervisor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16:52</td>
<td>The supervisor returns to her earlier subjects and continues to talk while pointing out things on the web page. Meanwhile, her son keeps playing with the chair. The participants listen in silence. More and more participants are leaning on desks.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16:54</td>
<td>A young woman from the front row asks another question, about the funding of the Cooperation assembly. The supervisor responds in brief that they are funded by the President’s Office and tries to return to the main topic. The young woman continues</td>
</tr>
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</table>
questioning her regarding the relationship between the Cooperation Assembly and the President’s Office. Discussion between the young woman and the supervisor. Another young woman joins the discussion.

**16:59**  The young woman who was the first speak up quietly takes a seat. A second and a third one immediately follow her example. Discussion between the supervisor and the audience.

**17:01**  The supervisor shows a People’s Assembly promo video on YouTube. The supervisor keeps on talking.

**17:02**  A young man from the back row asks about their marketing, pointing out that the video only has 600 views. The supervisor responds that they do marketing themselves and they have not promoted the video that much. The supervisor continues talking.

**17:06**  A young man from the front row asks about the audience of the activity and publicity of the Cooperation Assembly. The supervisor responds. She shows examples of various popular initiatives from the Cooperation Assembly website.

**17:08**  A young woman from the back-row notes that many people will be left out due to the digital divide. The supervisor responds that they are not specifically focussing on this problem, but they cannot just refrain from doing things simply because of this.

**17:11**  A young woman from the front row asks another critical question. The supervisor scrolls down on the website to respond. Discussion between the young woman standing in the front row and the supervisor.

**17:16**  Discussion between the supervisor and the audience; a couple of young women from the front row are asking questions. The supervisor again scrolls down on the website to respond. Her son has stopped playing with the chair and is looking out the window.

**17:19**  Discussion between the most active young woman from the first row and the supervisor regarding whether all the proposal received can be transformed into a law at all. The supervisor continues talking.

**17:22**  A photographer enters the room and starts taking pictures. The supervisor keeps on talking.

**17:23**  Elise reminds everyone that it is time to start drawing things up. The photographer leaves the room. The supervisor asks the audience a few questions. There is no response. The supervisor thanks everyone for participating in the workshop. Applause. The participants pour out. One of the participants goes to the front of the room to talk to the supervisor.

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Small break. Participants go and get something to drink. A line forms for the toilet. Small groups of people talking form in the lobby, the hallway, and the hall.

**17:36**  People return to the hall. Chatter and clatter of chairs. The speakers are already wearing headsets.

**17:38**  Nora stands up with her hand raised. Other hands are raised in the hall. Nora asks about how the workshops went. From the back of the room, Lennart’s loud voice announces that they went well. Nora talks about what is coming up next.

**17:40**  Nora gives the word to Darja Saar, executive of the ETV+ TV channel. Darja Saar moves to the front and begins to talk. Darja Saar talks about national identity and how the focus on national identity has outlived its usefulness. Her talk gives an emphasis to her personal experience of integration into the society and participation in the development of various programmes facilitating integration. The audience listens in silence.
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<th>Time</th>
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| 17:54 | Darja asks the audience, what is the goal of the Republic of Estonia. A young man from the audience shouts: 'Estonia becoming one of the five wealthiest nations!'

Laughter. Darja continues talking. |
| 17:57 | Darja finishes her talk. Applause. Nora walks up and asks if the participants remembered to write down their questions. She stresses the importance of this, because memory can be poor. Nora gives the word to the next speaker – Triin Toomesaar, an alumnus of the Noored Kooli\(^98\) initiative for young teachers. |
| 17:58 | Triin walks up to the front of the hall and puts on Michael Jackson’s ‘Man in the Mirror’. For a while, it is only music playing. Sporadic laughter. Triin starts talking. Triin talks about her journey to various educational projects and what she has learned thanks to Bully-Free School. Triin gives an overview of the Bully-Free School programme. The audience listens in silence. Some people are taking notes. |
| 18:19 | Triin continues to talk and then puts on ‘Man in the Mirror’ again. Triin finishes her talk. Applause. Nora walks up to the front of the hall and tries to change to the next slide. She is unable to do so. Nora introduces the next speaker who walks up to the front of the hall and starts talking about changing the world using the SPIN\(^99\) methodology. The audience listens in silence. Some people are taking notes. |
| 18:27 | The speaker shows a YouTube video about the latest SPIN programme tournament. |
| 18:28 | She continues with how they are trying to change the world with their programme and what their method is. She makes jokes from time to time. Sporadic laughter. |
| 18:38 | The speaker finishes her talk. Applause. Nora walks up to the front and talks about what will happen next. She displays a slide on the screen with a link for signing up to workshops. Nora speaks. Questions and proposals from the audience; Norman’s comments in response; laughter. The audience is in their seats, using their smartphones for signing up. Some people leave the hall. |
| 18:42 | Nora asks those who have not signed up yet to raise their hands. Some people raise their hands. Nora speaks. Nora announces the time they are to return to the hall again. |
| 18:43 | People leave the hall, moving on to other rooms where the workshops are to take place. Triin Toomesaar’s workshop will be in the other great hall. Triin and Norman are chatting and joking. Triin is sitting at the front, spinning her chair. There are very few listeners compared to the size of the hall. |
| 18:46 | Triin remarks that she is not quite sure what are going to do: the audience can either ask her questions or she will start doing Bully-Free School activities with us. Norman moves to the back row. A young woman from the front row asks about how they determine the number of people being bullied. Triin, seated in a swivel chair in the front of the hall, talks about the organisation of this process in the Bully-Free School programme. People listen in silence. |
| 18:54 | A young man from the second row asks about dealing bullying in situation where the bully is a teacher. He talks about personal experience. Triin agrees that teachers can also bully both children and other teachers, parents can bully teachers, etc. She talks about how this problem is addressed in the Bully-Free School programme. |
| 18:58 | The young man follows up with a question about forcing the teacher’s values on students, again, presenting an example from personal experience. Triin responds that there are not that many teachers to choose from in Estonian schools. |
| 19:01 | Triin gives the word to Norman. Norman asks is the issue of bullying has become ideological. Triin says people have always tended to consider bullying a normal part of school life; the bigger issue right now is that modern media tends to amplify all kinds of |

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\(^97\) This is an ironical remark on one political campaign.

\(^98\) Noored Kooli is often translated as Teach Estonia.

\(^99\) It is a youth integration programme based on football.
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<tr>
<td>19:03</td>
<td>The young man from the second row asks how LGBT issues are received at schools, again presenting an example from personal experience. Triin responds that the reception tends to differ between schools, but the schools and teachers participating in the Bully-Free School programme tend to be quite open.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19:06</td>
<td>A young woman from the second row asks if the method could also work at work places. Triin responds that the method could work and clarifies what it is about. A young woman from the front row asks a clarifying question. Triin continues with her response.</td>
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<td>19:08</td>
<td>A young man from the back row asks a question about mental health issues in the Bully-Free School programme. Triin explains that they do not separately focus on mental health issues.</td>
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<td>19:10</td>
<td>A young woman from the front row gives an example from personal experience of what happens when a teacher or the principal is the bully and how she is actually unable to do anything as a member of the school’s board of governors. Triin admits that the bar for the management is pretty low in Estonian schools and tells her not to give up.</td>
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<td>19:13</td>
<td>Norman asks about the funding of Bully-Free School. Triin talks about donors and writing projects.</td>
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<td>19:14</td>
<td>A young woman from the second row asks about cooperation with school psychologists. Triin responds that they do not specifically target school psychologists, but the school psychologist is often involved in the programme.</td>
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<td>19:16</td>
<td>A young woman from the third row asks about implementing the programme in schools for special-needs children. Triin admits that the results of the programme have not been that good in the case of special-needs children.</td>
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<td>19:17</td>
<td>A young woman from the front row asks about volunteers. Triin talks about how they have organised the work of volunteers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19:19</td>
<td>A young man from the back row asks if they need to 'sell' the programme to schools. Triin responds that they have not had to do any marketing because schools have been eager to participate themselves. A young woman from the front row adds that parents often demand the school to have a bullying-prevention programme. Triin provides further comments.</td>
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<td>19:21</td>
<td>The same young man asks how much bullying Triin witnessed in her school as a participant in the programme for young teachers. Triin responds that she did not witness any bullying as a teacher but in many cases, it tends to remain hidden from the teachers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19:23</td>
<td>A young woman from the second row asks about the long-term vision for addressing bullying in schools. Triin talks about the vision for Estonian education.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19:25</td>
<td>A young man from the third row asks about the main bottleneck for the expansion of the programme – whether it is only an issue of funding. Triin responds that a sufficient amount of money would eliminate all problems. Banter. Laughter.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19:27</td>
<td>Another young man from the third row asks if there are any schools that do not want to hear a single word about the programme. Triin responds that they do not exactly know how common it is but schools like this do exist. A young woman from the front row adds that in many schools, the management is in complete denial of the problem. Triin responds that they always tell these schools that prevention is the easiest if the problem does not exist yet.</td>
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<td>19:30</td>
<td>A young woman from the second row asks about the questionnaire and data collection. Triin talks about the kind of classes they survey.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19:31</td>
<td>A young man from the second row asks about the intervention method. Triin talks in detail about how they deal with the bully and the person being bullied.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19:33</td>
<td>Triin asks if there are any other questions and calls for completely random questions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19:35</td>
<td>Applause. Norman stands up, walks to the front of the room and thanks Triin. Banter. Laughter. Majority of the people leave the room, but some walk up to talk to Triin.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19:40</td>
<td>People return to the great hall in not too much of a hurry. Some pause at the coffee table or stand in line for the toilets. There are several groups chatting in the lobby and the hall.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19:45</td>
<td>Nora stands in front of the hall and talks about what is coming up next, and that reflection consists of two parts: written and oral. She puts on quiet music. Questions to aid reflecting on the day are displayed on the wall. Majority of the participants are writing in silence; some are simply sitting there and not writing. Nora is taking notes while standing in the front of the hall. The rest of the organisers – Hugo, Norman, Lea, Ingrid, Vanessa, Elise – have gathered in the back of the hall.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19:50</td>
<td>Nora turns the music off and breaks the silence with the announcement that everyone now has to turn to the front or to the back and exchange their thoughts with the person sitting in front or behind them. Loud chatter. Some people are searching around and moving around the room to find a partner. Nora stands behind the desk at the front of the room, keeping an eye on the audience. The photographer in the headscarf walks around taking pictures. The chatter grows louder and louder.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19:54</td>
<td>Nora raises her hand; other hands are raised in the hall. Nora asks the audience to share interesting things people have heard from their conversation partners. People shouting remarks from the back. Nora comments on these and encourages people to speak up more. Silence. Nora asks: 'What did you hear, Linda?' Linda responds. Nora turns to Ingmar. Ingmar speaks up. A young man in a suit from the back row speaks up.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19:59</td>
<td>Nora asks if there are any other concluding remarks. A young woman at the back of the room shouts that it has been great and inspiring. Nora responds that she feels the same. Nora asks Lea to step up. Lea steps up and talks about tomorrow’s networking sessions. There are a few clarifying questions from the audience. Lea responds. Lea asks if there are any other questions. Nora asks a question. Lea responds.</td>
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<tr>
<td>20:04</td>
<td>Applause. Nora talks about what is coming up next. Laughter.</td>
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<tr>
<td>20:05</td>
<td>Nora wishes everyone a great dinner. People stand up and start leaving the hall. Applause. People are pouring outside the hall.</td>
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</table>

The dinner is organised in a similar fashion to the lunch. It is served in the lobby and people move to the tables on the steps with bowls of soup. We take a seat at a table with Vanessa and Hugo and talk about the stress of being responsible for audio and other equipment. After dinner, people leave alone, in twos or in groups, until a few small groups are lingering in the lobby. The team are still busy in the hall.

**DD School of Change, 10 June 2017 starting at 9.30 a.m. at Tartu Health Care College**

Slightly after half past nine, people present include the organisers, caterers, and a few early participants. Norman and Hugo are at the sound board; most of the early arrivals have gathered near the coffee table and are pouring coffee and making sandwiches. They move to the tables on the steps with their sandwiches.

Iris, Ingmar, and another young man are at the registration desk, busy with the workshop sign-up sheets. Lea, Hugo, Nora, and Elise are eating at the table on the bottom step of the stairs and discussing organisational issues. The main problem is preparing the room for the networking session and who will do it.

People are slowly starting to arrive; most them appear in the last quarter-hour, at the very last minute. Meanwhile, the first speaker has arrived and is talking to Ingrid and Norman at the
sound system control panel while being fitted with a headset. Some of the participants are also in the hall. A few minutes before the beginning of the session, Hugo goes to the lobby to call people inside; they start moving to the hall (some with coffee cups and sandwiches) and the chatter grows louder.

10:00 | Norman turns the lights off in the hall; the only light is from screens and light leaking from the edges of the blinds. The screens show a comical music video of the Brexit. Laughter. Lea walks up to the front, swaying to the rhythm of the music. Lea begins to talk: she introduces herself, talks about how many times she has been to the School of Change and what she has gained, asks questions from the audience. People respond to Lea’s questions by raising hands.

10:06 | Lea talks about what will take place on the second day. Laughter.

10:10 | Lea introduces the next speaker – the political scientist Alar Kilp. Applause. Alar Kilp walks up to the applause of the audience and asks Lea how the slide remote works. Kilp begins speaking about how to present European problems to different audiences, pacing up and down the front of the hall, and gesticulating. Sporadic laughter. The audience listens in silence. Kilp talks about populism, the migration crisis, the increasing importance of national identity, the domination of loud statements over arguments, liberalism on the defence, the securitisation of Islam, the construction of reality, secular state, value judgements, and about how not all problems are completely solvable. The audience listens in silence, broken by sporadic bouts of laughter. The photographer in the headscarf walks around taking pictures. Ingmar, Nora, and other organisers are quietly moving in and out of the hall as needed.

10:59 | Loud noise drawing the attention of the speaker as well as the entire audience: all heads turn to the back row where a young woman’s folding desk has fallen over along with her cup, phone, notebook, and everything else. After momentary silence, the presenter continues his talk. The young woman is quietly picking up her things. Alar Kilp talks about value judgements, sense of security, liberalism, fantasies concerning education, the impossibility of a non-value based education, the inversion of economic logic in education, the proliferation of digital competence at the expense of the development of other competences, knowledge and critical thought. The audience listens in silence. At the back of the room, Ingmar quietly moves back and front between the control panel and the lobby.

11:24 | Alar Kilp ends his talk. After a moment of silence, he asks if there are any questions. A young woman from the third row asks who is going to be the subordinates if everyone is trained to be a leader. Kilp responds that minimal leadership skills are necessary for everyone.

11:26 | A young woman from the front row comments on education (the domination of Economics and ICT) and religion.

11:29 | Alar Kilp begins by responding to the second comment. He remarks that the American case used as an example is an exception and talks about history and the concept of civil religion. Then he asks the person to remind him what the first question was about.

11:33 | The young woman repeats her question concerning cooperation in education. Kilp talks about changes in education and insecurity and inequality.

11:36 | The young woman from the front row talks about the President’s words about insecurity and inequality. Kilp ironically remarks about how well things are in both the state and the education system. Laughter. Kilp talks about how in addition to success stories, we should also give an honest account of the lives of good people who have not done so well.

11:39 | A young man from the third row asks Kilp whether he watched football the day before. Kilp responds in negative. The young man asks, using football as an example, why
terrorists are not treated the same way as hooligans running on the court who are simply not shown in the media. Kilp responds that terrorism would, then, definitely lose its sense and brings examples from history of how keeping quiet about terror has made terrorism senseless. Kilp talks about the logic of fear.

11:42 Lea has moved to the front and is busy at the desk. Meanwhile, Kilp keeps on talking.

11:43 A young man from the middle of the hall asks about presenting a more adequate image of Islam. Kilp walks closer and responds that he cannot compete with the media in the classroom. Meanwhile, Lea has taken a gift bag from under the desk; the crumple of a paper bag. Kilp keeps on talking about different currents in Islam.

11:45 Another young man from the same part of the room asks about the attitudes of lay folk. Kilp responds that if certain attitudes are amplified in the media, it can prove pretty dangerous. A young woman from the back asks about the boundaries of value-based Europe. Kilp stutters for a second, then responds that it depends on your understanding of European values.

11:48 Lea breaks the discussion and announces that it is unfortunately time to end the discussion, thanks the speaker and hands him the gift bag. Applause. Lea asks Norman to put on a new slide and talks about what is coming up, asking the participants to move to the lobby for games. People leave the hall, accompanied by loud chatter and clatter of folding desks. Meanwhile, Kilp talks to Ingrid at the back of the hall.

11:51 Hugo comes in from the lobby and asks Norman to turn down the music. The last three young women leave the hall.

Games and coffee break. Norman and Hugo are busy at the equipment control panel. The participants move to different sides of the lobby, following Lea’s instructions. Some are waiting in line for the toilet. Following Lea’s instructions, people form into groups based on hair colour and field of studies. In the end, Lea announces that they have 13 minutes for toilet. People chat in groups; a line forms at the coffee table. I talk to the person running the YFU workshop about listening in on her workshop and taking notes. In the classroom where the workshop is to take place, chairs are arranged in a circle; other than three organisers, there a few other young women present.

12:15 One of the organisers asks if the participants have heard anything interesting today. A young woman (participant) remarks that the first talk covered so many different topics that summarising it is difficult. Three young women (participants) talk about how the first presentation gave them much to think about.

12:20 One of the organisers opens the workshop. The three young women (organisers) introduce themselves. The first young woman (organiser) says the subject of the workshop is paying attention as a citizen of the world. She talks about the workshop.

12:22 One of the young women (organisers) goes over the simulation game; meanwhile, another young woman (organiser) stands up and hands out role descriptions on coloured paper.

12:23 Another participant enters; one of the organisers stands up to find them an extra chair. The third young woman (organiser) quickly recounts the aim of the workshop.

12:24 The third young woman (organiser) tells the participants to get into their role by closing their eyes and think about her questions from the perspective of the role. She reads out questions about childhood and everyday life in a steady voice. The participants sit in a circle in silence.

12:26 The third young woman (organiser) tells the participants they can open their eyes and asks them to step outside for a moment. There is confusion for a moment, then the participants all move to the hallway outside. They line up by the wall following the organisers’ instructions. The young woman who spoke first (organiser) starts reading descriptions of life situations. People take a step away from the wall when they mentally
answer positively to a question. Pretty soon, some participants have made it quite far from the wall while others are still standing by or close to the wall. The first young woman (organiser) tells people the password for entering the room. A young woman from the back (participant) asks what the password was. Nobody tells her. People returning the room will receive candy if they know the password; those who do not know the password are admitted to the classroom last and will not get candy. The participants are asked to share their experience and what kind of feelings this experience gave rise to. Participants left without candy talk about their experience.

12:33 The second young woman (organiser) asks the participants to reveal their roles. The participants take turns to talk about their roles and what they thought.

12:35 A photographer enters and takes photos of people while moving around the room. The young woman currently speaking (participant) continues talking. Her comments about the experience of thirty-somethings of life in the Soviet Union spark a debate with two other participants who stress the fact that thirty-somethings only spent their early childhoods living in the Soviet Union. People continue to take turns to talk about their roles. Others listen in silence. From time to time, the second young woman (organiser) asks the participants how they imagined the people whose roles they were in.

12:47 The photographer leaves the room. The young woman (participant) whose turn it was to speak continues talking about the doubts that she had about her role. The last speaker’s comments cause a bout of laughter. (In most cases, people speak in a rather serious voice; a few use a lighter tone and make jokes.)

12:55 The second young woman (organiser) asks everyone to stand up and snap their fingers following her example to come out of the role. She starts snapping her fingers; others follow her lead. The young woman (organiser) switches from snapping to clapping etc., while others follow her lead.

12:57 The second young woman (organiser) asks the participants to sit down again. She asks the participants how they felt about some people falling behind and whether they would have liked to help them somehow. The participants take turns to comment. Sporadic laughter. The second young woman (participant) explains how people only look ahead and not behind. She asks the participants if they learned anything from the exercise and what. A woman slightly older than others comments on the illustrative character of the exercise. Others chime in as well. The second young woman (organiser) talks about her experience with inequality in Uruguay. Several participants comment on educational inequality in South American countries.

13:06 The second young woman (organiser) asks how the exercise could be related to the topic of the workshop, 'Tolerance cubed'. Some of the participants left behind in the game comment. The second young woman (organiser) asks whether the participants had any intolerant thoughts when getting into their role. Some participants comment on this.

13:09 One young woman raises the question whether the concept of 'minorities' is adequate. Active discussion begins. The woman older than others comments in length on the concept of minorities, the norms established by the majority, and heterogeneity within minority groups. Discussion between her and the young woman raising the question.

13:12 The second young woman (organiser) talks about putting people in boxes and where it comes from. She asks the participants whether they would do something differently if they played the same game again. A few people comment.

13:14 The second young woman (organiser) asks what should be done to make tolerance more normal in the society. One participant says that she was not intolerant towards the people behind her; she simply did not notice them. She adds that certain social intolerance is unavoidable. A young man participating asks whether everything should be tolerated. A young woman agrees with him and says too many different positions just confuse people. Another young woman says for her, tolerance means accepting
I exchange a few words with the organisers regarding the method they used. Meanwhile, the lunch break has started and the majority of the participants have already got their meals and gathered around the tables on the steps to eat; the line at the food table is rather short. Near the wall, Ingrid is talking to the next speaker. I spend the rest of the lunch break at the same table with three young women; we talk about veganism, the morning lecture, the workshops, professors we all know and the organisation of studies, until Norman calls everyone to gather for the group photo.

People gather in a large group on the bottom step and in front of the stairs. The organisers and the photographer are evaluating the situation. The organisers tell everyone to move on to the steps on the next floor. The crowd moves to another set of steps one floor up. The photographer takes pictures. Lea walks up and announces that it is Annika’s birthday; she asks her to come down. Annika walks down from the back – this takes some time. They take pictures with Annika in the front. Someone from the people standing on the steps proposes everyone to sing ‘Happy Birthday’. They sing ‘Happy Birthday’. The photographer takes pictures and Annika shoots a video on her phone. Lea announces that it is time to move back to the hall. The crowd starts moving again and the participants slowly move back to the hall while chatting. The chatter does not cease.

Lea stands at the front with her hand raised; Hugo, Elise, and Iris leaning on the wall at the front raise their hands; other hands are raised in the hall. Lea asks the participants how their workshops went and what workshops they participated in. A dialogue between Lea and the audience; interjections. Lea talks about what will happen next today and tomorrow.

Lea asks Norman to step up. Applause. Norman walks up to the applause of the audience. Norman, with an open notebook in his hand, talks about DD Academy; interjections and laughter. Ingrid walks next to Iris by the wall at the front. Norman speaking. Laughter. Lotta moves to the steps from behind the seats and sits down on the steps. Norman speaking, Laughter. Norman speaking.

Norman asks the graduating class of DD Academy to step up. Applause. Participants of DD Academy step up and line up under the screens. Norman hands out packs of diplomas to members of the organising team; Ingrid, Lea, Elise, Hugo, and Iris run back and forth, handing out diplomas and bags of candy. Applause.

Norman speaking, Laughter. Norman speaking. The graduates of DD Academy move back to their seats to an applause. The organising team moves over to the control panel. Lea is left standing at the front of the hall alone; she announces a slight change in schedule due to a foreign speaker running late. Lea asks the participants to take out their notebooks (asking for a show of notebooks) and pens (asking for a show of pens). Some participants raise their notebooks and pens. Lea speaking.
14:42 Lea asks the speaker Veiko Spolitis from Latvia to step up; he will be talking about the European Republic. The screen behind the speaker shows the history of European national borders starting from the Middle Ages. The participants listen in silence; some are examining the map of Europe on the wall, some are taking notes.

14:58 Lennart arrives, moves over to the control panel and leaves the hall again. The speaker keeps on talking. The borders on the European map on the wall keep changing.

14:59 The speaker finishes the talk. Applause. Lea steps up and announces the next speaker in English – Elina Uutela from Finland.

15:00 The speaker walks down the steps to the applause of the audience and starts speaking in English about hundrED, the educational programme that she is representing. She says they are collecting innovative, efficient, and viable educational projects from around the world. So far, they have collected 450 innovations from 127 different countries. The audience listens in silence; some are taking notes. The speaker says finding great examples is the easy part of their job because teachers are doing awesome things; the difficulty lies in spreading good practices. She talks about how they are intending to do this.

15:18 The speaker finishes the talk. Applause. Lea walks up front and goes over the system of registration into workshop using the mobile app once again. Registration begins. Veiko Spolitis approaches Lea with a question; Norman moves up to him to deal with the issue. The photographer walks up to take pictures. The registration procedure is accompanied by muted clicking and quiet whispers. Some people leave the hall. The clatter of folding desks is mixed with increasing chatter. Lea walks back up front and gives the participants the permission to move over to where they have registered. Most of the participants stand up and leave the hall. Slightly over ten people are left in the great hall.

15:23 A young man standing in the back says he is actually going to another workshop but he would like to thank the speaker for being one of the few discussing Latvian issues in Estonian media. The speaker thanks him. The young man leaves the hall. A young man from the second to last row asks a question about the difference between a unified state and a federation. Spolitis talks about the differences in the politics and budgets of a unified state and a federation, leaning on the desk at the front; he has removed the headset.

15:28 A young man from the second row asks a question that begins with a detour into the history of the United States. Spolitis responds that a civil war will definitely not be necessary for founding a European Federation. Spolitis talks about the developments in Europe and outside influences over the past few decades.

15:31 A young man from the second to last row asks about the influence of Donald Trump on Europe. Spolitis responds that Donald Trump is the first American president in a long time who not only does not understand external relations but also shows it. Spolitis talks about possible developments and how it is difficult to predict anything before the German elections.

15:34 A young man from the front row asks about the possibility of creating a federation without it resulting in the decline of national cultures. Spolitis responds by discussing the examples of Switzerland and Canada and the artificial construction of nation states.

15:39 The same young man has a follow-up question regarding smaller national groups inside larger entities, such as Catalonia or Scotland. Spolitis responds that from time to time, prosperity and other practical issues can outweigh the questions of identity and sovereignty.

15:44 A young man from the second row remarks that people’s expectations towards the EU are conflicting: they want an EU with a smaller influence that would solve more problems. Spolitis talks about people’s attitudes towards local politicians. At the back of
15:49 A young man from the second to last row asks about how the EU should be reformed: should more decision-making power be given to the member states or Brussels. Spolitis talks about the extreme importance of member state-level decision-making power, how not every kind of policy is worth making jointly and what the states need is joint foreign and defence policy.

15:54 A young man from the front row asks a follow-up question regarding the necessity of joint EU activities. Spolitis recounts things that the EU should do jointly and which areas should be jointly reformed in the fields of defence and foreign policy and digital market policy.

15:56 A young man from the second row asks about how much the Baltics could cooperate at the EU level to make themselves heard. Spolitis responds that the Baltics actually already cooperate a lot.

16:00 Short silence. Spolitis says that if there are no more questions at the moment, he would like to ask the audience in turn how they feel about the possibility of a European Republic, judging by the attitudes of their acquaintances. A young man from the front row responds that it may be the most painful to the older generations. A young man from the second row follows up by listing various ethnocentric and conservative discourses in the Estonian public sphere.

16:03 Spolitis thanks the speakers for the ideas they have expressed and agrees that national ideas and their creation are important issues. He continues with the issue of security and the need for cooperation with other countries for ensuring one's own security.

16:11 A young man asks how the Latvians look at the Estonian desire to be one of the Nordic countries. Spolitis responds that one part of the Latvian elite perceives it as Estonians showing off; on the other hand, though, Estonia is ahead of the other Baltic states in development. Participants from other workshops start to arrive in the hall. Spolitis remarks that it must be time for him to stop. Applause. Iris walks up and hands over 'humanitarian aid' in the form of a gift bag. Spolitis walks up to the equipment control panel, exchanges a few words with Norman, and then leaves. The participants leave the room.

During the break, two lines form once more: one for the toilets, the other for the coffee table. There are several groups chatting in the lobby. In the room, Norman talks to his namesake. The participants slowly start to move to the other room where the networking session is taking place. In the hall, the chairs are arranged into smaller circles (seven chairs). The speaker from Finland who ran the education workshop in the same room is talking to a couple of participants at the desk in front of the screen. More and more participants are entering the room and sitting in chairs arranged in circles.

16:28 Lea walks up, takes the microphone and asks people to signal if they have room in their group for the lone young woman at the back of the hall. Several groups indicate that they have free seats. The young woman joins one group. Lea talks about what is going to take place and gives an overview of the 'dare to ask' method. The people sitting in circles listen in silence. Some are looking for notebooks and pens. Lea continues to talk. Elise walks from one group to another.

16:32 Norman shouts additional recommendations from the door. Muted chatter. Lea repeats Norman's recommendation using the microphone.

16:33 Lea announces that there will be three minutes for writing. Writing is accompanied by muted chatter. Lea quietly responds to one group’s clarifying questions. Elise has walked up to the front and is sitting behind the desk. The photographer in the headscarf is walking around, taking pictures.

16:37 Lea announces that the three minutes are up and tells the groups to pick the person to
16:38 **Lea announces that the minute is up: start writing notes. The chatter grows a bit more quiet.**

16:40 **Lea takes the microphone, walks in front of the desk, then back behind the desk to take some notes, whispers something to Elise sitting behind the desk, and then stands by the desk with the microphone in hand.**

16:41 **Lea announces that it is time to hand over the notes and give the word to the next speaker. The chatter grows louder. Lea goes and explains something to the nearest groups. Elise sits behind the desk, alternately looking at the participants and the computer.**

16:43 **Lea goes back behind the desk. Lea and Elise talk in whispers.**

16:44 **Lea announces over the microphone that it is now time to write notes to others. The chatter continues non-stop. Lea stands in front of the desk with the microphone, walking back and forth from time to time. Elise is sitting behind the desk.**

16:47 **Lea asks everyone to pass the notes on to the second speaker and announces that the word now goes to the third speaker. The chatter grows louder.**

16:49 **Lea announces that it is time to write down recommendations to the third speaker. The chatter continues. Lea walks up and down the stage; Elise is sitting behind the desk and working on the computer.**

16:51 **Lea announces over the microphone that it is time for the fourth speaker to start. The chatter continues. Lea whispers to Elise and makes dancing moves. Lea walks between the discussion circles at the front; Elise continues sitting behind the desk.**

16:53 **Lea announces over the microphone that it is time to write down recommendations to the fourth speaker. The chatter continues. Lea walks between discussion circles further down the hall. The participants are passing each other notes. Lea comes back to the desk.**

16:55 **Lea announces over the microphone that it is time for the fifth person to speak. The chatter grows louder. Lea walks back and forth in front of the desk, watching the speakers. Lea and Elise discuss something in whispers.**

16:57 **Standing by the wall near the desk, Lea announces over the microphone that it is time to write notes to the fifth person. Continued chatter. Lea walks over to a group to explain something, then returns to the desk. Some people are writing, some continue to talk, and some are looking around.**

17:00 **Lea announces over the microphone that it is time for the sixth person to speak in groups of six or more; if the group is smaller, then some problems can be discussed in more detail. Continued chatter. Lea paces back and forth in front of the desk with the microphone. Lea walks over to Elise behind the desk where they look at the screen together and grin at something. Lea walks between the chatting groups.**

17:02 **Lea announces over the microphone that it is now time to write notes to the sixth member of the group. Continued chatter. Lea walks over to Elise behind the desk; they exchange a few words. Lea paces back and forth in front of the desk. Lea and Elise grinning at something. Lea continues pacing back and forth.**

17:05 **Lea announces that if the group has seven people, it is time for the seventh person to talk; if not, then someone else can take another turn to speak. Continued chatter. Lea pacing back and forth in the front. Elise is sitting behind the desk, watching the participants.**

17:06 **Lea announces over the microphone that it is now the final chance to write recommendations to other group members. Continued chatter. The photographer stands up, moves away from her group and walks around, taking pictures. Lea stands at the front, holding on to the desk.**
17:09 Lea walks between the discussion circles with the microphone in hand. Lea announces that problem sharing is over, although everyone will definitely get more chances to talk to each other. One circle reports that they are in the middle of the sentence. Lea tells them to finish the sentence, but that she would go on with the others regardless. Lea announces that it is now time to read one's notes. Continued chatter. Lea watches the audience, standing at the front of the desk; Elise sitting behind the desk.

17:12 Lea asks the groups to choose a speaker and the most interesting or complex problem to share with others.

17:13 Lea speaking. The chatter does not subside. Lea stands up with her hand up; other hands are raised in the hall. Silence. Lea talks while moving over to the first group where she asks a person to talk about their problem and what advice they got. She hands the microphone to a young woman who talks about her efforts. Lea asks her what advice she got. She responds.

17:16 Lea moves from one group to another with the microphone, asking one person from each group to talk about their problem and what advice they got. Lea comments on the topics while moving from one group to another. Elise has moved from behind the desk to the window where she is watching the discussion, standing. The photographer with the large headscarf walks around the room, taking pictures.

17:32 Lea asks a representative of the technology group whether the users of push-button phones are technophobic. The representative responds in negative. A shout from the room: these people are simply poor. Laughter. Lea remarks that is a horrible thing to say that everyone will probably remember now; she has moved on to the next group and comments that she found a phone with push-buttons and a slide cover. Applause. Laughter. Lea continues to walk around with the microphone. The representative of the next group talks about their problem.

17:37 The last speaker finishes. Lea commends the participants and introduces the next task: to come up with a question to ask other participants. She adds that everyone can stand up now and approach other people with their questions.

17:39 The participants stand up to the clatter of chairs; some stay near their seat, others move around the room. Loud chatter. The photographer walks around, taking pictures. Some people walk around the room looking for a new partner while others chat for longer with a specific person. Lea is busy at the desk: flipping through some papers, looking at the computer. Elise is gone. Lea walks to the participants with the microphone and goes to talk to a young woman. Groups of three and four are starting to form in addition to pairs.

17:47 Luisa, a participant, comes over and tells me that she is doing a survey on the subject 'Chocolate or vanilla ice cream?' I respond that any will do. Luisa thanks me and moves over to the next person. Continued chatter. Luisa reaches Lea with her survey. Luisa and Lea talking; Lea checks something in her papers.

17:50 Elise returns with a bottle of water, walking up and down the hall staying close to the wall and watching the participants. Lea speaks into the microphone and raises her hand. Other hands are raised. Silence. Lea thanks and commends the participants and asks them for a round of applause. Applause. Lea announces a ten-minute break. People rushing outside to the clatter of chairs. Some of the pairs still cannot finish talking and take time to leave the hall.

Classic short break: lines at the toilets and the coffee pots, chatting groups of various sizes. The next speaker has arrived at the hall and is talking to a few people. Only a few participants in the hall; the majority return at the last minute.

18:01 Lea stands at the front, holding up a hand. Other hands are raised in the hall, silence falls. Meanwhile, some latecomers arrive to the clatter of chairs and folding desks. Lea
<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18:03</td>
<td>Lea introduces the next speaker – the space entrepreneur Erika Ilves. Applause. Erika walks up and starts talking. Before she can finish the first sentence, she manages to say School of Change’, causing an enthusiastic round of applause. The speaker asks for a few examples of what the people in the room do. A young man responds that his goal is understanding things. Comments. Laughter. The speaker talks about how she became a space entrepreneur and how she came to the problem she is working on in her everyday work and her two companies are working on. Her slides are in English. The speaker speaks in a mixture of Estonian and English, with an accent and some grammatical mistakes, sometimes struggling to find Estonian words. Erika Ilves speaks standing behind the desk. The participants listen in silence. The photographer walks around, taking pictures. Sporadic laughter.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18:42</td>
<td>The speaker asks how many of the listeners have visited an underground mine. At least half of the participants raise their hands. The speaker is in awe; she asks if they have all been to Ida-Virumaa in Estonia. The speaker continues with a description of the mines the robots developed by her company are working in. She talks about the work of her current company. Sporadic laughter.</td>
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<td>18:56</td>
<td>The speaker finishes talking. Applause. A young man in a suit from the back row congratulates the speaker for doing such awesome work and asks if they have tried the ancient Estonian method of using water to break up rocks. Erika responds that water is unsuitable as it is not always available. The young man asks a follow-up question: ‘What about just dropping them from a height?’ Laughter. The speaker remarks that it is not a joke and talks about all the methods they have tested. Laughter.</td>
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<td>19:00</td>
<td>A young woman from the back row asks about the legal status of using materials extracted from space. The speaker responds that in legal terms, everything is pretty unclear.</td>
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<td>19:02</td>
<td>A young man from somewhere in the middle asks something that cannot be heard in the back. The speaker talks about the first possible space trips.</td>
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<td>19:04</td>
<td>From the front row, Lea asks how the speaker came from Law to mining and space technology. Erika Ilves talks about her career and how she came from business to acquiring engineering knowledge.</td>
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<td>19:06</td>
<td>A young man in a suit asks about the most important things the speaker has found out about herself and technology during the process. Erika Ilves responds that the most surprising things has been how whenever they go to patent a seemingly innovative idea, it always turns out some Russian guy has already proposed something similar back in the fifties. She also talks about how the problem has taken control of her life.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19:10</td>
<td>A young woman from the second row asks about the purpose of ensuring the existence of humankind for all times. The speaker compares life to a game where you constantly have to improve and level up; she finds it important to evolve. Intermittent bouts of laughter. Dialogue between the young woman and Erika Ilves.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19:13</td>
<td>A young man from the middle of the room asks what the engineers need to ensure the development of the space business. Erika Ilves responds that the most important things are identity – a common sense of belonging – and motivation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19:16</td>
<td>A young man next to the previous speaker asks about putting the robots into service. Erika Ilves responds that they already have working robots.</td>
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<td>19:17</td>
<td>Norman, standing at the back, asks if the speaker would like to live forever if it were possible. The answer is yes. A young man from somewhere in the middle asks something. Erika responds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19:18</td>
<td>A young man from somewhere in the middle asks how the speaker avoids burnout. Erika responds that burnout may be one of the problems she will have to deal with soon.</td>
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</table>
19:20 A young woman from the front row asks if she would like to do something differently in her life. Erika Ilves recounts things she would have loved to have done differently. The same young woman asks about her main accomplishment in life. First reaction: I have not accomplished anything yet. Then she corrects herself: finding out what she wants to do with her life.

19:22 A young man in a suit from the back row asks about the most difficult decision in the speaker’s life. The speaker talks about the changes in her life related to the entry into the start-up world.

19:23 A young man from somewhere in the back asks how much support and resistance the speaker has met in relation to what she does. The speaker responds that she first experienced resistance from her father who thought she had lost her mind, and describes various counter-reactions to her work. Laughter. Lea has moved in front of the Domus Dorpatensis banner and stands there, listening to the speaker.

19:24 A young woman asks a question. The speaker responds.

19:25 Lea announces one last quick question. A couple of short questions and answers.

19:27 Lea points at the speaker, announcing: ’Erika Ilves!’ Applause. Lea hands Erika Ilves a gift bag. Erika Ilves praises Lennart for forbidding her from taking on extra tasks outside her work. Lennart tells people not to clap to him. Erika is a bit confused about whether that is all. Lea helps Erika remove the headset.

19:29 Lea gives an enthusiastic speech about Erika’s talk and then introduces the reflection exercise. Meanwhile, Erika Ilves is leaving the room. The reflection background music starts to play; questions are displayed on the wall. Several participants leave the room; others are taking notes or talking in whispers. Lea, Elise, Ingmar, Iris, and Ingrid have gathered around Norman by the control panel. Some of the people who had left the room return.

19:33 Lea walks up and asks the audience to turn to the front or to the back and share their thoughts with others. People look around for a second, then start to chatter. Lea stands at the front and talks to two participants of DD Academy seated in the front row. The rest of the organisers are chatting by the control panel. The photographer walks around the room, taking pictures.

19:37 Lea raises her hand; other hands are raised; silence. Lea speaks up, asking the participants to share any new ideas they got during the day. Lea approaches individual people. A young man from the second row talks about the last presentation. Three more comments, mainly talking about how people still need to digest things. Lea agrees that it has been a busy day.

19:41 Lea calls up Elise who walks down the steps, receives the microphone from Lea and introduces the evening’s treasure hunt. Elise and Lea are handing out maps for the treasure hunt. Representatives of the teams walk up for the maps; this causes a slight confusion. Elise and Lea ask people to stay put. Elise talks about the treasure hunt some more and responds to clarifying questions about the meeting place.

19:44 Some people stand up to leave the room. Elise and Lea ask them to stay put and Lea talks about the evening programme.

19:45 People are rushing outside the hall; Lea no longer invites them back inside.

**DD School of Change, 11 June 2017 starting at 9.30 a.m. at Tartu Health Care College**

At quarter to ten, the coffee table is surrounded by people making sandwiches and many people have already gathered on the steps to eat. A bit before ten, Norman comes to the lobby and asks everyone to go to the hall. By the third morning, the rows of participants have thinned out and there are many empty chairs.

10:01 A video starts playing on the screens that stops after a few seconds; the name of the next speaker is displayed on the screen. Joking comments, laughter. In a few moments,
the video starts to play again\textsuperscript{100}. The audience watches in silence.

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>20:06</td>
<td>Iris steps up and takes the microphone; the lights are turned up in the hall. Iris speaks up, announcing that she still has to work on getting herself together after the video. Iris introduces herself and asks the participants to talk about what took place at last night’s treasure hunt and party. Nobody responds. Iris asks those who participated in these events to raise their hands. Many hands are raised. Iris announces that she is not forcing anyone to speak; she continues talking and explaining the energiser. Those who answer 'yes' to a question must stand up; some stand up after the first question – would you like to live forever? Nobody wants to comment on their answer. The second question – whether some human rights are more important than others – makes some people pause. Iris asks for comments, but not many are forthcoming. The follow-up questions on the colonisation of Mars and the importance of School of Change in their personal lives cause fewer people to stand up but much joking and laughter.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:14</td>
<td>Iris introduces the next speaker, Kristina Mänd. Kristina Mänd steps up. She manages to say 'School of Cahnge' in the first few sentences, causing an enthusiastic round of applause. The speaker goes on to talk about how there are no global problems for her that she personally cannot influence. The participants listen in silence.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:17</td>
<td>Kristina Mänd tries to switch to the next slide, commenting on this activity; eventually, she manages to change slides and she continues to talk about how all everyday choices affect the world. She stands by the desk and gesticulates energetically while talking; from time to time, she takes a peek at the notes on the table. The audience listens in silence; some are taking notes. The photographer in the large headscarf walks around taking pictures. In the back of the room, Norman and Elise move between the control panel and the lobby; Hugo is sitting at the control panel. Some latecomers enter during the presentation, quietly finding themselves a seat. Sporadic laughter.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:51</td>
<td>The speaker asks those who have had coffee this morning to raise their hands; then those who have had tea, eaten chocolate or a tropical fruit. One by one, hands are raised until nearly everyone has raised their hand. The speaker now asks people to put down their hands and only those raise their hands who know where the products they consume come from. No hands are raised. The speaker continues talking about how everyday consumption decisions affect the world. The audience listens in silence. Bouts of laughter over the speaker’s jokes and images in the slides.</td>
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<td>11:19</td>
<td>The speaker finishes her talk and falls silent. Applause. The speaker asks if Iris will serve as the moderator. Iris responds that she can do it if Kristina wants her to. The speaker gives an affirmative response. Iris walks up to the desk to monitor question requests.</td>
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<td>11:21</td>
<td>A young man from the front row asks about GMOs. The speaker moves towards the young man and responds that she has not focused on GMOs specifically but goes on to discuss the possible effects of GMOs on the environment and communities. Laughter over the speaker’s joke.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:24</td>
<td>The young man asking the question responds that the response was not actually related to GMOs. The speaker agrees that she is no expert.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:25</td>
<td>A young woman from the back row asks about the price awareness of consumers — whether some consumers should give up consumption if they cannot afford fair trade goods. The speaker finds that most Estonians are actually not so poor as to not be able to afford fair trade goods 10 cents more expensive than ordinary goods. She remarks that most problems related to low income and price sensitivity arise from the way people think.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:29</td>
<td>A young man in a suit from the back row asks a question. The speaker asks him to speak louder. The young man asks in a louder voice whether instead of developing fair trade</td>
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\textsuperscript{100} Video is about the destruction humans have caused on our planet.
commerce we should not be developing the economic structures of developing countries instead, and whether paying more to workers might actually cause more harm than good because this keeps the economy of these countries from developing. The speaker responds that the issue is not just fair pay but also the environment. She adds that there is nothing wrong about being a farmer, as long as it is a personal choice. Then she talks about the development of co-operatives and communities through lobby work in EU governments and Brussels.

11:35 A young lady from the middle of the hall comments that despite the differences in picking clothes and food claimed by the speaker, people actually buy clothes just as randomly as food. The speaker agrees that the problems with clothes are just as big as with food, and people are not too interested in where their clothes come from or how they are produced.

11:37 A young man from the back row talk about how the majority of people simply tries to get along as simple as possible and changing the way people think is difficult; he gives examples from his personal life about how this can cause counter-reactions. The speaker agrees that growing youths have a million other problems in school; nevertheless, raising their awareness and developing their critical thinking is important. Laughter over the list of problems of the youth. The speaker remarks that getting people take more responsibility takes a lot of time in a young state. She soon moves on to how developing countries want people to come and tell them what and how they must do, whereas they should actually be taught the process of reaching viable solutions.

11:47 Iris takes over keeping track of people wanting to ask questions and gives the word to a young woman in the back. She announces that she is a donation addict and asks for advice on deciding who to donate to. The speaker is surprised for a moment; then she talks about the principles she follows in her choices of where to contribute her time.

11:50 Iris asks for an applause. Applause. Iris takes a gift bag from under the desk and hands it over to the speaker to the applause of the crowd. The speaker announces she brought along some materials she will be leaving here for taking home. Applause. The speaker walks over to the control panel in the back to talk to Ingrid. Meanwhile, Iris talks about what is happening next.

11:52 Iris announces a break. The participants stand up to the clatter of chairs and folding desks and leave the hall. Some young women stay in the hall with laptops.

I move over to the hallway with the seminar rooms for workshops. I talk to the organiser of the workshop, M.-L., about participating in her e-democracy workshop and making notes.

12:07 The first participants have arrived. The organiser asks about their background. Four young men take turns to name their field. The organiser asks why they picked this workshop. They answer a bit impatiently that they had to pick something, etc.

12:08 More participants arrive. The talk grows into chatter. The organiser asks people not to sit behind the desks.

12:09 The speaker starts with the workshop. She has to speak over a few participants who will shut up soon. The speaker asks the participants questions that they have to answer by raising their hands. She talks about the conflicts between the Estonian e-success story and the reality and shows pictures on the screen. Some more participants arrive. A foreign speaker stands by the door for a few minutes, watching the workshop. There are now 14 participants in the room. The speaker keeps on talking, asking the participants questions from time to time, which they react to with a show of hands.

12:24 A young man from the first row asks a clarifying question about expanding the popular initiative web to the local government level. The organiser responds. The organiser talks while walking back and forth in front of the audience, gesticulating energetically, and pointing at the screen.
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<tr>
<td>12:26</td>
<td>A young woman sitting by the wall asks a clarifying question about the local level. The organiser responds and continues to talk.</td>
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<td>12:27</td>
<td>The organiser picks up coloured post-it notes from the desk and announces that she will divide the audience into groups now. She explains the procedure while sticking coloured post-its to the wall.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:29</td>
<td>The speaker hands the post-its to the young men sitting in the front row and asks everyone to find a suitable colour. The participants take post-its from the pack, stick these to their name tags and pass the packs on. Clarifying questions regarding where one field or another should be classified. From the front row, Vanessa asks if everyone got a sticker.</td>
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<td>12:31</td>
<td>The organiser asks people to form groups where there is at least one person of each colour. Participants start reorganising to the clatter of chairs and chatter of people. It turns out the colours are not equally distributed and there are too few people with a dark pink tag. Three groups are formed: one group of four and two groups of five. The groups gather around desks. The organiser gives each group a large sheet of paper.</td>
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<td>12:34</td>
<td>The organiser explains the task. A young woman from a group of five asks a clarifying question. The organiser responds and continues with her explanation. The groups listen in silence, occasionally exchanging a few whispered words with each other.</td>
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<td>12:38</td>
<td>The organiser gives the groups ten minutes for coming up with an initial plan. The room is filled with chatter. The organiser searches her folder for fliers. The members of one group ask her clarifying questions; she moves over to the group to answer and gives explanations. A young woman from another group tries to draw her attention by raising her hand.</td>
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<td>12:40</td>
<td>The young woman who raised her hand calls the organiser over to her desk and asks a clarifying question about the task. The organiser gives explanations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:41</td>
<td>The organiser gives the third group a flier she has already handed to the other two groups while giving explanations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:42</td>
<td>The organiser takes a chair from near the wall, opens the door, and blocks it with the chair to keep it open. Meanwhile, the groups continue to work: chatter; in the third group, a young man is constantly taking notes on the large sheet of paper.</td>
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<td>12:43</td>
<td>The organiser sits at the desk and starts doing something on the computer; her searches and everything else is displayed on the wall. The groups continue their discussions.</td>
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<td>12:45</td>
<td>A young man from the first group asks a clarifying question. The organiser moves over to the group to respond. Dialogue between the young man and the organiser. Other groups continue their discussion.</td>
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<td>12:46</td>
<td>The organiser announces that the groups have about four minutes left for the task and they should not get too hung up on details. A young man from the third group asks a question; the organiser moves over to the group to explain things. The organiser walks up and down the room between the groups while eating an apple. All groups are in the middle of a lively discussion, making notes on the large paper.</td>
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<td>12:50</td>
<td>The organiser announces that the time is up and talks about what to do next. The chatter continues. Some participants explain that she should raise her hand for silence. The organiser raises her hands, other hands are raised, and there is silence at last. The organiser asks the groups to share the fruits of their discussions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:51</td>
<td>A young man and woman representing the first group move up front with their poster. The organiser sits on the edge of the desk. The young woman holds the poster; the young man talks while pointing at the poster. Others listen in silence; the second group talks in whispers for a while. The young woman holding the poster takes over the talking.</td>
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</table>
| 12:53 | The organiser asks a question. The young woman answers. The organiser asks the group to modify their poster and write down the spoken clarifications because this info is very
helpful to her; she explains why.

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<td>12:54</td>
<td>The representatives of the first group go back to their places. Following the organiser’s question about who will go next, both of the other groups are ready but the third group is quicker. Two young men from the third group step up with their poster; one is holding the poster, the other (the person taking notes for that group) talks while pointing at the poster. The organiser interrupts his talk with comments. The young man continues to talk. The organiser comments while gesticulating energetically. A young woman from the third group provides additional comments from her seat.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:59</td>
<td>The representatives of the third group move back to their places; a young woman and man from the second group step up: the young man is holding the poster while the young woman is speaking about the poster. The organiser comments on how cool it is that the group reached the same questions that they themselves have got to. Discussion between the organiser and the young woman standing in front of the screen. The others are listening in silence; occasional, muted conversations are heard from the hallway through the open door. A young woman from the second group comments from her seat. The organiser comments on this.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13:03</td>
<td>A young woman from the first group asks a question. The organiser and Vanessa respond. The representatives of the second group move back to their seats. The organiser, gesticulating energetically, speaks about the importance of the work done in the workshop and how she will be using it. The organiser talks about further work in the promotion of e-popular initiatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:07</td>
<td>A young woman from the third group asks about e-democracy in other organisations. The speaker responds that even though their time is up, she can certainly talk about things done elsewhere. She talks about a few great examples from elsewhere in the world and how important it is to keep these kinds of activities going.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:08</td>
<td>The organiser asks the participants to sign their names on the large sheets of paper and bring these to her. Vanessa stands up, thanks the speaker, and hands her a gift bag. Applause. The participants stand up and start returning the desks to their original places upon the initiative of one of the young women. A young man walks up to the speaker; they exchange some thoughts and business cards.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Germany Appendices

Appendix A (Germany): Interviews
WP# 8 Appendix

your signed agreement letter with the organisation, Interviews of Greenpeace 1)

| I | Genau es ist ja hat [Name Interviewer_in 2] schon ein bisschen erzählt, dass das ja auch für ihre Masterarbeit ist und auch für das europäische Projekt. Und uns interessiert wirklich, wie du zur [Umweltjugendorganisation] eigentlich gekommen bist und was du zu ehrenamtlichem Engagement und Einsatz von Jugendlichen denkst. Was dich jetzt motiviert dich da einzubringen. Manchmal schreibe ich mir mal was {au}, damit ich später noch einmal nachfragen kann. Es gibt keine richtigen und keine falschen Antworten. Du erzählst einfach alles, was dir einfällt und wenn dir etwas unklar ist oder so, kannst auch jederzeit fragen. Genau, wenn wir das dann abtippen und auswerten, steht auch nicht dein Name da. Gut, hast du erst einmal noch Fragen bevor wir loslegen? Okay #00:00:57-2#
| B | Einfach anfangen oder? #00:00:56-1#
| I | Genau, würde einfach was fragen, falls noch etwas unklar ist, einfach fragen. #00:01:07-1#
| I | Mich würde erst einmal interessieren, wie du auf die Idee gekommen bist, zur [Umweltjugendorganisation] in [Stadt] zu gehen. #00:01:07-5#
| B | Also ich weiß nicht, ob du das kennst, es gibt den Schülerfreiwilligentag in [Stadt]? #00:01:11-3#
| I | Ne, kenne ich nicht. #00:01:13-0#
| B | Da gibt es, da hängen immer so Listen aus mit Organisationen und da hat man dann einen Tag Einsatz, wo man da helfen kann und da habe ich dann mal ein Jahr einen Zaun gestrichen. Dann gab es auch einmal die Möglichkeit bei [Umweltorganisation] dabei zu sein. Das war dann ein ziemlich langer Tag, acht Stunden oder so. Da | I | Exactly, [Name Interviewer_in 2] already mentioned that the Interview is for her Master thesis as well as the European Project. What really interests us, is how you came to the [environmental youth organization] and what you think about the volunteering of teenagers. What motivates you to engage in this at the moment. I will sometimes write something down to inquire further info. There are no right or wrong answers. Just tell us everything that comes to mind and if somethings are unclear don’t be afraid to ask. Exactly, and the interview will be anonymised. Okay, so do you have any questions before we start? Okay #00:00:57-2#
| B | Should I just start? #00:00:56-1#
| I | Yes, I would just start of by asking you something. If there are anymore questions, just ask. #00:01:07-1#
| I | First of all I would like to know how you came to the [environmental youth organization] in [City]. #00:01:07-5#
| B | Do you know the day for Volunteering as a pupil in [City]? #00:01:11-3#
| I | No, I don’t know it. #00:01:13-0#
| B | There are lists that hang out in the school with Organizations that could use your help for one day. One year I helped paint a fence. And once there was the possibility of going to [environmental NGO]. It was quite a long day, we had to be there for eight hours or something like that. We drew some banners and did a Demonstration on the same day. It was publicity for the Anti-Coal-Groups and they also advertised the [environmental youth organization], which didn’t exist yet. The Organization was supposed to be founded by adults first of all. So [Other group member], who is |
haben wir Banner gemalt und eine richtige Demonstration gemacht. Als Werbung für die Antikohleketten und da haben die Werbung gemacht für die [Umweltjugendorganisation], die es aber noch nicht gab. Die sollte erst gegründet werden von Erwachsenen. Und da haben [Name anderes Gruppenmitglied] und ich, die ja jetzt auch noch in der Gruppe ist, gedacht: „He, ja das ist doch cool, lass uns da mal hin gehen.“ und haben dann noch [Name anderes Gruppenmitglied] gefragt und sind dann dahn zusammen hingegangen. Und haben sozusagen die Gruppe mitgegründet, also es war so der Aufhänger, das wir mit den Erwachsenen die Aktion mitgemacht haben. #00:02:03-4#

I Cool, and when was this? #00:02:03-4#

B It was about 3 years ago. I’m not to sure though. #00:02:12-1#

I And who organizes the info-day? Where was it? At your school, right? #00:02:14-6#

B That was, so we met right here [Group room]. I think it is an initiative by the city administration, and kindergarten and other Institutions are also involved. You could do a whole lot of different things and [environmental NGO] needed some publicity and thought (incomprehensible). It hasn’t been done again since I joined. We thought it would be quite cool, but oh well. #00:02:39-9#

I Okay, sounds interesting. What are the most interesting things and topics for you? #00:02:48-0#

B It is mostly about the preservation of the environment. I personally find it super important, especially due to the greater amount of pollution through modern technology, that we are sensitized for the protection of the environment and the young people are super important for this, as you say. And that is absolutely true. At the moment we have a campaign about “Mobility”. We did a bike demonstration, I don’t know if you heard something about it? #00:03:24-2#

I Mhm (affirmatively). #00:03:24-1#

B I’m super fascinated about this at the moment, but there is a whole lot more, for example the meat campaign in [Shopping mall] at the moment. #00:03:33-5#

I And do you have other things you do during your spare time next to [environmental NGO]? #00:03:42-9#
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I</th>
<th>Mhm (bejahend) #00:03:24-1#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Und das finde ich zur Zeit super spannend aber es gibt auch ganz viele andere Sachen, die Fleischkampagne zur Zeit im [Einkaufszentrum] #00:03:33-5#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Und gibt es noch etwas anderes, was du in deiner Freizeit machst neben [Umweltorganisation]? #00:03:42-9#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Ja, soll ich jetzt alles erzählen? #00:03:42-9#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Gerne, also ich würde gerne ein bisschen wissen, was dich sonst noch so interessiert? #00:03:46-3#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Also ich spiele Querflöte, auch mit anderen Leuten zusammen, aber nicht im Orchester, und Theater relativ viel im Moment, weil wir Aufführungen haben und so. Dann {haben} wir an der Schule eine Schülerfirma, wo wir eine Partnerschule in [anderes Land als Heimatland] {haben}. Da setzten wir uns ein für fairen Handel und organisieren Buffets und so und unterstützten mit den Spenden unsere Partnerschule. {Wir} hatten wir auch neulich einen Schüleraustausch, das war ziemlich stressig, weil parallel die Fahrraddemo lief. Das war ganz schön viel auf einmal und dann bin ich noch in der Jungengemeinde, also christlich #00:04:19-1#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Ich würde jetzt einfach noch ein paar Fragen dazu stellen, warum du dich noch einmal genau, du dich [Umweltorganisation] entschieden hast? #00:04:31-7#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Mhm (bejahend). #00:04:34-2#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Was würdest du denn sagen, was motiviert dich so bei [Umweltorganisation] mit zu machen? #00:04:42-4#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Es ist einerseits ein schöner Aufhänger sich zu treffen, mit Freunden, mit Leuten die so ein bisschen die gleiche Orientierung haben, was (...) Umwelt angeht oder halt ein bisschen tiefgründiger schürfen als nur feiern gehen oder so. Und dann kann man auch irgendwelche Aktionen machen. Ich finde es eigentlich immer super auf der Straße auf irgendetwas hinzuweisen. #00:05:23-5#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Yes, should I tell you about all of it? #00:03:42-9#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Sure, I would like to know what other things you are interested in? #00:03:46-3#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>So I play the flute, together with others as well, but not in an orchestra and act a lot at the moment, because we have performances and such. Next we have a pupil’s company at our school where we have a partner school in [other country]. In this we have the chance to establish some fair trade and we organize buffets and similar things and support our partner school with donations. We recently had a pupil exchange, which was quite stressful, because the bike demonstration was at the same time. That was quite a lot at once, and I’m also in the youth commune, so christian. #00:04:19-1#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>I would like to asked you some more questions about the reasons for choosing exactly [environmental NGO]? #00:04:31-7#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Mhm (affirmatively). #00:04:34-2#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>What motivates you to be active in [environmental NGO]? #00:04:42-4#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>On one hand it is a nice way to meet friends, and people with similar views, concerning the environment as well as having a deeper exchange and communication than just partying. And one can do events. I nearly always find it great to publicly show up interesting facts. Precisely in the youth group there are a lot of possibilities to use creative methods. Once we used chalk as an agent for our action, so that everything was colorful and happy and as creative as possible, that’s what I like the most about [environmental youth organization]. Yeah, did that answer your question? #00:05:23-5#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Okay. #00:05:25-9#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>So you have also been active in other groups? #00:05:30-8#</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| B | To be honest not yet, but I never saw the chance to yet. I asked [other environmental NGO], they often
Gerade in der Jugendgruppe gibt es die Möglichkeit das kreativ zu machen. Wir haben mal Straßenkreide benutzt als Aktionsmittel und so dann halt ganz bunt und fröhlich zu machen und kreativ wie möglich, das finde ich eigentlich am coolsten an der [Umweltjugendorganisation] Ja, hat das die Frage beantwortet? #00:05:23-5#

I Mhm (bejahend). #00:05:25-9#

B Okay. #00:05:25-9#

I Also warst auch schon mal in anderen Gruppen aktiv? #00:05:30-8#


I Okay und würden dich die Organisationen, die du jetzt schon genannt hast oder auch andere auch in Frage kommen? #00:06:18-3#

B Ja, ich glaube auf alle Fälle. Aber jetzt nicht so viel parallel. Ich glaube, da ist es besser sich für eins richtig engagieren als für drei. #00:06:30-0#

I Ja, und gibt es für dich auch ein persönliches Ziel, das du für dich mit [Umweltjugendorganisation] verfolgst? Also liegt dir irgendetwas richtig am Herzen? #00:06:38-5#

B Naja es ist auf alle Fälle wichtig, dass man erst einmal auf sich selber schaut, wie immer. Und dann, also dass man nicht für etwas Werbung macht, das man nicht vertritt oder so. Also dass man es als Aufhänger nimmt selbst informiert zu sein. #00:06:53-2#

had stands here. They always said: “Sorry, but in [city] there is no youth group.” And I find [environmental youth organization] more interesting, because they have a wider spectrum and [other environmental NGO] as far as I know only works with animals and [other environmental youth organization] goes deeper into environment and peace. I also find [children's health organization] quite interesting. But I haven’t found a direct contact to them yet. That’s why it is the first for me. #00:06:10-9#

I Mhm (affirmatively), Okay, what would you say is the most important goal of your group, that of [environmental youth organization] [city]? #00:07:09-3#

B Momentarily to gather members. So that we are more young people, so that they are able to change something and so they aren't so ignorant and keep on throwing there plastic waste everywhere. That they gain a view for the important topics. #00:07:33-7#

I Okay and would the other organizations, which you just named, be a viable option for you? #00:06:18-3#

B I think so, most likely. But not parallel to each other. I think it is better to volunteer for one entirely, than for three. #00:06:30-0#

I Okay, and do you have a personal goal which you are following with [environmental youth organization]? Is there something that you really want to achieve? #00:06:38-5#

B Well it is definitely important, that you look after yourself first of all, as always. And then, that you don't support something, that you don't represent or something like that. So that you can take it as a help to stay informed on the topic. #00:06:53-2#

I Mhm (affirmatively), Okay, what would you say is the most important goal of your group, that of [environmental youth organization] [city]? #00:07:09-3#

B I think we aren't that few at the moment. I believe six or eight or something. #00:07:41-0#

I Okay #00:07:41-4#
Mhm (bejahend) okay, was würdest du denn sagen, ist denn das wichtigste Ziel eurer Gruppe, also das der [Umweltjugendorganisation] [Stadt]? #00:07:09-3#

B Momentan Mitglieder zu sammeln. Damit wir mehr sind und viele junge Leute, dass sie da sind, um etwas zu ändern und ihnen es nicht so am Arsch vorbei gehen soll und sie weiter ihr Plastikzeug irgendwo hin schmeiße. Dass sie einfach Aufmerksamkeit schaffen für wichtige Themen. #00:07:33-7#

I Wie groß ist denn die Gruppe gerade? #00:07:33-7#

B Ich glaube, wir sind momentan gar nicht so wenige. Ich glaube sechs oder acht oder so. #00:07:41-0#

I Okay. #00:07:41-4#

B Ich weiß es gerade nicht so. #00:07:41-4#

I Aber ihr wärt gerade, also ihr wärt gerne mehr? #00:07:46-2#

B Ja, klar. #00:07:47-2#

I Okay. Gibt es eine Erfahrung die machst oder gemacht hast, die du besonders einprägsam fandst in der Gruppe? #00:07:57-8#

B Ehrlich gesagt nicht. #00:08:05-2#

I Und gibt es etwas, wo du so sagst, das war die wichtigste Erfahrung mit [Umweltjugendorganisation]? #00:08:12-6#

B Also es ist natürlich immer eine krasse Erfahrung, wenn du so etwas selber organisiert und selbst auf der Straße stehst und weißt: „Ja, da habe ich viel reingesteckt und jetzt habe ich es geschafft.“ Und wenn dann sogar Leute kommen und ein gutes Feedback geben. Aber so etwas ganz krasses hatte ich jetzt noch nicht. #00:08:28-5#

I Mhm (bejahend). Ja also was glaubst du denn, was Menschen durch ihre Mitwirken bewirken

B I don't exactly know at the moment. #00:07:41-4#

I But you are recruiting momentarily so you would like to be more? #00:07:46-2#

B Yes, for sure. #00:07:47-2#

I Okay. Is there an experience in the group that you make or made which you found especially memorable? #00:07:57-8#

B To be honest not really. #00:08:05-2#

I Is there a moment which you would say, that was the most important experience with [environmental youth organization]? #00:08:12-6#

B Naturally it is an awesome experience to organize something by yourself and go the streets and know: “Yeah, I put a lot of Energy into this and now it is finally accomplished.” And if people come to you and give you a good feedback. But I haven’t had something real extraordinary. #00:08:28-5#

I Mhm (affirmatively). Okay so what do you think people can achieve through there contributions? #00:08:41-1#

B From the point of view of our group? #00:08:41-7#

I Yes, and in general when people volunteer.

B Well, it definitely is one person more, which is informed and shows interest. One more who can motivate people to join in. #00:09:00-4#

I Do you have the feeling you can change something? #00:09:05-4#

B Not me by myself, but together with others surely. For example if I went running around and would tell people: “Pick up your stuff!” and be running after them and maybe even picking up their stuff, that would probably be quite pointless. But if we were four people running around with a cool banner or we would draw something on the street, maybe we’d shout, have cool flyers, then I think we would be more convincing. To be by yourself would probably be a little weird. #00:09:33-8#
können? #00:08:41-1#

B Jetzt aus unserer Gruppe? #00:08:41-7#

I Ja oder generell, wenn sich Menschen engagieren. #00:08:48-0#

B Naja, es ist auf alle Fälle immer einer mehr der Bescheid weiß und der Interesse zeigt. Einer mehr, der auch andere Leute motivieren kann was zu tun. #00:09:04-4#

I Hast du das Gefühl, dass du etwas bewirken kannst? #00:09:05-4#

B Ich alleine nicht, aber mit anderen zusammen schon. Also wenn ich alleine herumrennen würde und sagen würde: „Hebt euer Zeug auf!“ und den Leuten hinter rennen würde und das Zeug vielleicht noch aufhebe, dann wäre das wahrscheinlich ziemlich sinnlos. Aber wenn wir zu viert durch die Straßen laufen und vielleicht noch ein cooles Banner haben oder was auf die Straße malen, vielleicht noch etwas rufen, coole Flyer haben, dann denke ich, ist so etwas überzeugender. Als so einer alleine, das kommt dann etwas komisch. #00:09:33-8#

I Gibt es etwas, woran du das auch merkst, dass das eine Veränderung mit sich bringt? #00:09:39-4#

B Naja, man hat halt das Zusammenhaltsgefühl. Dass man nicht allein da steht, traut man sich auch mehr. #00:09:47-6#

I Gibt es auch eine Reaktion von den anderen Menschen? Weil die irgendwie mit einem ins Gespräch kommen und eine Rückmeldung geben? #00:09:56-9#

B Ja obwohl ich glaube, das liegt jetzt nicht direkt daran ob man jetzt alleine geht oder mit anderen zusammen. Es gibt halt Leute, die sind total verschlossen, wenn irgendjemand auf der Straße steht und Flyer verteilt. Dass ist egal, was das ist. Ob es für Kinder ist oder für eine Partei oder für die Umwelt. Die wollen einfach nur weggehen, manche nehmen auch nur den Flyer mit und sagen "ja Danke" und dann fliegt er gleich in {den} Müll. Und es gibt aber auch Leute, die sind...

#00:10:45-5#

I Weil man da nicht mehr aus dem Gespräch raus kommt oder? #00:10:48-1#

B Und weil man eben zu wenig weiß und dann so Sachen kommen, wo man so denkt: „Das ist totaler Schwachsinn“ aber {man} kann auch nicht gegen halten, weil die Leute so überzeugt davon sind. #00:11:00-6#

I Also, das man nicht richtig gut ins Gespräch kommen kann? #00:11:05-3#

B Ja. #00:11:05-3#

I Okay. #00:11:07-8#

B Kann halt auch nicht argumentieren, beziehungsweise gegenhalten. #00:11:12-1#

I Mhm (bejahend). Ist dir das schon einmal passiert? #00:11:14-3#

B Nein mir noch nicht, aber ich weiß, dass es schon anderen passiert ist. Ich war auch selbst bei den Aktionen dabei, aber ich selbst habe es noch nicht erlebt. #00:11:25-4#

I Würdest du sagen, du unterscheidest dich von anderen Jugendlichen, die nicht bei [Umweltjugendorganisation] sind? #00:11:30-0#


other. I was there when it happened, but I didn't experience it myself. #00:11:25-4#

I Would you say you are different from other teenagers that aren’t in [environmental youth organization]? #00:11:30-0#

B From some I would say so, but not from everyone. I definitely have people in my class that live very ecologically friendly, probably even more so than me and eat very healthy and nearly never use cars and everything. But there are also people that don’t care about anything. They leave there stuff lying around and eat pretty much anything just as long as it is cheap. They buy loads of things, of which they then only wear one. So it depends, I think I’m pretty average. #00:12:04-3#

I Mhm (affirmatively). But you are mindful about the things that you just named? Are those things important to you? Does [environmental youth organization] and your lifestyle belong together, so that you don’t buy to much, and things with a higher quality? #00:12:24-9#

B Well I think I wouldn’t accuse myself as much if I wasn’t in [environmental youth organization]. Because you tell yourself: “Hey, you are part of a movement and you aren’t eating organic produce again or it’s imported from America” but I try to be mindful, but I do eat oranges and bananas every so often or buy a t-shirt, that I don’t wear as often. But I try to take care. #00:12:48-7#

I What is especially challenging in your group? #00:12:56-8#

B Organizing, because we are all quite messy. #00:13:02-1#

I Mhm (affirmatively). #00:13:04-2#

B I think so. #00:13:05-3#

I Would you say more during the meetings or the events? #00:13:10-6#

B More the events. We have pretty cool ideas, but later everyone is to lazy or confused so that we don’t achieve a lot and we have to set precise deadlines, but even then it doesn’t always work out well. So it takes its time and after half a year we get our idea done. It’s still
Kaufen hunderttausend Sachen, wovon sie nur eine Sache anziehen oder so. Also {es} ist verschieden, ich glaube, ich bin relativer Durchschnitt. #00:12:04-3#

I Mhm (bejahend) aber die Sachen, die du jetzt genannt hast achtet du darauf? Ist das so für dich wichtig? Gehört das für dich zusammen [Umweltjugendorganisation] und dein Verhalten, dass du dann darauf achtet nicht so viel zu kaufen und gute Sachen einzukaufen? #00:12:24-9#

B Also ich glaube, ich würde mir nicht so viele Vorwürfe machen, wenn ich nicht bei [Umweltjugendorganisation] wäre. Weil man sich dann immer sagt: „Hey du engagierst dich dafür aber jetzt isst du schon wieder nicht Bio oder aus Amerika“ aber ich versuche darauf zu achten aber natürlich esse ich auch mal Orangen oder Bananen oder kaufe doch mal ein T-Shirt, dass ich dann nicht so oft anziehe, aber ich versuch drauf zu achten. #00:12:48-7#

I Was findest du als besonders herausfordernd in eurer Gruppe? #00:12:56-8#

B Organisation, weil wir alle ziemlich verpeilt sind. #00:13:02-1#

I Mhm (bejahend). #00:13:04-2#

B Ich glaube das. #00:13:05-3#

I Also eher von den Gruppentreffen oder den Aktionen oder? #00:13:10-6#

B Von den Aktionen. Wir haben relativ coole Ideen, aber dann sind wir entweder zu faul oder zu verpeilt, dass wir es nicht hinkriegen und dann muss man sich immer ganz klare Termine setzen, aber manchmal klappt das dann auch nicht so gut. Dann dauert es immer ein halbes Jahr bis wir es dann zu Stande bekommen. Es ist trotzdem schön und wenn wir es dann schaffen macht es Spaß. #00:13:39-8#

I Gibt es etwas, das du anderes machen würdest oder veränderst würdest in der Gruppe, wenn du die Möglichkeit hättest? #00:13:43-4#

nice and when we’ve finally made it’s also fun. #00:13:39-8#

I Is there something you would change about and in the group, if you had the possibility? #00:13:43-4#

B Yes, and I do have the possibility, we already talked about structuring our plenum better. We want to include a time for discussion at the end, where we have time to talk about the topics that are relevant for [environmental NGO] at the moment. We have only done it a few times, because we talked about other things instead. That would be really cool, but I don't do enough right now to change something myself. #00:14:17-4#

I Okay, but what is successful? In which tasks do you succeed in and in which not so much? #00:14:26-9#

B Well I think we have a pretty good atmosphere in the group, so that we can talk to each other and there hasn’t been any big fights and we are all quite equal in our positions which is great. What doesn’t work to well, no what also works well is if you say: “It has to be done till next week”, then that usually works out well. Because you feel obliged to do it, sometimes it still doesn’t work out, but usually there is a good reason why not. So the agreements go smoothly, you just have to make them. #00:15:04-1#

I Okay. Are you all friends with each other? #00:15:08-2#

B I wouldn’t necessarily say that, but we get along with each other and I think we are more like superficial friends. #00:15:14-8#

I Is everyone from the same school? #00:15:20-7#

B No, we’re not. We are from five different schools actually. #00:15:27-3#

I I would now like to ask you some questions about your meetings, because I have only been there once so far and they interest me. So say you would have to
Ja, also ich habe ja die Möglichkeit, also wir haben auch schon einmal nachgedacht, dass wir unser Plenum besser strukturieren und da hatten wir die Idee, das am Ende von jedem Plenum eine Diskussionszeit einbringen, wo man dann richtig über die Themen diskutiert, die gerade [Umweltorganisation] relevant sind. Das haben wir dann jetzt nur ganz ganz selten gemacht, weil wir dann über andere Sachen geredet haben. Das wäre auf alle Fälle cool, aber da steuere ich einfach zu wenig bei, als dass das jetzt durch mich verändert werden könnte. #00:14:17-4#

Okay, und was gelingt, also welche Aufgaben gelingen gut in der Gruppe und welche eher nicht? #00:14:26-9#

Also, ich glaube, wir haben ein echt gutes Gruppenklima, so dass wir uns alle gut vertragen und noch kein krasser Streit entstanden ist und wir sind auch alle ziemlich gleichberechtigt, das ist auch echt schön. Was nicht gut klappt, ist halt nein, was gut klappt ist halt wenn man sagt: „Bis nächste Woche musst du das unbedingt haben“, dann klappt das meistens. Also weil man sich halt auch verpflichtet fühlt, manchmal klappt es auch nicht, aber dann ist es auch immer berechtigt, das es nicht klappt. Also eigentlich ist die Absprache schon ganz gut, man muss nur halt Absprachen treffen. #00:15:04-1#

Okay, seid ihr alle miteinander befreundet? #00:15:08-2#

Weiß ich nicht, ob man das sagen kann, aber wir verstehen uns gut und ich glaube oberflächliche Freunde. #00:15:14-8#

Seid ihr, seid ihr alle aus einer Schule? #00:15:20-7#

Nein sind wir nicht. Sogar von fünf verschiedenen Schulen. #00:15:27-3#

Ich würde jetzt noch ein paar Fragen zu euren Treffen stellen, weil ich ja erst einmal da war und das würde mich noch mal interessieren. Also angenommen, du würdest jetzt jemanden der euch nicht kennt, eure Gruppe beschreiben, was würdest du erzählen? #00:15:44-7#

Beschreiben, describe your group to someone you don't know the group or organization, what would you tell them? #00:15:44-7#

If I want the person to join our group I would tell them about our events and how fun they are. But if I would only have to say something about the group, then I would say that we meet each other every week and talk about ourselves and that we organize events, which takes quite long, but also is fun. I like to come here because it is also a good compensation. But it's a harmonious group and it is fun, just not super productive. #00:16:20-6#

Okay, and how would you describe a normal meeting of the group? #00:16:28-0#

Well we meet each other. We talk a little about what happened last week or however long we haven't seen each other and then we talk about what is on the agenda. There are people that have contact to [other city] and get emails from there or from the adults of our group. They're about what is happening and what they are doing, which new topics there are, where you can help out or join in, if there are any events coming up. And then we think about the events that we want to do or are planning at that moment. Or if there are similar events on. For instance sometimes there are events that are held nationally, where you even get material sent to you. So that's pretty much the procedure. #00:17:16-4#

When there are national events, are you supposed to do them or is it free for you to decide? #00:17:20-3#

We can always decide whether to join in. It is always practical though, because you have things prepared already. #00:17:24-2#

Yes. #00:17:26-7#

But you don't have to. #00:17:29-8#

And how do you decide what is discussed during the meeting? #00:17:29-2#

Well there are the ones that get emails, they get them the whole week and I personally save them and see what I have to say about them. We have a whiteboard overhead [reference to group room] which we use,

#00:16:20-6#

I Und wie würdest du eine ganz normale Sitzung bei euch beschreiben? Also so ein Treffen?

#00:16:28-0#

B Naja, wir treffen uns. Unterhalten uns kurz, was los so war die Woche über oder so lange wie wir uns halt nicht gesehen haben und dann besprechen wir halt, was so ansteht. Es gibt Leute, die haben einen Draht zu [andere Stadt], die bekommen E-Mails oder auch E-Mails von den Erwachsenen aus unsere Gruppe. Was die so machen und was so neue Themen sind, wo man so mitmachen kann, ob es Veranstaltungen gibt oder so. (...) Und dann gucken wir, ob wir selber eine Aktion haben, die wir gerade planen, ob wir eine Idee haben für eine Aktion, die wir so Aktionen machen könnten. Oder ob es gerade so Aktionen gibt. Also es gibt manchmal so Aktionen, die dann bundesweit stattfinden, wo man richtig Material geschickt bekommen kann. Ja das ist so unser Ablauf.

#00:17:16-4#

I Und wenn das so bundesweit ist, solltet ihr das dann auch als Aktion machen oder ist das euch dann freigestellt?

#00:17:20-3#

B Das ist uns freigestellt. Das ist halt immer praktisch, weil man dann was vorgegeben hat.

#00:17:24-2#

I Ja. #00:17:26-7#

B Aber {man} muss nicht #00:17:29-8#

I Und wie legt ihr fest, was vorgegeben wird in den einzelnen Sitzungen?

#00:17:29-2#

B Es gibt also, die die E-Mail bekommen, die when we have a lot to say and write down what we have to talk about and cross it off afterwards.

#00:17:51-7#

I Okay and how do you get information about what other groups of [environmental youth organization] are doing? #00:18:00-5#

B Over Facebook and we also have a page on the internet [name of the internet platform for members] where we are connected and I don't know if one of our group members is active because I'm not very active and we were only recently signed up, but there is nearly always information there. Otherwise you can always request info. There are also big meetings for the youth organizations at different times, where everyone is invited and once a year for the whole [environmental NGO]. Where everyone gets together and the best events are presented, our event was also presented, and others can then copy them. If it was a really good event.

#00:18:49-6#

I This [name of the internet platform for members] is provided by [environmental NGO] right?

B Yes, it's like Facebook only for [environmental NGO] members.

#00:19:01-7#

I How would you describe your roll in the group?

#00:19:08-9#

B Well, I haven't been there for quite a while. I think I'm not necessarily the most responsible of us, but I'm engaged and I was till recently the deputy contact person. That's why I still hold contact to [other city headquarters] and so on, but I'm not nationally active and I'm also not in the adult's group as a coordinator. I have had contact with [other city headquarters] stuff, but I was never there and wasn't at so many [name for trans-regional meeting] and I'm not that good with the adults as for instance [name of other group member] who knows nearly all of them. But I am engaged in activities, it's not like I just watch everyone else and I bring in my own ideas.

#00:19:59-9#
bekommen die über die ganze Woche und ich mache es so, dass ich mir die dann immer speichere und dann gucke, dass das das habe ich halt zu sagen. Wir haben oben [Bezug zu Gruppenraum] auch so ein Whiteboard, das benutzen wir, wenn halt viel zu sagen ist und schreiben uns dann richtig an was zu besprechen ist und haken das dann immer ab. #00:17:51-7#

I Okay ja und wie bekommt ihr auch Informationen darüber was andere [Umweltjugendorganisation der gleichen Organisation] gerade machen? #00:18:00-5#

B Über Facebook und dann gibt es so eine Internetseite [Name für Internetplattform der Mitglieder], da sind alle [Umweltjugendorganisationmitglieder] miteinander vernetzt und also ich weiß nicht, ob von uns da irgendjemand richtig aktiv ist, weil ich bin kaum aktiv und wir sind auch alle irgendwie vor kurzem dort erst angemeldet worden und da gibt es fast immer Informationen. Sonst kann man auch nachfragen. Es gibt auch große Treffen immer zu verschiedenen Zeiten, da werden auch alle immer eingeladen, also jetzt Jugendtreffen und dann gibt es aber auch einmal im Jahr so ein [Umweltorganisation]. Sozusagen, wo dann alle zusammen kommen und da werden dann auch die besten Aktionen vorgestellt, unsere Aktion wurde da auch vorgestellt und die können dann auch andere nachmachen sozusagen. Also wenn es eine besonders tolle Aktion war. #00:18:49-6#

I Dieses [Name für Internetplattform der Mitglieder] wird von [Umweltorganisation] zur Verfügung gestellt oder? #00:18:57-5#

B Ja ist halt wie Facebook nur für [Umweltorganisation] Mitglieder. #00:19:01-7#

I Wie würdest du dich denn, deine Rolle in der Gruppe beschreiben? #00:19:08-9#

B Naja, ich war jetzt relativ lange nicht da. Ich glaube, ich bin nicht so die Verantwortungsbewusste bei uns, aber schon aktiv dabei und ich war bis vor kurzem stellvertretende Ansprechpartnerin. Deswegen habe ich auch noch Kontakt zu [andere Stadt Hauptzentrale] und so aber ich bin jetzt nicht so

I Are there specific jobs or positions in your group? #00:20:04-7#

B So there is the person in charge of contact the [name of the position by organization], that is [name of other group member] and usually a second person for [name of the position by organization], because it is just easier if two people do the job, but they just have the privilege to get emails and a lot of them at that. That's not really a privilege and for the rest we are all equal and no one does a lot more than the other. Before this we had a very motivated person for the contact with others, and she wanted to always distribute all the tasks, but in the end she kept on doing everything and the rest of us nothing. That wasn't very wise and she ended up very over-worked and we weren't burdened at all and weren't happy that she did everything, but it wasn't possible to change it. Now it is definitely better. #00:20:55-7#

I And how is it during the events? How do you distribute the tasks there? #00:20:57-6#

B It always depends, we always name the tasks: “Someone has to go the police, someone has to go to the public order office, someone has to order the fabric, someone has to buy paint.” Then we see who can organize what, if somebody has time when the police station is open and if someone is going to walk past the paint shop. However it fits best. #00:21:19-2#

I Okay, let's say a new member would join your group, how would you react? #00:21:23-9#

B We'd be happy (laughing). #00:21:27-9#

I How would the meeting be? #00:21:26-2#

B So we recently gained a new member [name of other group member], she joined a few weeks ago, but I wasn't there I met her the first time today. Usually we do a round of introductions with secret hero power.

I Gibt es so verschiedene Positionen oder Aufgaben, die verschiedene Mitglieder bei euch haben? 

B Na, es gibt halt diesen Ansprechpartner den [Organisationssinster Name für die Position], das ist jetzt [Name anderes Gruppenmitglied] und meistens noch einen zweiten [Organisationssinster Name für die Position], weil es einfach einfacher ist zu zweit, aber die haben einfach nur das Privileg E-Mails zu bekommen und davon halt extrem viele. Das ist jetzt eigentlich auch nicht so das Privileg und sonst ist es bei uns so, dass wir total gleichberechtigt sind und es gibt auch keinen, der viel mehr macht als ein anderer. Wir hatten es vorher so, dass wir eine Ansprechpartnerin hatten die halt total engagierte war und die wollte immer Aufgaben verteilen und dann hat sie irgendwie alles gemacht und wir haben gar nichts mehr gemacht. Das war irgendwie nicht ganz so geschickt und sie war dann ein bisschen überlastet und wir unterlastet und fanden es doof, dass sie immer alles macht, aber es ging ja nicht anders. Das ist jetzt auf jeden Fall besser. 

I Und bei den Aktionen wie ist es da? Also wie teilt ihr da die Aufgaben auf? 

B Ist immer ganz verschieden also wir sagen immer: „Ja es muss noch jemand zur Polizei gehen, {es} muss noch jemand zum Ordnungsamt gehen, {es} muss noch jemand Stoff bestellen, jemand Farbe kaufen.“ Dann gucken wir immer, wer was organisieren kann, ob jemand Zeit hat, wenn die Polizei offen hat und ob jemand zufällig am Farbenladen vorbei kommt.

So we name our name, age and how we got here and stuff like that and then we tell her about our group and ask the person how they got here? We also organized a newcomers meeting, because we were only three people. So that new people could come by and we told them what we had already done. We don't do that though, if only one person is new. In that case we are just happy about the new face in the group. And we have a normal meeting. The new person should try to memorize as much as possible, but if he/she doesn't it's not a problem either, then we just talk a little, so they have some contact to us. There are no newcomer rituals or something like that.

I You said something interesting: “secret hero power”. What do you mean with that exactly? 

B That is something our first [name of the position by organization] introduced, it's so the round of introductions isn't so rigid. You would for example say: “[name], I'm [age] years old, I've been part of the group since the beginning and my secret hero power would be flying.” Just what you would like to be able to do.

I Ah, cool. 

B I insist on it, that you (incomprehensible). 

I Nice, and that is originally from the person who co-founded the group? Is there something else that you always do when someone new comes into the group? And how do you know what the adults do? 

B Because we have our meeting once a month with the adults. I think we introduced that this year. During those meetings we can say we need more information and someone who can brief us on what [environmental NGO] thinks about it. And then there is the [name of the position by organization] that gets the emails that are sent over the mailing list, so all of the adult stuff as well and that works quite well. You have to read the emails or be able to filter them, so that you only read the important stuff and just in case we have the email addresses of the adults and can always approach them.
Wie es halt passt. #00:21:19-2#
I Okay, angenommen zu eurer Gruppe würde ein neues Mitglied kommen, wie würdet ihr reagieren? #00:21:23-9#
B Erfreut (lachend). #00:21:27-9#
I Wie sähe das Treffen aus? #00:21:26-2#
B Also wir haben ja gerade [Name anderes Gruppenmitglied] die ist vor ein paar Wochen, ich war auch nicht dabei, ich habe sie heute zum ersten Mal gesehen neu gekommen. Es ist meistens so, dass wir eine Vorstellungsrunde machen, mit geheimer Superkraft. Also Name, Alter und wie man hier her gekommen ist und so und dann erzählten wir kurz und fragten vor allem, warum sie gekommen sind. Wir hatten auch einmal sogar ein Neuentreffen organisiert, weil wir nur drei Leute waren. Dass halt neue Leute dazu kommen können und haben halt eben erzählt, was wir alles so schon gemacht haben. Alles und das machen wir nicht, wenn nur eine Person kommt. Da freuen wir uns eigentlich nur, dass sie zu uns gekommen ist. Ja und dann machen wir eigentlich ganz normales Plenum. {Die Person} soll sich halt möglichst viel einprägen, wenn sie es nicht macht ist eigentlich auch egal, dann unterhalten wir uns ein bisschen, dass sie Kontakt zu uns haben. Gibt jetzt keine direkten Aufnahme-rituale oder so. #00:22:22-6#
I Du hast etwas spannendes gesagt, geheime Superkraft. Was hat es damit auf sich? #00:22:23-5#
B Das hat unsere erste [Organisationsinterner Name für die Position] eingeführt, das ist einfach um die Vorstellungsrunde nicht so steif zu machen. Sagt man halt: „[Name], ich bin [Alter], bin schon seit der Gründung der Gruppe dabei und meine geheime Superkraft wäre Fliegen“, zum Beispiel. Halt das was man gerne könnte würde. #00:22:49-0#
I Ah cool. #00:22:55-5#
B Da bestehe ich drauf, dass sie das (unv). #00:22:54-8#
I So you do work together regularly, if you see each other all the time? #00:23:55-5#
B Yes, we are at the same events a lot and the adults can always join our activities, and we can nearly always participate in theirs, as long as they are not illegal. #00:24:04-1#
I Okay, and how do you do that? Is your group regularly at the events? #00:24:15-5#
B Yeah, oh by the events, no. It always depends if they invite us or not. #00:24:21-0#
I Did I understand you right, that a few adults are always at your events? #00:24:22-7#
B I think there always has to be an adult at our events and there always have been as well. Because it is also fun for them to do something creative. #00:24:32-0#
I So there events aren’t very creative? #00:24:35-2#
B Well, they have to do events to acquire money and to be able to buy new material. So they often have info stands or similar things with them. But they also do cool stuff no question. Things like clothing exchanges. #00:24:49-0#
I How do your meetings differ from there meetings? #00:24:52-9#
B They are way more organized, have more people and they have there group split in to different topics. For example forest or ocean, pesticides. Maybe there is a day about mobility. So they split up in to new groups, if there are new campaigns and meet in the small groups during the week and on [weekday] they have the big meeting where the groups get to hear what the other groups are doing. #00:25:23-9#
I And how many are in the group of the adults? #00:25:28-7#
B They also have quite a lot of inactive members. I think they are about forty and in the meetings there are around fifteen. #00:25:33-1#
I You have already talked about how you came to [environmental youth organization]. Do you know other people in your surrounding that are volunteers at
Schön, und das ist von der die die Gruppe mitgegründet hat? Gibt es noch etwas, dass ihr immer macht, wenn jemand neu in die Gruppe kommt? Und woher wisst ihr was die Erwachsenen machen? #00:23:12-3#

Na wir haben immer einmal im Monat zusammen Plenum. Das haben wir dieses Jahr neu eingeführt, glaube ich erst. Da können wir auch sagen, wir brauchen noch irgendjemanden, der uns darin brieft, der uns Informationen dazu geben kann was jetzt [Umweltorganisation] Meinung dazu ist. Dann gibt es noch [Organisationsinterner Name für die Position] die die E-Mails bekommen, die über den [Umweltorganisation] Verteiler geschickt werden, also halt auch durch die Erwachsenen und das läuft eigentlich ganz gut. Man muss die E-Mails halt lesen oder auch filtern können, was wichtig ist und was nicht und das dann nur lesen und sonst haben wir auch die E-Mailadressen von denen Erwachsenen und können immer auf die Zugehen. #00:23:50-0#

Also arbeitet ihr recht regelmäßig dann zusammen, wenn ihr euch immer seht? #00:23:55-5#

Ja, wir sind auch bei vielen Aktionen zusammen und die Erwachsenen können immer bei unseren Aktionen mit machen, und wir eigentlich immer mit bei ihren, es sei denn sie sind illegal. #00:24:04-1#

Ja, und wie macht ihr das? Seid ihr regelmäßig dabei bei den Aktionen? #00:24:15-5#

Ja, ach bei den Aktionen, ne. Kommt immer darauf an, ob sie uns einladen oder nicht. #00:24:21-0#

Aber habe ich das richtig verstanden, bei euren sind auf jeden Fall ein paar Erwachsene dabei? #00:24:22-7#

Also ich glaube, es muss immer jemand dabei sein, aber es sind immer ein paar dabei. Weil es denen auch Spaß macht, was Kreatives zu machen. #00:24:32-0#

Only the ones in youth group. #00:25:49-7#

Okay, and what about your parents or siblings? #00:25:52-5#

No, not that I know of. #00:25:54-5#

Okay. But would you say that your friends and family share the same views as [environmental NGO] would represent? #00:26:06-9#

Yep. #00:26:11-9#

And what are the subjects and views they share? Do you discuss or exchange specific things? #00:26:19-5#

We definitely talk about food and diet. That you have to regard where the produce is from. That it isn't the cheapest of the cheap. We are able to contribute to better conditions and we also regard trash and wastefulness of groceries, clothes, material in general, water and transport and so on. It's actually quite funny, when I have to go to another city and I ask my mum to take me, because we have a car, then my mum always says: “not you.” (laughing) Because I’m a volunteer at [environmental NGO] and if I demand something like that, then that is always (incomprehensible) (laughing). #00:26:58-0#

Okay, but do you often talk about these topics: mobility or life, diet? #00:27:07-4#

Not like in a big discussion. Only if it’s present through a situation or so. Then we point out to each other the situation. But it’s not like we talk about facts. #00:27:21-6#

Do you know any members, that have swapped from the youth group to the group of the adults? #00:27:26-1#

Mhm (affirmatively) our [name of the position by organization] is in the adult group now. #00:27:29-9#

And what do you think happened, when she swapped the group? #00:27:34-2#
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I</th>
<th>Also sind deren Aktionen jetzt nicht so kreativ? #00:24:35-2#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Naja, die müssen halt auch Aktionen machen, um Geld rein zu bekommen und um halt neues Material zu kaufen. Das sind dann halt oft Infostände oder so dabei. Aber sie machen auch coole Sachen, keine Frage. So etwas wie Kleidertausch. #00:24:49-0#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Wie unterscheiden sich denn eure Treffen von deren Treffen? #00:24:52-9#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Die sind viel organisiert, mehr Leute und die haben halt ihre Gruppe so eingeteilt, in Gebiete, in Themengebiete. So etwas wie Wald oder Meer, Pestizide. Vielleicht gibt es auch einen Mobilitätstag. Also die teilen sich immer neu auf, wenn es neue Kampagnen gibt und dann treffen sich auch einzeln zu den verschiedenen Themen unter der Woche und die machen [Wochentag] nur ihre Versammlung und die erzählen was es neues gibt von den großen Gruppen. #00:25:23-9#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Und wie groß ist die Erwachsenengruppe ungefähr? #00:25:28-7#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Die haben auch ziemlich viele inaktive Mitglieder. Ich glaube es sind so vierzig und zu den Treffen sind dann fünfzehn oder so da. #00:25:33-1#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Jetzt nur die aus der Jugend{gruppe}. #00:25:49-7#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Okay aber so Eltern, Geschwister? #00:25:52-5#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Ne, kenn ich nicht. #00:25:54-5#</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| I | Nicht, okay. Okay aber würdest du so sagen, dass die meisten deiner Freunde und deiner Familie so ähnliche Ansichten haben, wie die die

| B | Well she did, I don't know. When she came to us she was already in her last year of school and switched nearly straight after finishing and was at these meetings a lot and so on. They do a lot more. They have a lot less liberties from [other city headquarters], more regulations. Otherwise I couldn't say something has changed. So just less liberties really. #00:28:04-8# |
| I | Is it somehow connected to the age in which group one is? Or how is it regulated? #00:28:09-6# |
| B | I think as soon as you are out of school you don't really want to work with younger ones. Because you feel older, but theoretically the youth group is till you are 19 {years old}. But if someone that is 21 would still be in the group nobody would say anything or even if he or she is 25. I think you just wouldn't want to anymore. #00:28:30-4# |
| I | Okay (laughing). So you think there could be a specific reason why she wanted to switch? #00:28:41-5# |
| B | Out of interest. #00:28:45-8# |
| I | What I understood from you and already know about [environmental NGO] is that events are a part of the work [environmental NGO] does. What do you think is the idea behind it? #00:28:59-9# |
| B | To raise awareness in people. #00:29:04-4# |
| I | And what is your opinion to the events? #00:29:07-0# |
| B | If they are cool then it definitely makes sense to do them. If it is only an info stand, then in can be quite boring for the people organizing it and I think it doesn't have such a large effect. It doesn't appeal to as many people as for instance to paint bags. It can happen that, if you are painting bags, a lot of teenagers come by: "Oh, I want to paint a bag.” but don't want to know anything about the topics. But for us it is especially cool to attract young people so that we gain more members. And I find it important to do creative events and to have the liberties to do them. To sensitize people. The coolest thing is to change somebody's mind about something and to not only

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| B | To raise awareness in people. #00:29:04-4# |
| I | And what is your opinion to the events? #00:29:07-0# |
auch bei [Umweltorganisation] vertreten werden? #00:26:06-9#

B Ja. #00:26:11-9#

I Und welche Themen oder Meinungen sind das so? Tauscht ihr euch über bestimmte Sachen auch aus? #00:26:19-5#


I Okay aber sprecht ihr auch regelmäßig über solche Themen, Mobilität oder Leben, Ernährung? #00:27:07-4#

B Also jetzt nicht so diskussionsmäßig. Nur wenn es gerade so eine Situation ist oder so. Dann weisen wir uns gegenseitig drauf hin oder so. Aber jetzt nicht so Faktenwissen. #00:27:21-6#

I Und kennst du Mitglieder, die auch von der Jugendgruppe schon in die Erwachsenengruppe gewechselt sind? #00:27:26-1#

B Mhm (bejahend) unsere [Organisationsinterner Name für die Position] jetzt in der Erwachsenengruppe. #00:27:29-9#

I Und was glaubst du, hat sich da jetzt geändert, als sie die Gruppe geändert hat? #00:27:34-2#

B Na sie, ich weiß es nicht. Sie war halt vorher schon, als sie zu uns gekommen ist, war sie schon im letzten Schuljahr und ist dann fast direkt danach gewechselt und war halt vorher auch schon total viel bei den Erwachsenen dabei und

meet people that say: “Yes, I’m already doing that.” It is usually that way and then they still run around with plastic bags. #00:30:04-5#

I In what way does it play a role, that [environmental NGO] is functioning globally? #00:30:19-0#

B I didn’t exactly understand what you just meant. #00:30:19-0#

I Does it matter to you and for the events or how you find them, that [environmental NGO] isn’t only a national Organization, but that they are active internationally. Does that matter to you? #00:30:28-6#

B Not directly. I haven't had contact to the foreign [environmental NGO] yet. Don’t know, you start having contact with them as an adult. But it creates a little community spirit and it’s a good feeling to know, that people elsewhere are doing the same thing as you and have the same views, for example the same events. #00:30:51-0#

I If you hear that they are doing the same thing in another country. #00:30:54-7#

B Yes, of course. #00:30:56-3#

I Cool. We are nearly at the end of the interview. I would just like to know some things about yourself. You already mentioned that you were seventeen, right? #00:31:04-8#

B Yes. #00:31:08-7#

I And you have been at [environmental youth organization] for about three years? #00:31:15-2#

I And what are you doing at the moment? Do you still go to school? #00:31:15-2#

B Yes. #00:31:19-4#

I What year are you in? #00:31:19-4#

B Year eleven. #00:31:19-9#

I Year eleven and which school? #00:31:26-0#
weiß nicht. Die machen halt deutlich mehr. Die haben deutlich weniger Freiheiten von [andere Stadt Hauptzentrale] mehr Vorschriften. Sonst könnte ich nicht sagen, was sich da geändert hat. Also halt weniger Freiheit, ja. #00:28:04-8#

I Ist das irgendwie an das Alter gekoppelt, in welcher Gruppe man ist? Oder wie ist das? #00:28:09-6#

B Ich glaube, sobald man nicht mehr in der Schule ist, hat man auch nicht mehr so richtig Lust mit den jüngeren zu Arbeiten. Weil man sich selber erwachserener fühlt, aber so theoretisch ist die Jugendgruppe bis 19 {Jahre}. Aber wenn jetzt jemand mit 21 {Jahre} noch dabei ist, würde ich glaube ich, keiner was sagen auch mit 25 {Jahre}. Ich glaube, man selbst will das einfach nicht mehr. #00:28:30-4#

I Okay (lachend). Also meinst es gibt einen bestimmten Grund, warum sie weiter machen wollte? Warum sie dann zu den Erwachsenen gewechselt ist? #00:28:41-5#

B Aus Interesse. #00:28:45-8#

I Wie ich das jetzt schon verstanden habe und was ich auch von [Umweltorganisation] weiß, sind Aktionen ja so ein Bestandteil einfach von der Arbeit von [Umweltorganisation]. Was glaubst du denn, ist denn die Idee dahinter? #00:28:59-9#

B Leute drauf Aufmerksam machen. #00:29:04-4#

I Und wie ist deine Meinung dazu, zu den Aktionen? #00:29:07-0#

B Wenn sie cool sind, dann ist es gut sie zu machen. Wenn es nur Infostände sind, dann ist es für die, die dastehen langweilig und ich glaube, es hat auch nicht so eine große {Wirkung}. Es spricht nicht so viele Leute an, wie jetzt Beutel zu bemalen oder so. Es kann halt sein, wenn man Beutel bemalt, dass viele Jugendliche kommen: „Oh ich will einen Beutel bemalen“ und dann aber nichts über das Thema wissen wollen. Aber für uns gerade ist es cool junge Leute anzusprechen, um halt Mitglieder zu bekommen und so. Und da, also ich finde es wichtig kreative Aktionen zu
machen gerade für {sich} diese Freiheit zu nehmen. Ja hält zu sensibilisieren. Am schönsten ist immer, wenn man Leute umstimmen kann und nicht nur Leute trifft die sagen: „Ja das mache ich eh schon so.“. Es ist halt ganz oft so und dann laufen sie doch mit Plastiktüten herum. #00:30:04-5#

I In welcher Weise spielt es eine Rolle, dass [Umweltorganisation] global also weltweit agiert? #00:30:19-0#

B Das habe ich nicht genau verstanden. #00:30:19-0#

I Also spielt es für dich eine Rolle auch für die Aktionen oder so, wie du die Aktion findest, dass [Umweltorganisation] ja eigentlich, dass sie ja nicht nur in [Land] eine Organisation sind, {sondern} die sind ja weltweit unterwegs. Spielt das für dich eine Rolle? #00:30:28-6#

B Jetzt nicht direkt. Ich habe sowieso mit der ausländischen [Umweltorganisation] noch nichts zu tun gehabt. Weiß nicht, das hat man auch erst als Erwachsener. Aber es schafft natürlich so ein bisschen ein Gemeinschaftsgefühl und es fühlt sich auch gut an, wenn man weiß, ja woanders sind die Leute auch so drauf und sind sogar in der selben Aktion. #00:30:51-0#

I Wenn man das dann erfährt, dass die das auch in einem anderen Land machen? #00:30:54-7#

B Ja genau. #00:30:56-3#

I Cool. Wir sind fast am Ende vom Interview. Mich würden jetzt einfach noch ein paar Sachen zu deiner Person interessieren. Du hast ja schon gesagt, du bist siebzehn oder? #00:31:04-8#

B Ja. #00:31:08-7#

I Und du bist seit ungefähr drei Jahren in der [Umweltjugendorganisation] #00:31:15-1#

B Ja, ich glaube ja. #00:31:15-2#

I Und was machst du gerade? Also gehst du noch zu Schule? #00:31:19-4#
<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td>B Ja.</td>
<td>#00:31:19-4#</td>
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<tr>
<td>I Welche Klasse?</td>
<td>#00:31:19-4#</td>
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<tr>
<td>B Elfte.</td>
<td>#00:31:19-9#</td>
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<tr>
<td>I Elfte Klasse und welche Schule?</td>
<td>#00:31:26-0#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B [Schulname]</td>
<td>#00:31:26-0#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Und hast du dich vorher schon mal gegen eine andere Schule entschieden und irgendeine Schule gewechselt?</td>
<td>#00:31:33-9#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Ne, ich bin schon immer da. Seit der ersten Klasse.</td>
<td>#00:31:37-9#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Hast du, genau, noch irgendeine Frage an mich? Also wir haben es an sich geschafft. Ich fand es super spannend, noch einmal so zu hören, dass du die Gruppe mitgegründet hast. Das fand ich total cool. Hast du erst einmal noch eine Frage?</td>
<td>#00:31:53-7#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Nein.</td>
<td>#00:31:53-9#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Also klar, dann mache ich das Ding erst einmal aus und sage noch einmal Danke.</td>
<td>#00:31:55-1#</td>
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Ich erzähle dir einmal ein bisschen, wie das ist. Also es geht ein bisschen darum, das habe ich ja vorhin schon gesagt, seit wann du da bist [Umweltjugendorganisation]. Ihr habt ja diese Fahrradaktion gemacht, da warst du auch dabei?

B Mhm (bejahend) #00:00:46-7#

Ich würde einfach ein bisschen spezieller danach fragen. Wenn du noch Fragen hast, das ist die E-Mailadresse, da kannst du auch immer nachfragen. Du kannst mir eine E-Mail schreiben und sonst kannst du dir auch noch einmal das Projekt anschauen. Hast du so ein Interview schon einmal gemacht? #00:01:06-2#

B (unv.) #00:01:08-1#


B Mhm (bejahend). #00:02:03-5#

Hast du noch Fragen? Okay, wie bist du denn auf die Idee gekommen zu [Umweltjugendorganisation] zu kommen?

B Also eigentlich ist es so, dass mein bester Freund, also [Name] mich gefragt hat, ob ich nicht einfach mitkommen will, weil ich in die Richtung auch schon interessiert war. Der hatte das entdeckt und da bin ich dann einfach einmal mitgekommen. #00:02:22-3#

I Da hast du das erste Mal von denen gehört? #00:02:24-4#

I First of all I will tell you what is going to happen. So I already mentioned it is going to be about the time you have been at [environmental youth organization]. You organized a bike event right, you participated right? #00:00:46-3#

B Mhm (affirmatively). #00:00:46-7#

I I would like to ask you some specific questions about this. If you have any questions here is the email address, you can always ask. You can send me an email or look up the project. Have you done such an interview before? #00:01:06-2#

B (incomprehensible). #00:01:08-1#

I I can just explain it to you once more. It is about the Catch-EyoU-Project and how you came to be part of [environmental youth organization]. There is no right or wrong answer and if you don't understand something you can always ask. The plan is for you to talk as long as you still have something to say and then I ask the next question. If you are able to describe it in detail, it will be easier for me to make a picture of it. Then I'll record that and make a few notes, if that isn't a problem for you. Just so that I have something to get back to and structure the interview with. #00:02:00-0#

B Mhm (affirmatively). #00:02:03-5#

I Do you still have some questions? Okay, so where did the idea to join [environmental youth organization] come from? #00:02:09-1#

B My best friend [Name] just asked me if I wanted to come with him because my interests went into that sought of direction anyway. He somehow found the group and once I just went along with him. #00:02:22-3#

I Is that when you heard of the group for the first time? #00:02:24-4#

B Well, I had heard from [environmental NGO], but not that they had a group in this city. #00:02:28-5#

I Where did you about it? #00:02:34-5#
B Na, von [Umweltorganisation] gehört hatte ich schon einmal, aber nicht, dass es hier in der Stadt eine Gruppe gibt. #00:02:28-5#

I Wo hattest du das gehört? #00:02:34-5#

B Na, in Medien uns so. #00:02:34-7#

I Was würdest du sagen, was dich dabei so am stärksten interessiert? #00:02:39-9#

B Mich interessiert schon irgendwie, dass man halt die Möglichkeit hat aktiv zu werden. Weil es halt schon ein paar Sachen gibt, die so schieflaufen und wo ich denke, dass es eigentlich nicht so kompliziert wäre etwas da zu verbessern. Bevor man jetzt gar nichts macht und einfach nur schaut wie es so läuft. finde ich schwierig. Dabei zu sein finde ich jetzt nicht schlecht und man hat auf jeden Fall auch eine Menge Spaß. #00:03:20-5#

I Cool. Gibt es noch so andere Sachen, die du so neben [Umweltjugendorganisation] in deiner Freizeit machst? #00:03:24-6#

B Ja schon, zum einen ich bin halt relativ viel draußen. Ich fahre halt Mountainbike. Ich bin damit beschäftigt und dann bin ich noch als DJ aktiv. #00:03:40-9#

I Stark! Und wo machst du das? #00:03:44-0#

B Im [Ort]. Da gibt es zum einen Workshops und dann gibt es so eine Jugendveranstaltung, wo es von Jugendlichen für Jugendliche ist und dann noch private Feten, wenn man jemanden kennt. #00:04:04-7#

I Das ist ja toll! Und machst du das regelmäßig? #00:04:09-5#

B Ja also der Workshop ist regelmäßig und Auftritte ist halt so wie es fällt. Also mittlerweile ist es so, da ist einmal im Monat auf jeden Fall etwas. Oder manchmal ist es so, dass ich in einer Woche mehrere Sachen habe und dann halt ein bis zwei Monate nichts mehr. #00:04:24-8#

I Ich würde dich noch einmal genauer Fragen, #00:04:43-7#

B Ja also der Workshop ist regelmäßig und Auftritte ist halt so wie es fällt. Also mittlerweile ist es so, da ist einmal im Monat auf jeden Fall etwas. Oder manchmal ist es so, dass ich in einer Woche mehrere Sachen habe und dann halt ein bis zwei Monate nichts mehr. #00:04:24-8#

I Ich würde dich noch einmal genauer Fragen, #00:04:43-7#
warum du dich so für [Umweltjugendorganisation] entschieden hast oder was dich so interessiert? Was würdest du denn sagen, was dich besonders motiviert? Gibt es etwas, wenn du es so herausröstelisieren würdest? #00:04:43-7#

B Ja was mich schon so besonders motiviert ist, dass ich schon so in der naturwissenschaftlich interessiert bin und dementsprechend auf der Schule bin. Man hält irgendwie das mit dem Klimawandel schon mitbekommt, wie das eigentlich ist. Was da genau schief läuft und es schon ein paar Sachen gibt, wie wenn jetzt wirklich morgens einer alleine mit einem BMWx5 zur Arbeit fährt. Was einfach so komplett unnötig ist. Was einfach keinen Vorteil bringt, sondern einfach aus Faulheit die Umwelt zerstört wird. {Es} macht mich etwas nachdenklich und da möchte ich einfach etwas dagegen unternehmen, auch wenn das wirklich nicht einfach ist. #00:05:37-4#

I Warum ist das nicht einfach? #00:05:46-0#

B Weil man muss halt die Leute(...) Die meisten sind halt auch sehr ignorant was das angeht und jetzt sag ich mal die Leute so zu erreichen, dass sie das auch wirklich als Problem wahrnehmen und einsehen, dass es auch ihre persönliche Verantwortung ist und dass sie dann nicht sagen: „Ja, dann müssen aber auch alle anderen mitmachen und das bringt doch eh nichts.“ Ja genau, das ist auch das Ding, was es wirklich schwierig macht. Weil (...) es sie es wirklich nicht richtig wahrnehmen. Das ist wirklich so ein Problem. #00:06:32-7#

I Bist du schon einmal in einer anderen Gruppe aktiv gewesen? Oder hast du dich schon einmal für eine andere Gruppe interessiert? #00:06:36-1#

B Also wo ich so ein bisschen aktiv war ist in der jungen Gemeinde, nach dem ich Konfirmation hatte. Es war einfach am Abend entspannt zusammensitzen und ein bisschen zu philosophieren. Das waren jetzt nicht irgendwelche Aktionen oder so etwas. #00:07:01-1#

I Und hast du einmal überlegt in eine andere {Gruppe} zu gehen? Also hat dich das schon even if it isn't easy to achieve. #00:05:37-4#

I Why is it not that easy? #00:05:46-0#

B Because you have to make people (...) Most of them are ignorant concerning that and to actually reach those people, that they really see and understand that it is also there personal responsibility and not just say: “Yeah, but then everyone else has to do it too and it doesn't help anyway.” Yeah, that's what makes it really difficult. Because (...) they don't perceive it really. That is a real problem. #00:06:32-7#

I Have you already been (politically) active in a different group? Or have you already been interested in another group? #00:06:36-1#

B I was a little active in the youth group of the church after my confirmation. It was just sitting around in the evening and philosophizing. We didn't do any events or something like that. #00:07:01-1#

I And have you already thought about changing to another {group}? Have you already had interests in that direction? #00:07:04-1#

B Not really. I don't know any other groups close by that go in the direction of our group. #00:07:18-2#

I Do you have a personal goal that you are following with [environmental youth organization]? So some sought of topic, which is really important to you? #00:07:26-1#

B What I do see as a personal goal is that I at some stage really become a member. That you can see that you have changed something. That would be really cool. I also think that it helps me develop my awareness for the environment. Especially through the contact to the topics and motivating myself. I don't know, but I have already looked at my diet and have limited my own consumption of meat. I think it also motivates me personally to do something, for instance in my daily perception. #00:08:17-1#
einmal interessiert? #00:07:04-1#

B Jetzt nicht so wirklich. In die Richtig kenne ich auch keine andere Gruppe in der näheren Umgebung, die irgendwas in die Richtung macht. #00:07:18-2#

I Gibt es für dich ein persönliches Ziel, was du mit [Umweltjugendorganisation] verfolgst? Also irgendein Thema, das dir besonders am Herzen liegt? #00:07:26-1#


I Stark. Was würdest du so als wichtigstes Ziel der Gruppe beschreiben? Könntest du eines formulieren? #00:08:23-9#

B Leute auf die Probleme aufmerksam zu machen und dafür zu sorgen, dass das auch in ihr Bewusstsein geht oder auch in Unternehmen. Dass sie einfach darüber nachdenken und ich denke auch, einfach etwas machen. #00:08:41-5#

I Wenn du jetzt, wie lange bist du jetzt schon dabei? #00:08:49-2#

B Also es müsste so seit Spätherbst 2015 sein. #00:08:55-8#

I So seit zwei Jahren? #00:08:57-1#

B Ja. #00:08:59-3#

I Ja, das passt? Gab es da ein Erlebnis, das du einprägsam fandest, wenn du jetzt auf die Zeit zurückblickst, so in Bezug auf die Gruppe? #00:09:08-0#

I Great! What would you say is the most important aim of your group? Could you phrase one? #00:08:23-9#

B To make people aware of the problems and to ensure that it actually reaches there consciousness or make companies aware. That they just think about the problems and also do something as well. #00:08:41-5#

I How long have you been part of the group? #00:08:49-2#

B It should be since like late autumn 2015. #00:08:55-8#

I So like two years now? #00:08:57-1#

B Yes. #00:08:59-3#

I Yes, that's alright? Is there an experience, which you found memorable when you think about the time spent in connection with the group? #00:09:08-0#

B So when I first arrived in the group? #00:09:09-2#

I Yes, but also in general. #00:09:13-7#

B What I found was really memorable was the [transregional youth gathering] which we organized. All the young people from all of [country] came. It was extremely cool, because we organized everything and carried it out. I thought it was super nice. That we could get in to contact in such a form and that we got to see that we can actually organize things like this. And it worked out perfectly. I was there and it was a great experience. And I think (...). #00:10:28-4#

I What do you think is most important experience, that one could make? In the [environmental youth organization]. #00:10:28-2#

B In the [environmental youth organization]. Well I think that the most important experience is that you realize you can take an effect on things. Even if it means a lot of work. That the work you do can change something and you aren't at mercy of everything. #00:10:54-0#

I Now I would like to come to the bike event. What
B Also als ich dazu gekommen bin? #00:09:13-7#
I Ja oder an sich. #00:09:13-7#

B Also was ich wirklich einprägsam empfand, war das [überregionales Jugendtreffen] was wir veranstaltet haben. Und die Jugendlichen aus ganz [Land] gekommen sind. Was schon extrem cool war, weil wir das alles organisiert hatten. Die Aktion durchgeführt haben. Also ich fand es wirklich sehr schön. Dass man halt auf so einer Ebene mit denen in Kontakt gekommen ist und dass man halt gesehen hat, dass man eigentlich in der Lage ist so etwas zu organisieren. Und es hat organistatorisch alles perfekt funktioniert gehabt. Da war ich dann, es war ein schönes Erlebnis. Und ich denke (...) #00:10:19-4#
I Was glaubst du ist so die wichtigste Erfahrung, die du so machen kannst? Also in der [Umweltjugendorganisation]? #00:10:28-2#
B In der [Umweltjugendorganisation]. Also ich denke, das ist schon die wichtigste Erfahrung, dass man sehen kann, dass man irgendetwas bewirken kann. Auch wenn da viel Arbeit dahintersteckt. Dass die Arbeit auch etwas bewirken kann und man nicht komplett ausgeliefert ist. #00:10:54-0#
I Jetzt würde ich gerne zu der Fahrradaktion kommen. Was genau habt ihr denn gemacht? #00:11:16-5#
B Also wir haben eine Demonstration veranstaltet, wo wir auf Fahrrädern, in der wir als Demonstrationsteilnehmer, ich glaube wir waren so 50 Mann oder sozusagen mit Bannern und Hupen einmal durch die Stadt gefahren sind und durch [Park]. #00:11:39-6#
I Wie viele so 50 {Personen}? #00:11:41-2#
B Es könnten sogar ein Ticken mehr gewesen sein. Es waren schon eine Menge. Es war ein bisschen schwierig. Am besten wäre gewesen, wenn wir noch Informationsmaterial hätten verteilen können. Das hat nicht so gut geklappt. Und halt versucht, die Leute darauf aufmerksam zu machen, dass das Wetter doch jetzt wieder
I How did you come up with the idea? #00:12:14-6#
B So we had the Idea to look for different forms of taking action. And there is a booklet from [environmental NGO] with a whole lot of suggestions. And in this it said you can use bike events as a form of action. We thought it would be nice and the current campaign of [environmental NGO] fitted perfectly to it. At the moment there is the [name of campaign] campaign. So we thought we could organize the demonstration in the frame of the [transnational youth gathering] and so we decided to do it. #00:12:53-7#
I Who participated in the planning? #00:13:52-2#
B It was really only us that helped and then we had a little help from the adults and then distributed the tasks that had to be handled. So [name of other group member] organized the accommodation, I designed the flyers. [Name of other group member] got the permissions from the police and registered the demonstration. #00:14:24-3#
I How did you know what you had to do? #00:14:26-6#
B For one there are guidelines for everything on which you have to look after. And then we also had some...
schön ist und dass man doch besser auf das Fahrrad steigen könnte, anstatt jeden Tag mit dem Auto zu der Arbeit zu fahren. #00:12:11-2#

I Wie seid ihr auf die Idee gekommen? #00:12:14-6#

B Also die Idee hatten wir, dass wir zum einen geschaut hatten, was so für verschiedene Aktionen gibt. Da gibt es auch so von [Umweltorganisation] so ein Heft mit verschiedenen Vorschlägen für Aktionen. Da war halt allgemein, dass man Fahrradaktionen als Aktionsform {nehmen kann}. Das fanden wir halt auch sehr schön und da auch die aktuelle Kampagne von [Umweltorganisation] genau dazu passt. Also momentan gibt es eine [Name der Kampagne] Kampagne. Haben wir uns gedacht, dass wir in dem Rahmen von dem [überregionales Jugendtreffen] auch umsetzen konnten und haben uns dann dafür entschieden gehabt. #00:12:53-7#

I Wer hat da so mitgemacht eigentlich? #00:13:52-2#

B Es haben eigentlich von uns {Leute} mitgemacht und dann hatten wir noch so ein bisschen Unterstützung von den Erwachsenen und dann ist das halt so gelaufen, dass wir die Aufgaben verteilt wurden, die so gestimmt werden müssen. Also [Name anderes Gruppenmitglied] um die Unterkunft gekümmert, ich habe halt die Flyer gestaltet. [Name anderes Gruppenmitglied] hat sich um das mit der Polizeianmeldung und Demonstrationsdurchführung {gekümmert}. #00:14:24-3#

I Woher wusstet ihr, was man da machen muss? #00:14:26-6#

B Also zum einen, es gibt halt Leitfäden für alles, sage ich mal was beachtet werden muss. Und ich sage mal, wir hatten auch so ein bisschen Unterstützung von [Name anderes Gruppenmitglied der Erwachsenen], die ist ja Mitglied der Erwachsenengruppe jetzt und die nimmt uns halt bei solchen organisatorischen Fragen ein bisschen an die Hand. #00:14:47-0#

I Das ist die, die ist ab und zu einmal bei euch in help from [name of member of adult group], she is now member of the adult group and she helps us with the questions we have about organizing and takes us a little by the hand. #00:14:47-0#

I Is it the one, that is sometimes in your group? #00:14:51-1#

B Yeah, exactly. And also [other city headquarters] supports us. There is also a guideline, as part of it. #00:15:09-5#

I That's where you had your information from? #00:15:09-8#

B Yes, exactly. #00:15:09-8#

I How long ahead do you have to plan? Do you know? #00:15:11-1#

B We certainly started like three months beforehand. #00:15:17-2#

I That's when you had your meeting and decided on doing the event. #00:15:22-2#

B Yes, exactly. #00:15:22-7#

I What would you say was the aim of your event? #00:15:25-3#

B Well to make people aware that the weather is good again and that one should think about taking a bike rather than a car. #00:15:43-6#

I What would you say, whose attention did you get with the event? #00:15:47-2#

B That's difficult. I guess everyone that was walking around outside. I guess a lot of families and as well as (…) I think everyone that was standing around would have seen it. #00:16:09-8#

I Did you do it on a weekend? #00:16:13-1#

B Yes, it was on a Saturday. #00:16:14-7#

I So it wasn't the people that had to work. It was probably people that had off that day? #00:16:21-5#
der Gruppe? #00:14:51-1#

B Ja genau. Und auch [andere Stadt Hauptzentrale] unterstützt uns halt so. Es gibt auch einen Leitfaden, was halt Teil ist. #00:15:09-5#

I Daher habt ihr eure Informationen? #00:15:09-8#

B Ja genau. #00:15:09-8#

I Wie lange im Voraus muss man das so planen? Weißt du das ungefähr? #00:15:11-1#

B Wir haben bestimmt drei Monate vorher angefangen. #00:15:17-2#

I Da habt ihr in eurem Treffen entschieden, dass ihr das machen wollt? #00:15:22-2#

B Ja genau. #00:15:22-7#

I Was würdest du so sagen war Ziel eurer Aktion? #00:15:25-3#

B Ja halt die Leute darauf Aufmerksam zu machen, dass das Wetter wieder gut ist und dass man halt doch einmal überlegen sollte das Fahrrad an Stelle des Autos zu nehmen. #00:15:43-6#

I Was würdest du sagen, wessen Aufmerksamkeit ihr besonders auf euch gezogen habt? #00:15:47-2#

B Das ist jetzt schwierig. Ich denke, alle die halt da draußen unterwegs waren. Ich denke halt so recht viele Familien und auch (...) Ich denke mitbekommen muss es eigentlich jeder, der dastand. #00:16:09-8#

I Habt ihr das an einem Wochenende gemacht? #00:16:13-1#

B Ja genau, das war an einem Samstag. #00:16:14-7#

I Also es waren nicht Leute draußen, die gearbeitet haben, sondern eher die, die frei hatten? #00:16:21-5#

B Yes exactly, free time. #00:16:25-8#

I How happy were you with the demonstration? With the event as such? #00:16:28-7#

B There were a few things that could have been done nicer. For instance, we didn't actually have the possibility to interact with the people and to actually talk to them. Which is usually very useful to give out information flyers. But apart from that I thought it was a good thing to do. #00:16:48-9#

I That would have been my next question. What would you have wished for? What could you have done better in hindsight? #00:16:59-6#

B Well not really. Everything was a little weird because the police was escorting us with a motorbike. That they probably don't have a bike in [city]. When the two liter BMW in front of us (...) that is somehow iffy. #00:17:18-9#

I What sort of reactions did you get with your demonstration? Were there any? #00:17:35-1#

B We had (...) with the ones that I talked to they thought it was quite cool. #00:17:49-1#

I With whom did you talk? #00:17:36-1#

B I heard from a friend and the police as well, they thought it was a pretty good. #00:17:49-6#

I How did you recognize that? #00:17:49-5#

B We had a short debrief afterwards. #00:17:56-9#

I Was there any feedback from you’re adult group? #00:18:02-6#

B Yeah and they all thought it was pretty good. And also from [other city headquarters], it was the biggest bike event that was arranged by the teenagers. #00:18:12-1#

I Really, not bad. #00:18:13-7#

B But they were quite happy about it. #00:18:20-6#

I You already said what your task was. What would you
Ja genau, Freizeit. #00:16:25-8#

Wie warst du so zufrieden mit dem? Mit der Aktion an sich? #00:16:28-7#

Also es gab so ein paar Sachen, die hätte man schöner machen können. Zum Beispiel hatten wir überhaupt nicht die Möglichkeit auf die Leute richtig zu zugehen und mit den Leuten richtig zu reden. Was meistens relativ ist praktisch ist um Informationsmaterial zu verteilen. Ansonsten fand ich schon, dass das eine gute Sache war. #00:16:48-9#

Das wäre so meine nächste Frage gewesen. Was hätttest du dir so gewünscht? Was man hätte im Nachhinein hätten verbessern können? #00:16:59-6#

Ja an sich nicht. Also was ein bisschen komisch war, war das die Polizei uns mit Motorrad begleitet hat. Dass die anscheinend kein Fahrrad in [Stadt] haben. Wenn dann die zwei Liter BMW vor einem (...) das ist irgendwie, naja. #00:17:18-9#

Was gab es so für eine Resonanz so von anderen auf eure Aktion? Gab es da welche? #00:17:24-6#

Wir hatten (...) mit denen, mit denen ich geredet hatte, die fanden das auch alle ganz cool. #00:17:35-1#

Mit wem hast du geredet? #00:17:36-1#

Zum einen hatte ich noch einem Kumpel von mir mitbekommen und die Polizisten fanden es eigentlich von der Sache auch ganz gut. #00:17:49-6#

Wie hast du das gemerkt? #00:17:49-5#

Wir haben dann noch so Nachbesprechung kurz mit denen gemacht. #00:17:56-9#

Gab es da irgendwie auch Resonanz aus der Erwachsenengruppe dafür? #00:18:02-6#

Ja und die fanden es eigentlich alle auch ziemlich gut. Und auch aus [andere Stadt]

say was your roll in the whole group? #00:18:36-3#

On the one hand I took care of the flyers a little, so the advertising. Then I arranged some organization stuff for the [transregional youth gathering], like food, shopping, we did all do that together. Then I also looked at the kindergarten [place where the external participants stayed] that it was left properly again. I also took care of the time plan, so that everything went smoothly. It was also quite exhausting. #00:19:18-7#

Was? #00:19:21-8#

Yes. #00:19:24-3#

What would you say, were the tasks evenly split? #00:19:24-0#

I would say so, also because a few people were missing, that me and [name of other group member] had the most to do on the weekend. It wasn't let's say optimal, but I could deal with it pretty well. It happens sometimes. As long as it isn't always that way. #00:19:45-1#

And are there any rituals that you have before you start an event? How you start your events? #00:19:54-8#

Hmm Ritual. When the event actually starts? #00:20:03-4#

Mhm (affirmatively). #00:20:05-3#

There is always a (...) I'm just thinking (...). There is always a briefing a few hours before an event. #00:20:17-5#

What is that? #00:20:17-5#

We discuss everything once more, what will happen exactly and the content is clarified as well. And then the event starts. #00:20:36-6#

You already said that your intention was to make people aware that they can also ride their bicycle. #00:20:51-8#
Hauptzentrale], es war auch die größte Fahrradaktion die von Jugendlichen veranstaltet wurde. #00:18:12-1#

I Achso, nicht schlecht. #00:18:13-7#

B Aber die relativ glücklich darüber {waren}. #00:18:20-6#

I Du hast ja schon gesagt, was so deine Aufgabe war. Was würdest du sagen, war so deine Rolle in dem Ganzen in der Gruppe? #00:18:36-3#

B Ich habe zum einen mich um die Flyer so ein bisschen gekümmert, so zusagen um die Werbung. Dann habe ich mich um das Organisatorische bei dem [überregionales Jugendtreffen], mit Essen, mit Einkaufen, das haben wir ja auch zusammen gemacht. Dann habe ich mit geschaut, das war ein Kindergarten [Ort der Übernachtung der externen Teilnehmer_innen], ordentlich verlassen. Auch auf den Zeitplan geachtet, dass das alles gut funktioniert. {Es} war auch relativ anstrengend. #00:19:18-7#

I Ja war es? #00:19:21-8#

B Ja. #00:19:24-3#

I Würdest du sagen, es war so gleichverteilt die Aufgaben? #00:19:24-0#

B Ich würde schon sagen, dass auch, weil ein paar aus verschiedenen Gründen nicht da waren, es schon größtenteils auf mich und [Name anderes Gruppenmitglied] zurück gefallen ist an dem Wochenende. Das war, sage ich einmal nicht optimal, aber ich konnte zumindest gut damit leben. Es passiert halt manchmal. So lange das ist nicht immer so ist. #00:19:45-1#

I Und gibt es ein Ritual, dass ihr so macht, wenn ihr so anfangt Aktionen zu machen? Wie ihr dann startet? #00:19:54-8#

B Naja Ritual. Wenn es dann wirklich bei der Aktion so los geht? #00:20:03-4#

I Mhm (bejahend). #00:20:05-3#
Es gibt immer noch so ein (...) ich überlege gerade (...). Es gibt immer noch so ein paar Stunden vor der Aktion noch das Briefing. #00:20:17-5#

Was ist das? #00:20:17-5#

Wo halt wirklich noch einmal alles durchgesprochen wird, was genau passieren soll und wo wir inhaltlich auch noch einmal und abklären. (...) Dann geht es halt los. #00:20:36-6#

(...). Du hattest ja schon gesagt, die Intension war, dass die Leute darauf Aufmerksam gemacht werden, dass sie auch mit dem Fahrrad fahren können. #00:20:51-8#

Ja. #00:20:53-1#

Glaubst du, das verändert etwas? Würdest du sagen, dass es etwas bewirkt hat? #00:21:02-7#

Das ist ja jetzt schwierig, man hat ja überhaupt kein Feedback durch die Aktion und kann es ehrlich gesagt nicht einschätzen. Ich hoffe es aber, ich habe einfach keine Ahnung. #00:21:13-4#

Und so bei anderen Sachen, die ihr macht? Würdest du sagen, dass es Veränderungen bringt? #00:21:18-2#

Ich denke schon. Wir hatten zum Beispiel einmal eine Aktion. Da hatten wir einen Plan gemacht über saisonales Obst und Gemüse, das man Essen kann, die wir ausgeteilt haben. Da war die Resonanz sehr gut. Die Leute haben die {Flyer} schon gerne genommen und ich denke ein paar haben das dann doch an den Kühlshrank gepinnt und achten da jetzt mehr darauf, dass wir wirklich das Kochen, was gerade so wächst. #00:21:48-6#


(...). Das ist schwierig. (...). So richtiger Unterschied (...). Es gibt viele Jugendliche, denen das Thema auch bewusst ist und ich denke, (...) das ist irgendwie, wie wenn man fragen würde,
warum jemand Badminton spielt. Das ist halt wirklich schwierig zu sagen. Ich glaube jetzt nicht so. Wir sind halt auch alle aus komplett unterschiedlichen Umfeldern eigentlich. Sag ich jetzt einmal. #00:22:46-1#

I Wie unterschiedlich? #00:22:42-4#


B Also wirklich aktiv kenne ich jetzt niemanden. #00:24:00-7#

I Wenn du jetzt mit anderen Leuten, mit deinen Eltern darüber sprichst, wie finden die, dass du dabei bist? #00:24:11-3#

B Die meisten sind zumindest interessiert. Meine Eltern finden, glaube ich, dass das eine gute Sache ist. Negativ kriege ich so weniger mit. Obwohl naja, ein Freund würde vielleicht nicht sagen: „Ich finde es voll scheiße, was du so machst." #00:24:35-4#

I Die Themen die, die ihr besprecht in der [Umweltjugendorganisation], glaubst du eine Freund und Familie die sind ähnlicher Ansicht? #00:24:41-5#


I Do you think something changes when you change from the youth group to the adult group? #00:26:22-0#

B Yeah, I think so. The events differ, because you don't have to do only legal things. You do borderline legal things, with which you can make more aware of yourself. Or you can actually become an activist. For instance the topic [animals] or something like that, but not necessarily in the local group. But I would really like to do that, when I'm in the adult group, to join in a few bigger campaigns as an activist. I think you get a lot more options and opportunities. #00:27:14-4#

I Can you see yourself changing to the adult group? #00:27:23-0#

B Yes, I think so. #00:27:23-0#

I When would that be? #00:27:26-2#

B Well I guess when I'm finished with school. #00:27:25-4#

I You already talked a little about the campaigns and events. [Environmental NGO] is a little famous for doing such events. What do you think is the idea behind these? #00:27:40-0#

B Well to make the people aware of the different topics, and to do it media-effective. That is the aim of [environmental NGO]. #00:27:43-6#

I How do find that? #00:27:49-7#

B I think it is good and important. In the past there has been quite a bit of success. A key word for instance is “energy revolution” it all started through this movement. Like 30 to 40 years ago everybody thought they were nuts (…) yes. #00:28:12-8#

I Now [environmental NGO] isn't just in this city it is also a global organization. Does that matter to you, that they are active worldwide? #00:28:24-0#

B Yes and no. Because I think that you have the
sollten wir darüber berichten (unv.). #00:25:18-2#

I Ach ihr sollt den Vortrag gemeinsam machen? #00:25:23-3#

B Es ist darauf hinausgelaufen, dass ich danebenstehe und den Mund halte. #00:25:29-6#

I Weil du eine andere Meinung hattest? #00:25:33-7#

B Ja, ich hätte dazu gerne etwas anderes gesagt. #00:25:37-3#

I Glaubst du, dass das auch im Zusammenhang damit steht, dass du bei [Umweltjugendorganisation] bist und dass du es deswegen anders siehst? #00:25:39-6#

B Ich denke schon, dass ich das Thema Kunststoff deutlich kritischer sehe als die anderen. Oder es mir halt bewusster ist. #00:25:54-5#

I Kennst du, es ist ja von der [Umweltjugendorganisation] gehen ja viele in die Erwachsenengruppe. Kennst du da Leute, die das gemacht haben. #00:26:06-8#

B Also in der Erwachsenengruppe sind ja schon ein paar, ja genau die, die man durch die Erwachsenengruppe kennenlernt. Die waren auch bei der [Umweltjugendorganisation]. #00:26:17-8#

I Glaubst du, es ändert sich etwas von der Jugendgruppe in die Erwachsenengruppe wechselt? #00:26:22-0#


possibility for big campaigns and events and they are also coordinated together as well. That way you have the possibility to reach a lot of people. (...) It is not as limited to only do things locally and that way you also have many more resources (incomprehensible). #00:28:59-2#

I We are getting to the end of the interview and I have just few little questions left for you. You already told me how you have been part of the group, since 2 years? #00:29:07-2#

B Yes. #00:29:07-4#

I You are at school still? #00:29:15-4#

B Yes. #00:29:15-0#

I How long have you already been at your school? #00:29:21-9#

B Since year five, so for five years. #00:29:28-5#

I Can you tell me how old you are again? #00:29:30-8#

B 17. #00:29:34-1#

I 17 okay. And do you have any questions left? #00:29:39-7#

B No. #00:29:42-0#

I Was something unclear to you? #00:29:42-9#

B No. #00:29:42-3#

I Then thank you very much for staying here even though it is raining. Thank you for participating.
Ich kannst du dir vorstellen dann auch in die Erwachsenengruppe dann zu wechseln? #00:27:23-0#

Ja, ich denke schon. #00:27:23-0#

Wann wäre das soweit? #00:27:26-2#

Na ich denke, wenn ich mit der Schule fertig bin. #00:27:25-4#

Du hast ja jetzt schon ein bisschen von den Aktionen gesprochen. [Umweltorganisation] ist ja auch ein bisschen bekannt dafür, dass sie solche Aktionen machen. Was glaubst du, was die Idee ist dahinter? #00:27:40-0#

Also die Leute auch medienwirksam darauf aufmerksam zu machen auf die verschiedenen Themen. Das ist das Ziel von [Umweltorganisation] #00:27:43-6#

Wie findest du das? #00:27:49-7#

Ich finde das schon gut und wichtig. In der Vergangenheit hat es ja auch schon einiges bewirkt. Stichwort beispielsweise „Energiewende“ ist halt alles aus dieser Bewegung entstanden. Vor 30-40 Jahren haben denen alle noch einen Vogel gezeigt und (...) ja. #00:28:12-8#

Jetzt ist [Umweltorganisation] nicht nur in [Stadt], sondern eine global agierende Organisation. Spielt das für dich eine Rolle, dass die so weltweit aktiv sind? #00:28:24-0#

Teilweise schon. Weil ich denke, dass man dadurch schon die Möglichkeit hat, sage ich mal auf die großen Aktionen {zu machen}, die auch aufeinander abgestimmt sind. Dadurch hat man auch die Möglichkeit viele Leute zu erreichen. (...) Es ist jetzt nicht so beschränkt lokal etwas zu machen und dadurch sind auch die Ressourcen {größer} (unv.). #00:28:59-2#

Dann näheren wir uns tatsächlich dem Ende des Interviews und ich habe so ein paar kleine Fragen noch. Wie lange du dabei bist, das hattest du schon gesagt, seit zwei Jahren? #00:29:07-2#
<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>B</strong></td>
<td>Ja. #00:29:07-4#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I</strong></td>
<td>Du gehst zur Schule? #00:29:15-4#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B</strong></td>
<td>Ja. #00:29:15-0#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I</strong></td>
<td>Wie lange bist schon auf der Schule? #00:29:21-9#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B</strong></td>
<td>Seit der fünften Klasse, jetzt fünf Jahre. #00:29:28-5#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I</strong></td>
<td>Sagst du mir auch noch einmal wie alt du bist? #00:29:30-8#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B</strong></td>
<td>17. #00:29:34-1#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I</strong></td>
<td>17 okay. Und hast du noch Fragen? #00:29:39-7#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B</strong></td>
<td>Nein. #00:29:42-0#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I</strong></td>
<td>War irgendewas unverständlich? #00:29:42-9#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B</strong></td>
<td>Nein. #00:29:42-3#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I</strong></td>
<td>Dann lieben Dank das du, trotz des Regens, hier ausgeharrt hast. Danke dass du mitgemacht hast.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zeit</td>
<td>Objektive Beobachtung/Fakten</td>
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<td>--------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beginn 17.30 Uhr</td>
<td>noch keiner da</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Eine Co_2, weiblich kommt und sagt, dass kein Schlüssel da sei die PSN würde noch kommen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Bringt Melone für alle mit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Sie habe gerade die Verantwortung für den Schlüssel abgeben</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Zwei weitere Personen (X, No_f1) erscheinen</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Wird sich vorgestellt und noch einmal bei mir nach meinem Namen erkundigt</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Person X trifft Co_2 und sagt, dass er nur Hallo sagen wolle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Person X erkundigt sich nach Aktionen und erzählt selbst von welchen und wie gut er dieser gefunden habe</td>
<td>- Person X asks about the last campaigns and he himself tells about some and how good he found them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Person X geht</td>
<td>- Person X leaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Immer noch vor der Tür stehen</td>
<td>- Still standing in front of the door</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- No_fl und Co_2 kommen ins Gespräch</td>
<td>- From where the group knows each other, mainly from [school]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Wird gefragt woher sie kommen aus [Stadt]</td>
<td>- Co_2 is now going to a school in [city], did not want to continue school after tenth grade, but her father expected it until she is 18 years old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Woher sich die Gruppe kenne, vornehmlich aus der [Schule]</td>
<td>- From where the group knows each other, mainly from [school]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Einmal die Woche seine Freunde sehen</td>
<td>- Co_2 points out that she is a member for already 3 years and has actually co-founded the group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Co_2 gehe jetzt auf eine Schule in [Stadt], wollte erst nach der 10. Klasse gar nicht mehr zur Schule gehen, aber ihr Vater habe das erwartet bis sie 18 Jahre alt sei</td>
<td>- Co_2 self-confident, proud and leading the conversation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- In der Gruppe seien alle 17 Jahre bis auf Co_1 die sei 16 Jahre</td>
<td>- -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Co_2 weist daraufhin, dass sie bereits seit drei Jahren dabei sei und die Gruppe eigentlich mit gegründet habe</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Gab bereits vorher eine Gruppe vor 10 Jahren, aber die sei dann irgendwann nicht mehr existent gewesen</td>
<td>- No_fl zurückhaltender und wirkt so als ob sie ungerne über den Schulabbruch erzähle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Personen außerhalb [Stadt] seien oft nur kurz dabei</td>
<td>- Auf Nachfrage was sie jetzt machen würde, antwortet sie eher ausweichend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- No_fl aus [Stadt], 16 Jahre alt, gehe gar nicht mehr zur Schule, sei in [Stadt] auch auf eine [Schule] gegangen</td>
<td>- People from out of town often join only for a short period of time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Mache jetzt Praktikum</td>
<td>- Is now doing an internship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Habe vorher es falsch verstanden mit der Greenpeace Jugend, dachte sie müsse Mitgliedsbeitrag zahlen</td>
<td>- No_fl - Beforehand, she has misunderstood the [environmental youth group], thought she had to pay a membership fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Darauf Co_2, das sei nicht der Fall im Gegenteil, sie würde die Fahrt nach [Stadt] sogar bezahlt bekommen</td>
<td>- Co_2 responds that this is not the case, on the contrary she would be paid the journey to [city]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- PSN No_fl erkundigt sich nach Größe und Aktionen (ist informiert)</td>
<td>- PSN No_fl asks about the size and campaigns (is informed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Haben Fahrraddemonstration gemacht aber Dreivierteljahr nichts Co_2</td>
<td>- They did a bicycle demonstration before, but nothing for nine months Co_2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Uhr</td>
<td>- Bo_1 mit Schlüssel kommt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Entschuldigt sich (musste Kaninchenstall)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant Agreement N. 649538</td>
<td></td>
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<td>---------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>all für Schwester aufbauen bzw. helfen)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Co_2 fragt, ob sie wieder den Schlüssel nehmen soll</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Neue TN fragt, wann denn so angefangen wird</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Co_2 eigentlich 17.30 aber so richtig erst ab 18 Uhr</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- An mich gewandt ob ich die von der Uni sei und sie habe doch noch etwas Zweifel, weil sie nicht so produktiv seien</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Ich antworte darauf, dass ich das normale Setting haben will und es für mich nicht relevant sei</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Raum wird betreten, Tür bleibt offen</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Stelle Person No_f1 kurz vor was ich bei dem Gruppentreffen mache</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Co_2 asks whether she should take the key again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- New TN asks when they usually start</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Co_2 actually 5.30 pm but really starting not until 6 pm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Addressing to me whether I am at university and that she still has some doubts because they are not too productive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- I respond that I want the normal setting and that it is not relevant for me</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Entering the room, door stays open</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- I briefly present to No_f1 what I am doing at the group meeting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ca. 18.05 Uhr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- kommt eine weitere Person Co_1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- wird sich vorgestellt für die neue PSN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Bo_1: JAGAP (Verantwortlicher), seit 1.1/2 Jahren Mitglied; geheime Superkraft, dass er keine habe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- ritualisiert, da allen klar ist, sich mit Namen, Rolle in der GPJ und mit einer geheimen Supermacht vorzustellen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- another person Co_1 comes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Presenting oneself for the new PSN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Bo_1: JAGAP (responsible person), member for 1.5 years; secret superpower, has none</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- ritualized because it is clear to everyone presenting oneself with name, role in the [environmental youth group] and a secret superpower</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co_1: seit Ende der Sommerferien (2016), Superkraft Atmen?</td>
<td>Co_1: member since end of the summer holidays (2016), superpower breathing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co_2: seit 3 Jahren dabei, Mitbegründerin, stellvertretende JAGAP, Superkraft: Fliegen</td>
<td>Co_2: member for 3 years, co-founder, representative JAGAP (certain position in the group), superpower: flying</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**18.10**

| Another person comes Leaves the room for a moment to change |
| --- | --- |
| Bringt etwas Unruhe rein, zieht sich um |
| Melone wird mehrmals an die anderen und auch mir angeboten |

**Zusätzlich gebe es noch zwei Personen, die seien heute nicht da und eine Lotsin von den Erwachsenen**

| Selbstverständlicher Umgang mit Greenpeaceinternein Vokabular wird No_f1 aber erklärt, ohne dass sie dazu auffordern muss |
| --- | --- |

**Wird erzählt, dass letzte Woche Plenum mit den Erwachsenen war**

| Klare Gesprächsführung von Co_2 |
| --- | --- |
| Telling that there was a plenum of the adults last week |
| Concerning the date, this meeting is once a month |
| Discussed mutually what could be done in the meeting |

**Frage von Co_2, ob jemand protokolliert**

| Bo_1 übernimmt das Protokollieren mit seinem Handy |
| --- | --- |
| Bo_1 takes the minutes with his mobile phone |

**Co_2 bietet an von vorherigem Wochenende dem JAGGIOtreffen (Jugendaktionsgruppe) zu berichten**

| Zustimmung der anderen erfolgt |
| --- | --- |

**Erläuterung für No_f1**

| Fällt auf, dass die beiden Jungs und No_f1reger sich an dem Gespräch beteiligen als Co_1 |
| --- | --- |

**542**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themen</th>
<th>Konvergenz</th>
<th>Erklärung</th>
<th>Konsequenzen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Fahrraddemo der letzten Aktion erzählt | - Wird stolz erzählt und als erfolgreich deklariert  
- Weiterhin klare Dominanz der Gesprächsführung durch Co_2 | - Is of bicycle demonstration the last action  
- Is told proudly and as successful  
- Still clear dominance of leading the conversation by Co_2 | - Is partly accepted |
| Themen  
- GreenpeaceCamp  
- 1. Jahrestreffen  
- Ca. 600 Leute | - Wird teilweise angenommen  
- Asking by Bo_2 whether it would be okay if he eats  
- offers something to the others | - Topic [environmental group] camp  
- Is annual meeting  
- Approx. 600 people | - Is partly accepted |
| Wird gefragt, ob davon erzählt werden kann  
- Wird okay dafür gegeben | - Asking whether someone could talk about it  
- Is okay | - About green and peace in the meeting because it is not only about an environmental organisation | - Asking politely whether it is okay to talk about topics  
- Everyone is heard out  
- Obviously not fitting the TN’s lifestyle |
| Über Green und Peace gesprochen auf dem Treffen, da es sich ja nicht nur um eine Umweltorganisation handelt  
- Kritik an dem Treffen: es sind auch die Erwachsenen dabei, die würden sehr viel Alkohol trinken  
- Globaler Bezug zu bei den Aktionen Bekanntmachung der Aktionen über Facebook | - Höflich, wird erfragt ob es in Ordnung ist Themen zu besprechen  
- Wird sich ausreden gelassen  
- Anscheinend nicht passend zu der Lebenswelt der TN  
- Wird nicht von eigenen Erfahrungen erzählt  
- Medialer Bezug | - About green and peace in the meeting because it is not only about an environmental organisation  
- criticism on the meeting: there are also adults who drink a lot of alcohol  
- Global reference to the announcement of the actions via Facebook | - Not talking about own experiences  
- Medial reference |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Co_2 berichtet was sie auf dem Treffen gemacht hat und dass es eine globale Aktion gegeben habe zu einem Wald vermutlich in Kanada, das weiß sie nicht mehr ganz genau.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wird gemeinsam überlegt, wo das sein könnte.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co_2 tells about what they did in the meeting and that there has been a global action concerning a forest probably in Canada, about that she is not sure anymore.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Together, it is reasoned where that could be.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nächster Punkt: Flyeraktion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wollen einen neuen Flyer für die Gruppe machen um mehr Mitglieder zubekommen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Next point: flyer action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Want to make a new flyer for the group to get more members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience themselves as a small group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodische Frage: wer das am PC machen könnte.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nach Ressourcen, zeitlich und Kenntnissen gefragt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodical question: who can do that on the computer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking about resources, concerning time and know-how.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wer hat Zeit dafür.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Versucht Potenziale der TN gut auszunutzen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who has time for that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trying to use the TN’s potentials well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welche Schritte wichtig wären um diesen Flyer zu machen Text, Foto.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nach weiteren PSN mit Kompetenzen gefragt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which steps are necessary to create the flyer text, photo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bo_1 hätte Zeit, weil fast Sommerferien wären.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co_1 steigt mit ins Gespräch ein.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bo_1 would have time because there would be summer holidays soon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No_f1 bringt sich ein.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerning size- size of a postcard would be best.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referring to size, small would be best.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nach Sinnhaftigkeit des Flyers gefragt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No_f1 bringt sich ein.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verweis auf Größe am besten klein Co_2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Empfinden sich als kleine Gruppe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Nach Ressourcen, zeitlich und Kenntnissen gefragt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Versucht Potenziale der TN gut auszunutzen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Nach weiteren PSN mit Kompetenzen gefragt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Co_1 steigt mit ins Gespräch ein.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- No_f1 bringt sich ein.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant Agreement N. 649538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| - Bezug zur Aktion der Erwachsenen
- No_f1 will wissen wie viele Leute dabei sind
- Antwort: kommen immer die gleichen Leute, manche nur zu den Aktionen und Feiern |
| - Themawechsel
- Eindruck als wäre No_f1 wichtig, dass es viele Leute sind sowohl bei den Erwachsenen und bei der GPJ |
| - Reference to adults' action
- No_f1 wants to know how many people take part
- Answer: there are always the same people coming, some only to the actions and parties |
| - Change of topic
- Impression that it is important for No_f1 that there are many people in the adults' group as well as in the [environment al youth group] |
| 18.1 5 |
| - Bezug zu anderen GPJ Gruppen und deren Material |
| - Aktionen der GPJ dürfen nicht illegal sein |
| - Klare Dominanz der vier Sprecher außer Co_1 |
| - Reference to other [environment al youth group] groups and their material |
| - Clear dominance of the four speakers except for Co_1 |
| - Change of topic |
| - Need to know about legal facts |
| - Nobody reacts strange |
| - Co_2 nimmt das Gespräch wieder in die Hand |
| - Themawechsel
- Sind rechtlich aufgeklärt sein |
| - Actions of the [environment al youth group] must not be illegal |
| - Co_2’s mobile phone rings |
| - Bo_2 and Bo_1 start talking parallel about Bo_1’s growling stomach |
| - Nobody reacts strange |
| - Again, nobody thinks that is strange |
| - Co_2 nimmt das Gespräch wieder in die Hand |
| - Keiner reagiert befremdlich |
| - Findet ebenfalls keiner befremdlich |
| - Co_2’s mobile phone rings |
| - Bo_2 and Bo_1 start talking parallel about Bo_1’s growling stomach |
| - Nobody reacts strange |
| - Again, nobody thinks that is strange |
| - Aktion der Erwachsenen am kommenden Wochenende beim (Supermarkt) |
| - Wirksamkeit in den sozialen Netzwerken besprochen |
| - Themawechsel |
| - Adults' action at the next weekend at (Supermarket) |
| - Co_2 gut informiert |
| - Talking about the efficacy in the social networks |
| - Co_2 well informed |
| - Change of topic |
| Frage: ob da mitgemacht werden soll | Question: whether to take part there or not |
| Erklärt warum Lidl gut für die Aktion, weil die europaweit, Massentierhaltung, Fleisch in anderen europ. Ländern bei Lidl besser, in Deutschland nicht, damit macht Greenpeace aufmerksam | Explains why Lidl is good for the action because Europe-wide, industrial livestock farming, meat in other European countries at Lidl better, not in Germany, thereby [the environment al group] draws attention |

| Erinnerung an die Aktion | Co_1 | Bees action – reminding of the action | Change of topic |
| Beecherwechsel | Co_1 |

| Seedbombs | Themechange | Seedbombs | Change of topic |
| Vorstellung an PSN Y „eatable Stadt (City)“, ob sie das kenne würde | Lokaler Bezug | Question: where to put it | Local reference |
| | Erfahrungsaustausch | Presenting to PSN Y „eatable city (City)“ whether she knows that | Exchange of experiences |
| Erklärung, dass sie die Seedbombs das letzte Mal selbst gemacht hätten und noch welche hätten | Hinterfragt der Machbarkeit der Umsetzung der Seedbombs, | Explanation that the last time they made the seedbombs themselves and still have some | Questions the feasibility and the practicability of the seedbombs |
| Würden die auch auf Litfaßsäulen wachsen | Aufmerksam | Would also grow on advertising pillars | Attentive |

| Co_1 wird gefragt von Co_2 ob sie was noch dazu sagen wolle |
- Co_2 steht auf und holt Material  
- Keiner irritiert  
- Nobody is irritated

| - Aktionsbuch  
- Thema Bienen und Fleisch erneut aufgegriffen  
- Eindruck der angespannten Stimmung durch meine Anwesenheit  
- Book of actions  
- Picking up the topic bees and meat  
- Impression of a tense atmosphere because of my presence |
|---|
| - Frage ob ein Gruppentag zu Fleisch organisiert werden soll  
- Thematisiert was wirksam sein könnte was erzeugt Aufmerksamkeit  
- Machbarkeit eines Aktionstags Terminfindung doodle  
- Bo_2 übernimmt das und macht direkt auf seinem Handy ein doodle  
- Question whether a group day about meat should be organised  
- Talking about what could be effective what draws attention  
- Practicability of an action day finding a date doodle  
- Bo_2 takes it over and makes a doodle on his mobile phone  
- Consistently consulting with the group whether it would be ok to talk about the topics |
| - Über Erwachsenentreffen gesprochen  
- Seien langweilig aber strukturiert  
- 'Themawechsel  
- Nehmen sich selbst als unstrukturiert wahr  
- Regressiv: kommen immer wieder auf Themen zurück  
- Talking about adults' meeting  
- Would be boring however structured  
- Change of topic  
- Perceive themselves as unstructured  
- Regressive: always coming back to topics |
| 18.3  
- Gruppenflyer  
- Co_1fragt pragmatische Fragen Impuls noch mal nach Format gefragt  
- 'Themawechsel  
- Stille kurz wird überlegt  
- Flyer fort he group  
- Co_1 asking pragmatic questions  
- Impulse to ask about the format again  
- Objection by Bo_2 doodle which dates  
- Change of topic  
- Silence thinking briefly |
| 18.0 |
| 547 |
- **Flyer: wie stellt ihr euch den Flyer vor?**

- **PSN Y: könnte mit provokativer Frage beginnen: Nervt dich das?**

- **An Zielgruppe orientiert**

- **PSN Y: could start with a provocative question: Is it getting on your nerves?**

- **Orientated at target group**

- **Bo_1: könnte sich ein slogan überlegen und im Internet mal schauen was es da gibt als Hausaufgabe**

- **Wird als lustig die Hausaufgabe empfunden aber aufgenommen**

- **Bo_1: could think about a slogan and look up what there is on the internet as a homework**

- **Perceive the homework as funny however accepted**

- **Einwurf Bo_2 doodle welche Termine/ Feiertage**

- **Frase Co_2: generell die Lust bestünde mitzumachen**

- **Wird besprochen, dass die Internetseite sehr veraltet sei**

- **Wird als lustig die Hausaufgabe empfunden aber aufgenommen**

- **Co_2 sei das letzte Mal vor einem halben Jahr darin gewesen**

- **Co_1holt ihr Handy heraus**

- **Themeneues Foto für den Flyer recal idee auch eines von der Fahrraddemo zu nutzen**

- **Wird erzählt das Greenpeace ein eigenes Portal hat ähnlich Facebook, da (Name Plattform)**

- **Co_2 gut informiert über Strukturen**

- **Co_2 gut informiert über Strukturen**

- **Co_1 gets out his mobile phone**

- **Topic new photo for the flyer idea to use one of the bicycle demonstration as well**

- **Telling about that [environmental group] has its own portal similar to Facebook,**

- **Co_2 has been there a half year ago**

- **Not commenting what she does with it**

- **Nobody is irritated**

- **During the conversation a lot of references to the EU**

- **Topic of how current the group is**

- **Co_2 well informed about structures**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>18.4 2</th>
<th>- Überprüfung ob doodle funktioniert durch Bo_m1</th>
<th>- Checking whether doodle works by Bo_m1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Co_2 berichtet über G20 Gipfel</td>
<td>- Co_2 telling about the G20 summit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Co_1 berichtet, dass auf der eigenen Homepage nur ein Eintrag wäre und der nicht aktuell sei</td>
<td>- Co_1 telling that there is only one entry on the own homepage and it is not a current one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Hat sie mit dem Handy recherchiert</td>
<td>- Did the research on the mobile phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- „kein Wunder, dass keiner Kommt, wenn die Homepage nicht aktuell ist“</td>
<td>- „No wonder, nobody is coming when the homepage is not up-to-date.“</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Frage No_f1 warum nicht an Schulen gegangen wird und Werbung gemacht wird</td>
<td>- Question No_f1 why not going in schools and do promotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Weil sie selber zur Schule gehen würden</td>
<td>- Because they themselves go to school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Aber auf Schulfesten wäre eine Option</td>
<td>- However, at school festivals would be an option</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Bo_1 würde das bei sich an der Schule machen</td>
<td>- Bo_1 would do that at the own school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Co_2 fänd das peinlich</td>
<td>- Co_2 would find that embarrassing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Erfahrungsaustausch, welche Aktionen sie bereits gemacht hätten</td>
<td>- Exchange of experiences, which actions they already did</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Welche Themen die Erwachsenen hätten bei denen sie mitmachen könnten</td>
<td>- Which topics the adults have where they could join</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Erwachsene kommt hinzu und setzt sich rein</td>
<td>- Adult joins and sits down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Flyer</td>
<td>- Themawechsel</td>
<td>- Flyer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Wie er aussehen soll</td>
<td>- How it should look like</td>
<td>- If something could be created/crafted out of the flyer an instruction would probably be more effective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Wenn etwas aus dem Flyer basteln könnteneine Anleitung sei das sicher wirksamer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ideen werden anhört, Kritik, Machbarkeit</td>
<td>- Listening to ideas, critique, practicability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Runder Flyer hätte ein Alleinstellungsmerkmal</td>
<td>- Round flyer would be a unique feature</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Frage nach der Praktikabilität</td>
<td>- Question concerning practicability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Erwachsene schaltet sich ein und befindet die Idee als gut</td>
<td>- Adult gets involved and appreciates the idea as good</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Erwachsene würdigend und wertschätzend, unterbricht eigentlich nicht</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Moosgraffiti</td>
<td>- Moss graffiti</td>
<td>- Change of topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Gut, weil kein Ärger bei der Aktion, muss im Jugendbuch stehen dann nicht illegal</td>
<td>- Good because no trouble with the action, needs to be in the youth book then not illegal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Frage wie machbar</td>
<td>- Question how practicable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Co_1, was soll auf dem Graffiti stehen?</td>
<td>- Co_1, what should the graffiti say?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Kritik an Rezeptur Milch etc. enthalten Alternativen alkoholfreies Bier</td>
<td>- Critique on recipe milk etc. included alternatives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Co_1 stellt zielführende Fragen</td>
<td>- Co_1 asking constructive questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DANACH (Gedanken nach der Beobachtung)

| - Entsteht zweier Diskussion | - Discussion between two arises |
| - Einigen sich es noch einmal auszuprobieren | - Agreeing to try once again |
| - Wird zum Ende noch einmal zusammengefasst was gemacht werden wird und besprochen würde | - In the end summarising again, what will be done and was talked about |
| - Weitere Personen jetzt vor der Tür wartend, weil Erwachsenentreffen im Anschluss | - Other persons now waiting in front of the door because of the following adults’ meeting |
| - Flyer bis kommende Woche | - Flyer until the following week |
| - Kontaktdaten | - Contact details |
| - Moosgraffiti | - Moss graffiti |
| - Erwachsenenrücksprache was nicht illegal ist und im rechtlichen Rahmen | - Consulting the adults what is not illegal and in legal framework |
| - Schwierigkeiten in der Umsetzbarkeit, Wetter, Ort | - Difficulties in practicability, weather, location |
| - Weiterer Erwachsener steigt in Diskussion ein | - Another adult gets involved in the discussion |

AFTERWARDS (thoughts after the observation)

Especially Bo_1 eye contact to me very often, maybe to reassure what I am doing: first complete observation of me
- All in all, very concentrated, few joking
- Flexible concerning room, want to go outside in summer
- Sticks out that I am there and the only one writing
High flexibility group- who is there- who is doing what during the meeting
Appendix A (Greece): Interviews

Interview #1. Akis

N: Let me say for the record that your name will not be revealed if you don’t want to.
A: I have no problem you can mention my name, last name, everything.
N: Great. This project, as you know, is about civic engagement. You mentioned that you are a volunteer.
A: Yes.
N: How did you get involved with Colour Youth?
A: I was talking to a guy, that also had a same-sex sexual orientation, as I had, and in Facebook first page the big group popped up. I got excited, there is a group I Athens, I must go, to check them out. Is it only a Facebook group? What is it?
N: “Must”?
A: Must… it felt like that, like I had to go and see what this group is, that there are more individuals like me, and I wanted to meet them and see what exactly they do. In the beginning, I didn’t know if it was a Facebook group or one with a physical space, and I googled it, I found when meetings take place, ho w to become a member. I wanted to become a member straight away, without checking if this was a good organization or not, organized or not. I wanted in. I remember the exact date, February 17th I came here, for my first workshop on intersex issues.
N: How was that?
A: Intense, because there were a big crowd. It was one of Saturday meetings that had at least 100 persons, very dense. I got here early, and everyone was very friendly and mad feel really comfortable. When I was asked to introduce myself, I was nervous, there were too many people.
N: You visited, you saw what was happening, what kept you here?
A: The friendliness of everyone here, that they had a nice word for everyone, that they were excited for the newcomers, although there were 50 more that day, new people that had never been there before, they didn’t know them at all. I didn’t come thorough a friend, they didn’t know me at all, but they talked to me and wanted to know about me, what I study, they wanted my opinion and feedback, it was a very intense day and it was a really special, I didn’t know a lot about intersex, what I had heard, but I didn’t even know the term, I knew of them as “hermaphrodites”, older ideas. I was shocked, it was an experiential talk, it was organized, there was an intersex person who presented, with a power point, coming from the Netherlands, if I remember correctly, I was impressed that young people organized a meeting like this, with such a crowd, and there were no weird questions, or that I saw people asking interesting questions and participate, that made me want to come back for the next meeting and have another look at was is going on, and become a member.
N: And that motivated you to become more involved.
A: Yes, and now I am responsible for the space, in just two months.
N: This has made you more active?
A: Yes.
N: Do you have a job outside Colour Youth?
A: No.
N: What is a typical day and a typical week in Colour Youth?
A: It depends on the week. Sometimes there are multiple meetings in the same day, this is why have 3 different offices (in the same space), for example today we have the interview with you, and we also have the feminist group. Two meetings in the same day. Other days we might have 3 or 4. There are three separate spaces and we can have multiple meetings.
N: Do you have to be here for all meetings?
A: No, depending what I want to follow. I actually go to most of them, I want to be as involved as possible.
N: What kind of activities do you enjoy most in Colour Youth?
A: What involves community, especially going and talking to individuals, to give talks and presentations, I really like this, to represent Colour Youth, it is something that I considered really important in my mind, it feel like I am giving something back to the group, and this is something I really enjoy.
N: So this is also that is mostly rewarding for you…
A: Yes, and it is also good for me, I do a lot of networking. I am a sociable person, it is easy for me to go to someone to talk to, to give them information, I will not be shy. Previously, I was more shy, I would talk to someone easily, now I say “hi, I am from Colour Youth”, I introduce myself, I make have info material with me, I will give them contact details and take their own, everything.
N: So being for Colour Youth, it gives you a context, you aren’t just Akis, you are Akis from Colour Youth.
A: Exactly.
N: What does this mean for you?
A: It is a privilege and it gives me a push. I am part of a team. And also a context. I have a position of responsibility, I am an active member. I have something to offer to groups. For example, I hadn’t really participated in the work for LGBTQ refugees, but after a press conference, I was there, got all relevant info and gave them to the work group’s project manager.
N: This also answers the question of your contribution towards the organization's goals.
A: Yes, it is like this. Yesterday I also attended a meeting with students of the Social Work Department that wanted to learn everything about Colour Youth, the history, why and how it started, current and past projects, the general structure, about General Assemblies, everything there is to know. I really enjoy talking about Colour Youth.
N: So what does Colour Youth offer? What is the purpose?
A: The simplest thing for me, what I see and like, and what brought me here, are the Saturday meetings. Socialization, that you are not alone, you see that there are people to support you, to whom you can ask questions, with necessarily becoming a member, just meeting people, to hang out together afterwards. It is short of a tradition, after Saturday meetings a group of people will go somewhere to hang out. Socialization is really important. And a feeling that you belong to a group, to a family, you see other LGBTQ individuals. You feel that you exist, that you are not the only one with these questions and doubts, just by coming here to talk, you learn things, we are not experts, but there are things that we have experience and connections. For example, at the meetings for the LGBT history in Greece last March, these were some of the first meetings I had attended, it was a great month. We had brought many people from the older days of the LGBT movement that had a lot of experience, it was unbelievable seeing kids 15-16 years old wanting to learn what happened in Greece and what was happening in the community, what are the differences now and then, 2017 and 1975.
N: Do you talk about CY's activities with friends and/or family?
A: With the family not so much, they don’t know about CY, I haven’t mentioned it. My brother knows of some of the events and some things we do. My friends, previously, friends from outside Colour Youth, they were learning.
N: So family and friends and two very different things. Your family doesn't know about Colour Youth, because it wouldn't be something that they would support?
A: No they wouldn’t be positive, at some point they might come to accept the situation about who I am, but they would accept that we have to be activists. Not just for me, for all youth, all of LGBT youth, because we would be considered to be provoking. They would most definitely be negative.
N: Can you give me an example of something that you particularly respect in Colour Youth?
A: Old members. For example, there are some people here for many years and, at least for me, I see them as an energy pack, they make me become even more active, because I see their passion
after all these years. I can always go to them and discuss things and ask about things, what happened before, because I don’t have a first hand experience but when they shared the story, I felt like I belonged also to the older Colour Youth, like it was before. With the philosophy, and the stories on how they painted the offices, a funny story about when they did something. I felt that I was connecting to them.

N: the ones that came before
A: yes, many have left, but also the ones that are still here, 4, 5, 6 years. Hearing these stories, I feel even more as a member of this group, and also you are more accepted, that your opinion is heard.

N: Is there something that make you feel more effective?
A: When we gather together, when something happens and we have to meet, for example when the incident at Athens Pride happened with the police, at that time I really saw how people can hang out with different crowds (in here I mean), how we all got together, in spite of our conflicts and disagreements, and we left everything on the side, and we talked, and none of us blamed each other, we all did it together, and took the blame together. That was really good. Another example is when our president spoke in the parliament the day of the voting (he refers to the Legal Gender Recognition law). It was amazing how many comments were on that post with his picture, there were comments about his shirt, his hair, even if he had used gel, we were all there to comment anything that was said, what the Church said, anything that happened at that moment. We weren’t physically together, but online connected, it was a great feeling.

N: Is there something that disappoints you or makes you feel frustrated?
A: Sometimes, for example, why we don’t organize more street events, why we stopped, or for things that we don’t have the capacity or the skills… we should get the skills, there are so many members that when they got here they didn’t know for example how to write a proposal and now they are great, they are better than people who work in companies. They have gather so much experience that others will never get. In two months time, we might have to prepare six proposals, for example, it is a terrific experience. The work can be a lot, I am just a member, and I may come here in the morning and leave after 12 hours.

N: What is the impact of all this work and why?
A: It depends, mostly positive, they will participate, and they will support what we do. For example they came to the parliament to support us.

N: this also answers the question, how Colour Youth contributes to civic engagement
A: Colour Youth is a formal organization in order to push for our demands, to be able to talk with politicians. A queer anarchist group can’t do this. For us to help, we need to be able to use all means. Not kill, but all other means (laughs)

N: How would you describe goals and aims of Colour Youth?
A: they are a lot and not always clear. The rapid change means that sometimes goals change. To be united, to have contributed to something good. Even with simple things, for someone to do five meetings to give something and then leave. There are collective and individual goals, and sometime people do things they need to do for the organization and then leave.

N: Who does Colour Youth work with?
A: LGBTQ and allies. And feminist issues, and all aspects of LGBTQ issues, for incarceration, sex-work, refugees.

N: how do you recruit members?
A: it is difficult to approach, no pressure to enlist members. They are all accepted, we want different voices.

N: what is the structure?
A: there is an administrative group, president, treasurer, and secretary, as well as the heads of the working groups. Also the head of the seniors.

N: Who are the seniors?
A: (Laughing) some grannies over 30 that want to patronize us, and this is why they don’t have the right to vote
N: who elects the administrative group?
A: the general Assembly, twice a year it is convened. December for elections and April/May for serious issues that may have come up.
N: So the General Assembly is responsible for all decisions?
A: Exactly
N: Are members active, or everything happens through the Administrative Group?
A: They are active, they Administrative Group makes a call and members participate. They can also take part, like a member, not necessarily as a coordinator.
N: Where do you get funding?
A: Everywhere, ILGA, IGLYO, OSF & Solidarity Now, Stavros Niarchos Foundation, Bodossaki Foundation, what else…
N: Private funding, not from the state
A: no, not from the state, just the EU
N: Do you feel that your voice is heard, that you have the space to speak?
A: Yes, always. I respect them and I want to get involved, and I have the space. Sometimes, you need to build some trust, I am the only member that is in a responsible position in just two months time.
N: what happens when people disagree?
A: someone mediates and tries to calm things down. And we get somewhere
N: and how has the final say?
A: the Administrative Group, they try to agree all of them. It can go with the majority, but they prefer unanimous decisions
N: Can one person influence a major decision and the organization?
A: An older member perhaps can propose something and be heard immediately, but the Administrative Group still has to support it.
N: When you decided to get involved, did you have the identity of being an active citizen?
A: yes, and as I learnt details about advocacy, I thought that I was part of promoting social change, a lever for change
N: how do you define active citizenship?
A: not necessarily in an organization, but in general someone that doesn’t close their eyes and ears, that if you don’t have a problem, you never will. An active citizen reacts to oppression, in all society
N: And what is the goal?
A: On one hand to feel goo with yourself, it cleanses the Karma so to speak. On the other hand you have to, you live in a country, you have to have an opinion, a word, to contribute positively and to stand critically.
N: And the EU? Does it play a part in CY’s work?
A: a big one, the statutes follow European standards, how we define youth, 18-30, our demands. Also the directives about LGBTQ issues and what should happen in Greece.
N: Does the instability of the EU stress you?
A: Sometimes yes, for example, the Legal Gender Recognition wouldn’t have happened without the EU
N: How do members have a say in decisions, how do they propose activities?
A: there is form that one can use to propose a project, give a title and some details, a time frame, an estimated budget, and one sends it to Administrative Group and then they discuss it with whomever proposed it and if it is feasible, there is a call and it moves forward.
N: so any member can propose something?
A: yes
N: In the General Assemblies who sets the agenda
A: everyone can add what they want. Also, between General Assemblies, in the closed meeting for members they can talk and propose anything, on the record.
N: So there is a space to talk and give feedback for anything
A: exactly! Anything, even how to answer on comments if needed, politics, anything
N: How do you use media and technology?
A: Intensely, we are young! Everything is on Facebook, events, meetings, press releases
N: do you gather references in the press?
A: yes everything
N: who writes press releases?
A: there is a communications officer who writes them, with the Administrative Group
N: what voices are being represented in Colour Youth?
A: It depends on who are members, we now have many trans members so that changes. For example, we have fewer lesbians.
N: Last question, what does Colour Youth try to teach to young people?
A: to respect the experience of the others, no matter our stereotypes, or what we think, we should respect the experience and the pain, you have to accept what the other says.
N: Akis, thank you so much!
A: Thank you, I hope you got what you needed!
Interview #2 – Luke

N: Is it ok to use your name?
L: Yes, Luke!

N: How did you get involved with Colour Youth?
L: I was 18, when I saw “Blue is the warmest colour” and I realized that I wasn’t straight and it was before I became aware of my gender identity. I said ok, you are not straight. When I realized I wasn’t straight, I took same time to let it sink, and then I said to myself, what can you do? I realized I couldn't handle it, because I live in a society that doesn’t treat minorities well, and especially the LGBTQ community. And I looked at different LGBT stuff in Greece and outside and I found Colour Youth. It sounded great and interesting, so I decided to go to one of the meetings, they have meetings every Saturday. That Saturday they had asked a group called Bisparkle to come and they did some games and I really liked it. It felt good being with others like myself for the first time, and then I kept going to Saturday meetings, and I realized at some point that it feels like home, really comfortable with all the members, and I thought that I wanted to contribute to this because it would help me evolve and accept myself, and also I could help others facing the same difficulties. I decided to become a member.

N: How active are you?
L: I can’t really say, I want to be more involved. In the beginning, for a few months, I just was. Then in early 2017, I found out about the School Climate Survey and I decided to participate, since I also study statistics. Then I became more active in Saturday meetings. I helped with many things with others. Now with the Legal Gender Recognition, what I could do was go to meetings and gatherings, and I try to participate as much as I can, in different projects. And now I decided to be a candidate for Secretary.

N: Which kind of activities do you like more?
L: I can't say, they are all important. They are divided in three domains: support, community development, and advocacy. I think they are equally important. I haven’t helped with support so far, but I know we have projects, such as Tell us. But, in advocacy, I am there. Or in community development, where Saturday meetings fall, I have tried to organize a Saturday meeting if I have time. I have taken part in meetings with Embassies, whenever I have time and I feel I can do a good job, I go. I can’t really say what I like more.

N: What is the purpose? How does Colour Youth impact youths’ lives?
L: It impacts them personally, for all that participate, or just come to Saturday meetings, and also for social change. On a personal level, everyone that has attended an event, they have said that they have felt like home and like family. Colour Youth also tries through everyday activism to create change, whenever we hear something transphobic or homophobic we will take a stand immediately. I think that the mentality is that we don’t want next generations and other individuals to have the same difficulties as us.

N: Do you discuss Colour Youth with friends or family?
L: With family, not. With friends outside Colour Youth, straight and whatever, yes I talk about it. They are supportive, even the ones that don’t like NGOs, when they get to know Colour Youth and what it tries to do, they are positive, they are happy that there are people that are active.

N: Can you give me an example of something that you particularly like and respect in Colour Youth?
L: What I really respect is that everyone is equal and we have a rule that all are treated as equals. Also the respect we show each other. We are really politically correct, and we really stand for it, despite reactions that we are too politically correct. But it comes from our need to show respect, and we want to be respected also. Also, that one person can’t serve for more than two years in the Administrative group, which means that there are not the same persons running Colour Youth, that they own it. There is a team, working together towards a cause.

N: Was there a moment that you felt really effective?
L: Yes, in the School Climate Survey, with all I did there. When we reached 4000 questionnaires, I was proud, it had never happened before, it was the first time a survey like this happened. Another time was when the Legal Gender recognition was voted, we all we managed something.
N: Was there a point that you felt the opposite?
L: A lot of times, but not in Colour Youth, from a society point of view. I see so many people to push their personal lives to the side in order to work for Colour Youth, so that society become more accepting, and then I see society and especially the LGBT community to reproduce the same problematic behaviours, I get disappointed.
N: Can you give an example on how Colour Youth helps youth become more civically engaged?
L: Regarding LGBTQ community or in general.
N: Isn't LGBTQ issues civic engagement?
L: Yes they sure are. LGBTQ community is part of the society. First thing that comes to mind is the right to vote and how important it is to vote for something, and in Colour Youth we vote every year, for the elections. I believe that someone in Colour Youth learns how to respect others more, what is right and wrong, and it helps to move society forward and to make it more accepting, and to become more aware to inequality and discrimination, to react, to speak up.
N: how would you describe the goals?
L: long term: to change the world. To be blunt, for LGBT individuals to stop facing all this shit. Also to show that we are also members of a society and we want to participate and they shouldn't turn us away because of sexual orientation, it is ridiculous. Or for that matter, because of any characteristic. Because we are a minority, we try to support other minorities also, for example there is a program for refugees also in Colour Youth. Mostly LGBT refugees, but we work together with other organizations.
N: How does Colour Youth enlists members? Are activities open?
L: Everyone is welcome, most activities are open to all.
N: Do you have space to talk in Colour Youth?
L: Yes, certainly, and also, if I say the wrong thing, people will train me. They don't expect me to know everything, even though they have done it thousands of time, they will train me, if I say something problematic without being aware it is problematic, they will tell me why. I learn and develop. But, if I say the same problematic thing again and again, we'll have a problem.
N: Do you feel that you can be heard?
L: yes, every time that we have to talk about something
N: How do you handle disagreement in the organization?
L: Definitely not with shouting, generally we try to find the most sensible solution, something in the middle, and the basic principle is that we won’t fight because we have to deal with something that concerns a wider audience, it isn’t personal. I would say that we deal with it in a very democratic way, so that we don't lose sight of our goal.
N: How do you make a decision?
L: We mostly vote, it depends on the decision. Important ones are voted and in general, when the Administrative Group wants our advice we have a closed Facebook group and they ask.
N: Beyond LGBT?
L: Refugees, women’s issues. We start with the LGBTQI, but you can’t treat fairly LGBTQI individuals, but not other minorities. This is why I believe that we do helps create respect in the society.
N: If you think back, when you joined Colour Youth, did you think yourself as an active citizen?
L: yes sure
N: How do you define it? What is an active citizen?
L: An active citizen is someone that first knows how things work, what happens. I didn’t know how a society works, no one had taught me in school. I managed to get a better grasp. And then I finally felt that I could do something to change it. It was the first time I felt that I can do something, have an impact. A citizen must evolve and help the society evolve. It’s not only
voting once in the elections, every 4, or 3, or 2 years – elections in Greece can be a little weird. I believe that it has to do with how one functions daily in a society, how you relate to people, it has to do with civic engagement. And of course, it had to do with rights, regarding work, as a woman, with the rights as an LGBTQ individual, all these.

N: What should youth aim for by being civically engaged?

L: I believe that they carry the weight to change the world. They receive a world pretty much destroyed and they have to fix it. It can be disappointing, many young people don’t bother. It is bout learning to do other mistakes than the previous generations, in any level.

N: Is EU relevant to Colour Youth?

L: Without the EU, Colour Youth wouldn’t exist. Greece is very backwards. Even Legal Gender Recognition got voted because we had to, not because we wanted. We were supported by European organizations and we had guidance. We got guidance from Europe; if we were on our own we would have shut down, despite our will.

N: Do you have opportunities to learn in Colour Youth?

L: Yes, with all the activities, from knitting to empowerment. In the School Climate survey I learnt practical things that I hadn’t learnt in University.

N: What does Colour Youth try to teach youth? If there is something

L: Mostly respect and teamwork. We will work together to achieve something better.

N: How does Colour Youth social media and new technologies?

L: There is a person that handles it, we have an account in all social media, instagram, facebook, twitter, etc. Mostly facebook. There are two groups, one members only and a general one. We use them a lot.

N: how does Colour Youth gain attention?

L: Mostly with press releases, it depends.

N: Do you gather them?

L: Yes, from all sites, even the hate comments.

N: Who does Colour Youth represent?

L: All the LGBTQI community, and every aspect of it.

N: Is there space to think about what has happened and give constructive feedback?

L: Yes, all the time, not critically, but feedback. We have made a lot of mistakes, but we get better.

N: Do you want to add something about Colour Youth, your experience with Colour Youth?

L: I may be biased, but I feel great, that it is my home and my family, and that there are people that will be honest with the good and the bad, they will help you grow and they will help you help others.
Interview #3 – Marilina
N: Can I use your name?
M: Yes, of course
N: How did you get involved with Colour Youth?
M: An afternoon, a classmate called and said we are here with some kids and we think about starting a group for LGBTQI issues and we would love to have a psychologist – I had just gotten in the university- do you want to join? Guys, just a sec, I am not a psychologist yet, wait, but tell me, if I can help as a volunteer. Then we got lost for a while, and then when it got going, I started attending meetings and activities.
N: So you where there from the beginning, the conception of the idea…
M: yes (laughs)
N: How old are you? It doesn’t have to be recorded (laughter)
M: It’s ok, 26 just.
N: So 8 years ago…
M: sometime, we don’t have to be specific!
N: Now, all this time, are you a volunteer or paid?
M: A volunteer
N: What made you decide to stay in Colour Youth?
M: I love that it is very active, whatever happens, we run for everything, things happen. We don’t just sit around a table and talk, we are activists. Also Colour Youth is a network, it is a social network, it creates a context of a family, that you belong, it isn’t just about rights, for whatever reason. It has many aspects.
N: How does the organization of an activity start?
M: Someone thinks of an idea, and then they say what can we do about this, then an open call, and then we talk about it, like this.
N: What do you like more of what Colour Youth does?
M: Street actions, refugees, mostly these…
N: Is there something that you find challenging?
M: not really… except the ones that I don’t have the skills for…
N: what do you do in Colour Youth?
M: Now? Now a lot! Until December I am co-coordinator of Human Resources, and then, since January, I got elected to be the new coordinator of the support team
N: What is this?
M: it the psychological team, this is why I wanted that. I also help with the refugees group, I am also second chair to Elena in the gender identity empowerment group, the same with the women’s empowerment group. This.
N: How does your work fit with the overall goals of Colour Youth?
M: They are very well defined by the working groups: there is the one that lobbies and pushes for what we want, then the socialization part, the community development work group, and finally the psychological support workgroup.
N: Three distinct needs then…
M: Yes, and three goals. Also to educate on LGBTQI issues, schools, professionals, everywhere
N: How does Colour Youth impacts youth?
M: A lot…to me it has given me the possibility to stand for things I believe in, and to feel that we can, we can change something, and this is very rare. Without this space, you feel really frustrated. Also, what I said about creating a support network, friends, persons of reference…
N: Do you talk about what you do in Colour Youth with friends and family?
M: sure (laughs). Yes, I do. My parents are suspicious, what do you do there, what happens there? Are you one of them? My friends outside here… let me think who they are… ok, it is unknown to them, sometimes you become an encyclopedia, and I also become this for LGBTQI individuals, because I am an activist. It’s not like I have seen a negative behavior or rejection.
Grant Agreement N. 649538

N: Talking about participating, is there also partly coming out?
M: yes, it is…
N: can you give me an example of something that you particularly like and respect in Colour Youth?
M: There are a lot. The most important are two: psychological support, the empowerment groups, it is a huge need, huge. And second, what I admire a lot is the advocacy, the time needed for press releases, looking for information.
N: Is there something that makes you feel really effective?
M: I can’t say…Maybe because we do everything as a team.
N: Something that frustrates you or challenges you?
M: Yes! One of the main things I had to do, to separate between volunteers and members. Well, there are individuals that want to help, but they can’t or don’t want to become members. These individuals, we lose them, so there is capacity that we miss. And that we need. So, trying to find a way to keep them and have them on record. We started it, and then interns came, and it got lost.
N: I guess there have to be enough members active to coordinate everything…
M: Yes, that’s the problem, who are they? One person does five things…
N: Can you give me an example of a moment that you felt that what you do here really creates change?
M: yes, in the vote for the civil partnerships, we were outside and it was amazing… and it the legal gender recognition, in these things I say, God, what we do –and not just us- something happens.
N: How do you understand being an active citizen and being civically engaged?
M: uh? That’s the sincere reaction! It’s very formal how you say it!
N: I know, it sounds really formal, not something that we do in our everyday lives
M: yes, I wouldn’t use it like this…
N: How does Colour Youth contribute to civic engagement?
M: We advocate, we activate youth, it’s in the foundations of Colour Youth.
N: How do we define youth
M: We have the amazing boundary, 30, it’s in the statutes.
N: When does it begin?
M: we have kids here, 14, 15, 16 years old
N: Only LGBTQI?
M: They usually come with friends, not alone, or a relationship.
N: Anyone can become member?
M: Yes, if they are young and they don’t pose a threat for safety.
N: Who can start a project?
M: Anyone can, there is a process, but anyone can
N: Do you feel that your voice is heard?
M: yes, a lot
N: What happens with disagreements?
M: what do we do? (Sigh) guilt… (laughs). There is a dialogue, and we get there.
N: is there someone that has a final saying in decisions?
M: the General Assembly, the Administrative Group won’t do something on their own. There isn’t one person that can decide.
N: Other than LGBTQI issues?
M: refugees, inmates in prisons, schools, feminist issues, intersectionality in general.
N: When you became more active in Colour Youth, did you have an identity of being an active citizen?
M: yes, surely. It is an activist thing, you feel that you are active…
N: how do you define this?
M: I do something that has an impact for a population, a social group.
N: Is civic engagement important for youth and why?
M: It is, because it creates a safety net for everyone that experiences discrimination and rejection. And then create change, things will change.
N: Relationship with Europe?
M: With organizations in Europe.
N: Is there a safe space to talk about decisions and give feedback?
M: Yes, and sometimes we are too strict with ourselves. We try to be constructive though.
N: Do you feel that you learn new skills?
M: Yes, a lot, and this is why I wanted to be in a position of responsibility.
N: If there is a thing that Colour Youth tries to teach to youth?
M: To love themselves and stop beating themselves up, and feel so bad.
N: How do you reach out?
M: Site and Facebook mostly. And press releases, written by a team.
N: Who would you say that Colour Youth represent?
M: LGBTQI youth. We have more than 4500 members in the open Facebook group.
N: Is there something you want to say, ask, or add?
M: Ok, it wasn’t bad (laughs)
Interview #4 – Nikolas (NN)

NP: how did you find Colour Youth and how did you decide to get involved?

NN: It’s a long story. I found out about Colour Youth in 2012-2013. Because I was very closeted, I was very afraid to come, so I watched from a distance. At some point they were having meetings in the National Garden, and I had passed several, many times, but never joined the group, the group was open for all. After a couple of years I met someone that new people from Colour Youth, and that helped me to decide it. It was then that I first came in Colour Youth, and that was really good for me because I saw people that…many gay, many queer, many trans individuals that I had never seen. That was it, I attended a couple of meetings, I really liked it, but I didn’t do anything more. I watched from a distance for a couple of years. At some point, Colour Youth announces on Facebook about the empowerment groups, whoever wants, can join. I was in a difficult place with myself then and wanted to look into things about my sexual orientation, I said I’ll go. I went through the interview with the psychologist and she told me that to take part in this group you should also be a member in Colour Youth. At least this is what I understood. And what I did, I went to Colour Youth and said I want to join, and I want to go to this group, I need it. This is how I became a member of Colour Youth and then I got more involved and then I got elected in the Administrative Group twice.

Na: What is your position?

Ni: I am responsible for the CY Support Workgroup (the “seniors” workgroup). I just became 30. This is a big satisfaction for me and it makes me very happy, because people here, they have really supported me to accept myself, to do things, and to help first myself and then the organization.

Na: You are a volunteer?

Ni: Yes,

Na: Are there any paid members in Colour Youth?

Ni: We have some programs funded, and right now we have one person that is being paid to keep records of victims of hate crimes, and we also have an external collaborator, a psychologist, that will provide support if needed (to victims of hate crimes).

Na: Do you treat them differently, volunteers and paid staff?

Ni: Paid staff aren’t necessarily members, they are professionals, they are not in the organization, they don’t make decisions, they don’t vote, they don’t get elected.

Na: Can you describe a typical day or a typical week in Colour Youth?

Ni: The main thing that we do are the Saturday meetings. I come here every Saturday. I also communicate a lot with the rest of the team through apps and Internet and exchange ideas and opinions –I feel a little self-conscious now (laughing)

Na: why, what happened

Ni: because I’m being recorded, but it’s ok, I’m starting to relax… so a typical day. Because I am also responsible for a workgroup I talk a lot with the Administrative Group, there is a lot to discuss about things that need to be done for the organization and the projects we run, strategic planning, dealing with members in crisis, the space and what is needed. Generally, we are alert all the time, checking emails –we get thousands of them every day, we have to answer them… and also to have a good time, because all these people are also friends by now and I can talk about other things, beyond the organizational stuff.

Na: How do you go about organizing an action?

Ni: If someone has an idea, they can share it in facebook or in a meeting, and then we discuss about it, if it is doable. If we can do it, we figure out who’s the best person for the job, it usually is the one that proposed it in the first place. We have also a procedure in place, there is a form that people can use to say what they want to do, and how, how much it will cost. They send it to the administrative group, they discuss it with each other and the rest of the members and if it something that can be done and supported then we do it.
Na: Which of the things that you do here, you find them more interesting or enjoyable, or rewarding?
Ni: Everything! Just having people with common interests to talk about things, because outside here, unfortunately, I didn’t have many friends that were gay or non-straight. Just this, it is a big deal for me.
Na: How does your work here influence youth?
Ni: I see a lot of people here that can come and fee; empowered and can talk freely, sometimes to come out. If I also think of myself, it has empowered me a lot, I was an unhappy kid and now I have managed to do so many things that I couldn’t even think that I would do them on my own before. It was unthinkable that I could think things, I had too many boxes in me, stereotypes, that didn’t help me function, and created a lot of problems in my life in general. Colour Youth has changed me, and by being here I have worked through many issues, and I still do.
Na: Do you discuss Colour Youth with family and friends?
Ni: Not my family, I haven’t said anything, they are not supportive at all. My outside environment is not supported. Actually, Colour Youth is mainly supportive for me.
NA: Friends?
Ni: My friends yes, I have some friends (outside Colour Youth) that know about me, there are 5 persons that know about me and are supportive, but that’s as far as it goes, I can’t talk to them more about other issues on my mind, personal issues.
Na: If there was just one thing that you respect most about Colour Youth, what would it be?
Ni: Just one? There are more… That there is mutual respect, that there are open ears to hear your voice, there is support, they are by your side if you need anything, people will help.
Na: Is there something that you do here that makes you feel especially effective?
Ni: Sometimes, I have ideas and I can get people to agree with them and the ideas can become action. To be more decisive, to say let’s do it, and do it.
Na: Is there something that disappoints or frustrates you?
Ni: In the beginning, when I didn’t know a lot, I had various ideas about things to do in Colour Youth that were undoable. In the beginning, I felt disappointed, I am suggesting so many things, why can’t we do them. And, after a lot of discussion, and after getting more involved with the rest of the LGBTQ community, I realized that they were right to say no and I am happy that they did. They protected me and I now agree (laughs)
Na: Can you think of an example, a moment that you felt that your work here actually changes things?
Ni: Yes, from the simplest thing, Saturday meetings where you see people talking about their problems, that are like your own, and they come and you become one, and they feel moved, what else can anyone ask? We also do more official things, working with ministries, pushing for the Legal Gender Recognition, but I think the most important thing is Community Development, empowering people, not necessarily to join Colour Youth, but creating a space to talk. I think this is a huge thing.
Na: How do you think that the work you do here and Colour Youth Itself helps youth become more civically engaged?
Ni: Colour Youth is in itself civically engaged, we are deeply involved with what happens around us. It is an official organization, we have been asked to speak in the parliament for a number of times, we have worked together with officials for different kinds of legislation, eg. the civil partnership or the legal gender recognition
NA: What are the aims of the organization?
Ni: Equal rights for all the LGBTQ community. And empowerment, especially for youth, because they face more difficulties and their voices are not heard.
NA: Is there a procedure to enlist new members?
NI: it is a process, whoever wants to join, can come and ask to join. There is a small annual amount, 20€, after 30 they double and lose their voting rights, but they can be there in a a supporting capacity.

NA: Who has the final say in things?
NI: All together, the administrative group and the general assembly.

NA: Funding?
NI: ILGA, GLSEN, OSF, EU. But not national funds.

NA: Do you feel that your voice is heard?
NI: Yes, my voice will be heard. And there also might be a dialogue after. But my voice will be heard.

NA: What happens when there are disagreements?
NI: We try, we work on this. We try to give arguments for what we say, not become personal.
NA: Could there be one person to make a decision and influence all of the organization?
NI: No, no one can do this. People can’t even be elected for more than two terms in the Administrative Group.

NA: How do you give feedback, after a decision, or an event? Or when something goes wrong? Does it happen in a self-reflective or a self-critical way?
NI: We assess the results, and we take it from there. There isn’t any scapegoating, there isn’t any one person that has done something wrong, because we do things together. The responsibility belongs to all of us.

NA: Beyond LGBTQ issues?
NI: feminist, youth issues, mainly LGBTQ.

NA: When you decided to get more involved with Colour Youth, did you also felt that you were becoming more of an active citizen?
NI: I felt that I have some power, by being here, I have some power and I can influence a group of people, and this group can influence an even bigger group.

NA: How would you define active citizenship?
NI: Being with people, talk about things, and trying to find solutions for the problems that you face. This is what Colour Youth does.

NA: Is it important for youth to also be active citizens?
NI: Of course, youth can better express their own problems. Older people can’t express in the same way and talk about the problems that youth face.

NA: Is Europe relevant to Colour Youth?
NI: we participate in groups such as ILGA-EU and IGLYO, participate in European conferences, good practices and developments regarding LGBTQ issues. We are also financially dependent on European foundations.

NA: Do you feel that you have the opportunity to learn new skills?
NI: Yes, I have learnt a lot, from younger and older persons.

NA: If there is one thing that Colour Youth would try to teach to young people, what would that be?
NI: If we are more active, we have more power.
NA: How do you get attention to what you do?
NI: Through the site, social media, press releases, interviews. Especially now with Legal Gender Identity, we had to many requests for interviews, we were overwhelmed. But we didn’t go everywhere, we selected the ones that were better, and we said a lot of nos.

NA: Who writes press releases?
NI: The most relevant individuals, but we all have a say
NA: Whose voices would you say that are more represented by Colour Youth?
NI: LGBTQ youth, and all LGBTQ identities. We have made a lot of efforts all these years. The next Administrative Group will have 6 non-male identified members, they are women and non binary individuals.
NA. Do you have any questions?
NI: No, but is there something that I didn’t answer?
NA: No you were great!
Interview #5 – Savvas

N: Hi, for the record you are being recorded
S: (laughing) ok
N: So, how did you find Colour Youth and how did you decide to get involved with it?
S: So the story is that I was in the army in Cyprus with a guy, a gay guy, and when we got back
un Greece, he suggested to go to an organization to see what is going on and we went once to
to get to know them, and they asked for volunteers for the Tell Us project, so we volunteered. And
this is how it started..
N: and that happened when?
S: It was back on 2013, not that long ago. I’m not there since the beginning, more like the middle
N: I know that you are a volunteer
S: Yes
N: Is there paid staff?
S: yes there are, project based personnel. We have the Tell Us project that has a project manager,
who is neither youth nor LGBTQ, and there also was in that project a psychologist and an
lawyer, who were also paid per case. Most of the projects and activities of Colour Youth, other
than support, are run by members.
N: Are paid members treated differently than volunteers?
S: There are no paid members. By chance, it is not a policy
N: What do you do in Colour Youth?
S: (laughs) Since 2015 I am responsible for advocacy for Colour Youth,
after a lot of pressure
N: How is a typical week in Colour Youth?
S: There is no ty
N: Such as?
S: Taking part in Athens Pride Political group, for example
N: How is a typical week in Colour Youth?
S: There is no typical week for all members. The most typical thing that we do are the Saturday
meetings, that are open. On any week, there are other meetings for various projects. Each
member can also attend the workgroup meetings, every month and the Closed Meeting for
Members. There are many meetings, depending how involved one is. For example, I don’t think
that there are days that I don’t do something for the organization, several hours per day.
N: What is the procedure to organize a project or a meeting?
S: The proce
N: Of all that Colour Youth does, what do you like most?
S: The advocacy workgroup, it is where I joined in the beginning. It isn’t the main thing that
Colour Youth does, it actually is the thing that Colour Youth is worse at. There had been some
efforts before, it started to get organized in 2015 and it became a workgroup. The problem with
advocacy is that very often many individuals feel that they can’t do it, and they are right up to a
point, because you have to be trained in the beginning before you do it. It isn’t about attending
an advocacy event and this is it. On the other hand, it isn’t a priority for Colour Youth,
Community Development is what always was Colour Youth’s priority and this is what we put
most of our efforts. A secondary priority is support, through the workgroup and funded
programs. In all these, the need for social change was created; it has always been a goal, but we
didn’t try it in a structured manner. The last couple of years, we started to organize it and we
hope that it will gain an even bigger momentum.
N: Why is advocacy such a challenge?
S: For a number of reasons. It isn’t a priority for Colour Youth as an organization, although it is on paper, people care more for community development. At the same time, because there is a rapid succession of people, many leave for postgrad studies etc. New members are scared and until they start getting it, and trying it out, it takes a lot of time. Being the oldest member in this workgroup, this is what I see being the main problem.

N: What are your goals for the work you do in the organization, and how do they fit with the organization’s goals?
S: Advocacy is where I think I can offer the most, this is important to me. In Colour Youth for a long time, I was a beneficiary, not in a project, but indirectly. I had and still have various mental health issues, and Colour Youth through its people, and not in a deliberate way, helped me get over some thing and of course I feel that I owe them to give something in return, like helping with what I can do, which is the more official stuff. To help so that it keeps existing with the best way.

N: So, support and community…
S: Yes, what I don’t do in a way. I think that it is the most important thing, because it is one of the few things that don’t exist anywhere else like this. Or at least, they don’t happen in the same way, it is different than other opportunities for networking and I want to support it, in any way that I can. I am not sociable, and I can’t do sociable things, but ok, this is what I do.

N: How does the work in Colour Youth influences youth?
S: I am not sure how large of an impact we have, if we consider that large part of youth, even LGBTQ youth. I think it is an example that a group of young individuals can manage to do whatever they aim for. Colour Youth started meeting in a squat and it has managed to get its own space to find funding, to sit on the same table with institutions (for example, ministries, government officials) with the help of many people for sure, mentors and people over 30. But all the work comes very specifically from young individuals, and I hope that it is an example. Now, because there is a lot of toxicity in our community, I don’t know if it will allow it to grow, as it could. I hope that it gives an example, if they can do it, I can join and help, or, if they don’t agree with what we do, and don’t want to try and change it, to feel that they can do their own thing.

N: Do you discuss Colour Youth with family and friends?
S: yes, a lot. The usual thing they say is that I am too involved and I have to take a few steps back, because I need to do more things outside Colour Youth, that I do, but I do have left behind a lot of things that have to do with my career. I haven’t taken exams, or done further trainings, things that… Let’s be honest, if I wanted to do these things, I would have done them, it has more to do with me being not so interested in them. In general, I am lucky to have supportive family and friends. And in Colour Youth, I made even more friends, when I talk about my friends, I talk about Colour Youth, because we have common experiences in it. From a point on, you become a part of the gang, because we are an organization, but we wouldn’t be anything if we weren’t also friends.

N: Can you give an example that you respect in Colour Youth?
S: Democracy. Clearly. Democracy in Colour Youth is amazing, I haven’t seen anything like it anywhere else, ever. I don’t have experience of many organizations, in 5 or 6, in and out of the LGBTQ community. What Colour Youth has, doesn’t exist anywhere else, as far as I know. And I don’t mean only the frequent change of the administrative group (every year). Every year, there is a lot of change. At the same time, it goes further. There is transparency in everything, and I don’t mean only minutes and records. All Administrative Group meetings are open and members are informed for them. Once every month we have members’ meetings, once a month there are meetings of workgroups open to all members, to get informed about projects and join what they want. Because of the huge change, Colour Youth has learnt to encourage participation of members in all things, as horizontally as possible, because individuals that are in charge know that they won’t be in charge for long and it is an one-way-street to have as many individuals as
possible involves, so that when the one that runs something leaves, the same something can be passed to next person. This creates a lot of work, because we end up having to know everything. But, I think that the democracy we have built is impressive. Often there is a backlash, not in a bad way, in an annoying way. A couple of days, we made public a text for sex-work, with our policies. This was getting ready for two years, it went through two general assemblies before being allowed to become public, not for exclusionary reasons, but because of syntax. After all, it isn’t enough for the Administrative Group to say yes, the General Assembly has also to approve.

N: Is there something that disappoints or frustrates you?
S: Democracy. The first time the text on sex-work didn’t get voted, god knows how we managed, the ones that wrote it. But we managed and in the end we also appreciated it, because it became much better at the end. Things that I don’t like, ok… very often it is very difficult to have a youth organization, lack of maturity, change of people in key positions, reflexes, and of course, and I see that a lot in advocacy, connections (networking). Now that we had the same president for two years, it was better, but connections are lost, and it is a problem for advocacy and fund raising, but it’s ok. The positives of the innate characteristics of an only-youth organization are more than the negatives.

N: Was there a moment that you felt that the work of Colour Youth has an impact, creates change?
S: If we refer to social change in terms of laws, maybe with the Legal Gender Recognition, we saw that what we did brought some result, not everything we wanted, but something happened. It is very difficult sometimes, because an action, or a set of actions can have actual impact in the future, or impact that you can’t see. For me, one of my most moving moments in Colour Youth was that the first time we handled an asylum application, that had an immediate result. We slept very little for a week, but when she was granted the asylum, it was something real. A person didn’t have to go back to an abusive setting. The joy was worth even less sleep!

N: How does the work in Colour Youth promotes civic engagement?
S: Members of Colour Youth join because of the characteristics of the group (not the fact that it is a youth organizations. Many individuals come and they are introverts, or they have self-esteem issues, and they come out really empowered. I see that in myself, I see this happen in front of my eyes. People that were closed, that didn’t show their potential, they opened and learnt what means to participate, what it means to vote, we have a General Assembly meeting that can last 12 hours and we vote, and our vote counts, you learn your power, and what you can do in a system that democracy is ensured, we have ensured it.

N: How did you reach the system of having candidates for each position separately?
S: Because older members thought that someone could be really good for secretary but not for treasurer, or vice versa. They also thought that when we vote someone, we need to know why we vote them, for what reason, not vote for someone because we think of them as good with organizing and they end up in a totally irrelevant position. The other reason is that it allows transparency, even the Administrative Group can’t decide on their own to change roles. They are not allowed to forget that the General Assembly is in charge, in general.

N: How do you deal with disagreements?
S: Difficult. In order to resolve something, it takes exhaustive, carefully structured discussions, especially, because important discussions happen in General Assemblies, which is the worst
practice. We also have a culture for important proposals to ask for a wide margin of agreement. Technically, they can go forward even with just one vote more, but it has happened that someone withdrew their proposal because it wasn't approved with a wide margin. We want consensus, and there are also exceptions. There have been discussions that have destroyed us and we have found different ways to deal, every time with the help of a psychologist we have, Elena, you know her. Once, after the end of a General Assembly, we need help and in five days she did a group process. She called all of 30 of us, and we did this group process in order to see each other's side and move forward. We do things like this to resolve things. We have also handled individuals in crises. Before joining Colour Youth, I would never thought that we could deal with individuals that have serious mental health issues, we had a case with an individual that came every time shouting and creating a havoc, and we couldn’t react, because she was a trans girl in serious need of support. I don’t know how we got through this…

N: How did you get through this?
S: With a lot of drama, it wasn’t something that could be resolved in a general assembly or a couple of meetings. It was something that took two years. We started with a person that had problematic behaviours, but we covered it, because she was in big need of support, and also was a friend, she was one of us, not a stranger that came in our space. At some point, it got out of our hands, she didn’t want to talk to a professional, and at the same time she had mood swings, one day she accused online Colour Youth for thefts and the next day she begged for forgiveness and promised to change, when we asked for evidence and said that if that has happened, we are beside you. A lot of interactions, we got our psychologist involved behind the scene, because the girl knew she was a psychologist, and when she saw a psychologist she disappeared, because she was traumatized by other mental health professionals. It ended up badly, what happened was that after two years we had to not accept her as a member any more, with a promise that we would do our best to support her outside Colour Youth. It was at a point that her mental health issues had a great effect on the mental health of other members.

N: This shows care, you took care of her, and also the other members..
S: Yes, and it took a general assembly to decide that, and it took a lot of work between us. She remained as a beneficiary in many projects, but she is not a member. She is welcome in all open meetings, and she attends them.

N: Do you ever get burnt out?
S: There is this possibility. What happens is that people join, and they think, it is a youth organization, how many problems could there be? (laughs) and every November, we try to find individuals for the Administrative group and we try to persuade them. I have grown generations of Administrative Groups and I have said, don’t worry, we’re all here, it’s no big deal (laughs). Every November, we find them, and then they realize that they are not on their own, but it isn’t easy and they have to deal with serious problems that affect lives of people you know, you see everyday. There have been situations that I don’t know how we got through them. I think that our angel is Elena, our psychologist, because she offers her services pro bono for the last five or six years. Beyond the empowerment groups, she also acts as a supervisor for the Administrative Group. Although the Administrative group doesn’t convene every week, they meet with our psychologist every two weeks, and we discuss our problems and how we manage, and the dynamics between us. I think that if we didn’t have Elena as an adviser and helper –and this is why she is now an honorary member, one of four individuals that have really helped exceeding themselves- but Elena is really… if it wasn’t for her we would be nowhere. Often we see that for an organization you need a lawyer or leaders. What you need is a good psychologist. This what you need for a successful organization (laughs). Obviously, you need more things, but Elena played a decisive role in what we are, and we all play our part, but without this help we wouldn’t exist.

N: when you joined Colour Youth did you think of yourself as an active citizen?
S: Things are getting more intersectional here, I can’t answer for Colour Youth only. When I joined Colour Youth I felt that this was what I had to do to help that other youth wouldn’t have such a lousy experience as I did. I didn’t think of active citizenship or anything else, I thought that there are kids, that just like I, are going through shit. I am privileged but I had a very tough time and I felt this. Now I feel like an active citizen, the more I get involved, and I happen to also be involved in the advocacy workgroup that makes it even more obvious. It is part of my daily or weekly routine to visit opengov.gr, or diaveia (sites with new proposed legislation), to see what is going on, if we have to intervene, now I feel like an active citizen. When I started, I felt I needed to do something, because there was no other way. Even in other groups, for example in the knitting group, it might not seem as active citizenship, but it is. Creating a space for an individual that doesn’t have any place else to be social, to come and have fun with dorky things, that in other places could be considered weird, for example why would a 22 year old boy want to knit? Other than faggot, he would also be called old… in a way, it is civic participation, even if the ones involved don’t see it like this.

N: how do you define active citizenship?
S: I haven’t really thought about it… what becomes evident the more I participate, is how people don’t really care for the future of the society.. this is how I understand it, to do something, small as it may be, for bettering society. Before Colour Youth, I didn’t think of it. Now, I see my colleagues not care for important things, if they don’t affect their wage. And even when their wage is affected, they nag, but they won’t do anything more about it. As a society, we are terrifyingly unpolitical. Before Colour Youth I couldn’t see it, that if I didn’t participate, I was doing something wrong, but now it is the sensible thing to participate. I often think that in a while I will have to leave Colour Youth, or stay but not be really active, and I thought where I will go next. That made me think even more of Colour Youth.

N: What is the role of the European Union?
S: As a member of the advocacy group, I realized that most of our legislation comes from the EU and, my first relationship with the EU, even though I studied abroad since I was 17, and I experienced the European identity even in terms of fees, students from EU pay less. I had never realized the importance of it, and at the same time the positive and negative requirements. For example, the non-discrimination on the workplace on grounds of social orientation and gender identity came from the EU. At the end of the day, there are positive and negative things coming from the EU, for example a negative thing is the agreement with Turkey (to send back refugees). It is important to empower European organizations, limited as they are in what they can say, given that they are funded by the EU. Another EU parliament would have different policies, this is why we need to vote. Even if the EU doesn’t have consent from the people, and I am for the EU, from the moment we gave them part of our power, we need to remember that we have power, but it is there (on the EU), it isn’t like we don’t have it. We have to learn how to be active citizens also in the EU, and this influences horizontally our politics.

N: Doo you have opportunities to learn new skills?
S: Yes, there is even a new position of someone responsible for trainings such as project management, time management, team building etc

N: If there is one thing that Colour Youth would want to teach to its members?
S: An attitude, to expand inclusivity and a safe space, we want to be a team, to have more space on the team. And while we do this, we exclude others, I am not very happy with many things. I am proud, and also critical. For example, in a meeting about fatphobia, there was a cis gay guy talking about his experiences, how he had considered breast surgery, and I remember how moved I was. I never believed that we could create a space safe enough for someone to talk so personally. At the same time I noticed that in the last three years, all people that are seen as beautiful by the society. You won’t find not even one person with sixpack, maybe just one. I don’t know why, maybe because if you become inclusive in some things, you exclude others. I remember a talk about hanging a poster of an explicit cis gay sex scene. We never hang it,
because of a huge discussion of this is ok for people that feel dysphoric with this? Is it inclusive for asexual individuals? I think that we have sanitized our space a little more than we should have. We have one of the few spaces in Athens that really welcome trans men, non binary individuals, fat individuals, individuals with mental health issues, and individuals that talk openly about sex have left, individuals with sixpacks, HIV+ individuals have left. We try to have an inclusive attitude, but we don’t always manage. But we try. And we were ready to leave something behind. There are enough spaces for cis guys with sixpacks. But Colour Youth lacks completely beautiful cis guys. They used to be here, when I first got here, I remember them, they were the majority. And then happened what happened, and we realized things, and we changed.

N: But you also represent the voices of cis gay men, correct?
S: Yes, because there are enough cis gay guys in Colour Youth, we also have MSM of another kind.

N: However Colour Youth is a more queer organization…
S: Yes, it is but not only. We had a long discussion if monosexuality is transphobia. This is a shock to people, if there are two individuals together, for example me and a guy, and he says that he is non binary, he doesn’t want to change something in his body, but he doesn’t feel comfortable with the term man. If I break up with him, because of this, it makes us think… we didn’t get somewhere, we don’t want to criminalize the term lesbian or gay. But I think that women in Colour Youth were really affected by this discussion. We have women that have sex with women, but we don’t have many lesbians. There are conversations that don’t happen, because individuals in Colour Youth have different things on their minds. For example, Colour Youth is smoke free. With the exception of older members, there are almost no new members that smoke. In the older days, in the squat, smokers were there. Is it sanitization, hygeinism? I don’t know, but Colour Youth is almost totally a non-smoking organization. We have lost inclusivity in more mainstream things.

N: I think we covered everything. Is there something you want to ask?
S: No, it was great, thank you!
Interview #6: Elena

N: How did you get involved in Colour Youth?
E: One day, a friend took me there in a meeting, she said let’s go there, there are some young kids that do something for LGBT rights and so on. Until then I was more involved in other causes, in the human rights are, not LGBT, and I went. It was in the Rainbow House then, 2012 and a little before, before it got an official status.

N: So you are a psychologist, are you paid or a volunteer?
E: I am a volunteer (laughs)

N: What was it in Colour Youth that made you decide to get involved?
E: It was in the very beginning, so I liked the idea of building something from scratch, and not yet hierarchically structured. It was also something that I had on my mind and it gave me an outlet for LGBT activism, and then I saw really clearly that there was a need to get involved also as a psychologist, and this is also something that I really wanted.

N: So, what do you do in Colour Youth?
E: I offer services as a psychologist (laughs). Ok. I facilitate the empowerment groups. They are open groups for LGBTQ individuals that can explore in a safe space issues around LGBT identities, such as homophobia, transphobia etc, and share experiences. There are three, sexual orientation, gender identity, and a women’s group. I also conduct workshops and seminars from time to time, where we talk about relevant issues. I have a say regarding all psychological things, meaning requests for mental health services, colleagues, volunteers, people that want to come and do something, and I try to filter through these. I also do the supervision / support of the Administrative Group, that takes most of the weight, and they get burnt out a lot, and they need back up and at least once per month we meet. Crisis intervention sometimes, when needed. This.

N: What is your goal in the work that you do for Colour Youth?
E: I really like working in the community, so my goal is to be able to work in the community and be a part of what is happening. On an institutional level, or the closed community with its needs. I like being active, my main goal is to be active.

N: What do you find more rewarding?
E: Everything is rewarding. Yes, everything. In a psycho-emotional way, and not only, also scientifically and professionally, I gather experience. I have learnt a lot.

N: And the biggest challenge?
E: Conflict resolution. It is a big part in the community in general. It is also a challenge, being a youth community, in Colour Youth there is always a new generation, that are again their in late teens. It is always a challenge to meet youth from the beginning, with all the homophobia and transphobia that they face, it is always a challenge…

N: Regarding the organizations goals, how is your work complementary?
E: A big part of my work has to do with psychosocial support, so this part I contribute, mostly with ideas. I don’t to the implementation, it is a team effort, and in many of these I don’t participate in all phases of implementation. But in the psychosocial support. Also in an institutional way, for example, with the Legal Gender Recognition, or the Civil Partnership, when in the public sphere a scientific language is required and I can help in this role.

N: Does your work there change people’s lives?
E: (laughs) changes… for all of us, it goes without saying. My life changes, and other lives also change, yes. We go for the change!

N: How does your life change?
E: It changes, as connection changes us, getting in touch with our blind spots. My blind spots are worked on, as I work there, facilitating groups and everything. Privileges that I happen to have or to have worked on them and then I remember how it is not to have them, and revisit them and work on them again. These are all change and they bring change.

N: Do you talk about your participation in Colour Youth there with family and friends?
E: Yes, I do.
N: Are they supportive?
E: Yes they are.
N: Regarding Colour Youth, can you think of one thing that you particularly like or respect?
E: Yes. I respect a lot, a lot, a super effort and a power that I see in very young individuals with great hurt in many levels, and because of the LGBT identity. They try to offer, they come together, although they are very hurt and need lots of support, they offer this support, they work as a team, they try to not be hegemonic, I respect this a lot, it is huge.
N: Is there something that makes you feel particularly effective?
E: I remember the first day that we went to the new space, the one that they rented now. Before that, Colour Youth didn’t have a space of its own. We had a workshop. I went for the first time, and it was the first day that the space opened. I started crying in front of everyone, before I started the workshop. How do you get to a result? I’m saying this from an outside point of view, an external result: the space. It has a lot of substance deep down and a lot of effort. Of course, I contributed something to this and because I had experienced all the previous situations, having the supervisions nowhere, in building that a coincidental organization gives, in a room without windows, without heat, outside in parks, in coffee shops etc. I see the result in practical things, where the effort gives something tangible, and I remember all the effort and the results that are also on the inside.
N: How many years do you do this in Colour Youth?
E: This is the sixth year…
N: So, approximately all the years that Colour Youth is an official organization?
E: Yes. I wasn’t in the very first group that made the first call and had the very first meeting. I wasn’t there, I was right after this.
N: So, you have worked with all Administrative Groups
E: Yes.
N: Is there something that disappoints or frustrates you?
E: No. To take a lot of things on me, yes. To find it difficult, to be annoyed, or angry, to be emotional, yes. But to be disappointed, no.
N: How does your work contribute to civic engagement and active citizenship?
E: Yes, it is the part of support, and it is important. Because young individuals really want to do this, they have a lot of energy, and the vision, that the older don’t have, but they don’t have the necessary support. Combined with the inversely proportional discrimination and lack of support they experience, it makes it really hard. So, I think that my role is helping in order to keep the engine running, to do what it can do.
N: How would you describe goals and aims of Colour Youth?
E: Substantial. All the goals, in their essence the need to connect more deeply in the community. All of Colour Youth’s goals have that, it couldn’t be any other way, they have it. So, I think it is to the point, it really hits the root of what is needed.
N: How would you describe the young people you work with?
E: Very strong, and they don’t know it, how strong they are.
N: When you started in Colour Youth did you think of yourself as an active citizen?
E: Yes, this is why I went.
N: And how would you define it? How do you define civic participation?
E: Active citizen is not only someone that seeks support, but also commits to the connecting. The one that feels that in order for change to happen, and change also includes he or she, he or she needs to work the connection in any community that he or she belongs. To learn, to listen, to leave the blind shields, to ask questions, they will have to commit to a process of connecting, a process in which they will open up, and they will leave space for the other to open up. Most of the citizens that I would describe as “active”, persons or groups, are more isolated, more remote from this notion.
N: So you talk about connection and community. The result?
E: There are always results. I won't talk about institutional changes, which are really important. There is social change on all levels, advocacy, for a community to be able to have the space that they deserve, the visibility. Also results on a personal level. What I said before, active citizen is the one that experiences change personally.

N: So, what would the purpose be: Social change?

E: Yes, of course. And awareness. Connection not only in the community, connection with other communities, in relation to power, what do I do when I come in contact with it, everything.

N: On democracy, where does Colour Youth stand?

E: You mean how democratic it is? A lot.

N: What happens when something goes wrong?

E: The first step is that some time is needed to actually see that something went wrong. Because sometimes we move from one end of “everything is wrong and it is my fault” to the other end “nothing is wrong, I don’t understand why this happened, everything is great, what do you mean, this was the right thing to do”. When something goes wrong, the boundaries of responsibility change, personally and in the group.

N: Your role is to a great extent do this in a meaningful, and not judgmental way.

E: Yes, it goes without saying. And also to get in touch with their needs, not only to not be judgmental, but also not to get to the other end of totally forgetting one’s own needs and just try to do what is expected.

N: How would you describe the atmosphere of Colour Youth?

E: Family, to a large extent. With many demands, because we are family, and you have to understand me, and I am in need, and something must be done. Also, with a lot of effort to make space for the other, because we are family, so it is a given that we have this connection so we must find a way to resolve everything. And a great wish to resolve any problem. It starts from a sense of a given: it is a given that we are here, no one leaves, we must find a way to resolve this. A commitment that we usually find in functional families: we need to do something.

N: If there is a thing that Colour Youth tries to teach to young people, what would it be?

E: Leaving guilt behind. That one doesn’t need to feel guilty, in general. We can start with gender identity, and gender, and sexual orientation, but it goes much deeper. Colour Youth is a unique case, because it is a youth community, they work at the same time on many issues that a young adult works on through this period, in adulthood, and how to relate and all this. To a great extent, starting with feeling guilt-free, as in don’t feel guilty about your gender, it goes much deeper, to stop feeling guilty in my relationships, how I functions, what I want in my life, in every level. They become adults in Colour Youth. On every level, many times.

N: How is this different?

E: I am starting on how this differs from other organization with older people. Becoming an adult can take place in any age, obviously, but in very young ages, also with the great discrimination that they have all faced. We have an intense combination, it is really imperative and they often don’t know what do with it, to whom they can talk. They might not have a family, or the space to keep it, this need. It becomes a lot.

N: It is interesting, because you entered in a supporting role, being yourself young

E: Yes, when I was 24.

N: How was that?

E: It was also empowering for me, that’s for sure, although I took another role, the role of the one supporting, right form the start. I was in a rather different phase, these needs weren’t as imperative as the average of the individuals. But, it was very rich, very interesting.

N: The lack of older people, what is the role it plays?

E: You become the older person. When I was 24, I facilitated groups of my peers, but it was as if I wasn’t a peer. I haven’t attended a party in Colour Youth, I don’t socialize with Colour Youth, I haven’t been out for drinks with Colour Youth…You take another role, as an older person.

N: What do you keep from all this? Can you describe your experience with Colour Youth?
E: My experience? It is really moving, every time I look back to my experience. I keep a feeling of authenticity, an effort to be genuine in the relationships, in the interactions in Colour Youth. I think this is what moves me. From my side, my contact with Colour Youth, and also when I look at them from a distance, this gets me. Authenticity moves me, in general. And because, I don’t see it often, or the need of authenticity is not often revealed in this degree in a closed space, this moves me. Every effort made, I feel it takes place on an axis of trying to be genuine. Now, how we will make this happen, it’s another story. But, this is where we try to go.
N: How do you define authentic?
E: Trying to support myself as I am, even though I might not like me a lot yet, but trying to be genuine with this. Make space for other people’s authenticity, that might annoy or scare me, or make me feel weird, or unknown, but still try, because I believe that they need to have space for their authenticity. Like this.
N: Perfect. Anything you want to add?
E: No. You covered everything.
Appendix B (Greece): Field Notes
Colour Youth – Field notes
Researcher: Nancy Papathanasiou

Date: Sunday May 14th 2017
Description of Event/Activity: Closed meeting for members
Location: Colour Youth offices
Who is attending or being observed: Approximately 20 members
In the moment (participant observations)
Time: 12:00-15:00

Objective Observation/Facts: This is one of the periodical meetings for members only, it is called Closed Meeting of Members (and the initials in Greek for the word “enema” something that is an ongoing joke). The meeting has a defined agenda and members have been notified to attend well in advance. The agenda is as follows:

1. Supervision groups for funded projects. This is about keeping members informed on progress for each funded project, regarding both administrative and financial aspects.
2. Facebook group and rules for posts. There are members that use one or both Facebook groups to ask for support. This creates a huge responsibility, that other members or the Administrative Group should be available to support someone at all times. Especially considering that some of the individual asking for support also have to deal with mental health issues, the responsibility grows exponentially and exceeds the capacity of Colour Youth and its members.
3. Community Development and Saturday meetings. Members are asked to propose themes for the Saturday meetings, and groups that they would like to participate into.
4. IDAHOBIT. Final planning and preparation for the upcoming event. It was supposed to take place on May 17th but it was postponed for a week because of a general strike.
5. A call for members that want to propose and draft the guidelines for these closed meeting of members.
6. Policies and guidelines regarding use of the Colour Youth offices. Who has keys, when members can visit, what they need to do before they leave (clean up, turn off lights and air-conditioning, etc).
7. Whatever else members want to propose, regarding projects, activities, other groups, and so on.

The meeting starts almost on time, and most members seem involved and caring. Many ideas are mentioned. Most of the debate focuses on the balance between people who want being able to express their need (in Facebook groups) and those that need to be able to say no or not be available.

Subjective Observation/Reflections: The debate on how to deal with the Facebook groups seems to be central in the current identity of Colour Youth, the balance between care for others and burn out, or assuming too much responsibility even for things that they shouldn’t.

After the moment (Post-Observation Thoughts): It was an interesting meeting. Not everything was resolved, but that would be an impossible task. The overall climate was warm and welcoming, people felt safe and could express their thoughts and needs. Disagreements are being handled with respect. People are not expected to agree, but they are expected to listen to each other and try to find some common ground. There is an overall feeling of care. At the same time, members are energetic and ready to support new activities. This is, after all, the time period with most LGBTQ events, after the IDAHOBIT event, Colour Youth is getting ready to participate in all four Pride events all over Greece.

Date: May 24th 2017
Description of Event/Activity: Colour Youth’s annual IDAHOBIT event. The title for 2017 is “Mental health and LGBTQI Youth: The role of the State”.
Location: Journalist’s Union of Athens Daily Newspapers
Who is attending or being observed: Approximately 50-70 youth, members of Colour Youth, reporters, and participants.
In the moment (participant observations)

**Time:** 17:00-21:00

**Objective Observation/Facts:** Although the event had to be postponed for a week, because of the general strike, it still is a full room. I take a seat in the back, and Max (CY secretary) comes timidly to sit next to me. He seems stressed, and is relieved to see me; this is the first very public event that he participates. Most of Colour Youth members are well-dressed, it shows their pride for this annual event. When Philippos, CY president, steps up to the podium to welcome everybody, almost all members smile. They are really proud of Philippos, he is their “president” (and they can’t seem to mention his name and title without smiling with pride).

Stavros is next on the podium, to present CY’s demands, mostly regarding Legal Gender Identity and interventions in schools. Next is Chrysoula, to present the research on School Climate. They have gathered more than 3000 questionnaires. Chrysoula is relaxed and seems at ease, she knows the research inside out. There is a slight change in the program, the representative of New Democracy has to leave early, and is moved up in the programme. Someone sitting in front of me comments sarcastically: “How typical! Of course, they have better things to do!” He is hardly applauded when he finishes. Next is the Danish Ambassador. The room is almost full, and people are attentive.

After that, two CY members share their experiences as trans/non-binary individuals. The first one is about transphobia in mental health professionals and the second about the experiences of a trans youth in family and school settings. Everybody is quiet, and at the end of each, the room bursts with applause. The politicians and state representatives that follow are well received. Most of them have not been invited are representatives from the Greek Communist Party and Golden Dawn.

There is a break, and then the mental health professionals’ panel. Colour Youth has invited the psychologists that coordinate their projects (Elena Christidi who facilitates the empowerment groups, Eva Spinou who is the psychologist for the Tell Us project), the psychologist of the Transgender Association (Parvy Palmou), and myself as the scientific coordinator of the 11528 Helpline. As usually, we manage to not overlap in our presentations, although there has been minimal coordination between us. The event closes almost timely (at 21:15). Leaving the venue, there is a commotion outside: a young trans woman, former member of Colour Youth is quite agitated, and shouts at an older trans woman. Some of the more cool headed members intervene, and break it up.

**Subjective Observation/Reflections:** I can’t help but notice how Colour Youth has grown in the last few years. I have attended most of past IDAHOBIT events, and they now seem to be surer of themselves, at least the older members. The newer ones are genuinely excited; Akis in the reception was glowing with pride and very relieved to see that it will be a well-attended event. On the other hand, Max’s nervousness reminds me that not all CY members have the same level of comfort with appearing in such public events. I have a feeling that his relief is because I am older, he needs comforting that there are adults in the room to stand for them if needed – after all it is the first time that trans youth speak out in public about their experience. Even if Max isn’t one of them, he feels exposed, he seems to try and in the back rows. Philippos is a charismatic leader, in spite his age (22). They look at him as a father figure, or rather as the very cool older brother. The same applies to Chrysoula. CY seems to bring out the best in some of its members. Both members that speak personally, though, seem really stressed, they hardly look up. It is a big step for them. They are applauded, but they seem to run away from the room, to compose themselves. After all, they are less than 20 years old; suddenly I remember that some Colour Youth members are still teenagers. Most of the older persons in the room are allies (members of other LGBT and human rights organizations, or friendly and known reporters). But the invited representatives of political parties and state agencies are also condescending: one keeps referring to them as “my children”, and I notice a lot of raised brows. However, no one from Colour Youth actually acknowledges it or stops it. The same happens with the mental...
health professionals’ panel, I am the only to acknowledge the absence of other mental health professionals in the audience. I know that at least one other person has noticed, but she hasn’t said anything, which is interesting. Outside, when I witness the fight between the younger and older trans women: the pressure of having these issues talked about in public, of becoming visible in a legitimate way, it has to be released.

**After the moment (Post-Observation Thoughts):** This was the most complete event of Colour Youth that I have attended. They have grown a lot in their public presence. At the same time, they still seem reluctant to acknowledge their position in the local LGBT community, as well as in the public sphere. The most interesting thing was the contrast between the ones that were, or at least seemed to be, at ease with their public presence (Philippos and Chrysoula for example) and the ones that have less or no experience. It is like the new ones have to quickly adapt to the achievements of those that have come before, without being able to own them completely. As a result, CY moves in two speeds, where members are concerned, and not as fast as it could be moving as an organization, because each new “generation” can’t keep up straight away, and although they are exceeding themselves, they still have to take it down a notch in order to find their pace.

Also, they do seem to need someone to hold the difficult conversations for them –meaning that they are not ready to be poignant with officials. Their attitude towards the absence of mental health professionals was also interesting. Many of them have been traumatized by mental health professionals, they are hopeful for a dialogue, but they still felt that it wasn’t their place to mention that they were absent (although all professional associations were invited to attend. For some reason (a personal feeling, as well as people coming to me afterwards to thank me for mentioning it), it stayed with me that I was the only one to mention it (and I was the last to speak). If I had to guess, I would say it is about my age (I am older than both psychologists of CY) and my relationship to the university –somehow it felt that I mentioned it backed by my seniority and/or my rank, that I was the only one that had the right to do so, which tells me more on how CY members perceive their relationship with mental health professionals that anything else.

**Date:** May 27th 2017  
**Description of Event/Activity:** Putting our Colour in Pride: Creating signs with CY’s slogans for the upcoming Pride Marches.  
**Location:** CY offices  
**Who is attending or being observed:** Approximately 20 members of Colour Youth  
**In the moment (participant observations)**  
**Time:** 12:30-17:30  
**Objective Observation/Facts:** At 12:30 only the person responsible for the office was there, and there were already messages exchanged about not being able to find some of the material needed. They started coming around 13:00, and they were all relaxed and seemed happy. They had brought all the material they needed, and they seemed excited. Colour Youth’s signs are known to be smart and to start conversations; they are prominently featured in all photo reports of Pride events, and people were already talking about finding the new slogans that would top last year’s. A lot of brainstorming happens in the meeting, it is not just about finding a clever slogan, but also conveying the message without leaving someone out or offending. A lot of clever (and unfortunately untranslatable) ideas are thrown around. Each makes their own sign, and some more for the others to share. After an hour of working together, the conversation goes to the troubled relationship of CY with Athens Pride (Athens Pride is the first and more massive pride each year). The story is being told again, for the benefit of newer members (the short version is that in 2014 a member of the organizational committee of Athens Pride published a transphobic text, just after the Athens Pride march. The rest of the committee failed to react on time, and that lead to a rift the following year between most of the organizations in the LGBTQ
community and Athens Pride. In 2016, the relationship started to mend, and in 2017 the Athens Pride organization committee invited all of the organizations to send members in order to form the Political Committee of Athens Pride, in charge of the official message of Athens Pride, and all political decisions. Colour Youth had accepted the invitation and its representatives were pivotal in drafting the bylaws of the Political Committee. However, trust between Colour Youth and Athens Pride hasn’t been completely restored). Many CY members are critical of Athens Pride, because of what they perceive as a mainstream and commercial attitude. They also think that identities other than those of cis gay beautiful men are underrepresented. They also mention the forthcoming participation of a group of LGBT friendly police officers in the march (this is different than the police officers that will be in Athens Pride with their official capacity and uniforms). This is also a vividly discussed subject. Colour Youth has already vetoed the participation of police officers with their uniforms, and the Political Committee of Athens Pride has already corrected the proposed slogan of this group. It still isn’t clear how they will participate. Members remember their own negative experiences with police officers, and some seem stressed at the thought of marching side to side with them. Others are considering a more direct approach, and the possibility of an intervention that will disrupt the police officers presence in Athens Pride is debated. CY’s official position is against such an intervention, but there is a group of activists (with the participation of some of CY’s members) that is considering it.

There are two sides in this conversation: the one that stands against Athens Pride in its current form, as well as most of the “formal institutions” inside and outside of the LGBT community and the other that states that the LGBTQ community’s safest bet is to work with Athens Pride in order to make it as political as possible, and for its message to reach as many people as possible (Athens Pride is the largest LGBTQ event in Greece, having more than 35,000 participants in 2016. There is no other LGBTQ organization that can claim such a wide base). This is not a debate to be resolved today, but older members of CY seem apprehensive: “the preparation for Pride used to be so much fun” one says to me quietly. “The last couple of years, it stresses me. I don’t know what to expect”. After all signs are ready and drying on the wall, the discussion about Pride continues—with all the disagreements, most of them still seem excited with the prospect of going. Philippos mentions privately that he is stressed, he feels responsible for each and every person that will be in the bloc of CY.

**Subjective Observation/Reflections:** There were quite a few members that didn’t really know me or knew what I was doing there. It was interesting to observe how they followed the lead of older members, before talking, especially around the conflict with Athens Pride. This kind of highlights the mistrust for older people (and activists). One or two, actually spoke to me in the plural (the Greek equivalent of the French “vous”). As soon as other, more senior, members guaranteed for my “belonging”, they relaxed and started speaking openly. They seem quite energized when they talk about Pride in general. For some it will be their first Pride, and there is something quite moving in how excited and at the same time frightened they are. After talking to Philippos, I realize that he is not only viewed as a “father” or “big brother” figure, but he also feels like it, and the responsibility weighs on him.

**After the moment (Post-Observation Thoughts):** What stays with me, is the concern for the well-being of all participants. I haven’t seen such care in any other organization. Colour Youth is more than just an organization, it resembles a family in the care it shows. Also, some of the ones in the Administrative Group seem and talk as much older than their age. I don’t know if their role in Colour Youth has forced them to mature, or if they have stepped up for this role, because they already were more mature. The difference between them and some of the younger (not in age, but in years of participation) members is truly stunning: it feels like they come from different worlds. Another thing that starts to show is how they need an adult. Sam lets her guard down when I am around, and comes for advice even for minor things –it feels like she need reassurance, someone to say that it is ok, you know what you’re doing, you’re not alone.
**Date:** June 3rd 2017  
**Description of Event/Activity:** Saturday meeting on internalized misogyny  
**Location:** Colour Youth offices  
**Who is attending or being observed:** approximately 20 members  
**In the moment (participant observations)**  
**Time:** 18:00-22:00  
**Objective Observation/Facts:** It is a facilitated discussion. The issue is near and dear to Colour Youth members, they process a lot of issues on misogyny and feminism and in the winter they lobbied a lot for misogyny to be this Pride’s theme. They start with two members presenting the general idea and the connection to homophobia and transphobia. They cover a lot of ground quickly and are open for questions. The discussion goes smoothly, mainly because it is topic very well known to most members and they hold it together for the newcomers. Colour Youth has developed a culture of how to talk and facilitate these conversations. They also have a protocol (although it is not official) to receive newcomers. Older members introduce themselves, and make sure they all feel welcome. After the end, a group goes to a party.  
**Subjective Observation/Reflections:** The Saturday events are very well received and a way for Colour Youth to welcome new members and they also provide an excuse for youth that want to join but wouldn’t attend pride or a more public event. The going out together after the meeting is also indicative of the community feeling. The event is important, but also an excuse to get together.  
**After the moment (Post-Observation Thoughts):** Colour Youth creates community and camaraderie. Much needed or LGBTQ youth in Greece.

**Date:** June 8th 2017  
**Description of Event/Activity:** Workshop for Gender Expression and Identity in Schools  
**Location:** Colour Youth offices  
**Who is attending or being observed:** approximately 20 members  
**In the moment (participant observations)**  
**Time:** 17:00-20:00  
**Objective Observation/Facts:** I am invited but it doesn’t really feel right (and I kind of expected this). The workshop is for youth up to 20 years old, an event for Pride Week. I opt out, and I notice that it is appreciated. I wait for it to finish and I catch up afterwards. They are excited and it went well.  
**Subjective Observation/Reflections:** Taking into account that I belong in the age group of their parent, probably wise to sit this one out. Feedback confirms it.  
**After the moment (Post-Observation Thoughts):** Kind of jealous of the opportunities youth have nowadays.

**Date:** June 10th 2017  
**Description of Event/Activity:** Athens Pride  
**Location:** Syntagma sq.  
**Who is attending or being observed:** Approximately 20 members of Colour Youth in the morning, more than 100 at 4pm  
**In the moment (participant observations)**  
**Time:** 11:00-20:30  
**Objective Observation/Facts:** Five minutes before I arrived in Syntagma sq., a group of neo-nazis had been there, throwing flyers, verbally attacking and shoving, CY members and volunteers in Athens Pride. There are only three police officers present. The younger members are shocked, and the older ones concerned, worried, and angry. They try to appear calm, but they are not. They exchange messages with the ones that are on their way to the square, to be careful.
The members of the Administration Group are troubled. They go with a member of the Athens Pride organization committee to the police officer in charge of the square to ask for more police officers. They are told that their volunteers should protect the square, and that more police officers will come after 4pm (by that time, approximately 10,000 participants are estimated to have arrived in the square, and it will be safe). There is tension and the issue remains unresolved. They coordinate with the Athens Pride organizers and keep an eye in nearby streets. When word comes that the same neo-nazi group is still around and waits to regroup and come back, they become more tense. At this point, a few of the older activists start calling politicians and applying pressure for more police officers to arrive. Because some time has passed, there are many more people in the square, and a sense of safety is kind of restored. As time passes, more people arrive at CY’s stand; most of them have no idea what happened and are genuinely excited to be there. Senior CY members still seem worried (“I feel personally responsible for everyone” one says). By 5pm, there are more than a hundred youth around CY’s stand, getting ready for the march. There is a lot of energy and glitter. Colour Youth has the most vibrant block and their slogans create a lot of buzz (again, unfortunately untranslatable). In the greeting of the CY representatives in Athens Pride, the presence of the police officers in the march is mentioned, and also the “problematic relationship of the police force with the LGBTQI community” is acknowledged.

During the march, the bloc of Colour Youth remains united and very energetic. At some point, a group of LGBTQ anarchists break in the march and isolate the group of police officers. They take their sign and break them up. Altercations follow, and it takes a while before the situation calms down. In this group of LGBTQ anarchists a few members of Colour Youth participated. The rest of the evening goes as expected without any other. At the end of the day, Colour Youth has sold everything they had (mostly pins and rainbow flags). There still is some talk about the situation with the police officers in the march, but everyone is too tired to deal with it right now.

**Subjective Observation/Reflections:** I also find myself to be worried with the morning events, and I share the feeling of responsibility for the younger ones, especially those that attend pride for the first time. Gradually, I relax, and I actually enjoy the march. When the LGBTQ anarchists confronted the police officers, I am called at the scene to help resolve the tension, so I witnessed half of it first hand. There is a lot of tension, and a feeling of betrayal from both sides. The LGBTQ anarchists group is mixed: there are some that are really calm and try to explain why the presence of police officers (even without their uniforms) in a Pride march is problematic. Others are outright angry. At some point, the police officers have left the scene, and a group of left SYRIZA supporters remains there. Most of them are straight, and are rather aggressive towards the LGBTQ anarchists. Words are exchanged, I intervene, and after a while, the conflict dies down. I talk to a couple of them, and I leave. It is difficult also for me, and I feel stressed and personally responsible for the safety of Colour Youth members that were there. I guess this is the general feeling of the day: threat and protection.

**After the moment (Post-Observation Thoughts):** Tomorrow is going to be a difficult day. There will be a huge backlash about the LGBTQ anarchists intervention, and I do think that Colour Youth will also have to deal with it somehow.

**Date:** June 11th, 2017

**Description of Event/Activity:** Meeting to write a press release regarding the events in Athens Pride and the intervention against the police officers.

**Location:** A bistrot in Klaftmonos sq.

**Who is attending or being observed:** 10 representatives from various LGBTQ organizations – Colour Youth included

**In the moment (participant observations)**

**Time:** 14:00-18:00
Objective Observation/Facts: Early in the morning, a Facebook post by a lawyer accused LGBTQ organizations in general and especially Colour Youth of standing together with the LGBTQ anarchists groups that ousted the police officers from the Pride march. That created a wave of posts from a few prominent older LGBTQ activists, as well as the police officer that organized the presence of the police officers in the march. Because Colour Youth was the only organization to mention that the relationship of the LGBTQ community with the police force is problematic, they are blamed as the ones that initiated of not organized and carried out the intervention. Most members of the Administration Group are really tired from the previous day, and they find themselves under a lot of pressure to respond to the accusations. At the same time, there are different threads in their Facebook group, where members of CY debate recent events. They have to deal both with the shock of the morning attack from the neo-nazi group (and the absence of the police), and the presence of the police officers in the march, that triggered emotional reactions in many of them. As a result, the Administrative Group has to balance between pressures for a public reaction condemning the intervention without estranging their members that agree with what happened. They talk about calling a General Assembly, but it is difficult and will take time. They agree that a press release has to be issued today, and they move forward to draft one, that condemns the intervention without exonerating the police force in general. In the same direction is the public statement they propose for the Political Committee of Athens Pride. Their proposal is accepted; a common statement is drafted and published. Everyone seems really tired with the tension, and they relive the tensions in 2014 and 2015 between Athens Pride and the trans community. They remember and talk about how back then the LGBTQ community was almost torn apart. At the same time, they watch different conversations in Facebook, and their peers being attacked (an older activist publicly refers to one of Colour Youth’s most vulnerable members “the snake’s egg”, meaning he is a budding fascist. The CY member is really upset, and withdraws. Because of the psychiatric problems he faces, they are also worried for his mental health). Senior members have a feeling of being under attack, because of internal dynamics in the LGBTQ community. They are left with a feeling of “damned if we do and damned if we don’t”. They say that they need a break, that they don’t want to deal with anything for a while, while at the same time realizing that they will need to do some damage control in the next days both inside and outside the organization.

Subjective Observation/Reflections: This is almost a textbook example of how to get burnt out as an activist. They have been attacked yesterday by neo-nazis and today they feel attacked by some of their fellow activists. They managed to go through Pride keeping everyone safe, something that stressed them a lot, and now they are found in what seems as an impossible situation. It is interesting that CY was singled out to be accused of tolerating the intervention against the police officers, and I find myself thinking that it must have something to do with their age: they are perhaps perceived to be immature, because of their age and their natural tendency to challenge the mainstream (even in the LGBTQ community). They are also perceived as a threat to some of the older organizations, especially the Trans Association, because they are the first to claim as many trans members, and most trans youth are oriented towards Colour Youth. The current Administrative Group are like parents in this family, and they now also face a small rebellion from within. I can see them trying to find the right thing to do and struggling with all the different options. Philipppos is a true leader; he gracefully and unwaveringly carries the responsibility for all this, but I wonder about the toll it takes.

After the moment (Post-Observation Thoughts): They did stand their ground in spite from all the outside noise. Philipppos was quick to reach a decision, when it seemed impossible, and Chrysoula did an excellent job steering the Political Group of Athens Pride to the same direction. They work together amazingly well. They also seem to be closing ranks in face of everything. This will not be easy for any of them in the following days. I wonder if they will keep being as involved as they are.
Date: June 24th 2017
Description of Event/Activity: Saturday meeting – Trans 101
Location: Colour Youth offices
Who is attending or being observed: approximately 40 members and non members
In the moment (participant observations)
Time: 18:00-22:00
Objective Observation/Facts: This is the first meeting after Athens and Thessaloniki Pride marches. This seems like Colour Youth’s way to bring in new members, especially the ones after the Pride events. I am told that many young people first contact Colour Youth in Prides, and because they will close for summer in a few weeks, it is better to have a meeting before. The theme is an introductory one, to ease them in. the discussion revolves around terms such as misgendering, genderqueer, non-binary, what differentiates gender identity from gender expression, and how to become a good ally for trans people. There is a lively discussion and a lot of questions. People are relaxed, and seem to have a good time. After the end, there are still mentions of what happened in Athens Pride and older members seem to avoid it.
Subjective Observation/Reflections: There is an initial nervousness; after all, they have just been in the spotlight and don’t really know what to expect. After a while, they actually start to have a good time. I think most of them are looking forward to getting some rest from activism and the overall demands of the community for the summer.
After the moment (Post-Observation Thoughts): Trans issues are something that Colour Youth seems to know better than any other organization. They have a modern approach, and I can’t help but compare them with the Trans Association. Colour Youth has younger members, in the entire non-binary spectrum. They are the first ones to talk about genderqueer persons, and have done overall an excellent job compiling the terminology in their site. A new generation of LGBTQI persons is being educated, and more traditional identities, as lesbian and gay, are becoming less common, even if slightly.

Date: July 8th 2017
Description of Event/Activity: Talk on Autogynephilia
Location: Colour Youth offices
Who is attending or being observed: appr. 25 members
In the moment (participant observations)
Time: 17:00-22:00
Objective Observation/Facts: The women coordinating the discussion mention that they don’t expect a big turnout, because it is already summertime. However, they are pleasantly surprised when people start to gather. There are two coordinators, Å. a young trans woman, who is presenting for the first time and is really stressed, and N. a non-binary individuals, who also is one of the older members of Colour Youth. N. is more experienced with public speaking, and helps create a safety net for Å. and attending members. This is a difficult subject for Å. (as well as most trans persons attending) because it involves a lot of abusive ideas and language. They create a welcoming and caring atmosphere right from the start, and they set the ground rules for the conversation (one at a time, no interrupting, use of preferred pronouns, no abusive language and terminology without warning). Å’s presentation is clear and succinct, and she tries to hide her feelings on the issue. N is more outspoken and sarcastic at times, when presented with particular transphobic ideas. Her humour helps ease the tension that starts to mount, and creates laughter in the room. Most of the discussion focuses on the pathologization of transgender experiences and identities, and participants share their experiences and fears around it. Many of them speak about visiting psychiatrists in public hospitals in order to receive a diagnosis that will allow them to start hormone therapy, and how they have been treated. The discussion is scheduled to finish at 9pm, but it goes on for another hour.
Subjective Observation/Reflections: There is a huge need for spaces where people can talk and share experiences. Another important aspect is the debunking of theories that have already been discredited, but are still considered valid in Greece. Because in Greece in order to proceed with gender affirmation procedures, trans persons need to be diagnosed as gender dysphoric, and to go through an often brutal process (e.g. they are expected to live as the desired gender for at least a year before they are given a diagnosis. This is extremely difficult for trans women, since without hormonal treatments, it is impossible to “pass” as a woman. The result in a transphobic society as Greece is to not have any opportunity to find jobs other than sex-working.) Most trans persons are vulnerable to and have been mistreated by mental health professionals, and have had no safe space to process these experiences.

After the moment (Post-Observation Thoughts): I confess to have had no previous knowledge of this issue, and it has surprised me. I particularly enjoyed seeing A. presenting and becoming more visible; although I had seen her before and knew who she was, today it felt like she took more space. She also seemed to enjoy herself, at least towards the end of the evening. Overall the feeling of the evening was bittersweet.

Date: Tuesday July 11th 2017
Description of Event/Activity: Meeting with the New Democracy President
Location: New Democracy HQ
Who is attending or being observed: 14 LGBTQ activists and approximately 5 New Democracy members
In the moment (participant observations)
Time: 16:00-23:00
Objective Observation/Facts: This invitation came as a surprise to the LGBTQ community. Members of Colour Youth had already met some of the New Democracy party members responsible for social affairs before. Today the invitation is to meet with the President of New Democracy (a conservative party), who some expect to be a serious candidate to become Prime Minister in the next elections. This is the first time that the President of the Parliamentary in Greece meets with LGBTQ activists. Opposition There is already some backlash from members of Colour Youth, because New Democracy is a conservative party, however, it is decided that Colour Youth will attend this meeting. Most activists meet beforehand in a coffee place to coordinate. They agree to not concede to anything without a promise that New Democracy will vote for forthcoming the Legal Gender Recognition Law. The meeting itself goes as expected. Colour Youth representatives are being outspoken and blunt, mentioning a number of occasions that New Democracy MPs have spoken in a homophobic and/or transphobic manner. After the meeting, they all go out to coordinate on a press release. There are two main tendencies in the LGBTQ community, one that is stricter (Colour Youth is on this line) and one that believes that the LGBTQ community should be more open to meetings even with representatives of the Greek Orthodox Church. The stricter approach prevails and the press release specifically mentions the problematic nature of the New Democracy regarding LGBTQ rights.

Subjective Observation/Reflections: It was an important meeting, at least symbolically. Colour Youth is aware of the fact and they haven’t been persuaded for New Democracy’s intentions. The coordination between them and the other organizations is also ok.

After the moment (Post-Observation Thoughts): This was also the first time that Colour Youth met with other organizations after the events in Athens Pride. Some of the present activists, were the ones that strongly and publicly accused Colour Youth members to act like fascists because they didn’t approve the police officers’ presence in the march. This remained civil, but the tension was there.

Date: July 12th 2017
Description of Event/Activity: Informal meeting
Location: Colour Youth offices
Who is attending or being observed: 7 members
In the moment (participant observations)
Time: 18:00-22:00

Objective Observation/Facts: There was an incident the night before. One of the younger CY members, L, a trans guy, had a seizure/fit in the street. He was hanging out with other CY members, he started hurting himself. Some of the bystanders tried to help him, but he needed a very particular approach. When the other CY members intervened, they were thought to be too young to know what they are doing. At some point a police officer intervened and because he assessed him as potentially dangerous, he had took him to the nearest police station. Some of his friends accompanied him and called his mother, who eventually came down to the police station, and had him released.

The whole incident was traumatizing for L, as well as the rest of the individuals that witnessed it. Some of them are here today, sharing their anger over what happened. They mention how they felt belittled and patronized by older adults present in the scene and also the police. Although they were the only ones that knew what needed to be done, their expertise was completely discarded. They had to deal both with the situation at hand, and their growing anger towards bystanders who “thought they knew better, because we were just a bunch of kids”. The arrival of a police officer was even more disturbing, considering the recent events during and after Athens Pride. Those that actually went to the police station say that they were angry and scared at the same time. They felt relieved when L’s mother came to pick him up. They remember experiences of their own with police officers that have ridiculed or misgendered them, when they have been confronted with in various demonstrations. They refer to police officers as “cops” and they are sarcastic about their overall attitude (how they need to hide the doubts about their masculinity behind their uniforms and guns). They talk about toxic masculinity and their own struggles with it. The conversation slowly turns again to the events in Athens Pride and they are still angry at the police’s attitude that day. “They haven’t done anything to find those who attacked us that morning.” “All they did in the afternoon was handout leaflets that we should call the department to report homophobic attacks. And then what, they never do anything about it.” “They are worthless. If it wasn’t for us, the legislation that they quote wouldn’t have even been voted.” “M.L. (the only police officer in Greece that is also out as gay) actually considers himself to be first a cop and then gay, be even said that the bullying he faces for being a cop is much worse than the bullying for being gay. How could any of us trust him?” The conversation keeps going for quite a while. This is most probably the last meeting for the summer, the exam period in the universities is almost over and Colour Youth will be going on vacation.

Subjective Observation/Reflections: They are clearly shocked by what happened and their inability to control the circumstances. They are perceived as children, young ones that have no idea, that can’t be trusted. Their self-perception is somewhere in-between, they are aware of their age and their skills/capacities, and they also know their experiences and all that they have accomplished, not only in Colour Youth or as Colour Youth members, but also personally, in their lives. At the same time, they do want support from trusted elders, when things are becoming too much (and witnessing a peer and a friend having a seizure in the middle of the street is too much). I notice myself being a little proud that they handle things, and a little protective of them at the same time.

After the moment (Post-Observation Thoughts): I find myself thinking about today, and worrying. What would have happened if L was on his own? Or if he had actually hurt himself or someone else, in a CY event? I know that these are the questions that also stress the Administrative Group, and although it is not their responsibility, they do feel responsible. And it also brings the question, what makes them choose this responsibility? The obvious answer is helping others, and/or a sense of duty towards those that aren’t still ready to stand for themselves. Actually, what makes anyone become involved with any form of activism?
Date: Monday July 15th 2017  
Description of Event/Activity: Closed meeting to work on and discuss the results of the School Climate survey  
Location: Colour Youth offices.  
Who is attending or being observed: 4 members  
In the moment (participant observations)  
Time: 11:00-18:00  
Objective Observation/Facts: Colour Youth has created a survey on school climate for LGBT youth. The person behind this is Chrysoula, a young psychologist. The survey has gathered more than 3000 answers. Today’s meeting is to evaluate the results and talk about the findings. The goal is to draft an initial report for Colour Youth. We go through the results and talk about each section. It is a well-built project, considering it was done with minimal supervision. Chrysoula and the rest of the team are excited by the results and rightly so. Although results mainly corroborate what they already suspected, it is important to see it backed up by data. Main findings include high percentages of bullying because of appearance, sexual orientation, and gender identity. In the drafting of the report, the team balances between a strictly scientific and a lobbying approach. They settle somewhere in the middle: they don’t compromise scientific thinking and rationale, but they include a section with policy implications and proposals.  
Subjective Observation/Reflections: One of the strengths of Colour Youth is that it allows its members to initiate projects. The access to a large pool of possible participants in a survey was left unexploited until now. Having supervised some undergraduate students research projects in the university, I was pleasantly surprised to find out that this one wasn’t even part of a university project; it was initiated as a pet project by a 23 year old psychologist, with some help by a supervisor.  
After the moment (Post-Observation Thoughts): The lack of older psychologists (or professionals in general) allows talented youth to step forward, to take initiatives, and to shine. Also, it is extremely rare for an NGO to end up with such a research project and that many participants.

Date: Wednesday September 13th 2017  
Description of Event/Activity: Open Wednesday  
Location: Colour Youth offices  
Who is attending or being observed: approximately 10 youth,  
In the moment (participant observations)  
Time: 15:00-21:00  
Objective Observation/Facts: It is the first meeting of the season, without a specific theme. The purpose is to just open the space for anyone who is in Athens and wants to hangout. It turns out to be quite a few of Colour Youth’s members around. Some of them have already spent the summer together, in short periods outside Athens or in Athens. Although there is no agenda, there is also discussion for new activities and events, and plans for the next months. They take care of the space, restock the kitchen, and count merchandise. They also browse through new items that they can order, and brainstorm for future events.

Subjective Observation/Reflections: It is a welcome back meeting for most of them, a back to reality feeling. They are happy to be back here, and excited (also a little stressed) for what is to come.  
After the moment (Post-Observation Thoughts):  

Date: Saturday, September 16th, 2017  
Description of Event/Activity: Participation with a rainbow bloc in an antifascist demonstration  
Location: Syntagma sq., downtown Athens and Colour Youth offices.
**Who is attending or being observed:** 20 Colour Youth members, friends, and allies (with Colour Youth’s bloc, the overall demonstration has many more participants).

**In the moment (participant observations)**

**Time:** 18:00-22:00

**Objective Observation/Facts:** This is a demonstration to mark the 4-year anniversary since the murder of Pavlos Fyssas by a member of Golden Dawn. Colour Youth decided to participate and also calls other LGBT organizations and allies to join them. Every time that CY takes part in a demonstration, they welcome anyone that wants to stand and/or march with them, not only their members. Tonight, there are members, friends, and allies. With their presence here, they want to state that LGBTQ individuals are also targeted by Golden Dawn, and that the LGBTQ community stands in solidarity with all other groups, against Golden Dawn. Colour Youth has more than a few members that are also active in leftist and anarchist movements and they are almost all present, along with others that don't have a lot of experience in demonstrations. They are mostly welcome in the demonstration, although there are some comments on how some of them look (too queer). They don’t respond, but they seem self-conscious. During the demonstration, they are careful and aware of their surroundings. There is also a counter-demonstration of some Golden Dawn members that is contained. After it finishes, the more experienced ones advise the rest on how to leave (they are afraid that there might be Golden Dawn members waiting in surrounding streets. A group goes back to the offices. There, they talk on how they are perceived by members of the antifa, the anarchist and other left movements and groups. On more than one occasions, there have been comments, that LGBTQ persons participating in demonstrations haven’t been “properly” dressed, or that they were too “flamboyant”, or not “respectful” enough. There is an ongoing debate on whom to trust politically, and that there are many LGBTQ individuals that have been hurt or fell betrayed by such attitudes.

**Subjective Observation/Reflections:** The need for allies is evident, and also the problems that arise when someone is perceived to represent a community as diverse as the LGBTQ community. The antifa/anarchist movement in Greece has yet to deal with its homophobia and transphobia, and that is really hurting that younger LGBTQ.

**After the moment (Post-Observation Thoughts):**

**Date:** Friday, September 22nd 2017

**Description of Event/Activity:** Meeting with the President of the Potami political party

**Location:** Free Thinking Zone bookstore

**Who is attending or being observed:** 15 LGBTQ activists and 7 members of the Potami political party

**In the moment (participant observations)**

**Time:** 18:00-22:00

**Objective Observation/Facts:** This meeting happened because SYRIZA announced that they would be bringing the much-awaited legislation for the Legal Gender Recognition in the parliament to be voted. Potami is a party in the center that has supported all LGBTQ related legislation. This is the first time however that the president will be present in the meeting. He arrives late (which isn’t unusual for anyone in Greece). In the beginning, the first organization to speak is the Trans Association. While Colour Youth should be the next one (considering that they are the other LGBTQ organization with most trans members), another representative starts speaking. They frown (CY representatives), but let it go. The meeting goes as expected, and the LGBTQ community is assured that the part will vote for the Legal Gender Recognition.

**Subjective Observation/Reflections:** The who-speaks-first-and-who-second is highly indicative of the power games in hierarchy. Colour Youth has received a lot of press and I guess they are perceived as a threat for the existing status quo (especially since they can’t be considered “children” any more).
After the moment (Post-Observation Thoughts):

**Date:** Saturday September 23rd 2017  
**Description of Event/Activity:** Welcome meeting  
**Location:** Colour Youth offices  
**Who is attending or being observed:** approximately 30 youth, members and newcomers  
**In the moment (participant observations)**  
**Time:** 15:00-21:00  
**Objective Observation/Facts:** It is the first meeting for the new year (because most of Colour Youth's members are university students, time follows the academic calendar). There are a few of the older members there early to prepare the space and welcome newcomers and old friends. There is a lot of excitement, people are happy to be back. They exchange news and stories from the summer, some say how good it is to be back in Athens. New members are coming, some are shy, and others come with friends. There are a couple of designated coordinators for the afternoon, at some point around 5pm when it seems that there are enough individuals there things quiet down. People sit on a circle, they exchange names and preferred pronouns, the usual ground rules are discussed, and this also serves as an introduction to the philosophy of Colour Youth. A few of the newcomers mentions that he is very happy to be here, he has been following Colour Youth for a couple of years. He wasn’t really out at his hometown, and he is excited to finally be able to join. Older members seem really happy and proud, and they make sure to welcome everyone. A short presentation of Colour Youth follows; they explain the different groups and activities that take place in the offices, what is for members-only and what open to all. After a while, they break to small groups, chatting and getting to know each other. Most of them ask to become members, and seem eager to get involved. Most leave happy to have been there. Older members are happy and relieved; they also seem to be proud.  
**Subjective Observation/Reflections:** Excellent timing for this introductory meeting. Colour Youth is being followed in social media by a lot of adolescents, and they look forward to meeting in real life, when they come to Athens to study. September is the first month for them here, and older Colour Youth members know that well. The mean age of Colour Youth members is declining every year, a 23 year old president is considered an elder (they do look at him with awe, it is rather sweet). Most newcomers seem dazed, some of them have never been able to be so out before. They are shy in the beginning, but they quickly fit in. Colour Youth is a haven for them. They come in Athens, not knowing anyone, shy and -more often than not- ashamed of who they are, and they find themselves in a safe space, where they have nothing to be ashamed of (at least in terms of sexual orientation, gender identity, appearance, etc). And they find friends that accept them, with whom they don’t need to come out, or pretend to be someone else. I don’t know how many of them will actually stay involved, but even if it is for a short while, Colour Youth has managed to make them feel that they fit in.  

**After the moment (Post-Observation Thoughts):** The excitement in their (the newcomers) eyes is what stayed with me. It is the beginning of a new life for most of them. First time in a new city, students in the university, first time with a group of people (and not just a best friend) that accepts them for who they are.

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**Date:** Saturday, September 30th, 2017  
**Description of Event/Activity:** Screening of the movie “But I’m a cheerleader”  
**Location:** Colour Youth offices  
**Who is attending or being observed:** approximately 30 CY members and friends  
**In the moment (participant observations)**  
**Time:** 18:00-23:00  
**Objective Observation/Facts:** Although it is an older movie, it attracts some attention. The screening is for the occasion of Coming Out Day on the 11th of October. The invitation refers to
a movie about coming out, “as well as to other important issues that concern our community, identities and history, such as family relations, gender stereotypes, coming of age, and the extremely harmful practices of conversion and normalization therapy for homosexuality.” The reactions are mixed, and most members approach the movie as a historical one (it was first aired 18 years ago, which makes it a couple of years younger than the mean age in the room). They enjoy the movie; they are surprised that RuPaul and Natasha Lyonne existed even back then. The discussion after the movies focuses on coming out stories and questions about conversion therapy in Greece.

**Subjective Observation/Reflections:** It is weird to watch this movie with a group of twenty year olds, because I first watched it in my 20s.

**After the moment (Post-Observation Thoughts):** CY members also look for history and a sense of continuity; this movie was also watched as a documentary of shorts.

**Date:** Saturday, October 7th 2017

**Description of Event/Activity:** Discussion on the upcoming Legal Gender Recognition Law

**Location:** Colour Youth offices

**Who is attending or being observed:** more than 30 members.

**In the moment (participant observations)**

**Time:** 17:00-23:00

**Objective Observation/Facts:** I am asked to be there early, in order to prepare for the discussion. The prosed law is to be voted on soon and everyone is excited, anxious and angry at the same time. Excited because it is a big deal for all, and something that they have been fighting for. Many Colour Youth members define themselves as genderqueer and they have cultivated awareness on these issues for all members. They are anxious because they are not sure that the government will find the votes to pass the proposed legislation. They are angry because the discussion in the media has been really transphobic and hurtful. Some say that they are also afraid that they can’t get their point through. The discussion focuses on the proposed legislation and the problems that it creates. As they say, the most serious implication is that now adolescents 15-18 won’t be able to ask for their Legal Gender to be changed without having the approval of a committee of experts. This is a step back and it regulates an area that was previously unregulated. After all questions are discussed and answered, they propose to start planning for their presence outside the parliament the next days. They design the signs that they will carry and share the invitations. There aren’t enough invitations for all, but they don’t really mind. They prefer to stand outside.

Another issue that is raised concerns the cooperation with other organizations, and especially with the Trans Association. While all other LGBTQ organizations in Greece have taken a step back, and have allowed Colour Youth and the Trans Association to take the lead, the coordination between them is far from optimal. Colour Youth thinks that this is mostly because the Trans Association doesn’t want to share credit for the legislation. They do acknowledge that the Trans Association is an older organization, however they have never managed to attract the numbers or the publicity that Colour Youth does. The President of the Trans Association would like to be considered as the most important trans activist in Greece, and her organization the only one with the right to address trans issues. However, Colour Youth having a trans man as the president, and with its public presence has made it difficult to ignore them. Older members are very aware of the balance and relationships in the greek LGBTQ community, but younger members are disappointed and they are becoming angry at what they perceive as injustice. The tension between the two organizations will not be addressed before the voting, but it creates what is described as an “unwanted problem”.

**Subjective Observation/Reflections:** This moment is the culmination of a battle; for CY members it is more important than the civil partnership legislation that was passed a couple of years ago. They have focused all their lobbying towards achieving this and this is now their
moment. They feel excited and under attack (from inside and outside the community at the same time).

**After the moment (Post-Observation Thoughts):** The problems between the organizations are one hand systemic and on the other personal. Systemic because they represent conflicts and tensions also in the Greek society (for example, if a youth organization has a right to be taken seriously; a lot of Greeks are condescending towards youth). Personal because as most things, there is a personal relationships component. The president of the Trans Association has managed to estrange most Greek LGBTQ organizations, because of her personality and her agenda. Can this be viewed as irrelevant of the context and the power dynamics in the LGBTQ community? Yes and no. The no is obvious. The yes is that the generational gap I think is equally, if not more, important. The Trans Association belongs to a previous generation, where the only identity was the trans identity, and when the only option a trans person could envision for work was sex work. Colour Youth is a newer generation that has travelled abroad and speaks foreign languages, that identify as genderqueer and genderfluid, and that consider sex work merely as one of their options. This doesn't mean that they don’t face discrimination and they they are not aware of the discrimination they face. But they can see a different future for themselves, and I think that this is part of what the older generation can’t forgive.

**Date:** Sunday, October 8th 2017

**Description of Event/Activity:** Impromptu meeting to draft an answer to a transphobic text.

**Location:** Colour Youth offices

**Who is attending or being observed:** 3 members of Colour Youth

**In the moment (participant observations)**

**Time:** 11:00-16:00

**Objective Observation/Facts:** Last Friday an open letter from the Greek Child Psychiatry Association became public with their positions on the proposed Legal Gender Recognition legislation. It started to circulate in various media outlets, it was transphobic and the cited literature was debatable. Although Colour Youth at first thought it best to ignore it, because it was gaining momentum they decided to address the issues it raised. They asked for help, so we are meeting. Beside myself, there are present here 2 members of the advocacy team and Elena, the main psychologist of Colour Youth. As we read the text carefully, I notice that we all get angry and worked up, because of the language and the implications (essentially that a trans is a symptom for some kind of mental illness). Before we actually start drafting a response, a whole conversation begins on the responsibility of mental health experts. At the same time, all kinds of sarcastic answers to each of the points are offered, as if to take it out so we can get to the proper answer. This meeting is also partly team building, this is the first time that I collaborate with them, and they need to check me out. When I say that I don’t need to sign it, but I will if they ask me to, I catch them smile, they like it. We go back and forth with the literature a lot, but we finally get to a good point and with a response that makes us all happy. It is signed by Colour Youth and it mentions a team of experts that have been consulted for the reply.

**Subjective Observation/Reflections:** This is one of those moments that they need outside help and I can feel that they are wary. Although they know and trust me, they still haven’t checked me out, if I want to gain publicity, thus the smile when I say that I don’t need to see my name there, but will not deny it if needed.

**After the moment (Post-Observation Thoughts):** It was a good collaboration. Elena, young as she might be, has a good head on her shoulders and is scientifically strong. Next day, she participated in a TV panel with one of the child psychiatrists of the Association and stood her ground. This wouldn’t be possible outside Colour Youth—at least I haven’t seen something like this, not in colleagues her age. Even if they have the skills and the competence, older colleagues usually outrank them and take space. Colour Youth offered a fertile ground for her to grow
professionally, and to explore and expand her skills (still though, she needed to be skillful and talented to begin with).

**Date:** Monday October 9th 2017  
**Description of Event/Activity:** Demonstration in front of the parliament on the event of the discussion of Legal Gender Identity proposed legislation  
**Location:** Syntagma sq. in front of the Parliament  
**Who is attending or being observed:** approximately 50 persons for Colour Youth and the rest of the LGBT organizations, 20 persons on a counter demonstration mostly religious. 
**In the moment (participant observations)**  
**Time:** 16:00-22:00  
**Objective Observation/Facts:** It is the afternoon of the first day of the discussion. Colour Youth is well organized, there is a member that watches in the TV the discussion and live-tweets it (along with some commentary), there are members inside the parliament, and members outside with signs. Those that are outside the parliament are the younger ones, most of them identifying as trans or genderqueer. They didn’t want to be inside for two reasons: they don’t feel comfortable showing their identification cards, where they appear with the name that they have been baptized (“dead names” for most of them) and because they don’t really feel comfortable in such an official setting as the parliament. It is a warm and sunny day for October, and that makes it easy for them to stay outside. They don’t really interact with the counter-demonstration and vice versa, it is almost as if they have a pact to respect one another. The watch and post in the social media and are really moved when the president of Colour Youth delivers his speech. They are really proud of him and they comment on everything, from what he said to how his hair was made. He is a trans man himself, so this makes it even more important. They are really happy and excited. The older ones count votes, who will and who will not vote. They expect a close count. 

**Subjective Observation/Reflections:** This legislation is really important to a number of people, both those that need to use it as soon as possible, and a lot of the allies because of its symbolic value. It has also awakened the most conservative reflexes of the Greek society (perhaps the most ridiculous rumour that circulated these days is that fugitives will use it to change their name and disappear or to avoid paying taxes). Colour Youth members have been facing extreme pressure to appear in media, often without any provision for their well-being. They have been coping, and wait for the celebration. 

**After the moment (Post-Observation Thoughts):** 

**Date:** Tuesday October 10th 2017  
**Description of Event/Activity:** Celebration for the Legal Gender Recognition being voted  
**Location:** Colour Youth offices  
**Who is attending or being observed:** approximately 30 members  
**In the moment (participant observations)**  
**Time:** 19:00-23:00  
**Objective Observation/Facts:** Legal Gender Recognition has been voted by the Greek Parliament earlier today. This is the celebration for this amazing win. They are all happy and exhausted. All in the Administrative Group are radiant, it is their moment. All present are really excited, they exchange stories and posts from the last few days. There are bottles of sparking wine being opened as loudly as possible. Talking with some of the members that were more active in this, they all say that they are too tired and feel that they had too much exposure. All they want is to get some sleep and some time away from the media (social and traditional). They don’t make any plans for the next few days. 

**Subjective Observation/Reflections:** It feels like some of them have given their everything for this. The Administrative Group has been struggling and lobbying for the last couple of years for
this. They are too tired to properly celebrate, and they also seem a little burnt out. They have been too exposed in the media, and I wonder if there will also be some backlash.

After the moment (Post-Observation Thoughts): It was a moving celebration. A huge win for them, with still a long way to go. I don’t know if they understand what they have managed just yet.

Date: Saturday October 14th 2017
Description of Event/Activity: Coming out discussion
Location: Colour Youth offices
Who is attending or being observed: more than 30 individuals, members and friends
In the moment (participant observations)
Time: 18:00-23:00
Objective Observation/Facts: I am asked to be there early, to watch the preparation. There are two coordinators, and they are stressed (although they both have experience in these discussions). They also ask for help to facilitate the discussion and set boundaries, if needed. There is a big turn out, some of them are members that participate in most events and others are newcomers. After a circle of names and pronouns, we start to discuss on coming out, when, to whom, how, what it means. Most individuals share experiences. At some point, a trans youth share that he feels that he has to come out to his family, he is trying and is still scared of what might happen. An older woman (in her 40s or 50s) says to him that if he really wants to live as a trans man, he will come out. There is an awkward silence, and then the facilitators manage to set a boundary, gently but firmly, cutting her off and stating (again) that coming out is a deeply personal process and one should respect it and pay attention to their own needs. The discussion and sharing keeps going for a long time, it feels like it is much needed.

Subjective Observation/Reflections: After the extroversion of the last weeks with the Legal Gender Recognition vote, tonight feels like closing ranks, and taking care of each other. A lot of youth consider coming out, partly due to all the publicity of the previous weeks. When the facilitators cut off that older woman, I notice myself smiling; for all they have done, Colour Youth members don’t pick up their rank, or their expertise easily. Perhaps this is starting to change.

After the moment (Post-Observation Thoughts): Thinking back, I’m left with a feeling of care for one’s family. Guess that Colour Youth is also family for many of its members.

Date: Saturday October 28th 2017
Description of Event/Activity: Queery Potter event
Location: Colour Youth offices
Who is attending or being observed: more than 40 members
In the moment (participant observations)
Time: 17:00-23:00
Objective Observation/Facts: I am including here the description of the event: “Welcome, welcome, to another year at Gaywarts! On the occasion of 20 years since the publication of Harry Potter, the letters we expected and the ships that never became canon, we are gathering on Saturday before Halloween at the space of the legendary Colour Youth (some also call it the Room of Requirement) to celebrate with food, drinks (yes, even butterbeer), games, screenings, discussions, the Sorting Hat, and of course with the purpose to queer Harry Potter up! We are expecting you with your wizard robes, your masks, your wands, and your House Pride! Alohomora of the entrance at 17:30. Dressing up is strongly encouraged.” They have been preparing for this event well in advance, and it seems like the actual celebration for everything they have achieved the past months. There are more than 10 members already here, and have made wands for sale (fundraising), different coloured drinks, different snacks. Some of the members have also set up art of their own to sell. The most interesting aspect of this is that it has brought together members and individuals from the wider LGBTQ community.
that have disagreed with most of Colour Youth’s political decisions in the past. When I ask M. about it, they answer, “Comrade, this is the end of the politics. Magic is here!” They know all the jokes, all the characters, they have favorites, and they have all cried when Dumbledore died. They joke with each other about fictional relationships between the main characters, and they try not to talk about anything else (mostly succeeding). They are also surprised that I know what they are talking about, and that I do like Harry Potter, which says a lot more about the way they see older individuals.

**Subjective Observation/Reflections:** I am noticing how important is the Harry Potter saga for most these youth. They identify with him, his being different and bullied, his overcoming obstacles, and his finding a family in Hogwarts. In some ways, Colour Youth is their own Hogwarts, their own safe place. There are also parallels with how they deal with what they consider their duty—especially members of the Administrative Group.

**After the moment (Post-Observation Thoughts):** It was a fun party and a way to bond with new members. Loved the guilt-free cosplay also.

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**Date:** Saturday November 11th 2017  
**Description of Event/Activity:** Discussion on fatphobia Pt I  
**Location:** Colour Youth offices  
**Who is attending or being observed:** more than 40 members  
**In the moment (participant observations)**  
**Time:** 17:00-22:00  
**Objective Observation/Facts:** Colour Youth has invited a new group “Fat Unicorns” to talk about fatphobia. The founder of the group is also a member in Colour Youth. There are more than 30 members present. The discussion starts after stating the usual ground rules. The main speaker is the founder, and he talks about what fatphobia is, how it intersects with being queer. When he starts talking about gay apps and how a fat queer guy is treated, the discussion becomes more lively. The “no fats, no fems” quote in many profiles in apps like Grindr and Romeo starts a long debate on regulation of attraction and the politics of language and desire. There is another meeting on the same subject organized for next week.

**Subjective Observation/Reflections:** It is a sensitive subject. Most Colour Youth members are open to hearing about it, understand the implications, and are actively dedicated in creating a safe space for all. They also understand first hand how hurtful bullying is. At the same time, this is perhaps the only aspect where Colour Youth isn’t fully inclusive; as an older member notices, mainstream beautiful gay guys are not present (not only at this moment, also in general). Colour Youth’s base is skewed towards queer. This means more understanding and inclusion, but also less representation of what the reality is outside.

**After the moment (Post-Observation Thoughts):**

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**Date:** Saturday November 18th 2017  
**Description of Event/Activity:** Discussion on fatphobia Pt II  
**Location:** Colour Youth offices  
**Who is attending or being observed:** more than 30 members and friends  
**In the moment (participant observations)**  
**Time:** 17:00-22:00  
**Objective Observation/Facts:** Today is the second part of the discussion that started the week before. This time a fat female individual who also talks about her own experience being fat. She also covers other related issues, such as the role of the family, how society treats fat people, how fat people internalize fatphobia and learn to undervalue themselves, leading to lacking self-esteem. A lot of buzz is created when she starts talking about relationships, and how difficult it is to deal with the perceptions of others, even when they claim to have her best interests at heart.
There is mention of too much emphasis on health and what is healthy in the society, but in a way that imposes the mainstream stereotypes.

**Subjective Observation/Reflections:** For the LGBTQ culture (if we can assume that there is such a thing) aesthetics and appearance used to be really important. With the visibility of previously marginalized identities, this starts to change. But still, I can’t help but wonder how the everyday gay guy that hangs out in clubs and has nothing to do with activism can relate to all this, and even if Colour Youth should try to recruit him. Sometimes, Colour Youth seems to become too intellectual in an elitist way.

**After the moment (Post-Observation Thoughts):**

**Date:** Saturday November 25th, 2017  
**Description of Event/Activity:** Discussion about and participation on the Political Group of Athens Pride  
**Location:** Colour Youth offices and Athens Pride offices  
**Who is attending or being observed:** Colour Youth Administrative Group and then Colour Youth representatives and other LGBTQ activists.

**In the moment (participant observations)**  
**Time:** 15:00-22:00

**Objective Observation/Facts:** The first part of this meeting concerned the participation of Colour Youth in the Political Group of Athens Pride for the preparation of the theme and the positions of Athens Pride 2018. This was approved by the General Assembly and then Colour Youth had to decide on who would represent them and what they would propose. On the representation, the easy solution was reached. Because all members of the Administrative Group were preparing for the forthcoming General Assembly, two senior members were asked to attend, one of them pretty well-known in the LGBTQ community, the other more of a low profile. Concerning the meeting of the Political Group, they had to propose at least one theme for Pride. General Assembly proposed two themes, both central in Colour Youth’s internal processes. The first was bisexual visibility and the second misogyny.

In the meeting with the rest of the LGBTQ groups and activists, N, the low profile one, seemed more shy than usually; it was the first time he met most of them. After the initial introductions, discussion started on the proposed themes. Some of the ones mentioned (other than the ones proposed by Colour Youth) were LGBTQ refugees, LGBTQ individuals in the workplace, LGBTQ families, and safe spaces. The discussion was rather awkward in the beginning; people were trying to figure each other out. It took a while and some jokes from some of the older and more experienced activists to ease the atmosphere. An interesting point was towards the end, when a trans guy made a vulgar joke about someone assuming a position in all fours (he referred to something a member of the government had said in order to humiliate one of their political opponents). Although the sexual connotations were evident, a silence fell at the table. S, the well-known experienced member was shocked but didn’t react. I expected him to say something, but he didn’t. After a few seconds, a woman spoke up and made the connection with why the theme of Athens Pride should be misogyny (how in order to humiliate someone, a position that refers to submission only appropriate for women is mentioned). The trans guy that made the comment refuted that this what he meant, and the meeting ended in a friendly. After we left, I asked S about his inability to react. He admitted that he was shocked and that he couldn’t find the courage to say something to a fellow activist, as if it wasn’t his place. He also mentioned that he didn’t feel he could find an appropriate way to react, without attacking him and jeopardizing the meeting.

**Subjective Observation/Reflections:** From my point of view, S could easily have reacted, he had every right. I started thinking that maybe he didn’t realize the position of Colour Youth in the hierarchy of the LGBTQ organizations. Colour Youth has more members than any other organization, and they are the most active organization. Still, he seemed confounded by the other...
guys seniority or age, almost as if he couldn’t believe he heard that and could even begin to imagine what would be an appropriate reaction.

**After the moment (Post-Observation Thoughts):**

**Date:** Thursday November 30th 2017  
**Description of Event/Activity:** Sophie Labelle in Athens!  
**Location:** Booze Cooperativa – downtown Athens  
**Who is attending or being observed:** more than 60 individuals  
**In the moment (participant observations)**  
**Time:** 20:00-00:00  
**Objective Observation/Facts:** Sophie Labelle, author of Assigned Male Comics and transgender activist, has come to Athens to talk about her art and activism. There is a big turnout, and a full room. They are happy to be there and listen to her. Many new faces also. She gives a vivid talk, and the discussion keeps going until late. Then the party begins, or rather an informal gathering. They are really proud to have her there, and it is one of the few times that a famous trans activist from outside Greece visits.  
**Subjective Observation/Reflections:** She is one of their heroines; they know her experience and are there to celebrate a part of their culture. They seem genuinely happy to have activists from other organizations there, it feels like they see that others also appreciate something valuable to them.  

**After the moment (Post-Observation Thoughts):**

**Date:** Saturday December 2nd 2017  
**Description of Event/Activity:** Historical aspects of HIV/AIDS in Greece  
**Location:** Colour Youth offices  
**Who is attending or being observed:** approximately 20 members  
**In the moment (participant observations)**  
**Time:** 17:00-22:00  
**Objective Observation/Facts:** This is an event for the International AIDS day. The presentation is by a Colour Youth member, and they go through historical facts of how HIV/AIDS was dealt with in Greece. He covers the mainstream approach and younger members are appalled to hear some of the details of how AIDS patients were treated. When he talks about what the LGBT community did they seem to become more interested. There are many facts that they don’t know. They realize how much ground has been covered since the 1980s – most of them were not born then, so it is like ancient history.  
**Subjective Observation/Reflections:** It is interesting to note how aware they are about issues concerning their sexual health and the progress that has been made. At the same time, the belief that it still concerns mostly men and much less women persists.  

**After the moment (Post-Observation Thoughts):**

**Date:** Sunday December 3rd 2017  
**Description of Event/Activity:** General Assembly  
**Location:** Colour Youth offices  
**Who is attending or being observed:** Approximately 40 members  
**In the moment (participant observations)**  
**Time:** 12:00-20:00  
**Objective Observation/Facts:** The preparation starts early. It has been an intense year and they have done a lot. There was some stress to find new candidates for the various positions, but it has turned out all right. The agenda for the day has the following:  
   1. presenting everything that the organization did in the last year, all events, parties, groups, trainings, participation in meetings, the empowerment groups, the feminist group, the social
wardrobe (a project that collects clothes and gives them where they are needed), the school climate survey, the LGBTQ refugee support group, the participation in demonstrations, and the lobbying activities.

2. Financial report. They present in adequate detail all incoming and outcoming expenses. The aim is as much transparency as possible.
3. Scheduling for 2018: all that they have planned for the following 12 months
4. Projected budget for 2018. Expected and existing funding
5. Strategic planning for 2018-2019. This is the most important aspect, and they present the future goals and aims of the organization. This is the umbrella under which all smaller activities will take place and it represents long term goals and demands, such as LGBTQ youth shelters, equality in all aspects of law, etc.
6. Text of positions and good practices regarding sex-work. This is one of the most ambitious projects of Colour Youth. Members have been working on this for the last two years. It represents the organizations positions for sex-work and they are the first Greek organization to offer them in detail.
7. Election of Administrator, Treasurer, and Secretary
8. Election of the Overseeing Committee (independent Committee that will follow financial transactions)
9. Confirmation of the elections in main groups
10. Internal guidelines for the Overseeing Committee (still a work in progress)

At the end, everything is approved, after being exhaustively talked about. The Administrative Group is completely new. The ones leaving seem relieved –borderline exhilarated. The ones coming are happy and energetic. The new Administrative Group consist mostly of self-identified females or genderqueer individuals, something that is immediately noticed and another reason to celebrate. Overall, that was one of the smoothest General Assemblies I have attended, not only in Colour Youth but also considering other organizations.

Subjective Observation/Reflections: Colour Youth is often accused of having strict procedures, However, it is this strictness that allows things to go smoothly; they don’t try to avoid anything, and they are amazingly prepared, in order to stay on time. The procedures are also what keep them safe from problems, they follow them to the letter. Another aspect is that whenever in doubt, they go to the General Assembly. Not all decisions are necessarily wise, but they are democratic and they all support them. In how Colour Youth deals with the formal aspects of the organization, there are lessons to be learnt.

After the moment (Post-Observation Thoughts): This is probably my last recording of Colour Youth as a researcher for WP8. It seems appropriate, since they also start a new circle with a new Administrative Group. I find myself feeling sad to finish this and happy to have witnessed it. I can’t really guarantee my objectivity, in this or previous observations, but I have a deep appreciation for what Colour Youth and it members do.
Appendix A (Italy): Interviews

Organisation: “Radioimmaginaria”

Interview #5

A. - When did you start with Radioimmaginaria and why?

G. – Well, I started with Radioimmaginaria when I was fourteen, fifteen, let’s say the year I went from junior to high school. We’d done this project at junior high, a cinema project, video-making, which was called Aria Immaginaria (Imaginary Air) and that’s when I got to know M.

A. – Was M. the one who introduced this project?

G. – Yes, because as director he’d won the competition for doing this project at the school, I don’t know if it was a competition or if he proposed the initiative, this shared initiative. But he was there as a professional and there were me and C.C., the other girl you met who does graphic design.

G. – We can say that we got to know him, mostly, in the beginning the project had nothing to do with what Radioimmaginaria is now. We met him and then we stayed connected because there were the awards for the short video that we made. The video was about the bullying problem and was titled “Campanella”. So, after meeting for these events, since he also lives in Castel Guelfo, we started thinking about the possibility to make a radio. Well, really none of us thought that the Radio could become like it is now. In any case, I started in this way, very spontaneously. One day we met in the room that is used by voluntary associations in Castel Guelfo. That was our base for some years.

A. – At the beginning, who took part in such meetings?

G. – I wasn’t the first, I was third I think, there were another two girls who don’t do radio any more, they left some years ago; then there was also C.C., she was one of the little group that… Let’s say that as a base there were me and her, and G. who’s now a bit evanescent.

Let’s say that he was selected because he was older than eighteen years, so he was an adult. Then, we started with some experiments, trying to do something. Thus, Ch., who was the speaker of an important national radio, came to visit us and told us how the radio works. So, quite instinctively, we started doing some tests. That was the beginning.

A. – And was there also M. as adult? and A.?

G. – There was M. as adult. I don’t remember if A. arrived right away or some time later, I don’t remember well, but he was already into the volunteer circuit, so in any case in that place, it was a familiar place to him because it was, still is, the volunteers’ headquarters. So we were there. And afterwards I started specialising immediately, I was doing loads of things, singing, I did four years of singing lessons, played music, a background that’s very useful when I have to gather up cables, haul them in, knot them.
up; how to use a microphone, all highly useful! All experiences are useful. And then at a certain point, let’s say that seeing what I was maybe made of, in brief, I was pretty precise, fairly self-confident, I don’t know, M. suggested having elections for editor, to give some shape, let’s say, because we’d never done any of all this, didn’t know anything about how it might work.

A. - Did you take any courses?

G. - No, I didn’t do any courses. But he told us: look, the newspaper and radio editorial departments function in this way, and Ch. too had of course explained, she was about the only one who talked at a more specific level, no? At a more technical level, she told us about her experience. So if you like, let’s have these elections where you all decide, vote for the person to elect, so I put myself up as a candidate and got elected editor. And I’ve never left my post, clinging on with my claws. So that was more or less the beginning because then, anyway, it was a continuous organizing, having meetings, having editorial meetings, organizing the broadcast, it was tough at the start.

A. – So, at the beginning you were the editor in chief of Radioimmaginaria?

G. – Yes, in the head office at Castel Guelfo. Only there.

A. - And now?

G. – In simple terms, I am still the editor in chief of Radioimmaginaria. However, if we want be more precise, and coherently with the functioning of Radioimmaginaria, I am the referent person for all the contents in Italian.

Because you know how it works. Don’t you? Radioimmaginaria has lots of studios all over, we’re not like the media where you have a single headquarters and that is the meeting place. We’ve got loads, we’ve got forty-six all over Europe. So I can’t be the editor of Radioimmaginaria because there’s the Rome editor, Milan and so on. But together we form this body called Coda, an acronym for Council of Antennas, which has a chief. Until last year it was me, no, sorry, until two years ago it was me, and last year T. took over who’s editor of the Sanremo branch. The chief gets elected by all the Italian editors. Unfortunately, the foreign headquarters are excluded, because the linguistic barriers make it difficult. In any case, I am still a point of reference for the contents, also because sometimes I really believe that I am a kind of historical memory for: Radioimmaginaria: I have been part of it for a long time. I knew people that nowadays everybody’s asking about, they’ve no idea of that speaker who came once. So I remain as a figure and then, I’m now trying to specialise, I’m not sure in what, but I’m trying to grow somehow as a figure, also because there are always new things to teach and think, so to complete a bit the things I can more or less do, because I never feel myself quite good enough to say: I know how to do this. Also because not feeling up to it allows me then to put myself more on the line when I have to do with kids, because I’m 21 but I feel like a sixteen year old. But when I talk to somebody of fourteen, well, for example I think of Cr., my brother, I mean he’ll spit in my eye if I’m not convincing enough, if I don’t also show that I’m putting myself at their level. If I thought I already knew everything, it would be pretty arrogant, as well as being untrue in a word.
A. – But, coming back to Ch., the famous speaker, what did she tell you? For example, you met her only once, she explained how the radio worked?

G. – Yes, one single meeting, one single meeting, we talked with her a bit, she came very informally, not… She came by to say hello, because she knows M., they worked together in the past. She kind of explained to us how a radio programme worked, general you know. Then we knew, I mean in a certain sense I recall that we already grasped, that we were a bit different, also because of the length of the contents, well, a web radio allows you to vary a lot from what… For your editorial content, I mean you can do roughly what you want. Then if they don’t listen to you it’s your own f****** business, but, fine then, you can do all the experimentation you want. Whereas for a generalist radio it’s another question. However, she told us, she did a bit… She also told us what a speakers’s job is like, how to be spontaneous, the news, music, she told us a bit about her world and helped us a bit to make things out about this medium, because radio is a medium that we didn’t… I mean, I listened in the car, never listened to a radio in my life. So, in short, it’s a strange medium for a generation of digital natives, zeta, epsilon, whatever it should be, because I don’t even know where I am. I think I’m part of the Millennials. The situation’s a bit confusing.

A. – So, you are saying that before this experience, you hadn’t thought about doing radio, right?

You said that you played music and didn’t have similar experiences.

G. – No, I was pretty good at school, I liked talking, a terrible character, so, in short, I always wanted to have my say, and I liked diving into something new, well, I felt rather stimulated by this thing, although in the beginning, I mean, I withdrew worse than a snail, I mean I slipped away all the time, when there were things to be done, responsibilities to meet, something that has served me very well and still does, because I remember what I used to do to avoid meetings, things which instead were useful, because in any case we had to get this thing into some kind of shape. Then, okay, slowly, slowly the other studios were set up, the second was San Giovanni in Persiceto, then Medicina, then Cremona, then Bologna I seem to recall. A correspondent in Cremona, or maybe Bologna, and then Cremona, I don’t remember now. Anyway the territorial area, the first outside the Region was definitely Cremona.

A. – Ok, and could you tell me something more about your experience? You said you started as a speaker. How was your experience as speaker?

G. – I’m still a speaker. Being a speaker is really cool, I mean it’s really a great thing, I mean very different, it gives the sensation you get when you sing, for example, it’s a whole other thing, but in any case the fact of being with a radio, in fact, I remember that it was reassuring because it was a situation where it was only us, we didn’t actually know who was listening, there was no need to have a special face. Then, when you heard the playback of your voice you were at risk of heart attack! you wanted to hear nothing for the rest of your life, just to avoid hearing that voice again, because it’s hard anyhow, in the sense that I’d never heard my own voice before. Anyway, no, being a speaker is very cool, then I also remember that I’ve never been just simply a speaker: in my mechanism there’s always this thing of saying at a certain
point: “okay guys, well then, now, having been screwing around all this time, let’s get the situation a bit under control”, and I was hated for this. Hated, I mean I lived through periods when I went home crying, because these little groups had been created who had it in for me. But these little groups, let’s say they did things in such a way as to stop me coming out with what I had it in me to do. By making me feel bad, ostracising me, not speaking to me, and even C. was in with them, which she later regretted. Ah well. Excluding me from those dynamics, things looked pretty bad to me because I didn’t know if I was getting something wrong, if… And then, definitely, I was maybe a bit arrogant now and again, because finding the strength to prevail, I mean in quotes to prevail a bit over the others, make myself felt, maybe sometimes overflowed a bit into arrogance, and they said: you’re putting on airs, like that. But it was useful to me, very useful also to turn it to others, I mean, I’ve lived through all the relationships, I’ve relived all these situations doing Radioimmaginaria. I mean I went, it was one of my first trips on my own by train, for Radioimmaginaria to Naples, to the Naples studio, because they’d decided not to let anyone else join unless… Let’s say, they had particular requisites. Meaning if the two guys playing at little bosses didn’t like them. Well, I’d got wind of the situation, I was a bit older, must have been sixteen, seventeen. We’d already talked and I’d already seen that it was… that something had to be done. Well then, I said: we’ve got to go, “fine, take a train and go”. Then, very sweet, they came to pick me up, practically right off the train, the parents of these kids from Naples. But having experienced such things when I was younger, when Radioimmaginaria didn’t yet exist, it helped me to see those same situations in others and help them to come out of it, also to understand who was in the right and who in the wrong, because it often happens that you adopt attitudes because you think you’re doing the right thing and the others see you as someone to be isolated. But if someone isn’t understood, in his situation, in what lies in his character. This is another thing I learned a lot about with Radioimmaginaria, that is, to try and draw out from others the pure form of what they are character-wise, cutting out all the rest, cutting out the polemics, the tales, I’m not available, I can’t, I have to do homework, have to study. Trying to see if there was something in these kids who approached Radioimmaginaria, because I think that somewhat the kids who approach Radioimmaginaria have a lot of courage, because in any case it’s something pretty different from the usual, where it’s also implied that you have to lay yourself on the line and speak. And also when there are ten of you around a table with three microphones, I mean that you, if you want to say something, I mean the microphone and being heard, the others are your obstacle, you have to be committed, because otherwise you’ll never speak. But it depends on you, it doesn’t only depend on the others having to let you speak. So it’s precisely a growth, and I’ve always tried, don’t know if I’ve always succeeded though, sometimes no, but I’ve always tried to draw out what they had, and maybe couldn’t manage to express. So, in short, this trip helped me a lot because I came back full of things to do.

A. – So, you are saying that there is something you see in the new arrivals that recalls your beginnings in Radioimmaginaria? The challenges, your old behaviours and everything you were able to overcome, maybe with more difficulty than they do now, because there was no one like
you who would say: look, I went through this, this happened and you could do this now.

G. – Yes, but also because my then editors were the only people I could talk with about this thing. Now, if someone, also with the events we do, everybody knows everybody somewhat, if somebody in Medicina has a problem and is close to the one in Paris, I mean they can talk together. I mean, I didn’t have anybody except M., who being a trainer helped me a lot in getting over these things, saying to me: hang on in there, because it’s worth it, you’ll see that you feel better afterwards, to keep it short. But I didn’t have someone of my own age that I could talk about these things with.

A. – There wasn’t anyone who was able to understand how you felt in that moment.

G. – Of course. In any case, I had the point of view of an adult.

A. – And so, you called yourselves “Radioimmaginaria” and then you became a European network.

G. – Yes, when we became a European network.

A. – And what happened?

G. – Well, it happened when we opened the studio in London, if I’m not mistaken, it was the first one abroad, but that definition was still in any case pretty, I mean a recent definition, both network and European network, because anyway it presupposes that, firstly what network means, that it’s not so taken for granted; and then it also presupposes that there’s a physical network, or virtual, of people who exchange ideas, opinions, information, and this is there with Radioimmaginaria. It’s a network they use also independently of Radioimmaginaria’s activities.

A. – And did it take place on-line? Are you referring to the on-line network or to the individuals’ network?

G. – A network of individuals is an on-line network, very often it’s an on-line network which corresponds to a network made by individuals. Because being quite distant, most of the work is done by phone. I mean that even while we are at school at school, if I have to speak with you I can send you a message.

A. – Do you use WhatsApp to share information?

G. – Yes, yes, a lot. Mostly functional to the stations, I mean, we abide by saying that those WhatsApp groups are tools for Radioimmaginaria activity, it’s not that I want to know if you’re going to granny’s or auntie’s, if you’re meeting outside, also because there’s the phone archive that after a while gives up on me. But we feel strongly about doing this, about understanding that it’s a workplace, in quotes, where Ludovica and I are also in it. Ludovica is head of personnel, she’s also a fine figure you’ll interview. And she and I are there, and there can’t be an official Radioimmaginaria group that we’re not in, because even within chats we do our own stuff, I mean, writing in forty groups, after a while my head’s banging. We do our own stuff however, by stripping and reading the conversations we can pick up whether there are any dangerous situations within the station; dangerous, I mean, not dangerous, within the limits, but if there’s somebody being excluded, if they change days and want to change broadcast day, and do it in such a way that the other speaker can’t go. I mean, therefore, that we too are sensitive to these things, or also when
things are posted on the Trick group, which is the group for everybody, obviously we’re also careful to act in a way that, in any case, even the youngest, a bit more ingenuous, are not offended by comments that are maybe ironic or not so nice; but then on the chat you don’t understand anything, I mean, everything is eminently misunderstandable. So she and I are there. Even though, however, I want to tell you that we’re doing our own stuff. I step in only when in the playlist there is… something that doesn’t work. Or I can say something about the contents, after that the playlist is posted on Coda. Because if it is posted on the Coda group, it means that it’s material that can be good to work on. I mean that if there is a content that I believe could be harmful, I write to you in private, not from the group. Because I want that this thing comes out and is accessible to the Co.d., where everyone is allowed to express an opinion, including editors and director, of course.

A. – So, you said that you are referent person for the contents. And do you choose general themes? Or do you monitor each content?

G. – I don’t choose, I don’t choose, because every station has its style, its inclinations, subjects it prefers to handle. I step in when… Usually I monitor, because there are… The Coda was created, the prime function of the Coda is that one shouldn’t speak of the same things, because there are several stations that record on the same day, and once when we discovered that three of them had talked about the same thing, I won’t tell you what a mess there was at Christmas. Also at the end of the school-year: delirium. Ten programmes about the last day of school. Sometimes however it’s also an editorial choice, somebody says: give space and voice. I intervene when there are doubled subjects, when I read an argument and feel that it might be risky, and so I gather my information and say: guys, how were you thinking of talking about this thing? This way and that way. Ah, fine – or – no, you’re getting it all wrong. Like that. You understand other things, I mean, we have a great responsibility towards our listeners, also because we’re a media organ, it isn’t a game. I mean, Radioimmaginaria is a real thing, it’s a test, a test on real things. So I step in when there are situations like these, and for the rest I tend, me together with Trick, which is a little group I created where there used to be two speakers, T. and S., who you met.

A. – Yes. Few days ago, S. told me something about this small group.

G. – Exactly, did you interview her? You interviewed her too. T. and S., now M. has come in as well, who isn’t anything actually, he’s not the editor or assistant editor, but I saw something in him and I wasn’t wrong. So he’s also getting busy. We tend to give feedback on the broadcasts, so we’re nourishing an ongoing growth, and this too is somewhat a control of content. Also having three or four people who continually listen to the broadcasts and who can also see if there are superimpositions, compare broadcasts; and then afterwards all this feedback is sent to the editors, even tough feedback. Because if a programme is lousy we say it’s lousy. In such case, we prepare a WhatsApp message.

A. – Do you prepare it together?

G. – Yes, let’s say it’s an individual one, they’re all divided into stations, there are forty stations, three of them have separated. I listen to everything, because I have different parameters, that is, maybe I listen to
the one that’s going really well, I listen to the one where I know there are problems, I tend to try to listen a bit to everything. But I’ve given loads of feedback, and that’s why we started using feedback. But I go on other parameters that I don’t even know how to explain so well. I go by feeling, actually. I mean, when I think there’s something to go into more in depth I send individual messages, or in any case I first put it on the Trick group for correctness, because it’s not that I’m the loveliest and can do whatever I like. But I’m more targeted, I go more on the individual slots, or the behaviour of the station etcetera. What do they do? They listen to the broadcasts, draw up feedback, put it on the Trick group, then they add comments by others, I mean, there’s actually an hour’s deadline in which people have time to comment. Maybe I say one thing, maybe M. happened to hear that one, because there’s M. too, who’s the editor of Radioimmaginaria, officially, and also President of the association, I don’t know for how long because he’s threatening to give it up. I don’t know, however, anyway for the moment he’s still President. He’s President of the association, so him being editor he’s also in the Trick and the Coda. But he never steps in, I mean he always goes obliquely, if there’s something needing to be said, but it’s always us, who usually manage these things.

A. – It’s your task.

G. – Yes, exactly. He is there, because he is the one who has the legal responsibility. He’s very good in this job. So, we have one hour or two to provide a feedback. Then, such feedback is transmitted to the editor in chief. The editor in chief transmits the feedback to his/her group. I personally monitor that the editor in chief transmit the feedback, because I am in all the groups, so I can control.

A. – And what about your relationship with the adults? For example, M., Al, and Si. You already said that M. gives you a lot of freedom.

G. – Exactly. Yes, let’s say that since there had been… I mean, we’ve come a long way to get where we are now, because the fact there are now automatisms derives also from the fact that before, well, we experimented then I delegated, but in the sense that I… Assigned at that moment, that is, it could be anyone else, could be Cha., could be… I don’t know, set out from a nucleus, because there was us, then later, bit by bit, they expanded, these… I’m saying exactly from a nucleus, because we’re the original speakers. Therefore also the fact that he doesn’t concern himself much with content is precisely because there are automatisms that make sure Radioimmaginaria is safeguarded from what might be risk factors, I mean, if we talk about news that isn’t real, if it’s fake news, I mean there are automatisms that allow us to take note before any misdeed occurs.

A. – When you say ‘authomatism’, do you mean that you have experience?

G. – Exactly. Experience, but also mechanisms, precisely, one of which is the list on Coda where there are debates. There was that case of Blue Whale, I’m writing something at the moment because I found out on Saturday that I have to go to Carpi to hold, I mean, there’s a meeting about fake news and I’m one of the speakers, I heard about it this morning. The Blue Whale case.

Because we talked about the Blue Whale case at the Castel Guelfo station, more or less, in March. Then it
came back into the news because also at media level, it was interesting to observe as a media happening because, well, news comes out that gets confirmed by a few papers, so you imagine it’s true, and we talked about it. All fine. A few months later the news resurges and they start taking about a series of absurd cases, different newspapers, because they’re all talking about this thing and the situation looks increasingly worse. Well, at that point everybody wanted to talk about Blue Whale on the radio. We’d already talked about it at Castel Guelfo, but the media boom hadn’t yet exploded, and a guy in Milan posted a special from Il Corriere della Sera that said: Blue Whale is fake news, here are the doubts we’re entertaining on this thing. And it was a very long article, but real. So there’s also this awareness, let’s say, and so it’s for this reason that the adults tend, on these things, to come in and not come in. They occupy themselves mainly with acting in such a way that Radioimmaginaria can go ahead at economic, and practical level, maybe to add new stations, help us out when anyhow we find ourselves in situations, I don’t know. A group of kids came the other day, Sunday, who interviewed us, and we realized that there was a probable risk. M. realized that we had to be careful about what we revealed because those guys might have been competitors who had come, they’ve got a newspaper, had also come to find out how we functioned. So you always have to keep your eyes open. And so they look after us in these things. Things that we ourselves, due to ingenuousness, often don’t notice.

My relationship with them is pretty good all in all. At a personal level, we’ve known each other for a long time, M. and I, and then we’re the most… I mean we’ve always worked together, so at editorial level we consult each other quite frequently. Sometimes it’s hard, difficult, because we’re doing… We’re trying to find our position, I’m trying to find my place in the world. And I realize that I don’t know how to do a lot of the things I’m already doing. There’s a lack maybe a bit of the possibility to… But not because they don’t give it but because we get fossilized, sometimes, about the things that Radioimmaginaria should necessarily have, meetings, things, experiences, a certain kind of time, we sometimes get a bit fossilized about our roles, in a word, if it isn’t us who put forward, but I think it’s designed in this way, that this is how it is; if it’s not us who propose courses, occasions to grow as individuals, it happens rarely, also because we’re very busy, I mean, in the end the nucleus is six people, eight, not a lot of us.

We’re the ones who do things in the end, I mean… Then, precisely, I want to create Teen Web Radio setups, I want to create stations that work on specific things, we’re trying to do it but anyhow it’s hard, because we push our way a bit, we’re something slightly different in a world of social networks that is a right mess, and so we’re actually looking at strategies at the moment for, anyway, improving all the time etcetera. But it’s fairly good all in all, we’re in conflict quite often but it’s a question of characters more than anything else.

A. – Do you feel that M. is one your friends? or is he your boss? or your advisor?

G. – I try to keep separate the different roles, even if it is often quite difficult. We have different personalities and we are often in conflict as characters. I always want to be right. He also wants to hear that he is right. He wants that his role, as in terms of seniority in the group, is respected, rightfully. I am
learning a lot from this exchange.

**A. – At the end, do you agree with him?**

G. – Here and there I’ve got better from that point of view. I’m growing a lot in this exchange, because I’m realizing that their character very often limits people in certain things, and I’ve got a character that’s my enemy number one. That is, I’m my own worst enemy, I mean that if I have to fight anybody, it’s against myself.

I very often maintain: I’m very proud, so maybe I remove myself from occasions to learn, to say: yes, you’re right, I was wrong and therefore metabolize the mistake, because my proud part prevails where I have to tell you, I have to explain, absolutely, my reasons, and so from this viewpoint he helps me a great deal. Because we always work together, I mean, I know certain things, I tell him, we agree on this fact: well, what to you advise me to do with the Sanremo station. They’re doing this, that and the other. What do you think? To do such and such. Ah, okay, yes. It’s okay now maybe, then, I hear them too. In short, these dynamics that are there, of constant exchange. I don’t know well how I consider him, certainly he’s someone I like so much that it goes beyond the fact that we do Radioimmaginaria, I mean, I consider him a very important person. But in a word, I also consider him as employer.

**A. – And has it happened to you to have some personal problems and confide in him?**

G. – Yes, yes, but also because I have another problem: that I am like an open book. I mean that if someone knows me, they can understand very well what I am thinking. I also like to speak a lot of my… When I am not threatened, I am more than willing to speak about my problems. He knows a lot of things about me. But this is something different from Radioimmaginaria. That’s a relationship that… And then, he knows my parents, obviously my mother wouldn’t send me around with someone she didn’t even know. But it’s something different from Radioimmaginaria, I mean it’s actually. We’ve got a shared passion that my mother passed on to me, she’s a photographer, the Polaroid. Now we’re messing about with this Polaroid I bought from him, which doesn’t work with me but with him yes. So, you understand the situation now. But this is a relationship that came about with Radioimmaginaria. However, it isn’t Radioimmaginaria, I mean it’s a private relationship we have and… With V. you can have a similar relationship, with Al., I mean, in any case, I’m… We also consult one another about certain things. Obviously.

**A. – Do you feel that Radioimmaginaria might take away your time? Can this represent an obstacle for other interests or for other things you’d like to do? For example, meeting other friends, go to the cinema, doing your homeworks or looking for a job? I mean, do you think that the amount of time you spend in Radioimmaginaria allows you to do also other things or not, how do you manage?**

G. – Yes. Now, at the present time with Radioimmaginaria it’s important that there should be as many energies as possible employed within this project. This is a given fact, because it’s still a start-up so, if you know how start-ups are, you put everything you’ve got into it. In reality, always having to reconcile the
fact that I must do Radioimmaginaria; must, I say must, but actually must is want to, in short, a responsibility from one viewpoint and a pleasure from others; and then having to reconcile other aspects of my life - one of which being my parents, a chapter we haven’t dealt with, but it is quite complex, even if fortunately not so much - it makes you find alternative solutions.

A. – For example?

G. – Sort of, last year there was a great need to work all together at the Pesa, because we had to create a work team that had its internal automatisms, its own things, to be more independent also among ourselves. And I had the elections, and on top of that I’d had this house renovated in Bologna, on my mother’s behalf; then we got a lot of money back from renting it, blah, blah, blah, but I felt responsible. So in my head there was this wanting both to do Radioimmaginaria and to go to Bologna, stay in Bologna, sleep there, and attend lessons. How can I manage, how can’t I… I asked M. for help. M. said: look, you could go back and forth every day, you’ll find a way, we’ll give you the muflo, take the train etcetera. I went away thrown completely into crisis, because to me that stuff was, I mean, unthinkable, when was I to study, read my books, do the shopping? And the gym, and what do you do? Total shambles. I’ll have a go. I tried it, laid myself on the line and reaped only benefits, because I actually managed to do everything, I mean, those hours of my day were used, not a second wasted. A second. And I was very pleased indeed last year to have done this thing. Also because my mother understood and said: don’t worry, like, it means nothing, even if you don’t stay every single day in that house. I felt so guilty that, well, for a moment. But this thing of always having to adapt, come up with new stuff, try to juggle the timetables of lessons at the university, this, I guarantee, these days, these days staying there at the Pesa, allow me to have this, this encounter, this meeting. I mean precisely… I go out of my mind and it’s so cool, because everything is just right, it’s great, everything, fantastic.

A. – And if something unexpected happens?

G. – Well, I cry for one week. This afternoon I lost my train, because my father forgot – even though I called him an hour earlier – to come and pick me up. I started crying. I also have to get my university degree, and I am very sensitive, a bit exhausted, let’s say. But it is not because of the radio, it depends on the fact that I always want to do everything. I like this idea of adapting myself, because only by trying I could understand that everything is possible. At this age, the more things I do, the more I learn, in terms of flexibility, adaptability. So I take plenty of time, I always call myself into question, a bit crisis-ridden, because I always have to review, twist the Rubik’s cube and do it always in a different way, but it gives me great satisfaction, managing to do this thing. I mean, succeed in fitting it in with all my other commitments.

A. – And do you parents support your participation in Radioimmaginaria?

G. – My parents have had moments in their life when… There was a year at high school, I went to the classical high school, came out of junior high real s***, I mean I had to repeat the exams two years running, so a messy business. My mother: “change school, you can’t go getting 4 out of 10, change
school”. No I want to stay here. So it was the third year when they started to hassle me: “you can’t go doing radio, and your homework, and this and the other”. And I said: “dear mum, dear dad, for now, until I start getting 4 out of 10 will you please let me do this thing I like? I promise you that when I start getting fours, at the first 4 I’ll quit, quit the radio”. Never got any fours, so I was lucky, or I managed to conceal them, like that. So there was this taking up a position on my part, with a pact let’s say. My parents think… They’re happy because, in the end, they’re happy, they don’t say so but they are. And they think at times that a lot of my behaviours, much of my stress, come from that; in actual fact in the last two years I’ve had a very tough relationship with my folks, a bit of conflict, they’re separated so I was pissed off for a month with one and a month with the other, all in all, a lot of things that for me… A lot of things they do for me are… I can’t manage to understand them, as a human being. If my mother gets angry about stupid things, I get angry, I mean, we don’t understand each other, the reasons… However, this is independent from the radio, such behaviours. Maybe it is also comfortable for them to say that the radio is too demanding. In any case, at the end, they have never said “withdraw”. They have always supported me well enough. For example, when I told my mother about Carpi she said “you are fantastic, don’t worry”. While other times she says very different things.

A. – So she supported you. Usually, she doesn’t support you?

G. – Well, no, let’s say she doesn’t support me so openly. I can say she minds her own business and doesn’t want to give me a lot of satisfaction,. However, my brother also joined Radioimmaginaria.

And my brother is a radical, I mean in the sense that he has very strong views on certain themes that are fairly in vogue at this historical moment; and he and I clash quite a lot. My mother is really pleased that he’s doing radio because he’ll get plenty of stick, not just at home but outside too, because you have to relate to opinions that are other people’s, you can’t talk garbage on the air, so to speak. Okay. So I think that generally, on average, they’re pleased.

A. – And what about your friends?

G. – Well, my friends were snobbish with me throughout secondary school, I had to plead with them to come to events etcetera, etcetera. Now at university I’ve had a bit of revenge, because there’ve been years, my years, when I had trouble keeping up with the lessons, so I had to borrow notes for the very tough exams such as Latin, I mean, that sort of thing. There was one day I was really in a predicament and my friend took me aside and said, “let’s go and have a coffee, I can see you’re not in the best of shape”. I explained what was going on, meaning that I didn’t want to be a burden on them, that I had this thing with the radio, in a word I told her my problems, and she said: “listen, you have to stop comparing yourself with us, you shouldn’t even think of it, I mean, we’re doing another thing altogether. The only chance we have to find a job out there is to do our best here, choose the right things. You’ve already got a job, so you shouldn’t compare yourself with us. Maybe you’ll graduate a month late, at the third call, and this that and the other, but don’t worry about it. You’re doing something which, I mean, you’re right to do it, go on doing it”. And this gave me a great feeling of relief, really of relief. And then I talk a lot with
this friend, she’s in Paris now with Erasmus, but I know that she actually understood, and then it isn’t
that I have a series of… All these friendships at university, I mean there’s 500 of us, a real jumble. But I
see in them a sort of uncertainty and also a lot… They’re very determined, sometimes also not so nice in
certain situations, very… Competitive as they say. Yes, sorry, highly competitive, because I know they
have more uncertainties than I do. All I’ve got to do, as I was saying earlier, is to get a piece of paper that
says I know how to do these things. But I feel more secure from that point of view, because if I manage
to make capital of this experience I’m sure I’ll have possibilities.

A. – And are you all doing voluntary work?

G. – Yes.

A. – Is anyone payed or refunded?

G. – Well, I am now VAT registered. There’s this new system, the new system of minimums, called a flat-
rate scheme. Mini-minimums. You can’t claim anything back, not even university fees, you can’t deduct
anything, nothing at all, no facilitations, but we pay taxes only on what we earn, so it’s pretty good. And
practically speaking, now and again, especially when our activities come under competitions, in any case,
in donations on a project basis, we get a contribution as consultants for that segment let’s say.

A. – So, you receive some reimbursement when you take part to activities which are part of
funded projects?

G. – Yes, it isn’t a question of seniority, because L. came in when she was eighteen. It’s just that they’re
guaranteeing us a certain frequency, a certain security. Then we issue invoices, the only difference is that
instead of outsourcing people to do these things, we specialise in that field, and let’s say I go to do a talk
at Sarnano and if the item is in the competition, we do the consultancy. For the moment it’s a very
easygoing thing, we don’t reckon on making millions, but it’s a help because at least we’ll be less of a
burden on our parents. All in all, I think I can tell you all this. Strange that V. didn’t tell you.

A. – And how do you feel about being VAT registered?

G. – Very powerful, I feel, very powerful. Let’s say that we were advised by Radioimmaginaria, but
probably, if we’d been a bit sharper, we would’ve realized on our own. At times we’re a bit sulky. It isn’t
as if our generation has such elasticity about these things.

A. – Can I say that this is the meaning of what Radioimmaginaria would like to become?

G. – Yes.

A. – Probably because you are not kids anymore. You are moving toward a new life project,
which includes also a job.

G. – Radioimmaginaria, as a mission, has also the aim of creating some job opportunities. So, I think that
this is part of the same picture.

A. – You were able to overcome the threshold of 17-18 years old. You thus decided to become Jay.
How was it?

G. – I am here. It means that I succeeded, but they were all quite frightened.
We do it on purpose. It's a whole strategy. I passed and was fairly sure of staying on, also because, anyway, there were less… I mean in the end it was all still to be invented, there were less things… Less restrictions than there are now, when there are more rules, because we grasped that if we invest so much time in people who in the end want to do just the trial year and not stay on, it's a whole lot of time wasted, I mean, really, hours, hours and weeks, weeks of wasted time. So we set up these rules, let's say that you have to enter, make a candidature, only if you're really convinced you want to do it. I did it, the first year went pretty badly if I think back because anyway none of us understood that there was this leap of quality to be made, but then we got a move on and so… Right now there a great many things where we’re not autonomous. But I feel that it's a bad habit we have, to think that there’s always somebody to cover us. Very bad this thing, whereas we ought to say: I'm going to do this thing, the lot, I'm doing it from start to finish, and if there’s anything wrong with it then kick me out. I mean, we should take more responsibility from that point of view, be a bit more autonomous. Whereas very often in certain things we aren't, but you can't always have the security of having Al., M. and Si. helping out when you're in difficulty. It's a double-edged sword in this sense, we’re a bit less inclined to risk, we've got less grit, let’s say.

We were supposed to finish Radioimmaginaria at seventeen, snap, there was nothing else. Then it was P. M. who came up with: “but why not go on after eighteen? Let’s create the Js”. And we created the Js. And that was that.

A. – OK. And how are the relationships with the others of your age? Do you meet each other also outside the radio?

G. – No, we don’t have time besides the radio. It is enough. When I'm not doing radio and I can't wait, now and again I'm happy to see someone else. No, we’re great friends, a great number of female and male friends. Me and C. and L. for example are great friends, even if, well, there’s no compulsion to be friends, indeed sometimes it’s better not to be, although anyhow I'm happy because we understand well, maybe we’re also not very resentful, we manage to understand well when it's a work thing and when it's a friendship thing. If I “bite C.’s head off” because she hasn’t said something and I don’t know what, she understands that it’s a work thing. And if after two seconds I ask, “what about an aperitif then?”, normal, she understands that it’s a… I mean it isn’t that the thing’s been forgotten but that, anyway… So this is the cool thing, I really like it that we understand the difference between the two aspects. Then we try to help each other in every way, because also going beyond our limitations, some people have limits, others don't, others again have them for other things, and yet others have limitations of character: that’s me, always. I learn a lot from others, an awful lot.

A. – What have you learned from Radioimmaginaria?

G. – Well, at first, I learned to understand who I am and what I can do.

I learn continually what I can do, as I was saying, precisely, I gave that example of the house. I’ve learnt to really widen my perspectives, my visions, my world view, widened it a whole lot. I’m still learning, I’m
learning all these things. Above all I’m learning how to come to terms with myself. Being with others, you’re obliged to take account of yourself, and when you also really like the people you do this thing with, then you understand that certain things in your character are out of place here, so you learn. I’ve also learnt to understand the things that damage myself and others, and to work on them. So I’ve learnt to know myself. I’ve learnt that now and again a touch of meritocracy also works well. I think there’s a lot of meritocracy within Radioimmaginaria, even if everybody wants to give themselves the same possibilities, because you never know, if someone isn’t given the chance and an occasion is missed. So they’re always very attentive. I learned that I like doing radio, that I like this world of communication, I’d never have thought so. Nothing else comes to mind. I learned to defend my passion in every way, with my parents and companions, and not to let it get me down if they said “but who listens to that stuff of yours?”

A. – And do you speak about it? Do you present it to others who don’t know about it?

G. – Yes, I speak about it. I believe it is the third thing that I say, when I introduce myself.

A. – So: your name, your age, and the radio?

G. – Yes. I think one of the most important things I’ve learnt, exactly, I’ve learnt that I have this passion, something I like, learnt to defend it and try to do everything to keep it going forward. I’ve learnt how to teach others what I know, yet still don’t do well. I am not sure that I will ever do it well. In any case, I am learning how to share what I have learned till now.

A. – And about the events that are organized by Radioimmaginaria, we can mention the Giffoni Film Festival and the Teen Parade. Which one did you like most? Do you want to say something about this?

G. – Let’s start with Teen Parade which is the nearest. Teen Parade is very difficult, really very difficult, one of the hardest things I’ve done in my life, cool, really great, because in any case seeing all those things you imagined being done, and two days later seeing them destroyed is terrible. I have a memory of total delirium for Teen Parade, when I turned around and I was pushing ahead with the live broadcast and, simultaneously, also with the live transmission of the things that were happening there at that moment; I turned around, a bicycle was supposed to appear beneath the stage, and there were none of the logistics people there, none of the logistics people who could help me get this thing done. Nobody. So, completely leaving the live broadcast to my two trusted assistants who could get by even without me, indeed they may have felt better, I went to call people to get this bicycle brought beneath the stage and keep everything moving, because until that bicycle appeared it was a void for me, time stopped. So I got hold of this bicycle together with a very nice guy who helped me, then somebody turned up, don’t remember who, and took over from me. But I remember the discomfort of that moment, and at the same time saying: “shit, this stuff must go on, somehow”. Me taking the bicycle and putting it there, something I shouldn’t ever have had to do, but everybody told me: “me too, when I was twenty I used to do events, I used to do it”. Really great. But I also remember that during the concert, at the end, with Lo Stato Sociale,
something came to mind: “the lists to be printed for tomorrow”. I went backstage to print the lists for the next day. Therefore, duty before pleasure. But I was happy to have done all these things, in the end, they like to be… Helping to contribute to saying: I did the same thing too, it also happened because I was there. The Giffoni, but the Giffoni is always cool, and then it's more relaxing, a torrid heat, but the Giffoni is always great, wonderful experiences. This year I was down in the pressroom, I really loved going to the pressroom, and I also had a stalker who made me a present of a book. I liked doing something different from usual, and then, at first I’d taken it very seriously, then I actually realized I could handle it well. We did interviews, we got to know how the press functions in the film world at such a complicated and intricate festival, and an almost family run thing like the Giffoni, you can’t do anything if you’re not the friend of a friend of a friend. I liked it.

**A. – Do you feel that you are an active citizen, thanks to Radioimmaginaria? In what way?**

G. – Yes, because I keep myself informed, I find out, because I contribute, in fact I discovered it the other day, I did a course of journalistic communication, because I contribute to the democratic function. We contribute to the democratic function of the press, of information, because we also give something, we try to be, precisely, the bridge that links the world of adults and the world of kids, and we give the possibility, not only us obviously, it's not that we're so… I don’t want to feel superior, but we do our bit to help adolescents understand that by communicating, being informed, being interested and having an opinion you really can do something. So I feel very much an active citizen.
Organisation: “Radio Immaginaria”

Interview # 1

A. So, L. tell me how you met Radio Immaginaria.

L. Well, I was... I mean I live in Castel Guelfo, and when Radioimmaginaria came into being, before that there was another project at school called Aria Immaginaria (Imaginary Air), a project to do with the cinema. And then Radioimmaginaria grew out of this project, but it’s something that was really devised not to be, exactly, linked with the school. And I was doing Aria Immaginaria, it’s only that I wasn’t old enough to get into the radio, you have to be from eleven to seventeen and I was a bit younger; so I got in at about twelve, and then… Yes, because people at my school were doing it and I wanted to have a go, then there’s the fact that my mother is the founder, so every now and then I went to see the broadcasts, because they were always on Monday and it wasn’t as if I had much to do. So I used to go to see them and afterwards I joined, and then later I moved to Bologna because I was going to school in Bologna.

A. So you started here, in Castelguelfo, and what did you do?

L. Me, in Castel Guelfo we talked about... okay, I was at junior high school, so I was still very, very shy, so I didn’t do very great things, then afterwards when we moved, I mean before I started school in Bologna, a sort of station had been set up, there were two or three doing it, then later when I moved myself, we actually found a place to do webcasts etcetera and so the Bologna station got started, which isn’t the same now. But we were there for kind of two years.

A. The station was in another site.

L. Yes, the station was based at one’s house, a boy, but we had some problems, and we moved

A. So you stated as radio speaker and then, what happened?

L. Well, we established the radio in Bologna, in the beginning I was simply a speaker, than little by little… some kids reached the legal age, they left their position as chief editor and they started with different tasks and positions, because when you reach the legal age you have different tasks, then I become chief editor, two or three years ago, more or less, I’m not really interested in technical issues, or being a director, we are somehow all speakers…

A. So you are not interested in being a director…

L. Not really interested in direction, I really like being a speaker…if it was needed I could consider other positions, but what I really like is talking at the radio,

A. I saw some episodes, attended some meetings, which is the role of the chief editor?

L. Basically the chief editor has different roles, and receives the support of the deputy chief editor, they are elected on an annual basis.

A. Are you elected?
I. Yes, one can propose its own candidature, that one can be voted or not.

...So yes, I mean there are various very precise duties, but generally the editor and assistant editor are the ones who are in quotes responsible for the broadcast, I mean not responsible like I control you just like a teacher sort of, but also within... I mean, with regard precisely to all the other stations, all the other editors and assistant editors, you have to account for the webcast you've put out, in that case your station, and there's this group, this body that's called Co.d.A, called Council of Antennas, which is a body that includes all the editors and assistant editors and producers in Italy and you, practically, you have to... Let's say, when you do a broadcast you have to send a sort of playlist to show that you're not always talking about the same things and, in any case, you're also kind of responsible for internal relations at your station, I mean if there's a problem with a particular presenter or with the production in general, you communicate to the right person and say: look, in Bologna we don't have this piece of production, and maybe it's a problem etcetera, etcetera. So yes, I mean, then there are loads of very precise tasks, which frankly I don't remember.

Having relationships with speakers, knowing well the people of the station, the editorial board, if you know well your station and your editorial board, it is easier to have thematic episodes, I know that my station loves gossip, I need them to talk about news, gossips, that's what we talk about.

A. So you decide themes on your own, in your station.

I. Yes, we decide the theme, but if there's something big going on, like it was for the Manchester attacks...

...If something happens, of course it is different, if there are news that need our attention, usually the station who is supposed to prepare the next broadcast (closer to the day of the attack), is going to talk about this...

...it's the broadcasts that go live on the air, because there are certain stations that go live and others not, so, maybe, if the thing... For example, the thing happened on Monday evening I think, and we had the Tuesday afternoon shift, so we, being live, were also the ones who could talk about it as soon as possible, because anyway the important thing is always to be topical. Then, in general, yes, I mean, maybe we find an interesting article on something that interests us about... I don't know, we know that, I don't know, that there's this guy in Bologna who does the programme on films and so, maybe, if the Oscars have to be talked about then we talk about them, because there's this guy who normally has parts in films, directing and things like that, or in general, whatever we want to talk about. There's always a format for every station which, I mean, it's sort of understood, I don't know how to put it, but generally if you go and look at the lists of the various stations there's always the one that deals with gossip, one with music, but, I mean, if you also want to talk about these things even if you're not with that station, there's no
sweat, you can do it.

**A. How many people are you in Bologna?**

L. Well, in general there isn’t a fixed number or a maximum number of people who can be involved. There are seven of us in Bologna, some of this number a bit… I mean we would be seven or eight, but there are many stations that are far more numerous, like in Medicina there’s a lot more, and then it depends a lot on, I mean, what you’re doing to promote your station, and then here, around Bologna, there are stations a bit more numerous, even if, then, I mean, like in Bologna no, but generally, in Castel Guelfo, Medicina, they’re a bit more numerous because the radio was born here and because here, round about, we’ve often done school attacks, which are sort of the things you do at school when maybe you get in touch with your old junior high, because that’s a moment, a target of junior high schools, because that’s what we would need, I mean, we need, I mean, that’s the age when, maybe you’re eleven, twelve and you go to the head teacher and ask if you can do sort of little talks, little presentations during the lessons, I don’t know now how long they are actually, because I’ve never done it, but friends of mine, I mean other kids have done it.

L. Ok, 15 minutes you introduce yourself, and what Radio Immaginaria is, in a very effective way, and this works because we had many people who joined, who subscribed, who wanted to try.. In the surrounding of Castelguelfo we did this many times, and it worked because it was easy to get in contact… But it really depends on the station, maybe some stations are more “introverted”, less open… In Bologna we need to involve many people, because we are not that many…so.

**A. Did new people join?**

L. Yes, yes. Now it is summertime and is a bit complicated to meet all together to prepare the episode, because many people are on holidays… Yes, when you are at school it is easier to come, and we have also these new kids who are very young.

**A. Very young...how old are they?**

L. They are in the lower bond, ten, eleven years old …. I’m very happy, it is nice to have many people in Bologna, we had a time when we were very few, even only four or five, not that many people are coming is fantastic.

**A. Or when they join, why do they join?**

L. We met these kids, when we presented the radio to an event called Networking school, at the trade fair.

L. It was... Yes, the final thing will be at the Trade Fair, but yes, practically speaking it was this project where, I mean, they went with… To do sort of… Oh Lord, to build sort of things in the schools and we… Let’s say that me and this other girl Giulia, who’s down there, and we did the presentation during the prize-giving for these things, for a day, with kids from both junior high
and elementary schools, so there were also a lot of parents, so at the end they approached us and said: "we really like this project and the kids are really happy too". Then, yes, but then at that age it’s more likely to be the parents that say: "look, this stuff is awesome", or maybe “we don’t like it”, but in the sense that if they come it means they like it, that the kids, because obviously they… I mean, generally little kids are very shy, so, okay, but there’s always the case of the explosive kid who talks to you all day, yes.

A. And how are they at the beginning? when they start to speak on the radio, I imagine that many of them had never done it before...

L. Yes, yes, it’s very, very, I mean nobody wants to hear their own voice when… Maybe they manage to speak, but then they’d rather not hear a playback, because it’s very embarrassing to hear your own voice, and then a lot of them, I mean, they’re afraid of the microphone, anyhow, it’s strange to talk into a microphone knowing you’re talking to a lot of people, then maybe you get used to it, but… I mean that a lot of people hear you in that moment, I mean even saying “Hi, my name is”, you’re always afraid of getting something wrong, but I mean, in the end, even if you get it wrong it’s no problem, I mean, they’re the most fun things, when people trip up at the microphone because then, you listen again and then, exactly, say to yourself “but what?”. And you start laughing. Then, I mean, when all’s said and done, it isn’t that we claim to be... I mean, great radio broadcasters who must be word perfect. Radioimmaginaria is also based on this, I mean on: you can say things as you like, even make mistakes, I mean, realizing that you've made mistakes. But if you get it wrong nobody’s going to kill you. .... yes, we pull at our legs… It’s really cool, because bit by bit you understand that you don’t need to have that… Maybe, yes, there are things that you absolutely have to do when you’re on the air, I mean, remember the contacts, know how to pronounce the songs, for example, or these things, there are certain things you have to, sort of, when you present an article you have to remember where you got it from, et cetera, et cetera. But generally, also, maybe, I mean the most important thing is to be comprehensible to the listeners, I mean you must be sure they understand what you’re saying, so you also have to put things in the simplest way possible, maybe, however, generally, even when you give your opinion, when there are moments a bit, you know, and you get it all wrong, well, that’s nothing, actually it’s much more fun. And so, yes.

A. Are there rules that are really really mandatory when you prepare the episode?

L. Well, the rules are, sort of, well there are a lot of sort of technical rules about like how you have to speak into the microphone, I mean you mustn’t get distracted, that is, you mustn’t talk over people, these are rules a bit more for… Both for the listeners, but also because then they don’t understand what you’re saying, so it’s a shame, maybe if you’re saying something intelligent and the other person’s talking over you. So there are these things that get the producers particularly angry, I mean, people who don’t speak into the microphone, or people who overlap,
or, yes, I mean the actual technical rules that maybe we’re also establishing in... I mean gradually as we go on we’re learning these things, because we’re still learning ourselves, how to do it, we weren’t born wise, and precisely for this reason we grasp things bit by bit as we go along. For example this thing about always having to remember the articles, where you got them from, it’s something we’ve, I mean, we thought about it and came to this conclusion, because in effect if there’s maybe some mistake in what you’re saying, at least you know that... Then, clearly, it isn’t us who go writing the articles and these things, maybe we find them written on internet, in an article, I mean on a site that’s valid, then maybe it’s mistaken. But also in general, to say that these... I mean, even saying that we’re not inventing it, we found it somewhere, that this thing exists, it’s true, for example the last broadcast where we talked about that app which finds...

here you are, it’s also the fact that, I don’t know, I went to find out if it actually existed, if it worked, to try it out directly etcetera, etcetera, and also like saying: "this thing exists, we’re not inventing it", also because there’s always the factor of credibility, like saying, two or three kids of twelve or thirteen in front of a microphone, saying these things, it’s easy for someone to say: "but what are you talking about?", but you say: "look, I found it written here".

**A. Did you attend some training before starting? Or a meeting where someone told you you have to do this and that...**

L. No. I mean, well, those... I mean, when you join it isn’t that you come in a group, that is, it isn’t that they say: “let’s set up this radio station here, let’s meet all the likely presenters and we’ll tell you which”, I mean, generally, things start out from one person who’s maybe heard a few broadcasts, calls from I don’t know and says: “I’d like to open this studio because it interests me”, and then maybe a nucleus is created around this guy who asks. And generally when we open a studio far from here or that sort of thing, a group of people go both for the production aspect, that is, taking all the equipment etcetera, and also to understand something about setting up a studio because, I mean, it’s a bit more complicated than just simply sending a programme to a producer who then edits it and uploads it, because, well, a radio station, I mean the station is not only... That is, the programme isn’t the only responsibility of the station, but also the fact that they should all be cohesive, I mean that it works that they send things, and this as far as studios are concerned. When the new ones arrive at an already existing station, generally of course there are some introductions, you know, to understand what radio is about, but it isn’t that we ever say: “you do this and you do that”, because maybe everybody has their own way of expressing themselves and this is the cool thing, because maybe you’re eleven years old, you don’t know how to get things across like somebody of seventeen but, and this is the cool thing, because you explain it as if you had to say it to a friend, so the thing is to create an environment where you’re actually telling a friend that the one talking into a microphone in front of you is a friend of yours and so, it really is like you were telling a friend and it’s far, far more relaxing.
A. Yes, meanwhile you tell it also to many other people
L. True.

A. Working with younger, how is it?
L. Basically I'm not really a social animal, working with other people, it is not...I mean, working in the radio.
L. Yes, yes, I mean, in this case working for the broadcasts with other people, a lot of other people, like at the events etcetera, I won't say it bothers me but generally it puts me in great difficulty. And then with younger kids it’s even more so because, I mean, I’m seventeen and maybe I’m not sensitive to certain things, even if maybe they've already happened to me, I mean, I can see myself again in certain behaviours, but I don’t know quite how to act, I mean, like the adult who was maybe the one that told me “no, you mustn’t do that”, when I was eleven years old.

A. Yes.
L. So it’s very complicated, but it’s also this that matters, I mean you also learn how to relate to people, to help them try to understand their problems etcetera, etcetera, I mean it’s cool, because literally you never stop learning something new, I mean, maybe you find yourself with an eleven year old who has certain problems in doing certain things that you thought were obvious, and so you have to know how to explain things, how best to explain, how to relate in the best way.

A. Is it difficult?
L. Yes, it is difficult for me, but maybe there other people, and for them it is easier....I'm learning, I hope I'm doing well, the key is not take things for granted, but yes for me it is difficult.

A. And this Council of Antennas, is it at the national level?
L. yes and it involves all the chief editors. All the editors and assistant editors, us, every... Not every month, it used to be every month, now it’s every two months, we sort of get together and have a meeting where we say what are in our opinion the. I mean, generally the meetings have a main theme, I mean for example there was one on fake news because, then, when this thing of the Blue Whale exploded, we had to know whether it was true, it wasn’t true, a lot were saying it was true and in any case this triggered the thing about naming a source each time we say something. But then, maybe there’s always a bit of space for talking about problems, sort of like I’ve got a problem at my station, I can compare things with the other editors and assistant editors and find out if they’ve had the same thing, how they tackled it and maybe get some advice, that sort of things. Then, I can say, I don’t know, maybe, the meeting of the Co.d.A. closest to summer is useful for learning about the summer events and how not to lose your station when there’s somebody who goes off to the seaside, another to the mountains, another goes abroad etcetera, to ensure they take part in the events, maybe, those that come… I mean,
the ones that are new and maybe haven't done anything with Radioimmaginaria, and the events are always a great spur towards participation. And then, this meeting isn’t only for chiefs and assistant chiefs but also for the so called GEI…

…The ones that have turned eighteen and decided to stay on with Radioimmaginaria and have specific duties, I mean, more demanding than a plain presenter, a plain editor, because they’ve decided to commit themselves to Radioimmaginaria even after turning eighteen, and so they maybe give us some guidance because they get together, they in turn have meetings, so maybe, I mean, they’re bodies that work and communicate together.

**A. Yes, concerning Blue Whale, where did you get to?**

L. Well on Blue Whale we talked about it, earlier than most newspapers, we read something on Messaggero [a newspaper], at that time they were the only one...they talked about it as if it was a real news, then one month later Le Iene [a tv show] talked about this, and we went back on the topic, but in a vague way, because it was not clear if it was a true or a fake news, and we did not want to give fake information, resulting in the end not true.

**A. Ok, there is the speakers and the director, ok?**

L. Yes, each station has its own director, like T., who is here and who works here seven days a week. There are other stations that do not prepare live broadcast, they register and send to the directors who prepare the episode, and deal with technical issues...It may happen also that an episode that was prepared is not broadcasted, maybe if they did not treat a sensitive issue in the proper way, some topics are sensitive

L. - of the deep web.

**A. OK.**

L. [Deep web], trafficking, this is a really sensitive issue, that maybe the older among us know a little bit, but kids, 12 years old that are here, they have fun, some topics are really sensitive, you need to be careful handling those issues, the risk is saying thing that may not be really true, or that are a little bit on the border.... you can say what you want, but it is important that it is clear that is your opinion as a speaker, not the opinion of Radioimmaginaria

**A. And the name Radioimmaginaria, where does it come from? Before it was Aria Immaginaria**

L. Don't know really, I think it' s about imagination, but I don't know exactly.

**A. And also all the logos.**

L. Exactly, yes, the little face emoticon is everywhere now, then there’s sort of this character, Muflo, on all the... Practically speaking there are loads of leaflets, there’s this leaflet which, I mean, it’s full of information, a sort of informative flyer called Muflè where there’s this mouflon wearing a Radioimmaginaria T-shirt, and there’s the whole explanation and then this character, I mean, they’re things that are strictly to do with graphic design, so, there are two guys who
handle graphic design, they’re Js who do these things, sort of… Then they’re on during our videos but also in the posters we do to promote certain events and they’re these pieces that are sort of characters with headphones maybe, if there is, I don’t know, oh Lord, sorry, if there’s a wine and ciambella cake festival, you put in this background, a glass of wine and a ciambella in their hands with grapes etcetera, then they’re reused on the basis of the event we’re doing. This graphic things, they develop this way, someone call's you mouflon, and that's how it happens, it is not planned to make money, but it is catchy...

A. Ok, how are the relationships within your station?

L. in every radio station there are always things, I mean the various… I don’t know, when you happen to quarrel and an epoch-making argument bursts out, well then, you have to try to resolve the situation and everything. Me, I mean, I already feel a bit of an outsider… Let’s say outside the internal relationships of the station because, yes, I’m editor, but I’m seventeen and the others were… I mean, practically speaking, I’m the oldest and the others were producers, and the others that actually do the presenting are from fifteen, sixteen downwards, so in the end, I mean, I already feel a bit outside the relationships, I mean I don’t really consider them… Well obviously I adore all of them because they’re all great friends, but I don’t really consider myself… because my… Let’s say age, my age range has already gone by. But in my view they, I mean they get on very well and it’s really cool to see them, I mean, maybe people you didn’t know before they started doing radio, because, maybe, I don’t know, Giovanni is twelve, Teresa’s sixteen, but anyway they talk easily with each other and it’s really cool because, that is, in my opinion there’s a really nice alchemy there, also at broadcasting level, and then, I mean, I don’t think they detest one another when they come here, so I’m happy that in any case they get on, and then obviously it’s also great to feel that a lot of people get on well when you listen.

A. Do you meet with different areas of Italy or not?

L. Well, during the year not a lot because, obviously, there’s school and all that, and we see each other sometimes at the events, I mean, maybe there’s an event in Milan and two or three from Bologna go, then there are some from Milan, someone comes from Cremona so in the end, I mean, you see one another a bit, but really everybody, everybody together, we see each other only at the big events like Team parade, Radio Campo, Giffoni which are all sort of in summer, and Sanremo which is in February, so, that’s the time when, I mean, a lot of us, we meet and get together. But yes, generally, it’s a bit difficult to meet in… Whereas during the year, in summer and with this team office thing...

These things we’re doing right now we’ve been doing every morning since school broke up, until sort of the first event of the summer, the first of the summer events, and practically speaking it works in this way: you come in the morning and since anyway there are a load of things to do also that… I mean because all the people that are here aren’t… I mean, maybe there are also Js
who normally do these things, that is, who come here and work. But like me, I’m a presenter, there are a lot of kids down there who are simply presenters during the year and during the summer, sort of, at the team office you’ve also got the chance to do things that aren’t exactly to do with broadcasting, I mean, there are things like organization of events, calling up guests, finding out who among all the Radioimmaginaria people are coming to certain events etcetera, etcetera. And it’s very useful in my opinion, because apart from the fact that this year other people are also starting to come from all over Italy, I mean, they do shifts. Like I mean there’s a girl from Cremona down there, a boy from Turin. Then, this week end young people form Sanremo are coming, and will be included in the broadcast, three per turn.

A. And you host them?

L. Yes, there's an hostel, sometimes we host them at our homes, some other times, like last week, we go to the hostel nearby Radio Immaginaria, and it is cool, this fact that people from other part can come, without the burden of moving their staff, because we host them. Then, there is an exchange, this week we had two/three girls from Cremona, next we will host guys from Sanremo, and this is cool, we have the chance to meet eachother again, without the stress of preparing an event, and also they can get the feeling of what experiencing "la pesa" [the scale] means.

A. "la pesa" [the scale]

L. Yes, this place, where they used to weight trucks.

That site, that was restructured and now it is RadioImmaginaria. Ok, we broadcast from Castelguelfo here, but we also do many other things here, we prepare episodes, we have meetings, all the meetings take place here....

A. And Sanremo, how was it?

L. Sanremo’s a great event because it’s really a moment of the year in winter when we can all meet up, with all the studios, I mean it’s a tiring event because anyway it’s Sanremo so you have to in any case document what’s happening, how it’s happening etcetera, etcetera, and it’s... I mean it’s great because we don’t have these limitations of, maybe, of TV news or things you always have to communicate to everyone, every guest; there might be interviews, so sometimes we also interview the singers, and that’s really cool because the younger kids, we send them especially because, I mean, there’s no sense in us going, we’ve maybe done it all before. And they have great fun, because maybe: “oh God I interviewed Michele Bravi", these sort of things and, in general, it’s a really great atmosphere because we always look for original ways to talk about it. Just to tell you, this year we set up this programme called The Improviser where we invited people at random during the broadcast, we gave them three words and first they...They got into this sort of cubicle we built, with a microphone inside, we gave them three words that weren’t
always very... I mean they were complicated words and they had to tell us the meaning and then compose a sort of little stanza with these three words and give us an arrangement, because in all this there are a lot of kids who play on the radio, no? There's one who plays the guitar, another the drums, another who sings, someone plays keyboards, and we could do a sort of arrangement. We sung, we joked, it was fun. There was also this radio show so called Gli stonati [the pitchies], they invited many people, people who sung well, there was a stage where young people could sing, and play, maybe not famous people, totally unknown people who take the chance, we invited them to exhibit at Radioimmaginaria, they played guitar, sung... Gli stonati [the pitchies] judged them, they evaluated them, they invented a sort of acronym including how good at you think you are etc...

And that was it, I mean, anyway it was really great, only that of course being during the school term it didn’t last long, just two or three days, and so in the end we all meet up and it’s great, but all in all it lasts just a short time, because it’s all concentrated, very frenetic and… but it’s so cool.

A. How do you manage time, having school and the radio,

L. Ah yes. No, no, well, generally it isn’t burdensome obviously because you, I mean, taking an individual broadcast your commitment is for two hours a week, a bit more maybe, in one afternoon. And in spite of this, however, a lot of people often have trouble, I mean it happens that you skip a broadcast because you have to study in the afternoon for an oral test the next day and the only thing, I mean, the point of… The commitment isn’t the broadcast in itself, in my view, the problem, precisely, is to do with the events and because during the year there are sort of a load of really cool events, I’m saying, I don’t know, Radio City in Milan, which is this event where they... I mean they organize this thing where there are a lot of stations, you do radio from morning till night, we went this year, it’s only that of course it’s during the school term so a lot of parents are sceptical about sending their kids for some days to sleep with these people they maybe haven’t ever seen.

L. - Or: "no, I don’t want to because he has to go to school". That is, school is a factor of course, I mean, for those two hours a week nothing happens, indeed, and then, it’s a very important thing that, in general, you do in radio, I mean it helps you to open up and talk, I mean a lot of people who maybe at junior high have to do their final exam, but even high school graduation etcetera, if you’re accustomed to talking for whole minutes in front of a microphone, it’s also easier to say, I mean, to express things when you explain them, and there are teachers who notice it, like me at junior high, they noted this thing, whereas other teachers didn’t, but in any case you yourself feel it, I mean, I improved a whole lot from this point of view, personally. So yes.

A. So, you think that it is helpful for school? You are facilitated in talking with teachers, you are able to express yourself better, that's what you mean?
L. In general yes, because it’s very helpful, then you’re used to doing it several times a week, and then, also having stations in foreign languages, if you do French at school you can, I mean, maybe you also really like it as a language and there are actually these stations in French, in Spanish, in English especially which, I mean, they help you a lot in practising the language in general, because the best way to learn a language is to speak it, I mean, for all that you might study grammar, but then, this is the problem. Sort of like at my school, where I go, we speak very little in English, we do a ton of grammar but there’s no talking, and if I didn’t do this thing in English I wouldn’t be able to speak.

**A. Did you choose to broadcast in English?**

L. – Yes, the thing started in Bologna, among other things, the broadcasts in English started in Bologna, because there were two or three guys from, who wanted to experiment with this thing in English, in Bologna there were guys who… There was one at the linguistic high school and another two who, anyway, they spoke it very well etcetera and wanted to… They were willing to jump in so we started up this channel, then, like I don’t know how many years, must be three or four that we also do broadcasts in English because, anyway… And then later, bit by bit, especially at Giffoni the new studios came into being. I mean, at Giffoni two years ago the idea came to us, we had the idea of doing the French one, Giffoni last year for the Spanish, because…

**A. And where do you do it? Not always here?**

L. Yes, then, I mean, it works exactly like the studios in Italy, I mean like if you, take for example this girl who lives in Bath, in England, who sends broadcasts, so the palimpsest works just like in Italy, from your studio you do You Too, you do French, Spanish there’s also a channel in Albanian because there’s this girl who talks in Albanian and sometimes also does webcasts on her own, with two or three people because, precisely, there aren’t many people.

…yes, we have also other stations, out of Italy like Sanremo or Bologna, Sanremo, in Milan there are many stations that broadcast also "You Too". The French, they do not have a specific station, they send episodes, they are a little bit scattered, the same for the Spanish but we have also stations abroad. There is a station in Norway, in Tromso, because there is this Norwegian girl, well she is Italian but she broadcast from there...and the Spanish, we have this group of young people who formed a station/editorial group in Gijon...usually a station, an editorial group speaks only one language (Spanish, English, French, usually they prepare some despachs, in London they went many times to perform these "school attacks", in order to organize editorial boards/stations, if we do not have a reported, it is a little bit....there is this guy from Dublin. This happens, in particular at Giffoni, because at Giffoni, there is the international jury...

L. I mean, jury members who come from outside Italy and then, they get put up at the houses of
Italian members. So yes, I mean, there are these jury members we maybe manage to get hold of, call them in to broadcast, these Spanish jury members who come to see us for a broadcast, and so we also do it in Spanish. And there you are. I mean, it’s cool because there’s a bit of participation also at international level.

A. **You are a network of adolescents**

L. We’re a network of adolescents because, well, this is a slightly singular thing because we, I mean until not long ago, our slogan was the adolescents’ radio, I mean the only adolescents’ radio in Europe. But then we realized that maybe it could sound a bit presumptuous as a thing, and obviously the last thing we want to do is show that we brag.

…we thought that, maybe it is not unique, but it may be the first, there are many people networking, people who attend university, but they are young.

They’re not adolescents, they’re young but they’re not adolescents, but in general, also sort of... But they’re very scholastic things those, even outside Italy. So we gave ourselves this name, it’s just that it might sound a bit presumptuous, so we decided… I mean, since we don’t want to shift around, because in any case we are kids who try, and so we said: a network that... Let’s say, that would’ve... Because I mean we’re, yes, a web radio, but the point is to hook up a lot of kids together, so network is also a slightly more suitable word than… Because maybe, I mean, they don’t talk, however, many… I mean we link up turnabout, I mean it’s a way of communicating also among ourselves, not only with other people.

A. **More boys or girls?**

L. Yes, a balance, in effect there are stations where there are a lot more girls than boys, like at Castel Guelfo when it was set up there were loads of them, I mean practically all girls, there was only one boy on his own, two and two, yes. Then maybe there’s, with time the two things got a bit more balanced, but yes, generally it’s pretty balanced.

A. **And how are your relationships with the older?**

L. Inside or also outside the radio?

A. **I mean the adults...**

L. Internal adults, there’s really only a few, I mean Michele, Alan and Simona, who are these… I mean they deal with slightly more general things, but actually, I mean, we are really very… I mean very homologated, there you go, I meant to say homogeneous, okay – but I mean anyway their work is in any case flanked by less adult adults, I mean sort of nineteen and twenty year olds, the ones who’ve just become Js, which is precisely the purpose, to help them in work that isn’t exactly the individual programme but rather sort of authorizations, transport, all that sort of thing regarding events, then maybe understand the contribution etcetera. And so they, I mean we are very, very mixed, see, their presence isn’t felt much, then maybe when they have to hold important meetings with people who don’t trust talking with a nineteen year old, then they do it,
but obviously internally it’s very, very homogeneous.

**A. What do your friends think about the radio?**

L. Yes, yes, of course. My friends think it’s a great thing but they don’t hide the fact that it’s always a bit hard to get outsiders involved, to listen to us, I mean maybe because we do… Because we have great fun among ourselves and it’s great if you’re in on it. Outside of it, I mean, all in all people see one network much like another, at least in my view, I mean, the fact that we’re kids doesn’t in any case change what the radio is, I mean it’s a radio, you listen to it, if you’re not a part of it you listen and that’s that. So we have, I mean, to my mind it’s very difficult to involve outside people, because in the end even the people who write to us saying “this thing is awesome, I always listen to you”, end up by joining the radio. My friends say “yes it’s cool, it’s great”. But in the end I don’t think they listen much to the broadcasts, I mean, maybe, now, there’s something striking where you’re like, “This thing means a lot to me, can you listen in and say how it comes across”. And then, we’re always looking to promote our programmes among our friends, among classmates and things like that, but yes, especially at first I was like… I found it hard, not hard to say it but to find one of my friends who wasn’t an insider who… I don’t say approved of it but who, I don’t know, was in agreement, I don’t know how to put it.

**A. Do they ask for your advice, let say, if they have to speak in front of an audience, or deal with some issues**

L. It never happened to me, but… I mean, nobody ever asked me “listen, I have to talk about this thing in public, can you give me a hand”, but I don’t know if it actually happens, I mean I don’t know whether it’s happened to somebody from the radio.

**A. Do you think that you may help, if this happens?**

L. I think so, I mean, there are things that I personally, I mean, feel very limited about, for example me, speaking to the public in a certain language, well, I get by because it comes to me easy by now, which is normal language, as if you were talking to a friend, and a lot of people think instead that when you’re in front of the public you must, I mean, you have to assume a sort of formal appearance, I mean it obviously depends on the public you’ve got, but if someone says… If somebody should say: “help me, I’ve got to speak in front of a group of senators”, oh Lord, I mean, I don’t know if I can really help you, because that’s not exactly what I do. But I mean, from this viewpoint, in any case there’s actually school, which helps you a lot in making formal speeches and all that kind of thing, and I mean, that’s it, at school the communication they teach you is just that. But if you have to speak to the public to entertain etcetera, etcetera, I can give you a hand, that’s it, this is what we do, also making the presentations we do before the public, I mean, we’ve got no interest in being formal, whether they’re journalists or kids like us, I mean because we have to show what we are, which is whatever it is. So actually making formal presentations, well, formal presentations are done when you have to, I mean, but we presenters
don’t do them, they’re sort of done by the adults who are a little older, there you are.

**A. You said, there are also the adults out of the radio**

L. Yes, the relationship with adults, with parents or even other presenters. There are parents who are, I mean, very... Who really back up the project, who are always there... Who always try to lend a hand and are for us anyway, because they maybe know more than others that this is a really useful project, I also mean precisely at the level of the individual; whereas others who are somewhat, I mean, very detached, that is, how it should be in reality.

**A. How do you call them?**

L. Babbioni, but they are are adults...

**A. There is a rule, I heard something about the fact that they have to keep some distance...**

L. Yes, I mean, it’s the rule, that is, we’re all kids between eleven and seventeen, this is our chance to make ourselves heard without help from a parent who stands there in control, an adult who’s always there to control you etcetera, I mean they can poke their noses in as much as they like when it’s a case of: I have to take you here and there, I mean, indeed, better, but when the broadcast comes into it, the contents and, I don’t know, the programmes etcetera, I mean the things we organize, we don’t want anyone telling us... Then there are adults within the radio who maybe give a hand, I mean, maybe, you can’t say this sort of thing, for example, because it’s against something, but generally they don’t do this, that’s it, generally it’s us and then maybe they tell us: “look, it’s wrong”, but only afterwards, always afterwards, because obviously that’s the way you learn.

**A. 100 metres distant**

L. I think they are not that interested in our business, they have their own problems, and also because I think, they recognise that it’s something tailor-made for leaving the kid. Then we do have meetings held specially for parents.

L. That is, a sort of annual meeting, something at the beginning or end of the year, I don’t remember though... Above all for the parents, but of course the kids can take part too, where we explain thoroughly what Radioimmaginaria is, we do it every year because each year we show annual progresses, I mean, to reassure the parents too that they’re not sending their kids to do stuff that, I don’t know, we show them exactly what we do, precisely because, during the year, the parents are... I won’t say they’re detached to the point of not knowing what we’re doing, but maybe they don’t have such a clear view as we do, so we organize these meetings, that is, the Js organize them.

Jay explain the achievements, numbers, followers, what we do, what we will do, to make sure everything is clear and also to involve.

**A. Are there parents who tell you, we listen to the broadcast?**
L. Yes, my mother does. I listened, you did well. Many parents are really willing to listen... to provide some, not suggestions to their children, but some feedback.

**A. Do you think that since you are involved in the radio, something has changed, for example, being more involved in societal issues, being more informed, if something has changed?**

L. Yes, that’s to say I... Well, there was a moment in my... Personally there was a moment in my life when I didn’t have a phone, I didn’t know anything about the… I mean about things, then, having a phone, maybe I don’t hide, thanks to the social networks which, maybe you’re always in any case very... I mean, news arrives and you read it. But thanks to the radio and, in general, to the fact that maybe the news would be useful for a broadcast, I mean, I want to talk about this thing, so I have to be well informed and, I mean, it’s very different, the level of information I now have about things, in comparison with maybe a simple person who reads and says: fine, I’ll read the headline, yes, well this thing has happened to me, okay, I’ll go on scrolling.

L. Because fundamentally we don’t have a political flag and they are things which generally, if we talk about them, I mean, because our target in any case is kids of thirteen and fourteen, I mean, fifteen, fourteen, that’s the age group. So if we start talking politics, whether you know the subject backwards or know nothing, it’s something that in my view the kids are not likely to enjoy listening to. But there was this girl in Bologna who wanted to talk politics because in her opinion it’s very useful, and we told her: "yes, the important thing is that you manage to make it accessible to everybody, all the kids, because in any case everybody has their own passions".

There’s this girl enthusiastic about politics, wants to talk about it, it isn’t that you can say no, because it’s like telling that boy who’s enthusiastic about cinema and wants to talk about it.

**A. And you did it?**

L. Not yet, but yes, we’ve scheduled it, because it happened like two weeks ago, then obviously now, with summer, we don’t all meet often, so... But we said: “yes, you can do it, but the important thing is this: don’t expose yourself politically with any kind of stance, and try maybe to explain well what is going on, without taking sides, there you are. And above all in our language". But yes, in general, also at an informative level, I feel much better informed about the world, I mean, I understand the things that interest me and that it is important to know, those things that maybe, no, I mean manage to do a… Let’s say a filter for the news. So to say: I feel capable of grasping when news is fake, when news is true.

…because I know that there are certain sites, certain things that maybe aren’t reliable, also because, maybe, I find something on a reliable site and it always has to be checked, in general, not only for the broadcasts but precisely in life. So yes, in my view this thing has helped a lot also in understanding if, I mean, to have a thousand times secure source rather than draw on news just like that, for the subject of the programme I mean, and then it come from the fact that I do
it normally, that's it.

**A. Do you think to stay after 18 years old?**

L. It's a question I'm often asking myself in general, I mean, it's a great responsibility, but I'm wondering if it's worthwhile, I mean obviously it's worthwhile, I like this thing a lot and so it's a question I'm still trying to answer at a personal level.

L. But yes, then it depends a lot on what... I mean, because they, when you're about to turn eighteen – I don't know if we're supposed to say this – you get an email from Radioimmaginaria where they tell you: "yes, you must... Being a J means this, being a J doesn’t mean this, that and the other". And then you have to send a candidature, that is, you have to send an email saying: “I want to be a J because, because and because. And so it depends a lot on what you want to do within Radioimmaginaria; when you come of age, I mean, it's not that you say: okay I'll turn eighteen and then let's see. I mean, you need to have a rudimentary idea of the why, of what you maybe want to try, etcetera, etcetera. And then they see if you say: "I want to stay as a J because that way we'll see", maybe they'll say no, because a lot is invested in eighteen year olds anyway, even on those just turned eighteen in general, I mean the ones you know could be likely, an awful lot of time is invested and you know well what... I mean there are people who get special attention because you know, however, it depends a lot on yourself, I mean, it’s not that I get special attention, because in this way, because I know that people know if a person is committed, is very keen, so maybe it’s right to give them special attention, give them certain indications not worth giving to someone who maybe doesn’t show any interest, precisely because you don’t see any interest there.
Interview #4

A. – How did you meet Prendiparte?
M. – I got to know it through mutual friends, that is, I knew a lot of the members, not an awful lot but a good many of the members of Prendiparte even before I joined the association; they were at high school with me or were old friends, and I joined this year, so this is...

A. Is it your first year in Prendiparte?
M. – Yes, the first year in Prendiparte is almost finished. Because, exactly, they’d talked to me about it and, in particular, I’m in the Scouts and so - I am also finishing the Scouts this year but - every year they propose service in associations, different things, and I said «I’d very much like». I insisted a lot to get into Prendiparte as an activity for this year, in a word, and so...

A. – Are you willing to report to Scouts about your service in this association?
M. - Yes. That is, there’s a time, several times, during the year when they say, everybody tells something about his/her experience, what he/she liked, what she didn't like and if she recommends it or not. In fact, this is good opportunity for spreading the word about Prendiparte in the sense that another girl who was in the clan with me, at the Scouts, chose to do the migrants project with the same principle, I mean on the same basis.

A. – And, based on your experience, what do you think about Prendiparte?
M. – I’m happy, it’s great fun. Well, what idea have I got? well I’m very pleased because there seems to be a structural base… Let's say, principles that also lie at the heart of formation precisely at educational level which are really valid in my view. I’m very interested in the educational aspect, in the sense that I want to make teaching my life, so I’m very interested in this thing and I’ve found, in brief, the pillars of continuity and informality.

So, I found them very useful. I mean that, experiencing them, they are two very important pillars in the sense that I think it’s the only serious way of working in order to obtain results.

A. – You are part of the project Scu.Ter., aren’t you?
M. – Yes. I have been part of the Scu.Ter project. From the beginning I said: "okay, I mean, I can do it", that is, if it hadn’t been for questions of time I wouldn’t have had any doubts, in the sense that it’s very… I think much more… I mean I like all the kids and everything, however the age range of high schools is particularly sensitive, I mean, that it also interests me at a hypothetical working level, I’d like to work in high schools because the pupils are, well, nice.

A. – So, how did you feel in Scu.Ter?
M. - Very well. From the beginning I was included in the team for a new school. So for the first three months we didn’t. I mean we weren’t stable until December, but we went… we had some
meetings with the class representatives, with the students, the teachers – one teacher – and we spoke a couple of times at school assemblies, fundamentally to get to know them a bit.

A. – And what did you do in these assemblies? Did you illustrate the project?

M. - No, we started right away, I mean we explained to the representatives, then we talked with them and decided to begin right away with an activity, that is, we went to the assembly of 25th November on violence against women.

And then we did an activity with them and at the end we said: “we're Scu.Ter”, during the last five minutes, “from January we'll be here every week”..., I mean we always explain who we are, what we do, why we do it, and then we can start at once with the best game and then... And I was with two others, a boy and a girl who, however, in March, then, I also started in January, in March there was a reorganization, I think people from Erasmus had come back and various things, so they came down, then the other two who couldn’t for questions of timetables or for various things and then Giulio and Valeria arrived who were both in Erasmus, and Clelia joined during the year I’d say.

A. – And what are your favourite activities or moments in Scu.Ter.? For example, the organizational meetings? Or the activities in schools? Others?

M. – The mornings, yes, at school, yes, yes, also over and above the intervals they always have, that is, something of a fulcrum also because we did an itinerary in the classes since we had problems with the referent teacher who didn’t advertise us much, blah, blah, blah; and so we succeeded in doing just one, for what I saw, anyway, it’s great fun to be… I mean it’s fun, great to be fixed there at school all morning, see and talk with the kids that pass by, who have a free period and stop to chat: “what are you doing today? No, I don’t like it”. And you talk about this and that.

A. – So, are students interested in what you are doing?

M. - Yes, I would say yes, because... Yes, obviously a little group has been created, maybe two, three, four, five kids who come to see us every week, they actually come looking for us to say hello, and others no, who just pass by who, well; But yes, in general yes they’re interested, also because we often, you know, suggest arguments and try to make them… okay, to make them as appetizing as possible to them, and this works pretty well. All in all, there’s not a great age difference, the oldest are two years younger than me.

A. – And how do you feel because of this small age difference?

M. – Well, I tried to go deeper into this topic. In any case, I don’t have ‘any truth in my pocket’, so I try to discuss with them as I usually do with my friends. I also have many friends who have their age – the age of the oldest ones.

A. – Did you have experience of Prendiparte in your own school, when you were student?

M. - No. However, it is possible that in the next year there will be the opportunity to take the
project also to my (past) high school, Minghetti. In any case, my school is very different from the one I am working in now.

A. - Are you worried about bringing the project to your school? Or..

M. – But from one angle I would say ‘yes’, in the sense I said: “here, who knows, prepare ourselves for the worst”, but actually it was... In fact I’m very perplexed about the idea of doing it at the Minghetti, not me but as the association, because at the Minghetti they’re all very clever, the children of well-off people, they don’t need to go to work right after finishing school, evidently, whereas the Manfredi is really filled up with people who maybe got failed at other schools, or people who have to work, of... even only at the level of origins and provenance of people at the Minghetti, there’s one foreigner, I mean, two or three maybe, not a trace of disabled people. At the Manfredi it’s different and much more stimulating, I mean you relate to people a bit different from yourself, because if not you get bored after a while, and above all, actually... they’ve got a lot of stimuli in fact, in that school, I thought less when I went there, but actually there are a lot of teachers who do loads of cool projects, but they’re... Let’s say also, I believe, these schools that are a bit more isolated, also geographically much farther away, I mean it’s in the centre and everything, it’s much more... Because teachers organize many other projects – I thought fewer – but in any case students are very interested and reacting. Probably because they need stimuli that they don’t receive at home.

A. – Do you mean that at the Minghetti, students have more resources?

M. – Yes, yes, yes, they’ve got a very different background, so they’re... I mean there’s no comparison, I mean they probably, even now when we go to the Minghetti we’ll need to create, I mean, a very different sort of work, also at the level of stimuli, probably, most of the activities we’ve done at the Manfredi wouldn’t go down well at the Minghetti, but this is all part of the process of adaptation to the different situations we go into. But I think that Prendiparte’s goal in any case is to steer in the direction of these more isolated schools because, I mean, the aim is just that: not to go where people have already got the tools to do it but to go where they have less, and give them a hand. But yes, absolutely. I found it much nicer, a bit more stimulating for me too.

A. – OK. And could you tell me something about some boring – or less satisfying – activities in Prendiparte?

M. – Obviously, there are things that are more boring, such as the meetings, the organizational briefings, that sort of thing, but it’s also pretty relative in the sense that, well, maybe you talk a bit about boring things but I might say that in effect we’re quite nice, I mean I always enjoy myself, even at the meetings. The members maybe don’t have a great desire to go, but I mean we’re good friends in general.

We feel comfortable and it is always a pleasure, I would say. Except, maybe in the periods in
which there are too many meetings, and maybe you need also something else. – For example, for a period I had three meetings a week. Because in Prendiparte I took part also in Meridiano d’Europa.

A. - What is “Meridiano d’Europa”?
M. - Meridiano d’Europa is a project set up some years ago, three years ago – I think it was promoted by We Care, which is the network Prendiparte belongs to and, in particular... Let’s say it’s headed by Acmos which is an association in Turin which represents also something of a model. It involves a series of meetings, in classes or small groups created ad hoc for the project, on the theme of Europe and it culminates in a trip to a place that is significant for Europe. Like well, last year they went to Hungary I think, and the previous years I don’t remember, I don’t know, and this year to Calais, to Brussels.

A. – OK. So, are you organizing meetings in classes?
M. – We organized meetings in classes, I mean just in one class. However, there was also enough discussion, because for the planning phase we met in Turin, in Milan, in different places. We met other people from the network. I also took part in one of these weekends, but we all participated in turns.

And a lot of them didn’t take classes, a lot of other towns didn’t take classes but across-the-board groups, sort of open participation or something like that. We took a class and this also caused a bit of discussion, with the network itself and among ourselves, but actually we were all fairly in agreement, more or less. I mean for us there’s more sense in taking a class, again for the reasons we talked about before, because we don’t want, it doesn’t interest us much, we like it but we’re not much interested when someone who’s already interested in Europe and in these themes says: "I want to come one this trip". Undoubtedly it’s an enriching experience that gives pleasure, but... And that’s always fine, as we were saying, but for us it’s more meaningful if we manage to take along the fascist, the anti-Europeanist, absolutely, contrary to... Who really don’t want to hear about a trip of this kind because, maybe, who believe that it wouldn’t give them any stimuli. So, we support the idea of engaging classes which could appear very difficult.

A. - For this specific project, did you chose one class from one of your schools?
M. – We chose one class from the school Fermi. From this year on, in that class we are not working with Scu.Ter anymore. However, we wanted to continue having a relationship with that school, so we choose to propose this project, and one class was identified by the principal and the teachers. We had four two-hours meetings that took place in the morning. Moreover, we had workshop that took place through Skye and other means.

A. – So, in the network you had some sort of formative opportunities?
M. - Yes. I took part in Milan, then in Turin another week-end took place but I wasn’t there.

A. – Are these initiatives always coordinated by Acmos? Right?
M. – Yes, yes. What we did at school was fairly… Some… All in all, everything in preparation for the trip, so we had a session on Europe, about European Institutions and all that kind of thing, a bit technical, one… The last was about… Okay, I’m getting there, I’m putting them in order; the last was on Calais and Brussels; then, as for the European institutions my mind’s gone blank more than anything else.

Because, then, we changed them a bit, obviously, because when there’s one among many… Ah, about Euro-scepticism and all that sort of stuff. Because we did three workshops in the classroom – sorry – and then the fourth session was scheduled… This was at network level, so the package was Europe, institutions and company; Euro-scepticism and Calais Brussels, there you are, I’ve reconstructed everything, we’ve got it.

Three. Whereas the fourth was a meeting with an organization from the area which did… Was somehow linked, obviously it was at the discretion of the ones… Of the educators in the area, anyway, and we met an X-generation that is an association of second generation people who do… In short, who work towards integration, also to share… let’s say share their problems with citizens and all those connected things, and we took this Migrantour, it’s called, that is, this Pakistani guy, I mean de facto Italian inasmuch as he was born in Italy and has always lived here, with Pakistani parents, took us to the district ‘Bolognina’, showing us the symbolic or at any rate significant places, and explaining also the value of these places, the history, and Bolognina as a meeting point, really, of different people from all over the world.

Then there was also… It was one of the last themes we’d dealt with at school because, talking about Calais and Brussels, there had also been something to say: what are… What is Calais in Bologna, what is Brussels, what it means, and to bring the situations to one’s own area, so we’d talked about Pilastro, about all the zones, Bolognina, all those zones…

**A. – So, you are telling me that the tour in Bolognina was done in the places which are meaningful for young migrants, or in any case for second generations living there?**

M. - Yes, we saw Bolognina as a setting for integration. It also depended on the personal experiences. For example, one guy took us to see one clinic.

**A. – Named Tiarini?**

M. - Yes, Tiarini, exactly. And telling us for example about when… For the first time he’d acted as cultural mediator and so he told us a lot about his experience, it was cool, then, he’d been to Fermi school with the kids of the class so it was also that… And he talked about various episodes of his life, also school life.

**A. - And how did you get in contact with this association (Migrantour)?**

M. – Because one guy from Prendiparte introduced me. He’d told me about it some time earlier, saying in general, “you Scu.Ter people”, they do these cool things, because they do Migrantour, a sort of, also a religious tour to various places of worship in Bologna, places of the various
religions, so it came to mind and we called them up. Just like that, we did... It was great, constructive.

**A. - So, what was the aim of Meridiano d'Europa?**

M. – The aim of Meridiano d'Europa was to try and problematize a bit... To analyse the Europe of today, try to understand its strongpoints and weak points and especially to make the kids understand, or at least arouse their curiosity, get them thinking, because since... you set out from the presupposition that something isn’t right, at that moment, and try to understand how to influence and change things and why. That’s the general idea.

**A. - So, I understand that you took part in training experiences with experts who spoke with you about these topics?**

M. - Yes, we took part in these trainings and we also did something. I forgot to say that the Meridiano is the line connecting Utøya with Lampedusa. So we’ve done the first training... There was a moment with groups divided in the various towns, with research for material on immigration and policies, agreements with Turkey, Greece and all those things, then precisely more... Dublin etcetera, on Islamophobia, on... exactly, Islamophobia, immigration in a word, and all the various themes, yes. So everybody had... We’d shared all this material previously, then for that day there was a moment of... We split up into groups to study the various materials, compare notes and things like that, and that was kind of self-information. That day for example we met Luca Mariani who wrote a book on the Utøya attacks, and in that situation he was the presence... Let’s say external presence. He was very, very good, it was great, but it was him alone. Among the feedback I sent shortly to the Meridiano d'Europa, I mean, they did a questionnaire to evaluate...

Then in my view, I say ‘mea culpa’ (it’s my fault) in the sense that I didn’t go to the second meeting in Turin because I couldn’t, but maybe a bit of external formation is needed there, well, I’m speaking for myself, I study humanities so I don’t study those things, while a lot of people do law or international sciences so they also have a more specific background, I mean actual technical knowledge which I somewhat lack. I’ve tried to fill the gaps by studying, but maybe what’s needed is a bit more training at school, I don’t know how to put it, but actually it’s not really necessary, not absolutely necessary, maybe, that’s it, maybe there are also problems to analyse and that’s fine. Sort of like the one about the classes, I feel it strongly because one kid said: but... Two classes have been brought actually, and one of our accompanying people said that you could really see the difference between the class and the group that had chosen to come, and obviously you could see it, but we shouldn’t exclude the class for this reason, indeed, in my opinion...

Also much more active, taking part, also much more charged up even on a trip that had pretty heavy rhythms, like... I mean, precisely, when they told me I said, like, these are things you do in
the Scouts, not always... Also because you choose to join the Scouts and it isn’t your school outing where you think: I'll go, it’s the trip that, no, because it’s a different choice therefore, between the two, maybe there’s a need to lower the aim a bit, I mean, do things in such a way that everybody feels more or less at their ease, so as to reach everyone, otherwise it's obvious that somebody will close up saying: I don’t want to listen to any more, I don’t want to hear anything about it, I hate Europe more than before.

They went to Brussels where they met various associations, they did… they visited Parliament, met an association that does lobbying, and then I tried to understand how lobbies influence European parliamentary life and… They went to Calais for a day and the people accompanying them said that it wasn't particularly meaningful because they said: the camp isn’t there anymore. On arriving they had a conference, but it might have been done in Brussels. So they said it was a somewhat lost season, however... Yes, and then for the rest they were in Brussels.

A. – So, through this project, did you have the opportunity to meet also the other associations in your network? Or do you feel this network as something distant?

M. – I’m not really happy about the network because of my experience this year, something I didn’t say at the beginning of this year, I had just arrived, so I kept it in mind and now I can say that I pretty much agree, and that it is important to network with other situations in other towns and all that, but in my view what is lacking and could be much more important is networking with the situations in Bologna, because Bologna really has a whole lot of occasions for interchange and we’re often a bit isolated. It would be much better I feel if instead we got together a bit.

A. - Are there some specific aims for the next year? Will Meridiano continue?

M. – Yes, we will start again. As I said before, the coordination is in charge of Acmos. We just pointed out this thing in a document that was mostly edited by Lucrezia. We noted also this thing, about the classes, these various problems.

A. – What do you mean with this document?

M. - We had a sharing of documents. Because the organization was a group dedicated to study, therefore research for documents and sharing with everything, transversal groups among the towns this. So study, research for documents and sharing with others. Also by Skype. One dedicated to logistic organization, awful job, I’ve said it all; one dedicated to leading the activities there. This was in view of the trip, and then... Because there were a load of mixed groups, then instead, exactly, there was another organization plan, I mean the one about workshops in Italy, again in transversal groups among the towns, to organize three different workshops, and therefore...

A. – So, you organized such workshops?

M. – Yes. I was sort of involved together with... I mean Bologna together with Novara, I think,
but I’m not sure at all, we did the last workshop, for example. The organization of these workshops was done by December-January and then, in January at the Turin meeting, where I didn’t go, they shared, in brief, they talked about the workshops that each group had devised, there were some alterations, some changes of things and that’s all.  

A. Are you all volunteers in Prendiparte?  
M. Yes. Well the spokespersons of Scu.Ter received a small amount of money.  

A – Do you think that Prendiparte has a specific political ideology?  
M. – With this we’re... It’s also a problem we have with the network, I mean, we’re often… Also I think at the first weekend we did where I, in a word, tried to understand something, because I’d just joined Prendiparte, I found myself directly on the network and so I said: oh Lord. I started to do Scu.Ter then, but one thing I noticed was that at a practical level we were a bit more polemical, there were me, Lucrezia and Camilla who came sometimes, now, okay, she’s in Paris. But the point was that in my view, the difference I noted in comparison with other associations is that we, in the sense, we’re not a leftwing association or linked, not even now, with a political party, but not… That it doesn’t carry on a party political project, certainly, political in the broad sense, but there are a lot of us who have very different ideas, different parties, and in my opinion this is fundamental, I mean, it’s precisely… I find a richness in it, I mean, something you really can’t do without, that is, otherwise the debate gets switched off.  

A. – And do you have arguments with others because of different political positions?  
M. – No, I mean we just discuss about it. And even about Europe, we were saying, Il Manifesto was... it was talking about European identity and it finished with: ”long live Europe" and that sort of thing, "long live united Europe", like. Let’s say, yes, okay, but I mean there’s no way I’m going to walk into a classroom and say: “Don’t forget kids, long live united Europe", I mean, I go and say: “what do you think about it?, I mean we’re trying to draw what you think out of you, let’s try to analyse the situation together", but we no longer want to carry on with... Or at least we’ve... I mean more of an idea with regard to the other in certain ways, yes, in the sense that we have shared foundations whatever parties we belong to or… or faiths, let’s say, but we’re definitely antifascists, I mean we have a common baseline, but at a level, I mean we’re also very different, multifaceted, and in my view... I think of Giulio quite a lot, in particular, with him, I mean, he’s much more functional with the kids, for example he was telling us that last year at the Pacinotti school there was this fascistoid boy… Let’s say and if you see farther ahead of you people of a certain type who are already little token communists, you don’t… I mean it’s hard, or at least you make a couple of wiseass comments, but you don’t take them seriously. If there were someone declaredly rightwing saying “look, I’m rightwing but I’m doing this stuff, what do you think of this stuff?” it helps a lot more to relate also to people who, precisely, if not they ignore you, because this garbage is recognised. So among ourselves and also with the kids, this
thing is important in my view.

A. Before you said something about the fact that your participation in Scu.Ter and Prendiparte could be useful for you, for your future. Do you feel that you have learned skills or something else that could be useful for a future job?

M. Yes. I mean, yes, the workshops in the classrooms were too few in my opinion, and these were the part a bit more... But yes, also at the level of thought, of... What might a kid be thinking, who’s nearly my age but has a completely different background, I think it’s a job a teacher should do always and often. Also when I was there I used to think: “I’ve got this... When I’m a teacher I’ll do”, this with them, things like that, because yes, yes, they are absolutely things that have to be learnt and, on the one hand, you need to study them a bit, something that isn’t done at the moment, that is, teachers don’t... I mean they don’t study how to teach; on the other hand you learn it by doing, as they say, but all in all if you start earlier, I mean, then, it’s not as if you have to teach anything special, but relating to the kids helps and is very cool, trying to draw their attention to certain themes, with determined methods. Obviously, I didn’t have a teaching role, however yes, this year I had a more conceptual and professional role, because I spent more time doing workshops in classes.

A. Do you feel that your organization represents young people? I mean, do you feel that your organization represents a large amount of young people on a national and local level?

M. Actually no, I don’t think so. I don’t think so because... In the end we’re all people, different but in certain ways very similar, because we’ve all studied, we’re all at university and we have an outlook... Let’s say, fairly... the pleasure that makes an effort to be broad about reality, and I unfortunately don’t believe that it’s... I mean it would be cool if it were representative of young people, but.

A. Do you mean that you are all from Bologna?

M. Most of us are from Bologna, but there are also some students who are in Bologna to attend at the University.

A. And maybe some of them already have past experience of other associations?

M. Yes. Many of us, when they were high school students, were part of Libera.

A. Ok. How would you describe the leadership in Prendiparte? I mean the management and the organization?

M. I don’t now exactly...

A. For example, how are your relationship with the chair and the vice-chair?

M. I mean, the leadership exists and does things, such as this, I didn’t do anything for the aperitif, because I prepared something because it wasn’t said: "Scu.Ter brings the savouries", so I made an omelette, also burnt it however... And so I did this, but I didn’t handle anything, the
leadership did everything. For the rest... I think it functions well, but I feel a bit outside things, in the sense that I’m not part of the leadership, maybe I will be, as treasurer I think, terrible idea, they asked me and now I don’t know how to say no. No, but then... It’s okay. But I don’t know, I find it a bit hard to say so.

Only, certainly, there it is, there was a big problem with the Meridiano d'Europa, organizational, in the sense that all the projects go well because there are volunteers, there’s a referent who therefore participates in the leadership, then they have meetings about the project, with these members of the project, and information is exchanged and everything runs well, this yes. What was seriously missing with the Meridiano d'Europa was this: that is, they said: “who wants to do it?” then the people changed along the way, there was no fixed referent handling relations with the network, so the information setup was chaotic to say the least.

A. – And what is, from your point of view, ‘civic participation’?

M. – Civic participation in my view means getting informed with the more (inc.) part, in my view, because Scu.Ter is complex, because there’s always so much to do in general and in the end I, for one, it’s the part I’ve always neglected most, I mean I realize that I should do... I mean, it’s never enough, undoubtedly, then, the one who does it says: yes. But this is always useful, so, setting out from a basis of information means understanding in what way you, with your possibilities and abilities, in the sense that I could be in a party, yes, but I don’t feel that politics is what I do, I believe a lot in education, so, understanding in what situation someone can make a contribution to society, therefore taking a step towards that goal that everyone has in their head, a little different, somewhat equal, a bit specific, and saying: “today with this Scu.Ter activity, it was great. Because we all learned something, we and they grew up a bit, and the next time we will vote, we will keep in mind also that this issue also exists”. It is important also to understand where you can spend your energies, with your skills, in a way that is useful for the society.

A. – Have you ever thought about the idea that, through this experience, you could feel as an active citizen?

M. – Yes, very often. The issue of being an active citizen is something we speak about quite often. This is the starting point, also among scouts. I can say that it is a kind of political choice, that means: I will commit myself in being an active citizen. I believe that it means what I have just said.

I mean the choice of faith, because it’s… and service and political choice, so there’s one which is service and it’s also, in fact, something I’ve always divided very little in my head, I mean this year my service was this… Let’s say however, I mean, political choice means service, that is, if I become informed then I make my contribution by giving service in a reality, because it needs more and it’s there that I can give more towards being an active citizen, I would say.

A. – So, do you believe that this is somehow political?
M. - Yes, it is.

A. - Do you feel that your personal contribution could help other young individuals to feel more active citizens? How?

M. – That’s kind of our objective, isn’t it? So... I mean all the kids we meet, our objective is somewhat to make them active citizens as much as possible, so in saying: we’re putting forward an argument because in my view it’s important, and if it is for you too, then this suggestion helps them in this sense and also, more everyday, with our example, in the sense that we’re there all morning, I mean, the kids say to us: “they don’t pay you, I mean, but why are you here?”’. So what I mean to say is: in fact, why am I here? There must be a reason. So yes, the kids we meet will, we hope, grow as much as possible from this point of view. So yes.

A. - And does your experience in Prendiparte have an impact also on your friends or family? What are they saying about this? Do they approve?

M. – In general, they agree. I mean that many of my friends and family members are scouts. They have always taken part in associations, since I was born.
A. – *What was the motivation of your participation in AGE at the beginning?*

C. – Well, I started in 2014 with the project Ovunque (Everywhere)

C.- I actually got to know AGE the same year though, right at the very beginning of the year, with Lisa’s *Duiuspikinglish* project. Being a friend of mine she invited me to this event of hers. She’d been part of it for a short time and had organized this project so I said: fine, let’s join, that way we’ll do something. I took part in *Duiuspikinglish* and it was fun, but to be honest I hadn’t thought about getting involved, because I wasn’t… I don’t know, what I thought was, I believed that to join you necessarily had to bring projects to the association. So having no ideas in particular I said: “okay, maybe, we’ll keep in touch, but no hurry”. Then later on I got to know people like P. etcetera who contacted me for the Ovunque (Everywhere) project. It was the first year that we organized – that they organized then – so you had to enrol, so I actually joined, compulsorily in quotes, in the sense that if you wanted to go with them, precisely, free of charge etcetera, enrolment was obligatory. Well, I said: five euros for a week in the Czech Republic, I’d say that’s worthwhile. To tell you the truth, I joined precisely to make that trip. After which, I got on well with them, they said: “look”, and they explained to me a bit better what it is that AGE actually does.

A. – *So you went to Czech Republic.*

C. – One week, almost 8, 9, 10 days. It was during this trip that I understood better, I talked to guys. There were I, P.B.P. and also MD, the boy who left. After that, I started to be involved also in the old projects that we did not talk about the *Duiuspikinglish*,

A. – *Ok. And what the camp was about?*

C. – The camp had to do with trades of the past, current trades and trades of the future, so of course everybody brought their own experience from their own country, and we did various activities like, I don’t know, dyeing T-shirts with natural dyes, then we went into the woods to pick flowers, we… In a word, we went through this process, and then we did orienteering, blindfold in the woods, so to say, somewhat special things about the Czech Republic to show us how they actually live their youth there.

C. - Olomouc, the city is quite similar to Modena, a university city in the Czech Republic

A. – *Ok. And did you like this experience?*

C. – Absolutely, yes.

A. – *What did you find?*

C. – Well, apart from getting to know the Italians better, because I’d never taken part in a foreign camp before, so also the fact of seeing new people, for example, there were Serbians and Hungarians, and they told me that Serbia and Hungary, precisely, can’t stand each other; whereas these people got on very well, and it was there, just to tell you, that they called their parents stupid for still carrying on this sort of racism among neighbours, and then it’s not as if there’s a great difference between Serbia and Hungary. So it was
also very interesting for me to see these different realities. Whereas, just to say, the girls from Berlin were much as I expected them to be, and then I’d done languages at high school, I’d studied a bit of German, also the culture and so on, and indeed they were exactly how I expected them to be. Whereas the fact of also getting to know Serbians and Hungarians that I’d never before… To tell you the truth, I didn’t know anything about this feud, because it’s not the sort of thing you study, nobody says much about it, I mean, at least I’d never heard anything about it before talking to these guys. So it was really great the fact of being able to talk about things, about the news, insofar as everybody can… Exactly, all the kids, because I think one of the oldest was P.

A. – And you, how old were you?
C. – It was 3 years ago, I was 19 or 20 years old. Yes, the youngest were the German girls, 16, 17 years old; the oldest were 23, 24 years.

A. - So, you decided to enter, right?
C. – Yes, in 2015 I was in the Board.

A. – As secretary?
C. – Yes, yes absolutely

A. – So, you have taken this role and never left it.
C. – Exactly, and since then to now. It happened by chance, because the former secretary left in the middle of the year and they did not know how to replace her. As this role was not so demanding, I said: Well, let’s try. And I stayed there, because the secretary is the heaviest role and the more boring task.

A. – Do you mean because you have to write the minutes?
C. – Yes, but the commitment is only to remember what to do, manage the agenda and remind people.

A. – So, at the end, it seems that you are fine in this role.
C. – It’s not demanding for me.

A. – Ok, but there has been other person who applied for this position?
C. – To become secretary? No.

C. – It was P. before, before, when he wasn’t President, or treasurer, because P., obviously, is somewhat the centre of AGE, because it was him, in a word, he’s one of the re-founders and really holds all the reins, all the control over exactly everything. Then he delegates the lot, he’s not some kind of dictator who decides everything himself, not a bit, but he’s the one who really remembers everything, therefore it’s always him, maybe just to put the question so that everybody gets back into action: “ah, it’s true, he said this thing”. Anyway, yes, first it was P. and then, exactly, he’d found this girl, but then he had relational problems, also with M.D. among others, who on top of that was her boyfriend, so also with M.D… All right, I’m sorry to say that year was a bit disastrous, two or three people left just because of relationship problems.

I mean, also involuntarily, in the sense that he was very much given, it was his intention to do the best thing for AGE, but he got exactly the opposite result because, precisely, he was really an annoying person. So, like if you maybe had a project and you were progressing a bit on the slow side, instead of spurring
you on to do better he’d maybe criticize you and, well, I also understand that somebody, I mean this is voluntary work so it isn’t paid and gives satisfaction only if you get a tough job done; so feeling yourself also demoralized, this is why a lot of people left, is just what I’m saying. However... And anyway he didn’t do it on purpose, don’t think that, it isn’t that he’s a bad person, he’s just a very by-the-book person. Therefore, he’s got his idea, so if you don’t come under the idea he has great difficulties in adapting to this sort of thing.

A. – But from your point of view it's has been an important loss for AGE? Are you sorry that he left?

C. – In one way yes, because in any case I know he was really very keen on this thing, and then we were also friends, exactly, M. and I, when we went to the Czech Republic we became really good friends. I mean, to show you, our friendship finished last year when instead of voting him for the leadership I voted for another guy. But not because… Not to belittle him, but simply because I preferred this other person for the position they were up for. And he decided we were no longer friends. Therefore, in the sense that he’s a slightly odd person. So on the one hand I’m sorry, but on the other no, because I know he’s done good for people.

He was a personality that went too much by the book and tried to force himself on others, something that, precisely, is not on in a situation like AGE which tends instead towards democracy, in everything and for everything. It couldn’t work. Maybe someone would have a wrong idea, however, if effectively… in a word, wrong, then maybe it wasn’t so correct, or he would want to do a project in a certain way, a bit different, it wasn’t necessarily wrong, precisely, whereas he really criticized this thing, everything had to be very linear sometimes, outside party politics, but yes, highly political, and this isn’t everybody’s interest within AGE, we’re not an association that, I mean we also do politics but we’re not a political association.

A. – Ok. And in what sense you are political?

C. - We also deal with current matters, especially since we also work with the Council, so obviously, the Council is linked to a rising party, so political in the sense that we also talk about current affairs, and politics is among the subjects we talk about. Our political side, precisely, is democracy which in any case is a sort of doing politics within the association, but no… We’re not a political association.

A. – Ok. What has been the most satisfying or funny activity, that you remember more in these years.

C. – In my view, the great moment is this year, this year, from the beginning of the year, exactly, we’ve gone back on the rails, so, also as a group precisely at a social level, and this year we’re really having fun and gaining greater satisfaction. At the personal level, yes, I also think that seeing how I, as secretary, maybe for new things, get sought out as a point of reference, so if someone has a question they ask me, this is satisfying, and I understand that there’s integration among everybody who wants… I mean, it’s people that come to us to ask, and I see it first hand, precisely, because all in all, being still the point of reference for events, or at least for things around me, and I realize that, exactly, it’s no longer us having to seek people out, it’s a bit more that people are starting to meet us halfway. Something that was slightly
difficult in the first year of... No the second year of the leadership where M. was President, because as President he was highly committed to an enormous project which however, exactly, being so involving... Let's say it drew attention away from what AGE was in itself, and everything was centred around that project. So as a group we got lost.

The name of the project was ‘Ovunque’ (Everywhere), and the aim was to bring Ovunque in Italy. And it sounded very nice, because the project was really nice and all were involved, there was the group of operators, who took care of the activities, there was the group whose I was member as external relations, we nominated ourselves Ambassadors, who took contact with the associations. Actually, I don’t remember the specific names, but every group was responsible for one part of the camp and all collaborated, and met often. But it was becoming more a commitment than an entertainment: it depends always on the way one enters the association, why he wants to do things, because if one enters with the idea “I want to do something that will become concrete”, perfect: that was the ideal project. But if one entered in AGE to do smaller projects, like for example Duiuspikinglish (which is the project that works better, because it’s more playful, we stay together, take a drink, it’s quiet, there are not particular requests, so, if one entered with the idea of that project, then to bring the project Ovunque in Italy was really a commitment. So, one needed time to dedicate, but one perhaps didn’t want to take time not because he hated the project, but because he preferred to do other things. For example, I do sport 3 times a week, why on Saturday afternoon I have to contact the foreign associations?

A. – Could you say that you are friends with one another?

C. – Yes, we can say that now, we can say that now, in fact we even go out together once in a while. It’s never easy because we’re all very different, as you’ll have noticed, so some work and some study, which already creates the first unbalance, then there are some who study in the evening maybe and want to rest etcetera, and some who instead work in the evening and can’t wait to get out, so this is a bit of a problem, but even only barbecue, when there is, we have a lot of participation this year, we are 20, not 500, and this year we had 3 or 4 new entries, or even more, because I was not present in the last meeting, but I know that someone else is coming, his name is L.

Well, even this year we have had a turnover, and that is what we want to achieve, in AGE no young people has left, and at 30 years old you are no more the young that AGE wants.

A. – Ok. So, what is your target? more or less...

C. – A good question, in the sense that until last year we were aiming more at a target, exactly, of, I mean younger kids, say from sixteen upwards, sixteen/twenty I’m saying, but we’re noting that it’s really very complicated because here too... I feel old talking in this way, I’m twenty-three myself, but in effect the sixteen-year-old of today isn’t interested in being part of a group of this kind. So it’s really complicated, even when we did various days in the schools on the educational project Open Source, I don’t know if you read about that too.

A. – the working hours

C. – Exactly, the working hours, or Saturdays, or how you say, free period. So lessons on extra school
topics, but with a meaning with the school curriculum. For example, M.D. who is a cardiologist has given a lesson on the cardiology at Spallanzani Hospital to scientific high school Moro, it’s an interesting topic and, at the end of the hour, he talked also of the association, like: “Hi, I’m Matteo Davoli, I’m member of AGE which is an association that is doing these kind of things. Are you interested? No”. Perfect

A. – They were not interested?

C. – No, we have also something more playful, and P. and S. went to Zanelli, but even there, there was the working hours, only two or three persons in the school, because even if the working hours is a good opportunity to do extra curriculum activity staying at school, people does not attend.

Now, we were shifting from the kids to the older ones, also with the evenings S. had done at the university, to see a bit how the university circuit works. And we saw that collaborating with Unlife, say, we’d done a brief evening and there were a few people, but even just the encounters concerning business, which is what it was, were really great in my opinion, I went to two out of four and I liked them a lot. One had to do with Amazon, for example, and one with the development of agriculture today, I mean, they’re subjects that I feel very close to us, among other things agriculture, it was about Arvaia, a farm cooperative in the Bolognese area.

Well, there were less than 10 persons besides AGE, for a total of 15 -20 persons maximum per meeting at the university. That is, even if I don’t know very much about at the university.

A. – Ok, so the response was not high to this activity. And, considering the older age, what’s the role of E.?

C. – E. is fantastic. E. is the best, anyway. No, he, among other things, now, I don’t really know if he or his son came in first, because I don’t know if you’ve ever seen his son. He lives in Russia and I must have seen him twice in all, because when I joined he was already in Russia; he comes back now and again, and he’s keen about us, he’s also in the groups, he writes something once in a while, launches some European project that maybe he hears about there where he lives. E. is his father, exactly, and he’s really committed and keen, truly, on this cause, he’s very concentrated precisely on the democracy aspect, and he always says “democracy is poison for the mafia”, so he really feels this anti-mafia cause. He had some projects about the mafia, democracy, etcetera, that was The Roads of Freedom, we had actually fixed these plaques of the partisan resistance places between Reggio, Correggio, and it was a really great project. A shame I wasn’t there, but I saw the photos and read the documentation, the site’s still there, the SME plaques, it’s a fine thing, and with the QR Code, you know, you can go with the phone and then read the history. Yes, for the Roads of Freedom there is a dedicated website, on the AGE website. Now P. has to restructure the website, but there is a direct link to the official website of the Roads of Freedom, that at that time was made for the project. So, also for us, this is one of the topic we are focusing on… and E. is highly committed and he has involved several time also the persons of Anpi (who are persons of his age) …So, they always help us, and I think this is a nice collaboration with the no more young people, who often stimulate us to take into consideration also another perspective …often E. raises questions and often we have to stop him, otherwise he talks for hours… but often, on the contrary, he put interesting
topics from which other points of view emerge.

For example, with the Muslims girls who are part of the group, then, K., but she’s not often here because she’s also at university and so on, but she joined when she was still at high school, so this was a really amazing thing for us, still at high school and she’d joined. On enrolling at university she put us in second place, but now she works at the market, I mean, anyway… Now and again she comes back and I remember when we talked only about religions etcetera, great discussions were created, so this is another of our points, our strongpoints I feel, that we’re not there only to enjoy ourselves but also to communicate about various things. And E. there too, was incredibly active and interested and, okay, yes, him… No, it’s great that he’s here, exactly, also in my view.

**A. – That is, for you he is not an intruder, someone who doesn’t leave space to young people.**

C. – Absolutely not. Anyway, the point is that sometimes he has to be stopped, not for his age, but because he is really pumped, … so, we are there at the meeting since an hour and a half, we want to finish and to go out, and he doesn’t end up, always adding new points.

A. - Ok. Now, what is an activity that you liked less, that has been more boring or something wrong, that caused you anger?

C. - In the Board there have been some problems, also because we started the *team building*. We started to know each other better, in the Board, because there was this problem, L.

I know her since a lot of time, she is Lisa’s sister, who is my friend since infancy, but she is the older sister of my friend, and that’s all. Then, she moved to Australia and when she came back, she was a different person: we had the need to link again each other, we were both in the Board. Not only us, there were also M. and D. had some problems with M. so we decided to do *team building* also to know each other better. Also concerning our way of reasoning. And we decided to make ‘role playing’, I don’t know if you are familiar with. We were a house of investigations, everybody had their own character and we had to, precisely, solve these cases so it was very mental as an activity, and consequently our peculiarities came out and in determined situations where, among other things, there was little time to make decisions, you either had to agree or die; which is why we’d decided...

**A. – But was there a kind coordinator?**

C. – Yes, D. He coordinated us as leader but, in any case, he had a part in it too, so he wasn’t external to the activity, he had his character, so he leapt out as well; the problem is that M., precisely, didn’t even take part so we, among ourselves, were getting along well but he’d decided not to take part because he didn’t want to have anything more to do with us and, in a word, he’d even ruined this playful side that we found even within the leadership, which is the more tiresome kind where, all in all, you already have at least one extra meeting a month and then, whenever there’s an extraordinary decision, he handles the email, handles, exactly, communications with the Council, a bit more tiresome, we found a way of also having fun, whereas the negative note has always been that one, because otherwise there was nothing negative right at the level of association.

**A. – And who made the proposal to do role playing?**
C. – I think D., because he had bought this play, he is passionate of plays, and has decided to launch this campaign together with us, with great approval, we all are quite nerd. In the Board there were me, D., M., P. and L., who didn’t ever play but was really interested, curious first to see the role play, and second she liked the idea to play and collaborate this way. And there was M.

A. - Ok. So in your opinion, then, you've got, precisely, you’re in the leadership, the President: in your view, is this training useful, is it efficient for AGE or is it a touch too hierarchical, I don't know, bureaucratized?

C. - No, in my opinion it’s useful, maybe not seven people because seven’s a lot, maybe five.

A. – Because over and above the figures of the standard and leadership roles there are also referents, right?

C. – Exactly, yes, they’re actually members of the leadership in quotes, more in the sense of having maybe greater, I don’t know, having more points of view, precisely, there are seven of us, but seven out of twenty, twenty of whom ten are active, practically, it’s a bit bulky perhaps as a leadership. It’s only that, effectively… I mean, to have less of us means maybe having fewer voices and therefore less plurality; seven is a bit of an encumbrance, on the other hand though, more often than not you realize that maybe without the leadership AGE would really be somewhat lost, so, I mean, it’s a hierarchy which in my view is necessary just for this reason, otherwise there’d be the President and it would become I’m not saying a dictatorship but nearly.

A. – You mean only in the President’s hands?

C. – Exactly. P. already, exactly, as a figure, is absolutely necessary, but I repeat, everything turns around him. Without P. AGE, I don’t know exactly what turn it would take.

A. – So, it’s necessary.

C. - Yes. Because it’s not that he isn’t replaceable, he is, and certainly I believe that AGE would keep going ahead, but I don’t know in which direction, I don’t know which turn it would take because... I mean, he’s got his ideas very clear and, in effect, each time we all talk together you realize that the voice of P. more often than not, I don’t say always but 98 percent of the time is effectively, in quotes, the right one, if you’ll allow me the term, in the sense that, exactly, having this idea of a grouping, he often knows already how to act; and then, he’s very precise, he also knows the bureaucratic stuff, when you don’t know, just ask him; he did the handbook with everything written down. The handbook is endless, but it's necessary, because when we were at the end of the year to renew the email, the website, the domains, so to pay, etc.. There are a lot of procedures quite boring to follow, and when he did the job, he wrote all the procedures, so he simplified the work, he is very precise.

A. – Ok. Are there emotions that you link to your experience in AGE?

C. – Emotions, yes, certainly yes. I’m not clever with emotions, anyway… It isn’t an emotion but, it’s... I don’t know, the satisfaction of seeing your own commitment in something that, then, that leaves you something. I don’t rightly know what emotion it may be, however, a satisfaction I think you might say. I don’t know. Happiness is too strong, perhaps, a bit strong. Joy, yes, joy, something positive. Yes, I think
so.

A. – Ok, let’s say a positive experience. And do you talk of that with your friends, family?
C. – Absolutely yes.

A. – What do they say about your participation?
C. – Well, my friends: “why do you do that? Are you payed? So, why are you doing this?”
The majority. Some say “ah! It’s interesting” but nothing more. And my parents I think they have not yet understood what we are doing, but they do not….

A. – do not hampered you.
C. – Yes, but I, at personal level, I’m involved in other activities, besides AGE: I’m in two other associations, I did already volunteering, but not as part of an association, but I participated, since 2012.

A. – And the tools you’ve given yourselves, such as WhatsApp groups, or Facebook, or Drive, do they work?
C. – They work, absolutely. First there was the Facebook group, exactly, because WhatsApp, I won’t say it didn’t exist but it still wasn’t used so much, anyway not everybody had a smartphone, I’m saying, with internet. I had a phone with keys until just the other day practically, therefore I didn’t have WhatsApp. Now that everybody’s got it we use it, I’m not saying only WhatsApp, but we use it almost exclusively for communication and of course when we’re not there in person.
Anyway, yes, the social networks luckily have this positive aspect which adults, also in quotes here, that is, the generation prior to ours, see as non-communication, whereas in reality that’s not the way it is, I mean, you always have to find the right means, so we therefore organize ourselves online, or on WhatsApp or Facebook, it’s okay, but we also see one another.

A. – And you are able to use all of these things.
C. – Yes, yes, certainly. Enzo too, who’s fantastic, him too, every time he votes he specifies it. He’s great. And on Drive, exactly, yes, all the files you might need are there, so that’s past, present and future projects, various documents, the enrolment form, precisely, the handbook, the statute, that is, everything’s there, all the material we need, the graphics for each project.

A. – Ok, Your name is AGE, that means “Association of young… ?
C. - …in Europe”.

A. – and what does Europe matter?
C. – Well, right now especially through Ovunque, because that’s the main project we have as Europe. Last year we rewrote our values as AGE and we gave a lot of importance to local territory too.
We actually had a leadership meeting where we talked first about seeing, exactly, what the voices of the leadership were. After which, at the next meeting, we talked with the whole of AGE, also asking them, all the other members, their own opinions, and then, number one, if they were in agreement, and two, if they had anything to add. I recall that somebody tried to propose sport, but we saw, precisely, that in the plurality of interests… of the individual, all in all, it was secondary, we voted by show of hands on three subjects each I think, the favourite ones. And Europe, exactly, currently lies, is present, with Ovunque
and with *Duispikinglish* which, I mean the fact of speaking English has in any case this sense of internationalization, that is, we always try to talk about subjects like travelling, things like that. This year it wasn’t observed so much in my view, at *Duispikinglish*, but I didn’t have any part in creating the project, so right now I couldn’t tell you, or say why. At the last meeting, yes, we talked about things of interest at European level, but I saw that we were re-launching it, in my opinion, three years after the start and we wanted to see, by changing target, why, exactly, back then, we were younger, so the oldest were my age and I was, yes, seventeen, eighteen.

*A. – But you are an association pro or anti Europe?*

C. - Pro, absolutely pro, pro-Europe. And the thread, precisely, ought to be this sense of unity, also right at the cultural level and always however valorising the importance of the individual area, the reason why we also went for valorisation of the territory. Also right down to the local, right in the Reggio area. But there too we thought, because this is for last year with the fact of the camp that we wanted to bring here, we held on to it as the environment theme and, in the meantime, we called people from abroad, so it was a combination of our territory and Europe. However, precisely due to a question of competitions and non-competitions, the project didn’t get by. So in the end, to put it briefly, we all got a bit disoriented, which is why we re-elected these things, because this year, seeing we were being somewhat reborn, we decided to do smaller projects, less demanding, so as a consequence we’ve had a lot of local encounters, and so here too Europe has gone onto the back burner, except for *Ovunque* which was set to go now, because they’re leaving in late August, early September.

*A. – Yes, August. Where?*

C. – Czech Republic again. In the meantime, M. is doing interviews with the students of the secondary schools. These are selection interviews, because .. last year we had some problems with a couple of kids. Well, we hadn’t thought “let’s make a selection”, because basically, in our mind, people who put themselves forward were interested, anyway, in a multicultural experience and in collaboration. Whereas a couple of them turned out to be not so responsible. That’s why we thought of, I’m not saying making a selection like “you must have average marks of ninety, nine out of ten, otherwise you can’t come”, but yes, I mean at least get to know you a bit first, who you are and why you want to come, so not just for a free trip but because you’re interested in the cause.

C. – So, he is doing this kind of selection, whereas last year the criterion was the time, the one who arrived first, name and surname, that’s all, you were in. There was only a couple of guys, out of 15 that were sent out, so at the end of the day there was not a negative experience…. B. came to Germany as leader with these 4 or 5 guys, all external to AGE, and this boy was on his own, he did not participate to the activities, that is exactly the only thing that you have not to do, to isolate and do not take part to the activities.

*A. - But do you have selection interviews with people who’re interested in joining?*

C. - No, no, absolutely not that, because in any case it’s basically voluntary, therefore also, to repeat
myself, we didn’t kick M. D. out of AGE, he decided to detach himself from AGE; the only thing they did was to expel him from the leadership, because basically you are or you are not a fascist or, precisely, someone whose ideas don’t fit in with ours, or, that is, and there are plenty ideas, in the sense that it isn’t like, we’re excluding you because you prefer pizza to sushi. I mean, but yes, being voluntary, we don’t exclude anyone, there’s no selection criterion.

A. - As for headquarters. The fact of not having a base: do you think it creates problems for you and the association?

C. – For the association, yes. It isn’t an essential matter because we manage in any case to organize ourselves one way or another as we go along, even the meetings, we have them in parks or cafés, and it goes very well indeed, that’s not the point. But if we want to launch a project, Duiuspikinglish for example, we actually have to make an agreement obviously with the café or whatever that hosts us, agree on dates and hours, make sure not to disturb in any way, even when our official base, which is still the Gabella, that little bar over there, but they also give space to a lot of associations, so more often than not we just phoned a couple of weeks before holding a meeting, it was that day we’d already established not… maybe there wasn’t a room available. So it’s inconvenient but it’s not something that anyway prevents us surviving, there you go.

A. – Do you consider your experience in Age as an experience of active citizenship, and in what sense?

C. – Some projects make me say yes, in the sense that, well, even just the fact of collaborating with the Council makes us feel part of a town that wants to do something, so this collaboration makes me say yes. I mean, I don’t know about the other guys, but before AGE I never had anything to do with the Council except for renewing my ID card, in the sense that it wasn’t something that really concerned me. Whereas also the fact of knowing the Councillors, I mean, seeing them doing something with their time, but they’re doing something and somehow want to collaborate with us, that makes you feel like, exactly, an active citizen. Contrariwise, I don’t think all the other AGE members feel that they are active citizens as part of AGE, in the sense that, precisely, the project Duiuspikinglish: I take part in Duiuspikinglish, I have an aperitif at the bar and my experience ends there. So it depends a bit on how you live it, in my opinion, and on how much you want to improve yourself.

A. – So, in your opinion, the experience of Duiuspikinglish is not easily linkable to feeling active citizen. But a project like Troviamoci or Ovunque, I don’t know, can be linked to active citizenship?

C. - Yes. We were also highly interested in the fact of being able to go into schools, something we asked for with Troviamoci in order to have a kind of passkey, in the sense that we’re an association that deals with cultural promotion at youth level: you like the idea, perfect. Do you want us to contact the kids in some way? Because you can’t just go into schools like that, for questions to do precisely with the – what’s it called? – the POF, that is the school educational offer.

All in all it’s harder to manage, whereas if there was a Council saying: okay, we’ll ask for the total hours to
make some space for these associations. There’s not just us, exactly, who promote precisely culture, and we somehow want to link up with the youngest ones, give them an avenue and, in my view, this would be a way of feeling more like citizens in the sense of having this triangle of school-association-Council, which however seems tougher than it looks. That’s it, in my view, if we could manage to get into schools, it would be a bit more involving also from that point of view.

A. – But you are already into schools.
C. – Yes, a bit, but not thank to the Municipality, but to the only one teacher who says: “well, it’s a good idea”, and he gives us the opportunity. But it’s just one teacher who wants to hear, because of course, they have their work to do. I mean that it’s not their duty to hear the association, for me, it should be this mediator, also because now there is the sector (the office) - I don’t know what is its name- inside the Municipality, that takes care of these things.

A. – In your association, as far as I have understood, there are different points of view, but also persons with a different background. This creates a problem for you, and also benefits, which benefits do you get from being different?
C. – Problems? absolutely no. On the contrary, it gives us inspiration to communicate even more among ourselves, I think, and as I was saying then, earlier, a stupid thing, but just for the fact of having girls who wear the veil, and understanding that it’s a choice of theirs, also at mental level, maybe, without having to be racist, but maybe, I can understand that someone might be, in quotes, uneasy, no? From seeing this reality of a veil and maybe not knowing this reality you think it’s an obligation, forced, sometimes it is, maybe, I’m not saying no, but having these two girls, both with the veil, having chosen to wear it themselves, around seventeen or eighteen, I mean it was a great discovery for a lot of people. So it also helps us to really know these realities. There’s a lot of talk about Muslims right now because, quite rightly, the cultural level, now, the subjects are these. But just like this we had a girl from Eastern Europe, for example, N. I don’t know if you met her too. She entered together with K. they are friends, and for the same reason, the university. Well, now she is leaving, she is going to live in Paris to study there. And she came from a little village, that was not in Russia nor in Ucraina, it was not clear where it was located, she spoke something like 7 or 8 languages. And even knowing these realities where she was not feeling part, then she went to Italy, it was a period, a very special girl, super active: this has been as to participate to an international camping. Anyway, yes: to have different cultures reinforce us as association, in my view.

A. – Fine. Do you want to add something more?
C. – Yes, I’d like there to be more participation from young people, I can say this, and precisely the fact of not feeling young myself worries me a bit, but yes, I see that, well, having a brother of fifteen, sixteen, I realize, I mean, that I’m totally outside these things.

A. – And in your opinion, what might be the strategies for going recruiting?
C. – It’s a good question, because we’ve been wondering ourselves up to now and...

A. – Maybe the schools aren’t the only place to find them?
C. – We’ve also tried having our own parties, exactly, even just Beer Pong for example, to see if from a
strictly playing point of view anybody was interested at least in being part of the group. However, outside the group of friends I’ve got the sports group, to tell you the truth we haven’t seen… Then it’s maybe that we’re old, I don’t know. No, it’s that we don’t effectively have these great avenues of communication.

A. – Do you think this is the problem?

C. – Yes, yes, from one side I think so, because often, I don’t know, I meet my parents’ friends and it’s like: “Take my son along, he never does anything, take my daughter,” but it shouldn’t be the parents telling you, because if a parent tells you to do something you’re all the more likely not to do it. I don’t know, we’re thinking about it, we’re working on it.
Organisation: AGE

Interview# 2

A. - How and when did you become member of AGE?
M. – Well, I’m one of the members that founded AGE, and so I joined in 2011, even though the society started up effectively in 2012. But the project began in 2011. I didn’t devise the project in itself, but I’m one of the founder members. Basically, this association was created after an Open Space Technology (OST) event organized by the local Council, which brought different people together, in particular P. C., another founder, and M. D. who was an acquaintance of mine.

With M. D. I had already participated in other projects of this organisation, based on encouraging young people to become engaged in activities, demonstrations, projects of social interest. With the support of the municipality, and especially of Albinea [a municipality], he took the initiative, together with P. and other people, to collect several good proposals. In particular the key proposal was that of a laic oratory, already put forward by M. D. with the collective “Locomotori”, another organisation. Other people joined, P., L. T. and others, who had ideas and who wanted to revitalise this association of Albinea that was inactive, and used to organise initiatives for young people in the local area as well as experiences abroad in Europe. So, this is the way AGE started.

A. - What did you do in this OST?
M. - I did not take part to this OST but they have discussed about how to reinvigorate youth participation in the area of Reggio Emilia..

A. - OK. Then, you got to know them in a subsequent phase?
M. – Practically speaking I was drawn in by M. D., because they needed more people, because they didn’t have enough people to found the association, and because actually a lot of other projects had been done. He’d asked everybody who’d been part of the Locomotori Collective, which had broken up a bit, and at the time I was really struck by the idea, especially because I’ve always had a pretty Europeanist spirit. So I made an approach and in the end I decided to join. And in spite of the fact that a lot of the other associates who, in the end, had been drawn in by M. D. and then backed off for various reasons, mostly political, I kept on. And I’m still here. And then I’ve played several roles.

I have been President for one year e vice President for other three years.

And I am still vice President.

A. - So you held two positions?
M. - Yes, sure, three positions. I have been president of AGE in the second year, actually I have been vice President for two years, the last year with two different boards, because the duration of
the board was shorter. Thus, actually I have been elected vice President three times and President only once, but besides one full year of vice Presidency, the other two together make one year.

A. - **OK, I got it. And what were the initial goals of AGE then?**

M. – The initial goals of AGE were: to found a lay oratory that was based, exactly, on a style of Church oratory, but with something different, I mean, instead of teaching religion, teaching history and civic education, or civil education, meaning law, which seemed to us to get bypassed at high school.

A. - **How old were you when you became member of AGE?**

M. - I was nineteen year old.

A. - **So, you had just finished high school.**

M. - I was in my first year at university, between nineteen and twenty years old.

A. - **OK. Then, you had just finished your high school experience**

M. - And then I’ve always had a passion for history, and so I was keen to teach certain things to other people because, precisely, I often found myself in discussions where I grasped the enormous, I’d say, ignorance that people had about certain subjects which they nonetheless commented on, and so, afterwards… I’d fought a series of battles against bad information, both at social level, meaning about the mafia, and at historical level.

A. - **By yourself? Or together with others?**

M. - No, no, always with other organisations.

A. - **So, you had other experiences, more than other members.**

M. - Yes, one of these, the most important one, has been the experience originated from the collective Locomotori, which is part of Cortocircuito.

A. - **But the focus of Cortocircuito was anti-mafia..**

M. – Yes, and it’s one of the reasons we then drifted apart, because it hadn’t come into being as anti-mafia but it became so, mostly through the wishes of our most important member, let’s put it that way. And after a while a lot of people got fed up, because they didn’t want to talk just about mafia, I mean they wanted to leave it to the police. After a bit we were pretty tired of it. We’d said what we had to say about certain things, but we wanted to talk about something else. That’s why we also kind of separated somewhat and I went on with AGE, whereas other friends of mine went through experiences, I mean they continued in politics but in a very different way; some joined the Five Star Movement, some the communist party.

A. – **Thus, political parties.**

M. – Yes, some joined political parties, some volunteering associations, some engaged with homeless people… Let’s say, they made different choices.

A. – **It's interesting what you say, because anyway, I mean you see it as political**
participation.

M. – For me it’s carrying forward an ideal, whatever… I mean apart from the fact that politics is almost everything… Society and politics are two intersected things. Me, if it had been down to me, I would have done politics, I mean I love history, for me politics is history under way, I mean it’s the becoming of history, so to speak, in some philosophical way, but I haven’t found where to carry it… I don’t know, in a manner coherent with my thoughts, the political idea. And so in the end I didn’t join any party, I tried, I had some experiences, but in the end I never felt part of any of them. And so I started instead to do more on the…

M. – Culture certainly, which already for me, I mean, good politics derives from good culture, that is, if you don’t have a good culture you’re unlikely to do good politics. Obviously we do politics, but we do politics always in a nonpartisan sense, I mean without taking up positions, except in cases that are fundamental to me such as antifascism because in that case it’s anti-constitutional, there’s a series of precedents, so now I’m far more severe even about taking up a position.

M. – But for all the other ideas, if we’re partisan we should remain so. Obviously, among party politics, being apolitical instead, because if you’re nonpartisan you don’t take sides; apolitical means that someone listens to your opinion. I wanted to voice my opinion, especially on culture, on integration and on Europe.

A. - Integration.

M. – Yes, certainly. Obviously, since you want to talk about united Europe you’re talking about integration among European peoples, you can also include integration of people who are coming to Europe.

M. - of course it’s harder because I’ve got more in common with a German than with an Egyptian, but that doesn’t mean I can’t also try to interact with him, or in any case understand.

A. – And you try to do this in AGE?

M. – Yes, the proof is in the fact that there’s a huge number of foreigners, I mean foreigners, foreigners of origin… Not of citizenship, at least, but yes, there are a great many Moroccans, Egyptians, Syrians who have joined AGE, and then we do a whole lot of projects with Mondo Insieme (World Together).

M. – It is based on exchanges of different sorts of things, from food to customs and traditions, among different regions. We had a meeting last Tuesday.

A. - Thus, Mandela Day.

M. - Yes, Mandela day, in which there are people from Sri Lanka, Ghana, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Guinea, because Reggio Emilia is a very multicultural context.

M. - It is the Italian province with the highest number of foreign people vs natives. So, there is a wide variety of ethnicities and cultures.
A. - OK. And where did you meet these guys?
M. – Through the activities of Mondo Insieme, both during high school and through the network of friends.

A. - During high school when you organize activities to recruit members?
M. – We also go around actually doing a sort of recruitment, I mean we go to do activities, I mean extra lessons, I mean instead of them sending a supply teacher, we go, we have actions on themes that we ourselves study as university students.

A. - OK. Which means: instead of sending a supply teacher?
M. – If there are time slots without the presence of teachers, sometimes we ask them to call us. …we tell them: "we are available", this happens rarely.

M. – From every member of AGE, in general, AGE approved it, then they were always themes based on progress, on updating, and on political themes like war in Syria, or also themes like cancer prevention, prevention of arteriosclerosis, of sexually transmitted diseases.

A. – I imagine that there are different points of view on these issues.
M. – Yes, we are very different.

A. – How do you manage such differences?
M. – Because we have shared ideals, basically, I mean there have also been clashes on the subject of ideals, one for example with M. D., who has now left AGE.
M. – I mean he for example saw the world of associations as almost a political party, so he expected from volunteers a self-denial that isn’t volunteer style, it’s precisely party agent style, and he also expected a rigid political line, I mean ideals that he often considered objective but were actually subjective, and if somebody didn’t stick to them...

A. – They were not shared by all members.
M. – Right. Many of them were shared, it was a matter of individual positioning.
M. – Then, this lead to several conflicts, especially for the way he responded, often in a very sarcastic way.

A. – It happened that he left, little by little he drifted apart, you decided to distance him.
M. – Yes, little by little, but, we never kicked him out, because it wasn’t right, in any case, with his projects, he completed them, he had excellent… He also got results. The problem in the end is that there were people who left because they couldn’t stand him anymore.
M. - We never said “get out”, but because it wasn’t even right to say it. But he never did anything so bad, but it was an ongoing weight, anyway, quarrels or raised voices, sometimes even about the most banal things.
M. – For example, my ideals are very similar to his ideals.
M. – that is, we have a very similar political idea, but a completely different way of acting on it. If
he is Alpha, I am Omega, we are completely different, even though our ideals and aims are similar.

M. – Well, I think it’s one of the most democratic associations ever, and I’ve seen plenty, so it’s very democratic indeed. The problem with democracy...

M. – That there’s practically nobody here who imposes his own opinion, hardly ever, and if it isn’t widely shared it’s unlikely to go far.

M. – So usually it’s always... in the sense they’re important, it concerns the whole association, the majority at the members’ meeting.

M. – If it’s a decision that has to be made with a simple majority, because if not, I mean, if I have to put a point or not, change something or not in the Statute, it’s yes or it’s no, I can’t. As for the others, we often have opinion polls on how important certain themes are felt to be, to assess whether it’s worth doing, if people might like it, or if it’s really seen as a problem; even if they are, if anything, things that are certainly useful, I mean I don’t know, cine- forums that also deal with interesting things, but if I don’t see in the end that they arouse interest, that people would take part, I ask first.

A. - **OK. So, you involve the members of your organisation in different processes.**

M. – Yes, above all else we’ve got a system, I mean we’ve got... We also have the Minutes, each project is written on a drive and everybody can gain access and check continually. So if somebody wants to look, there’s a transparency which, to repeat, I have experienced only in this association.

M. – Then, we also attempt to gather all the data of our members, we care about doing things properly.

M. - another thing that, in my view, was peculiar of AGE, was the inefficiency of organising meetings always for any project that was proposed.

A. - **Inefficiency...**

M. - Basically, anybody can have the idea for a project and recruit people external to AGE for projects that are okay with AGE.

M. – First off you have to meet with the vice-president, the president, draw up the project document, setting down clearly what the various phases and things are, and then you have plenty freedom, so you don’t have to be with the whole of AGE every time, you can also get together just for the project. So if need be, someone, also a member, doesn’t always have to wait until projects arrive from the leadership, he can get going, also involving external people who anyhow don’t want to join AGE, or who have...

A. -… **they have a more external role.**

M. – But if anything, they have, I don’t know, they wanted to do something on music, maybe Europe doesn’t interest them, so they don’t want to join AGE because they see it as a
Europeanist thing and they’re anti-Europeanist, but they’re interested in music and therefore they manage there in the project, in any case, to do… I mean to coordinate themselves to achieve the best result, and they have great freedom. So in my opinion, from that viewpoint, as a structure it’s highly efficient, but it suffers from the problem of not having headquarters and also from having, precisely, a lot of university students, which sometimes creates the problem of workforce and spaces available. That is, we still haven’t succeeded with the lay oratory because we need a space. And we’ve been looking for headquarters for four years now.

A. – And not having a space for the organization is something that bothers you, right?
M. – The problem is not the lack of a place in itself, it depends on how you want to use it. To be clear, I would like to establish a laic oratory, but I know that, unless I find a place, it will not be possible for me to do it, because as for the parish oratory, in order to do it you need headquarters, having headquarters also involves responsibilities, pretty big ones in my view… Let’s put it this way, once you’ve got headquarters you also find more people, especially if you’ve got ideas, you find more people, in the end, afterwards, you find the forces to fill up. So I go for the idea that when we find headquarters it’ll be a giant step forward.

A. – But you have always been vice president; have you ever run a project?
M. – I have run only a few projects but they were usually big projects.
M. – Yes. Done to create itineraries on the partisan resistance, so they are routes that passed by all the various memorial stones found around Reggio and created… For these thematic features. Then we had to get the data, together with ISTORECO, create the site, advertise the event, organize the event, create these itineraries, do the GPS mapping of all these itineraries, put up the signs at all the points and then actually put in the inscriptions we got from ISTORECO, a big job indeed...

A. – However, the other activities, besides the interventions in school, Do You Speak English, o or cineforum…
M. – A very important activity that we manage this year is the book market.
M. – Yes. There I’m one of the… Probably I’ve been the project leader since the start, I’m the one who’s carried it along to date, with Paolo. Then it was so big that the two of us always went, but especially last year I was effectively the project leader because Paolo was often absent, also because he had university, and I was also secretary at the market at certain times, I was running it basically. And that was really an immense job, for the quantity of people, books, money even, and so forth, certainly...

A. – It is the only project that provides you some money.
M. - No, it’s the only project where you need… we work, really, so much to bring some money in, usually we also get something for the charity pinochle tournaments at the club Il Venetano, that’s good, from the sale of AGE T-shirts and gadgets to the members themselves, from
enrolment fees and sometimes, yes, also from little things like when we go to serve or work. But generally it’s the charity pinochle tournaments that bring in money, we go and serve, give a hand, and the book market.

M. - Effectively six hours at the market, but often it’s from eight to ten o’clock, twelve hours that is, and it’s on four days a week. Practically a fulltime job, I mean, you don’t do anything else.

A. – *It is the only project in which you get a reimbursement of expenses of a real salary.*

M. - Yes.

A. – *All other activities are conducted on a voluntary basis, you don’t earn*…

M. – It is the only one in which… To clarify, actually also the other members of the organizations who are steadily involved, they can help with the book market on a voluntary basis or full time. If you help full time you are obliged to stay there also beyond the opening hours, for the whole period of the market, every day as if you have a full time job. Volunteers are more free but the market cannot survive without full time members.

A. – *Do you remember an activity of AGE that you found very satisfactory or amusing?*

M. – For sure, when we organized a travel to Olomouc, which is one of the main aims of AGE, I enjoyed it a lot.

A. – *Because it was an exchange programme*…

M. – It’s one of the states we have exchanges with, the Czech Republic, a rather anti-Europe delegation, and it was great there. I had a wonderful time, I was also with people who were very… Really nice AGE members, I liked the atmosphere, I wanted to talk, exchange views with people of other cultures, because I’ve always missed that a bit, and I really loved it, in fact it’s something we’re working towards increasing.

A. – *Because exchange programmes are useful in order to establish contacts with other organisations?*

M. - Yes. Because either you enter in other networks which put many contraints, or you need to create a network yourself with the people you get to know when you participate in exchanges abroad; this offers more opportunities, also for the choice of the issues to deal with.

A. – *What was the issue of the exchange you took part to?*

M. – Well, the theme was still Europe, an intercultural exchange in fact, there was always something… everybody brings something of their own, and it was an exchange precisely for its own sake. Actually I liked the thing of the Czech Republic precisely because of talking with other people, the really great freedom, more than for the things done there.

M. – Actually, the projects where nice, not really structured, sometimes a bit boring. They allowed a lot of freedom to interact with other people, you had a lot of time, you could talk, play,
we played games with people of different countries and languages.

**A. – So, this is what you enjoyed most...**

M. – I like to talk and exchange opinions with people from other countries.
M. – Then of course you can do it both in a project with a more precise theme and also with just chatting, because if I ask you then: how are things in your country and you tell me the history of Serbia, I don’t know anything about Serbia, so it’s interesting. Then in the end, often and willingly, we threw in our own themes. And then… you discover loads of things.

**A. – And instead, can you provide an example of an activity that you don’t like?**

**Boring, too demanding.**

M. – The market’s certainly remunerative, but it takes much more effort than what basically comes back to us at image level, we do it precisely almost more as voluntary work, because we’ve got the project, we’ve got operations with another association that’s often very...
M. - Nova Res. Who are many more than us but much more disorganized, so there’s a... It’s often very tiring, because we’ve got less energies and we try to dose down, they’ve got more energies but they dose them badly, so you’re always having to chase them up. And it often ends up that they do incredible big works for us in a very short time, and done well too, but it keeps you awake at night. And there you say: for voluntary work that’s unpaid...

**A. – But in your view this depends on the other organisations, on the way you interact, because it is not the only organisation with which you collaborate.**

M. – Yes, but, obviously, the other organisations try to do us a favour… As regards Troviamoci, what I find annoying is the absenteeism of the lack of feedback from other organisations. Nova Res does not respond, the problem is that, when you have an urgent deadline or a pressing work to do, if you work at a different speed it is always a problem, you always need to wait for the slower ones.

**A. – And how do you manage to find a...**

M. – Love, I don’t know….. shared objectives, reciprocal tolerance.
M. – If we aim at a goal it is: you do what you can. In the end it’s always the project that counts, I mean what interests us is that the project goes ahead, and then, we share a lot of things with… At a really ideal level, I don’t know, so with Nova Res we set aside our organizational, structural, management differences, often we give advice, they put the people in, we’re more on the ideas side, in fact since AGE stepped in, the market has changed totally. Organization, but precisely the structure of the market has been revolutionized, however most of the workers there are from Nova Res, because they’ve got a lot more people than we have, also because they’ve got… They were first to call volunteers from the city administration, so the Town Hall sends them volunteers… it’s a pretty complicated thing. But the substance is this: we are more organizers, the ones who handle management, while they are more the ones who put in the effort, the
energies to realize it. Therefore, a good compromise.

**A. - How can you describe the relationship of AGE with the local institutions?**

M. – Actually, they know us very well, especially after we won the competition, they know us very well.

**A. - The competition for?**

M. - Streets of freedom.

M. - in the years '13/14.

M. – Yes, the schools know us, the local Administration knows us well, above all for what involves young people, also because Troviamoci (Let’s Meet), which is a network we run for the Administration, I mean a network that we devised and created and proposed to the Administration which, in quotes, appropriated it in a manner also a bit… so to speak sly, and supported us a great deal in this and allowed us to create a serious network, there’s actually a site, obviously, with everyone...

**A. – the website of Troviamoci?**

M. - yes. Its function is to assemble all the organisations of AGE for sake of efficiency, numbers, resources.

**A. – What is the field of activity of Troviamoci?**

M. – It’s a network done in such a way as to allow associations to communicate reciprocally: if I wanted to find other associations with a theme similar to mine, I’d find them all on Troviamoci.

**A. – Yes, the one for which you have also done the OST.**

M. - Because Troviamoci has to have headquarters where they can meet, then the various associations, OST was set up to give a direction on how the headquarters will be run, how the spaces will be used, the time schedules, the location of the various situations and so on. Therefore it’s far more functional. Then, Troviamoci’s project is also long, it began during my presidency too, I mean...

M. – In the beginning of AGE, in 2013.

**A. – And now if you had to think about your participation in AGE, what’s the contribution or example you could give to other kids, in a word, to other young people who either don’t participate or have done so?**

M. – Well, definitely my presence, I mean I’ve been a presence… Whereas Paolo has been more the organizer. Maybe I’ve been more the face of AGE, I’m the one who was present at more things all round, a great many projects, almost all the events, I’ve always been pretty much a go-between for the parties involved, both in settling them in and in making them feel at their ease, giving a hand and so on. And then, often and willingly, my best contribution is my approach.

M. – Yes, the approach and also the critical spirit in approaching problems, I mean I have my
ideals but am unlikely to impose them. I always tend to get people to reason also about what they believe in; I always tend to make them reflect, I really like making people reflect.

A. – **And other people acknowledge your approach, do you feel that it is shared in some ways?**

M. – The face of AGE: other people told me this.

M. – Instead, the approach... I get acknowledgement but in a more informal way...... I am not perfect, obviously, when I am depressed, sometimes I become a bit irresponsible. But never on the important things. But on the minor issues sometimes I forget to do it. But undoubtedly, my presence and my approach most of the times are highly appreciated.

A. – **How do you recruit members? Besides the activities in the schools, is there a selection method, or criteria?**

M. – Yes, often we look for kids I mean, meanwhile, we don’t want to recruit everybody, we want... I mean, we leave everybody the possibility of being... To join AGE, but we’re looking particularly for people interested in certain themes, themes for an age range where they’re young but not too much so, I mean from the third year of high school onwards would be our ideal target. I mean, high school, because they have energy but they’re not too young...

M. – Yes, sixteen, seventeen, up to the first years of university, this is our range.

M. – to recruit members of this age range, especially to ensure a generational replacement.

A. – **Then, members having interests in specific issues?**

M. – Yes. I mean, in reality we like to form the themes ourselves, but all the same we like to seek out open people, I mean of open mentality, who like to try and are also willing to do and make, I mean, make a journey, in any case you need a certain inclination towards jumping in.

M. – So we like people with a critical spirit, who know what they want, who also want to get things done, and we try to give them a structure and a modus operandi to do them in the best way.

Then, in actual fact, recruitment comes about more...

A. – **people join AGE because they are interested in a specific project, a specific issue.**

M. – Yes, it’s often like that. Or through friends, I mean, acquaintances. One joins and likes it and stays. While others, people who’ve travelled for example or had experiences that afterwards if anything...

A. – **Travels are the most attractive part of AGE ...**

M. – Well, we haven’t made so many to be able to say they’ve... I mean, most of the current members weren’t recruited through journeys, but certainly it draws a lot of attention, I mean they’re...

A. – **They are paid, right?**

M. – Yes, yes, either paid or in any case subject to price-control, I mean everybody likes to have new experiences, at low cost, I mean you go off to another country, I mean however it’s pretty
much guaranteed, because they’re all people who also take responsibility, so it’s often an excellent incentive for getting close to people and so on, I mean it does attract.

A. – Did it happen to exclude some members? Or persons who were interested, but…
M. – Let’s put it this way: we never reject anybody, but if we see someone who wasn’t particularly nice, particularly interested, who joined somewhat because he liked travelling, but then in the end doesn’t respond much, after a while we’re not about to run after him.
M. – Well, we do not want to say continuously: "become member of AGE", if we realise that he does not respond, we ask him: "are you interested or not? If not...".

A. – Also because after a period of … inactivity, right?
M. – Yes, afterwards you pass, I mean the active members are divided from active members to supporters. Supporters are the ones who are interested in the activities of AGE but can’t work on them.
M. – The active members are those ones who really do things An active member who is doing nothing for a while gets his status changed from member to supporter.
M. – From supporter, if after a year he doesn’t show up he’s asked: “look are you still interested? Because if not I’ll eliminate you from the chat, I won’t send you any more email,” and so on, because… We’re unlikely to reject people.
M. – Most of them self-excluded, only a few of them were rejected.

A. – Concerning the issue of Europe. AGE is the acronym of association of youth…?
M. - In Europe.

A. - Are you pro-Europe?
M. – So we’re pro-Europe, but it’s a fairly interesting theme too, because we’re for European union in the sense of union, in the sense that we would like union, in certain cases also in a federal sense for some of us in the European Union. We’re not very satisfied with the current European Union I mean, at least some of us aren’t satisfied, me being an example.

A. - yes. Then, it is somehow a critical perspective.
M. – Yes, we’re critical, we’re critical of the European Union but we’re not sceptics, in the sense that we want to arrive at European union, so we might say reformists, I don’t know, we want to reform the European Union because for us, now, it’s a kind of chimera. At least this is more an opinion of mine, I mean, this theme is already widely debated in AGE.
M. – For sure, all members of AGE aim for a united Europe, even though they may differ in the way to reach this.

A. – Did you ever get in conflict for this issue?
M. – Yes, we discussed a lot on this. We also talked with other organisations, including one of my friends who had been member of AGE.
M. – He has very interesting and very profound motivations, but different. In fact one thing we
wanted to do was hold a three-way debate: he was like, Europe is an ugly thing, in the sense that it’s something that isn’t anything, and in being nothing it obliges member States to make forced choices, often counterproductive. Said in a very general way. Between him and ourselves – we’re a middle road – and the European federalists, they’re more extreme. I tend more towards a united Europe, that is, rather than remain in a sort of supranational entity that has powers with which, at the level of authority, it can go beyond a nation but at the same time, for other things, is extremely fragmented so it can’t make itself felt, and leaves a lot of inequality and also much more chaos. My dream would be a united Europe, exactly, for a series of reasons – historical, political, economic, social integration – but I don’t like how it is right now, because it obliges the member States to make choices, it isn’t seen as a unitary thing but as the predominance of certain Nations over the others. It’s more an economic than a socio-political question.

**A. – How does Europe enter into your activities; i.e. do you talk about Europe, do you follow the emerging issues at European level in a specific period?**

M. – We’ve sent... We look at European themes every now and then, like our OST wanted to do, we looked at the European theme in general, or when we did, exactly, also... Yes the OST, with us it means the camp, we looked at the theme of Europe, we wanted to associate ourselves with that theme, in that case it was the environment; let’s look... We studied the founders, how Europe functions, we also supply information on the Europe question, we often have debates about European Union choices on a series of things, on, I don’t know, what’s been done for Greece, what... In a word, what Mario Draghi did. Then also other things, depending on who we’re talking with or if we’re talking among ourselves, and who is doing the talking, the subject can get very specific or be widely general. The question of migrants has also been greatly debated, the question with Austria, Hungary, that is, countries which adopt internal policies that are different from the agglomeration, let’s put it, because, precisely, if I close my borders, but if the European Union that accepts migrants and also obstructs them, I mean, it’s a paradox: we’re both in the European Union. And now the question of seaports also brings in other themes, they are all themes...

**A. – Thus, there are issues on which you have discussions or issues that you propose, or cross cutting issues; or you organise initiatives to discuss exclusively about Europe, how Europe is facing the issue of migration. I would like to know if you organize specific activities on European issues, or if - given the aims of AGE, the European dimensions of your events, does not need to to be stressed each time.**

M. – Well then, I repeat, often we are more like supplying information for external people, that is, we often make comparisons with others, also because what we want to get across is a political idea, that is, we in any case have the political idea of a united Europe. So we often try to
understand why people don’t want a united Europe, for example. So while with the AGE people I talk more about the choices of the European Union, with external people it’s more of a discussion: because we need a united Europe.

M. – That’s to say, actually, more than trying to convince them we put forward our reasons, which in my case are… But, many are objective, however, like everything, said by one person, for us they’re historical reasons, or economic, political, another… a Grillo follower or another person who, if anything, we’ve also got ideas about a lot of other things, they’re, totally, different. He’s made speeches, but very long ones. Then, there, at a certain point, until… There’s always the proof of history, that is, you have to see. Certainly, inasmuch as I’m in AGE, they also let you know how similar we are in spite of being very different, they’re things I don’t appreciate.

M. – It isn’t just because I’m European, I’m a Europeanist, everything the European Union says, OK, it’s the line and so I follow it. I’m often critical if I look at the situation: do I really help? Has there been damage or benefit to my country? What might have been done better? What can Italy do better? For example, one of the things I brought in the early years was to find a way to facilitate people in enrolling, to put themselves forward for European competitions, because it isn’t simple, it isn’t at all simple and often they’re funds that don’t get used, precisely due to the complexity of applying for them, especially for Italians who, one, in the event have trouble with English, and two, also have difficulty in getting hold of information about how to apply, because our bureaucracy at the best doesn’t particularly understand anything, so you have to go looking for someone at the Town Hall who understands and can explain.

A. - The last question. Do you think that your participation in AGE is a form of active citizenship? In which way?

M. - Absolutely yes. For me, active citizenship consists of all those actions and gestures you can employ which have a positive effect on society, that is, which might create events or inspire debates. I mean, if I can make people think, if I put forward themes that make people discuss something, it’s definitely better than absolute silence. Just like if an action of mine, I don’t know, brings a camp here, or an extra show, or a concert, or, precisely, a cine-forum evening or the aperitif in English evening. All these things here are things that enrich my town. So for me it’s obviously active citizenship. Then, to repeat, everybody in my view should commit themselves, since it was voluntary, in accordance with their time and availability. If everybody did it, obviously it becomes a… I mean, if I give something, if everyone gives it in the same way, even differently, but obviously it’s an overall enrichment, a chain reaction, put it this way. And I hope to incentivize others by setting a good example.

A. - OK. Do you want to add something else?

M. – I only hope that the debate, especially on history, will increase, because I love history and I hope that other young people will engage… I strongly hope in the generational replacement
turnover, because I will start to work and to something else, and I will have less time, and the achievements of the organisation will disappear if we do not have someone else to take the lead… This was the function of the social centers, which have now disappeared. In my view we need to reintroduce the "laic oratory", to restructure the social center, to create a new type of structure capable of self-innovation, because people are now constantly innovating themselves, and are used to get information, to stay updated. Also, we need to leave room to the youngest, monitoring that they are not doing damages, but helping them to mature, by engaging them in small projects that are really helpful to instill responsibility in every aspect of young people life.
Appendix B (Italy): Field Notes

1. Radioimmaginaria fieldnotes

**Radioimmaginaria – 23 May 2017**

**DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY:** Radioimmaginaria Bologna broadcast

**WHO IS ATTENDING AND BEING OBSERVED:** 4 speakers, radio director and assistant director.

**LOCATION:** AltroMercato (pub), Bologna (Images RI_1 and RI_2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective observation</th>
<th>Subjective observation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>H 15:00 staff meeting before broadcast.</strong></td>
<td><strong>First meeting with Radioimmaginaria. Lu., as chief editor knew that I will be there. She is in charge of how the broadcast goes. I'm sitting in a corner and I observe them.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The group starts talking about the news of today. The first news will be the terrorist attack in Manchester. They find the news in the newspaper “La Repubblica”.</td>
<td>The reflections are made from the points of view of adolescents. Sensations and feelings from speakers are different.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lu. and Lo. come back, and they join the meeting. L. prepares the equipment for the broadcast.</td>
<td>I try to intervene as less as I can because I'm older.</td>
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<td>Who will introduce the topic? The general rule is: introduce the fact, the place where it happened, opinions on it. The slot is composed by the announcement of the topic, a reflection on it, dis-announce [word invented by them] the topic.</td>
<td>They are late for the live that was expected at 15:20</td>
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<tr>
<td>L. says that this fact needs a reflection:</td>
<td>Everyone is continuously on the phone.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- “it was a place where we could be”</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- “an attack doesn't make a sensation”</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- “you don't realize!”</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>L. supports the reflections of the other speakers about Manchester attack:</td>
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<tr>
<td>- “sometimes you expect an attack”</td>
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<tr>
<td>- “we are involved in first person”</td>
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<tr>
<td>It has been made against Manchester City? No, but it was at Ariana Grande concert, a singer known by adolescents.</td>
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<tr>
<td>L. looks for the pictures to publish with the news.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The other topic of the broadcast will be airplanes hostesses.</td>
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<tr>
<td>They continue speaking about a new music video, asking for who saw it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>L. asks who makes the intro?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>H 15:26 another guy (N.) arrives. He speaks with L., he fixes the part of the direction and they put some music.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Everyone is on the phone to find information and pictures they need for the news.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>L.: “what could we put as title? And the profile picture?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>They say that all the attacks are debated from Bologna.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Meanwhile, guys talk about girls’ period as not normal and L. scolds them saying “Are you in anxiety?” No, so we don't need you!</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
They prepare the headphones for the episode and then they go to the bathroom.

H 15:40 the episode starts

L. starts the episode but she didn’t realize she was on air and asks to L. to tell her when it starts.
L. says: wake up!
They have a brief discussion about the decision to keep it or not, then they decide to keep it.

They deal with the Manchester topic thinking of the teenagers who were there and the possibility for them to go. Also, Italian teenagers wanted to go. They say, “I could be there”.

L. gives a feedback about the slot they did, she says to G. that his intervention was very good.

VLP* – today they will announce the broadcast from Sanremo (Italian national music festival)
Then they put the last song.

H 16:03 L. talks with L. about the songs he chooses.

Now English episode.

L. says to G. to listen to it, so he can learn English.

They send A.’s service for the broadcast #YouToo.
Everyone is listening in silence to the episode by A.

L. announces the English episode and she presents A.’s service.

H 16:21 they finish the broadcast.

L. gives a final feedback: “It has been good, you have been very good”

Seems very difficult to manage a group of adolescents going there to have fun and meanwhile talking about a serious thing.

When L. has to talk about Westminster, she asked me if it was the Parliament headquarter. It seems to me that they recognize my being there as an adult, not an outside researcher.

Notes: *VLP stands for “Ve Lo siete Perso” which means “you missed it” referred to a previous broadcast.
I stopped after the broadcast and I began to talk with some of them:
- N. takes care about direction and archive. Every guy listens to the episode and sends the important information.
- The training for the guys has been in Castel Guelfo after the school.
- 1st episode was in april 2010

Every speaker, when intervening, introduces him/herself saying his/her name and age.

Link to the broadcast: http://bit.ly/2n4ezUV

Radioimmaginaria – 30 May 2017
DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: Radio Immaginaria
WHO IS ATTENDING AND BEING OBSERVED: Ga., Gl. Radio director: V.
LOCATION: AltroMercato (pub), Bologna

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<th>Objective observation</th>
<th>Subjective observation</th>
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H 15:00 Meeting with V. and 2 girls

They are waiting for the table where they usually prepare their instruments.
Meeting: they are choosing news for the broadcast: one deals with macacos (monkeys) and the other is about the faculty of arts.

Meanwhile, they talk about Erman, a character of a Norwegian show and V. says what a radio director does and how voices arrive.

Ga. and Gl.: “let's make the intro and the slot with macacos news (taken from the newspaper “La Repubblica”) and the VLP that lasts 1 min.
They talk about who is the last Italian singer who won Sanremo festival.

They prepare the intro. They choose the picture to put under the VLP.

V. says to them: “your language, today’s teenagers’ language, is different from the yesterday teenagers' language”

How could we make a MACACO picture?

H 16:00 They are on air.

1 minute before the live edition, they are in anxiety, but there aren’t so many problems. Actually, during the live edition, nothing is censored.

Intro is gone!

After the intro they appear to be in anxiety: “We are in anxiety” they say during the live edition.

They repeat how a slot is structured
1. intro – announcement – music
2. come back on air – news – announcement to their listeners to write on their social networks “let's write us”
3. VLP
4. come back on air after VLP – music

V. gives some suggestions about what to do when they don’t know what to say, for example they could talk about something else.

Other news: the fact is about DAMS [the Faculty of Arts], “Love and photography” taken from the newspaper “La Repubblica”. They tell the news and then they speak about their emotions when they see pictures of movies: “We are very emotional, so we cry for everything”
Announce – song – end of the episode.

H 16:19 End of the episode.
V. remembers to cite the source when they give a news. Listeners have been 10, not bad!
Today there isn’t the English broadcast (YouToo)

It seems that V., who has an important role within the radio, claims to be the older and more knowledgeable of the group.

I've made the picture of them. They ask me if the commas in a sentence are correct.

They are new speakers and today they are alone, V. is the only Jay who can help them.

Apparently, they are not in anxiety.

The 2 girls are young but they practiced, they get involved.
Radioimmaginaria – 13 June 2017
DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: Radioimmaginaria Bologna broadcast.
WHO IS ATTENDING AND BEING OBSERVED speakers: L., P.1, P.2, G., two newcomers, T., N.
Local staff director: V. Assistant director: N.
LOCATION: AltroMercato, Bologna

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<tr>
<td>H 15:00 L. is explaining what Radioimmaginaria is. There are 2 boys and after a while 2 girls arrive, they are accompanied by a mom.</td>
<td>L. is very interested and professional while she is explaining RI.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The meeting for the broadcast starts: the starting music is taken from unreleased songs and from bands and singers who are less than 20 years old.</td>
<td>P. approached me asking who I am.</td>
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<td>Lu talks also about the private consent that parents have to sign in and the functioning of the broadcast: it is possible to have special edition dealing with cinema or football or whatever.</td>
<td>There's a big mess, today we are in 11.</td>
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<td>P1. (a new boy) talks about how a radio episode works. “We found actuality news or news about what we like. With the news, we always send a picture of the staff representing some parts of the news and then we upload it on the website.”</td>
<td>This news seems to be very funny for them. They speak about their grandparents and their life with them.</td>
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<td>Also, T. and N. (L.’s sister) and P1. (a new boy) arrive.</td>
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<td>1st slot: smell of old people</td>
<td>L. has the management of the guys that she calls as her subjects.</td>
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<td>VLP*: T. had to care about VLP</td>
<td>The use of a network instead of the network comes from a discussion they had about their perception to be arrogant when considering the network as the only one existing in Europe. So, they decided to say a network.</td>
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<td>L. asks if everyone has the headphones. T. asks the guys if they are 11 years old.</td>
<td>The repetition of their presence on social networks is continuous.</td>
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<td>2nd slot: there is no news till now. VLP must be chosen. P1. and Gio make the episode intro. L. asks the intro to the guys.</td>
<td>There's always a bit of tension when V. gives the ok to come back on air.</td>
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<tr>
<td>When presenting the radio during the intro, L. explains that it is important to use “a” and not “the” before saying “network of adolescents” because we should be humble not conceited.</td>
<td>Speakers are distracted when the waiters of the pub pass.</td>
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<tr>
<td>“You are driving me crazy!” says L.</td>
<td>They are a lot of people, and it's very difficult to manage them. They chat and get distracted, L. is in anxiety for the radio episode. She is afraid to not be able to organize it well, she says she won't talk. As the chief editor, she always speaks to show others what to tell and to animate the broadcast. When she has some difficulties, she let others take their role as</td>
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<tr>
<td>H 15:34 Let's start! They make advertisement for “AltroMercato”, that is the place that hosts them for the broadcast.</td>
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<td>They come back on air, they talk about the smell of old people and of their grandparents.</td>
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<td>When not registering, L. remembers the basic rules: keep the contact with the public, say “write us on our social!”</td>
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Castel Guelfo VLP: There isn't VLP and L. intervenes talking about the yesterday episode and the news presented. V. found the VLP that N. sent him.

L. asks the newcomers if they are having fun and if they like it. She clarifies she is a chief editor, but she isn't a dictator, but the others are not always listening, so she has to tell them what to do.

3rd slot: T. comes back on air, she announces the P's movie review. The movie is about old people and it is named “Insospettabili sospetti” original title “Going in style”.

L. closes the episode, she thanks V. saying, “we love him, even if we don't show him.”

H 16:00 end of the radio episode.

The preparation meeting for episodes in English for YouToo broadcast starts. L. will speak in English and P., who came back from the USA, will tell about his experience. Then they'll talk about elderly.

For the YouToo there are 3 persons: P1., P2. and L. The other speakers chat between them.

They ask to an English girl if she would like to talk with them but she doesn’t feel to do it.

Meantime T. calls her mother to asks her if she can go to sleep to N.'s house.

One of them says ironically: “V. is a good director, and he does just one thing: he doesn't listen the public.”

H 16:25 English broadcast begins.

Intro: P1. and P2. They talk about P's experience in the USA. They talk also about Trump election and his victory.

P. reports the process of elections and how it happens in high school. L. reflects on the fact that “also in Italy we need to know the process of elections because I'm almost 18 years old and I don't know so much!”

Then they talk about the experience of school lessons about elections.

Meantime L. talks with the newcomers and she asks them if they liked the episode. “Are you interested to continue?” She apologizes for the situation of the day, but the oldest ones always find it difficult to organize

L. talks with the mom and asks her if they have a smartphone because they need it to exchange information and to prepare the radio episodes. She explains to send their private consent and she suggests sending an email to Radioimmaginaria.

P. went in USA to study in a high school and so he is very enthusiastic to tell his experience. Political elections are just mentioned during the broadcasts. It is almost the first time they talk about it but they don't seem to be uninterested. They are curious and want to get more information.

It is the first time I hear that a smartphone is needed to interact and to participate within an organization!!!

They make fun of different ways to speak English, such as American or British.

It is interesting to see how they ask for support to each other to manage younger speakers.

They ask me what I've studied and what I could do after the PhD.
The newcomers are interested, they met Radioimmaginaria at “Opificio Golinelli” in Bologna during an event.

H 16:39 end of the English episode.

L. asks for a support about Gio. who is frequently looking at the phone during the episode. V. says that he is interested to talk but he doesn't show it.

P. (who came back from USA) asks to V. what’s his role: project manager, responsible for production.

Notes:

Link to the broadcast: http://bit.ly/2n4ezUV

2. PrendiParTe fieldnotes

PrendiParTe – 26 May 2017
DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: Scu.Ter. project
LOCATION: “Manfredi – Tanari” technical professional high school, Bologna

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Objective observation</th>
<th>Subjective observation</th>
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| H 9:00/9:30 Meeting with V. and G. to go together to “Manfredi – Tanari” school  
H 9:45 We’ve arrived at school. C. and M. are waiting for us. M. is inside preparing pictures for the poster they’ll make today with the guys. Topic: the Republic, they will deal with this issue today (and not during the Republic Day that will be on June 2nd because it is holiday).  
They decide what they are going to write and who will write it.  
M. writes the poster, while G. goes on to cut pictures.  
Meantime they talk about Merkel prime minister in a funny way.  
The poster has the title: Republic, Monarchy or…? Picture of Renzi, Putin, Trump, Merkel, Queen Elisabeth.  
They organize the time break with the students thinking about how to propose them the discussion on the different forms of government: republic, monarchy, etc.  
H 10:00 The bell rings. Students should be coming. G. holds the poster. Two guys approach them, then V. and M. catch other students.  
M. is with 3 students, V. with 1 and G. with 3.  
The discussion is about the form of government, what they know about it and the corresponding ideologies.  
When they approach students, they show each political leader and ask: what do they govern? In which way? What are their ideas? Do you like them? Do you think it would be better having one person governing for everybody? Some guys say “yes” but he/she has to rule in a good way.  
Meanwhile they remember June 2nd Italian referendum that let to I feel closer to them. It's easier, but also riskier (because I can't keep the right distance to observe the processes), to intervene and to participate to their discussions and share their ideologies. |

The team is not balanced for gender, as there are three girls and one boy but it seems that this does not influence the management of the activity.

The location of PrendiParTe is at the entrance of the school on a blanket and some pillows. It is a very different setting from the usual school institutional setting. They say that usually it is used as a bivouac.

The interaction is very informal, direct and funny. Students have fun.
abandon the monarchy.

They talk about the answers. They realize that there is confusion about forms of government, who elects political leaders. When students leave, members of PrendiParte talk about the students’ answers that are balanced between choosing representatives for democracy or keeping a Monarchy.

They ask me to go with them to take a coffee.

We talk with a boy of the school who has a problematic situation. They talk about how the school is managed. It’s the first year in this school, for this reason there aren’t activities or projects, yet.

G. asks the reason why Putin approves to do war against ISIS. They talk with a 14 year old boy who is pro Putin, Berlusconi, etc.

Also, a teacher approaches the group, he talks with G. about the different leaders.

Meantime there is a ceramic activity exposition in the school.

PrendiParte’s members continue to receive students and talk with them. They approached “Manfredi” school through Concittadini network.

Some members of the team fill notes with the chronology of the break times they did this year. C. and G. make a list of the topics covered during this year: freedom, legitimate defence, April 25th, abortion, migrants, mafia, euthanasia, homosexuality, critical consumption (meat), recruitment of day laborers (for tomatoes), school, work, “scratch and win”. Other topic covered are: job, how much they gain, Memory Day.

Topics are chosen according to the typology of students of each school.

M. and V. go to call a teacher to look for the vice president because they want to ask that the responsible teacher in that school could change because they do not have a good relationship with him.

Meantime they upload pictures of the day on the Facebook page of the activity.

They’ve talked about the referent teacher for project in the school, who asked a report of the activity. PrendiParte members would change referent because they are not comfortable with him. They would ask to a more operative teacher to help and support them because the actual responsible teacher doesn’t answer to the mail and is not available to introduce the team in the school.

They talk about activities for the next year: gender equality, substances as G. says.

They decide how to do together the final report. They decide which material produced for the previous breaks they will leave at school and which one they at to keep with them to bring again next year. G. and M. take care of this.

and play with them. The “quiz style” to do the activity is very appreciated.

I try to keep myself distant from the discussion.

My presence is often perceived as member of “PrendiParte”, but sometimes it emerges that I’m older than members of the organization.

Every discussion with the poster dealt with the debate about the different political leaders of different European and non-European countries, such as Renzi, Merkel, Queen Victoria, Putin, etc. the discussion sometimes seems a competition between the leaders.
H 12:00 Another break. They go outside with 2 groups. One girl asks them “What have you chosen?” They discuss about the posters with a boy, then they clean the room. At the end, the favourite political leader is Putin.

Notes: * every Scu.Ter. team has a reference teacher in each school.

**PrendiParte** – 27 May 2017

**DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY:** Scu.Ter. project

**LOCATION:** “Copernico” high school

**WHO IS ATTENDING AND BEING OBSERVED:** I. e C. as staff members and the students of “Copernico” high school.

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| H 09:30 meeting in front of the school. They told the headmaster and vice headmaster that I will be there as a researcher. The school janitor will ask me the id card and then he or she will give me a visitor pass. Today they have brought some food to say goodbye to the students before the ending of the school. The activity they are going to do today is about the Republic day. Before the break they speak with two students who reach them in the hall. They use this moment to ask some questions to the students about the topic and then to chat. Today is the day for the immigration march and PrendiParte participates as organization. Students talk with them about everything. PrendiParte members ask which students are interested to participate to the visit to the migration centre Zaccarelli. C. asks to one girl to participate to the visit. Some students invited them to the Libera group they will have next week. Two girls ask to do the activity. C. explains the reasons to have a different activity from usual. The discussion doesn’t start because girls are attracted from food. Then, another girl brings the school annual to write a dedication. So, members of PrendiParte begin to write it. H 11:15 members of PrendiParte go to the administrative office to leave the signature sheet for Scu.Ter. project. When they come back, they detach the posters of the year activity. The poster with the label Scu.Ter. was created with the students by leaving a piece in every class and asking to bring it back. The aim of this activity was to explain the mood of the project, that involve every class and students as a piece of a big puzzle. Almost all the pieces came back and, the remaining ones were brought to the first classes to let them know about the project. The students stop to ask what is the today activity. C. explains them but they go away. I. asks the students if they will be at the demonstration. Then, she speaks with two guys about the difference between
| At school, the janitor didn’t ask me nothing because maybe it seems that I am part of the staff. They do not have a t-shirt that makes them recognisable from the other guys, so they blend very well with other students. Their post is on the first floor. It is very clear the kind of relationship they have with students. The students trust them and consider them almost as friends. Today it seems a particular day because students stay out of their class also beyond breaks. C. seems to be discouraged, in fact he repeats: “First they ask me, then they go away”. They have a clear, direct and open relationships with students. |
Grant Agreement N. 649538

republic and monarchy and she makes the example of Great Britain. They discuss about the fact that both the form of governments can’t guarantee rights. They speak about other issues, such as the day of 25 April: this issue that should be deepened because not so many youths know the reason why that day is a national celebration. One girl says that maybe these celebrations should be treated more at school. Other guys who are with C. speak about the university registration. H12:00 break Some guys come to speak with C. and about migration and what happened in the south of Italy.

PrendiParte – 21 September 2017
DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: “PrendiParte” Members meeting, Election for new President and new board
LOCATION: Libera headquarter, Bologna city centre (Image PP_5)
WHO IS ATTENDING AND BEING OBSERVED: all the members of the organization (around 41 people)

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<td>H 21:00 time set for the meeting</td>
<td>They speak about active citizenship as the topic and the value of their activity.</td>
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<td>H 21:20 all arrived. Chairs are in circle</td>
<td>Project’s presentations are very short, these are made by the project’s manager or by members participating to the project.</td>
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<td>A., the outgoing president starts to read the agenda.</td>
<td>There is a secretary who write the minutes.</td>
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<td>The first point to discuss is projects description in charge of the responsible: after school for the primary school,</td>
<td>Absents 3 persons</td>
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<td>- After school for the secondary school in Farini and Pepoli school,</td>
<td>There are 3 new girls</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Scu.Ter.,</td>
<td>A. is quite directive but funny in managing the meeting.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- migrants in Zaccarelli centre,</td>
<td>Nice Presentation Letter.</td>
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<td>- cineforum with Cinema Association’s members,</td>
<td>Everyone takes very seriously the association nominations for board role or president role.</td>
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<td>- “Meridiano d’Europa” to approach young people to the UE. There will be the WeCare council next weekend.</td>
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The new projects that will be proposed this year are:
- in youth jail within Pratello community.
- Brigata Viganò, a book with the stories about Renata Viganò (historical partisan from Bologna): it is a painted book about the Resistance that will serve to deal with the topic of Resistance in primary schools.

The second point is the renewal of charges: A. says goodbye after 5 years of presidency, there’s a little embarrassment.

Some members give cards for the election. There are 3 candidates for the board. Each of them campaign. The future candidate president read a letter for her presentation. There is also a treasurer’s candidacy. Finally, members vote for acclamation, because there was only one candidate for each position.

The new board will be composed by:  
- M.: she sends her candidacy as treasurer from Belgium, C. reads
The new members are acclaimed!

M. asks about the opportunity to be part of all projects because they are board members. They've tried in these years to make an inter project group, but it didn't work.

They discuss about other projects:
- Project with LINK to have a main office to share together but the majority of members do not agree with the methodology used by Link association so they decide to decline the invitation and to discuss about the main office in another moment.
- work with antimafia
- another proposal to take a room for the headquarter in Pirandello street that is far from the city centre: also this proposal is rejected because that is not their place of action and having a main office there would mean to develop a project and guarantee a minimum of presence and now they can't ensure this.

Any other business: project with the Local Council called “Cryptic thinking”, Internal Training

A. proposes the new Council Call named EDUCA – ALE’ to send projects.

H 23:30 the meeting is over.

3. AGE

AGE – 25 March 2017
DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: partners’ meeting,
LOCATION: free room in one member’s apartment (Image AGE_2)
WHO IS ATTENDING AND BEING OBSERVED: 11 attenders: President Pa., Vice president Mar, Al, Mat., Ma., Az., La., E., D., Lu., An.

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<td>H 15:16 P. introduces the meeting 1. He welcomes the new members: An. 27 years old, “ideas are good, valid, I want to give a hand.” Presentation of the members: Az. 20 years old, he joined in November and he says “I like travel.” Other members are: Ma., Mat., 24 years old, AGE’s vice president, Al, called B., Mar., 24 years old, P., 24 years old, he studies computer engineering 2. Presentation of the project “Catch-EyoU” Agenda: total amount of hours, Voucher, Projects update, Recruiting, Contact list at Moro school Az. presents the project and activities in which he is involved.</td>
<td>Informal atmosphere, convivial. Debate and interest about project contents. Slang and jokes all the time. They interrupt often for clarifications or requests. It’s difficult to follow the agenda if you don’t know the activities. Almost everyone talks freely and intervenes in the discussion. Members use traditional modality of group management</td>
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He presented the programme “European Mobility” to the Moro students with Pa. and J.: “I liked it very much, we were the group with the greater flow of students, two classes at time, between 50 and 60 people in an hour.”

They ask for clarifications about activities in schools. Members used a method to stimulate the discussion in class: giving candies to those who raised a question. They talk about the method and about its effectiveness in stimulating questions.

H 15:37 L., another member arrives. Total amount of hours at Zanelli school: next Monday L. will do a theatrical improvisation workshop in school. Guys ask what L. does in general.

Tuesday: Pa. and Ma., maybe Az. and M., a girl who is an Erasmus exchange. She’ll come back on 27th in the morning and she would go to help them.

P(president). and Ma. make a summary for L. A. has to pay 5 euro for the subscription and to have the t-shirt.

The subscription sheet is turned around for An., new member, and Az.

Voucher activity: summary, and how it works. UDU (a university students’ organization) contacts are not good, they do not participate. P. makes a summary and ask to detail how the meetings were gone. M. talks about the meetings. To add as a memorandum for this meeting: AGE was present, but it was not visible.

Then the agenda goes on talking about referendum and the possible meeting with a PD politician.

Meantime, a girl collects the subscription of new members as treasurer of the association.

La. speaks about the association visibility: how to make the association more visible? It would be good to have a flag, they have a banner.

They should write a project document to communicate to the other members what they did. There are problems within the organization about who is going to make the activities and to share them, not considering the communication and the activities as mere tasks.

Pa. says that he would write the project document at the end to summarize the meeting, but it comes out the need to have it in progress. P. and L. ask for a clarification. L. would like a discussion to understand how to proceed for the event organization, she suggests to follow more the events from a marketing perspective. A. says that it is a problem linked to the social management. M. reformulates the L.’s question saying that it would be useful to have a group that takes care about the organization of events. S. (nickname) didn’t manage well the event. P. says it would have been necessary to make a questions list. L. asks for more interaction for the next time.

(such as asking to talk raising the hand but this way seem not to be effective because they sometimes don’t respect their turn). Some suggests new modalities—and these are accepted.

A. is new, but he tries to give a very challenging vision for the financing of new students. The evaluation dynamic for the new members is explained with A. present. Merit? For what? A., under evaluations, remains silent. Mat. looks very upset for the situation with UDU.

L. always interrupts discussions.

They tone down the atmosphere of the meeting with jokes.
An. makes an ironic joke to tone down the atmosphere.
Pa. clarifies that it would be useful to open the discussion at schools to understand the interests of students instead of giving a voucher.
H 15:57 E., another member, arrives. He is an adult man, around 60 years old.
- European Exchange programs

Pa. says that it would be useful looking for information about training courses. AGE proposed itself as partner for training courses and camps. Then the school team could do meetings to create a working group as an association project. P. suggests A. as Project Manager and asks for the opinions of other members. L. is interested, also Ma. and Mat. It would be difficult to looking for camps. A. asks for clarifications. P. says that it is needed to send an email to the contacts they have about possible camps to organize. He suggests this sourcing modality for guys interested to join a camp.
Mat. says that he would contact immediately his contacts to show them what they can offer, suggesting projects that guys can develop. The association proposes itself as facilitator suggesting training meetings about what is possible to do. A. says that it would be necessary to look for European Mobility calls. It could be a good strategy to keep strong contact with school students, involving them in the project design activities to create immediately a group. This modality is approved. Jump In is an association that sent 150 guys in camps. In Moro high school, a girl asked if they were an association that make delegation leader. Maybe this association is CISV (a coordinator association for volunteering), that makes training for delegation leader.
P. asks who is in the group the responsible for the “management of new members”: P. chose A. as Project Manager.
La. asked An. if he wants to try, but he prefers to know better the activities.
Az.: there is a training course like Erasmus plus in Bulgaria from 29th April to 5th May and there is a fee to pay: 70 euro that AGE would pay.
AGE could anticipate the money for A. participation, then when he will be back, the money will be cashed from the association. Pa. suggests borrowing a part of AGE funds to him and to decide in the end of the year, when A. will come back, if he deserves that money or if they have to take it back.
Ma.: “I don’t like this, you give me the money and then I do it.” P. suggested him to use this modality, engaging in AGE and asking for the refund. It sounded like a salary, but it isn’t the AGE’s idea, refund or salary.
Ma. goes to smoke.
Az.: “the price is 270 euro,”

An. is L.a. friend.

It is interesting to observe how members deal with the need to recruit members and the opportunity to increase the level of their activities (camps in this case) that seem to create two opposite poles.
An. asks for clarifications: “why don’t you do the opposite? He has to make something, then we give him money.”
P. answers that they need recruiting people.
An. suggests the evaluation based on the engagement for the association.
E. says that there isn’t precedent, so they could discuss if it could be a association’s vision. A. says that it shouldn’t be a trade. If AGE gives the opportunity to the guys to get involved in initiatives, it could be nice to give them the opportunity to leave.
An. says that AGE should help the guys in this way.
An. says that to establish transparency, it could be useful to create an annual range of fee to allocate for the guys departures.
(P.) “Anyone is forced to give A. money for his departure? Nobody.”
They need to define criteria about funding students leaving.
E. says that it could be possible to establish the kind of experiences to propose to the guys.
P. says that if a person joins AGE to do a camp hoping to stay in the association, it could be difficult.
A. answers that it should be evaluated from time to time, depending to the personal experience.
The discussion heats up and P. asks to talk raising the hand.
P. says that it could be useful to make motivational interview to the new guys to evaluate them. E. overlaps, he says that they could evaluate the wishes.
Ma. says that the motivational interview could be a right method to understand if that person is interested to do a certain path or only to have a paid travel.
An. says that for Erasmus + it could be split depending on the goal of the program of exchange.
E. says that it could be prepared a new members’ personal data sheet, writing competences and future commitments. In this way, AGE can select people depending on its future activities.

Project’s updating:
“Troviamoci” (Let’s meet) Project: Mat., 5 associations are planning O.S.T., 2 of them pulled back, I’m a bit confident. Moca and Nova Res pulled back. Teatro Blu and Rete degli Studenti Medi said ok but they didn’t say anything else. The place will be in Toano, from 12 to 14 May. P. says what the new O.S.T. is for the representatives of the new associations, for the drafting of the call for the management for 5 years of a space for young people. He asks L. for the confirmation to take in charge of the meals for the 3 days. The Council isn’t being a support for the association, it seems that the council wants taking advantages from association activities. It doesn’t care about the content. It doesn’t give the patronage because
it results like a conflict of interest for the other associations. **Consumption today**, it’s a mess, we have a problem with poster. The third is not correct. Have we thought to print all the posters or to print just the words containing mistakes. The third option could be to take off all the posters and leave only the Facebook event. They agree to modify the number and correct the wrong day. The worst is: we have been contacted from UDU less than one week before the first event saying that the room won’t be the one of the invitation, it will change every time. We will know the room we will have just few days before, this is a reason why we didn’t want using poster. There are few issues with UDU conditions. They look for alternative solutions: the problem is the time to ask for the extension of the event to Coop Service. La. suggests changing the place not for the first day but for the others.

E. reports the meeting fort the April 5th for the **World Forum for Democracy** report, organized in Strasbourg by the Europe Council. It will be send the invitation on AGE email. E. says that who speaks English could participate with a project.

**Municipal Budget Project.**

E. suggests a AGE’s library, maybe a virtual one. Books that AGE reads or that it suggests. He reflects on the reading of book like Macchiavelli and that every member can make suggestions to share and create an identity of the association. L. suggests “Il capitale” (Marx) Another suggestion is having a AGE’s brooch, or a pen like promotional gadget.

Ma. says to create a group for the gadgets. P. says that they don’t need it, but Mar. insists.

Az. says that he has some contacts with the guys who made the exchange in Turkey.

Mat. says that the 20th the event will be done, poster will be removed.

P. brings back the communication to take it calm.

La. raises the hand but she’s not seen. Once seen, they give the word to speak about the management of Facebook events.

Mar. asks Mat. which news must be publicised.

An. asks what is necessary to write in the partnership format.

H 17:02 end of the meetings, other things will be treated next time.
Gabella” waiting for the others to start the meeting.

In the meantime, other members are coming.

H 15:16 They are 12 now, and they are still waiting for the last 2 members.

They have set up the room placing the sits in semicircle. The secretary and I are sitting on a little table with the laptop taking notes.

H 15:20 they ask to take attendance with the presents members, while the secretary says to wait for the others to arrive and then to take attendance and start the meeting.

After it, the delegations of members that are not there, are read and the meeting starts.

H 15:26 P. opens the meeting.

The first topic is about what has been decided within the board. Then, C. starts to read “what we think about ourselves”. Some of them said to have had some difficulties to follow the board, others say that the board worked better than the past years. She asks P. to add something, but he asks members about the trend of this year and half.

There was less confusion. The meetings/barbeques have been very effective in creating a feeling of being a group. The presence of S. has been a good thing, because he is precise and organized.

H 15:31 E. arrived, he is late because he had to print the delegations.

They discuss about a disadvantage: the participation to the gay pride, and the hitches come out for the ethics and the moral connected to the gay pride.

J.: there wasn’t the need to rise all this fuss

E.: We should say also that doing this debate means that there is people that cares to do things taking into account of the dignity of the association.

B. says that is better to express yourself than not do it.

The members didn’t know so much about the activities. P.: for this reason, we decided to do a summary of activities in the WhatsApp group, so everyone could feel involved.

L.: we are in 15 now, 13 should be missed. Among these people, how many we don’t see for a lot of time?

P.: after 6 months of inactivity they are considered inactive, even if, for the internal rules, they could stay, if they haven’t damaged materially or morally the association.

L.: so we can say that the division is, active member, inactive member, supporter.

P. and M.: for the rules of the association, everyone can vote, while something can change for the management of the organization.

The inactive member can be expelled after 6 months.

M. says that one member has been removed from the WhatsApp group, another one from the list of the members because he hasn’t pay the fee.

They talk about the Facebook profile: one post per day or 2 about different things in an informal way.

There’s a lot of sharing, they talk serenely about things that are not working. There are few digressions.

L. wants to define the status of the members, removing the non actives members. She looks very satisfied when some non actives members, who haven’t done anything in the last 6 months, are removed.

The calculation of votes of the election is quite serene.

C. reports always to calm down!

It seems that the difference between the level of activity of members is an important issue that gives importance to the engagement of active members.

It seemed that he lost the money of the organization during his period abroad and, to refund the organization, he went to work through a mobility program.
per week? The problem is that they are not read.
H 15:48 P.: we can start the vote. S. and S. don’t run for the elections for time and working reasons.
L.: positions to be elected are: the president, the secretary, the vice president, the treasurer. There is also the graphic manager, the foreign manager (he has to check the e-mail that they use to contact the foreign associations), the Facebook and Social manager, the events manager (he has to keep all the AGE’s materials)
All the functions of the position roles are explained.
A. He went to Sofia to work in a call centre to pay back what he has lost.
P. proposes a kind of election management: the nominations of president, vice president, secretary and treasurer must be collected. Then, the other positions and the other managers are elected. The positions not elected will be ad interim on the president.
M. distributes sheets for voting to every member.
The statutory positions are voted.
Meantime E. and another girl are talking on their own.
P. says that who is in AGE for less than 6 months can’t vote statutory charges. Maybe, the rule could be reviewed lowering the threshold to 3 months. If everyone agrees they can vote.
E. doesn’t agree because they could define the percentage of who is members for less months. At the end, everyone agrees.
Nominations are opened: P. (as first candidate) and M. are candidates for president (but in the end only one can candidate). C. is a candidate for secretary. M. M. (as first candidate) and P. are candidates for vice president. None is candidate for treasurer. There is a short funny explanation of what the treasurer must do.
Now the speeches of the candidates take place.
Secretary: “I’m secretary since 2016, I was told that I bother you, I’ve not time to dedicate to AGE, it’s true and I do it with pleasure. Please, bear with me if I bother you”.
President: M., I’ve been present in every moment of the AGE’s life, and it is very important being present, putting your face on, talking with people, being quite extroverted and expansive, and in my opinion, I’m very able to do this. It’s something that I like to do, and if there is something that is important to communicate is that we have to have fun and spend some good moments together, because we are volunteers and this is our pay. After this, I’m a person quite interested and curious.
P.: I applied myself for president in January with a quite clear idea in my mind, I had the idea to bring others young people in AGE and to focus on European camps, this mandate, in my opinion, is not over, it is just started, and in our last meeting, I brought the topic of applying for calls during all the year. I candidate again myself with this goal: to bring

The climate of the election was funny and informal, even if some procedures such as candidates’ speeches follow a formal procedure.

A youth is scolding an old member. This can be a sign of youth role within the organization.
Grant Agreement N. 649538

AGE in the schools for the first time establishing reliable channels, and to bring AGE in Europe, as it is right. Furthermore, I am an organized person, and I’m able to take under control the association, having an overview on it. About the new members, I pledge to meet them to asking them what they want to do, what they can do and what are their ideas.

H 16:16 Now they vote.
In a sheet the names of the 2 positions are written. They proceed to count the votes.
President: P.
Vicepresident: M.
Positions are unchanged due to the lack of the treasurer, who should be again L. ad interim.
They decide that in the next meetings it should be established a different way to vote. Meantime E. talks with the younger girls. L. scolds E, because he is too mouthy.
Now it’s time for the election of the other managers and members of the board. Some information is asked about the role of the board: it has a meeting every month and it carries on the association from an organizational point of view, for example, members management, doing the Facebook posts, organizing members in general, deciding, accepting and validating the projects: it has more power and more duties in the association.
L. asks to B. why he hasn’t applied. B. answers that if he did it, he won’t have more free evenings.
Who applies for the board?
There are not candidates for the board, so they are in 3 till now.
A. (new member) and B. candidate themselves for the board.
A. for Facebook manager.
Now the NON statutory charges are about to be elected.
Foreign manager: E. C. managed this activity this year. It’s about sending mail to foreign associations. The last year we had to bring foreign associations in Italy, and it has been more challenging. When we have to participate to camps, it’s less challenging. It’s about writing and answering mails in English for the summer camps.
AGE’s mail is managed by the secretary or the president.
E. asks for more information.
The last year we tried, but it has come out a stagnant situation with the foreign, so we’ve focused on a local level.
For the moment, the dialogue with the foreign is about involving AGE in foreign projects.
E., J. and Miriam are candidates.
E. and J. are elected as first and second.
Events manager: M.
Graphic Manager: he must have graphing knowledge, he is the first person to whom you are addressing to do events and other things. B. is candidate for this.

They had the meeting but this project was not carried on. It seems that they are more worried about other projects.
S. says that if there was a clearer and specific handbook of the organization on graphics, he could do it.
H 17.00 now we could talk about projects.
Updating projects: P., in place of people not presents, talks about the state of activities.
Troviamoci: we stopped after doing the O.S.T., because the Council after having bothered, said that the call would be open for the beginning of May, but the call is not open yet. The problem is that the call has to show a participated path, so we should do the O.S.T. since the call is open. We can’t do anything but waiting for the Council opening the call. We are waiting to meet to do a poster of the network and create a board.
Ovunque (Miriam): we’ve done 3 meetings and we have 3 projects in Turkey and 1 in Czech Republic. Next week they should tell us if the Turkey one will be activated or not. The last meeting will be done, I wait for the end of the Ramadan and the I will prepare it. The meetings we’ve done with the guys, we’ve tried to make them part of AGE, and in the next meetings we will see what we can do about it. A. came back to Bulgaria to work, because he has been robbed while he was there.
P.: I hoped that more guys would approach AGE. Maybe they will do it after participating to the camps. For those camps, we need to find some delegation leaders also for what happened in Bulgaria.
Du iu spik inglisc: L. We’ll start next Thursday 15th. We put already the posters where we wanted. For the first event, we are expecting a big participation of AGE to show people that we exist, and then spread the word. It’s a very funny event, it’s playful. We are focused on new people, but also on AGE’s members that want to participate. It will be every Thursday, for one month, from 7pm to 9pm. Then we’ll decide if the project continues also in summer time. There is a dress code: you need to have some clothes with the selected colour, yellow for the next Thursday.
Mercatino: M.: we’ve done the first meeting with the volunteers and we told them how it will be organized. There will be 3 AGE’s members and 3 Nova Res’ ones. We are very perplexed about the market’s organization, because it has been going on for a long time, and we can’t conclude.
They found the headquarter for the market project. It will be hard to find the market operative team: the secretary who has to coordinate all other people. Every manager is paid, Nova Res wants to pay less than the last year because they want to leave some money for other things. AGE doesn’t agree. People would be paid 500 euro per months. If Nova Res doesn’t agree, AGE will be give something. L. would propose herself as a refunded volunteer for the project.
We changed the statute of the market, and we have been able
to create a market account. Cineforum and other projects: there are some ideas to be proposed to the new guys not involved in other projects. Meeting between AGE, federalist movement and communists, about idea of Europe: deciding about AGE and talking about how to define Europe. They explain the sense of “federalism”. M. would keep this project. P. says that AGE during the summer goes on holidays, while should be a good idea to keep some events even in summer time. M. says that he would keep some event that keep together members of AGE. P.: someone wants to organize the cineforum? S. would like, he is interested because he likes a lot movies.

H17:31 the meeting is over.

AGE – 16 May 2017
DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: “Ovunque” Project
LOCATION: Association Mondoinsieme’s headquarter, there’s a big table in the centre and the guys are seated around. There are a laptop and a projector to present a video or a power point of the project.

WHO IS ATTENDING AND BEING OBSERVED: P., L., A., 4 boys + 2 boys interested to mobility projects. S., N., M., S. (he’s arrived through Facebook)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective observation</th>
<th>Subjective observation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H 18:30 presentation play outdoor</td>
<td>There’s a gender balance considering male and female members.</td>
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<tr>
<td>There are 2 boys and a girl, they are attending the first year of University</td>
<td>L. presents the facilitation plays, A. the formal part with Miriam.</td>
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<tr>
<td>H 19:16 They come back inside to do a frontal presentation with the guys</td>
<td>The communicative style is informal and recreational.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A. and Miriam talk about Erasmus plus, European program that is about youth mobility, but that is also addressed to teachers and young workers. Also EVS program is presented. They suggest AGE youth exchanges, of which AGE is partner.</td>
<td>I’ve been involved in a play, but no one asked me anything about my role.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Space for questions and clarifications. A. talks about work camp that are project where one has to pay. S. and M. talk about exchanges that asked for a fee. P. says that AGE doesn’t work in this way. They decide to make groups to consult website where is possible to find youth exchanges projects. Scambieuropei.info</td>
<td>A. talks about his personal experience with difficulties and critical parts. He’s very enthusiastic of activities and projects, and he describes these to the others. He always uses the word “figata” (it’s cool!)</td>
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<tr>
<td>S. asks for the age limit. From 16 years onwards. L. says to look for the projects expiring dates. A. chooses a project as example, Portugal - Leiria</td>
<td>Everyone looks very interested to the topic, even if each of them had already foreign experiences.</td>
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<tr>
<td>L. says that maybe it’s worth pay a fee to participate in such an experience. The table falls, with A. on it: no problem! A. talks also about EVS projects, and he says that he will send some contacts to the subscribers. AGE, as a partner with other organizations as delegation</td>
<td>There are pairs interactions, or in small groups, where sharing particular aspects about of their personal experiences and related emotions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’ve asked some clarifications</td>
<td>I’ve asked some clarifications</td>
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leaders, will support formulation and organization of the exchanges.
P. talking about AGE and the possibility to take part to these projects, invites the guys to the barbecue of May 28th.
S. asks about autumn AGE exchanges.
H 19:56 L. leaves. S., Mati. and Nic., Reb. stay
P. says that if they want to look for camps starting in October, they can use the laptop that AGE makes available. They continue to talk standing and they talk about experiences and foreign travel projects. Rebecca talks about her next travel in South America. She says she would go with pleasure in new places, while A. would like to, but he’s linked related to the emotions that he lives in the places where he goes, and for this reason he would come back in those places. P. dismantles PC that they don’t need.
Miriam and Sofia are looking together for 2 project exchanges on the laptop.

**Notes:** I’ve arrived at 18:10. Meantime A. and P. were preparing the last things for the meeting. L. arrived at 18:10, and she started to introduce herself with the guys already arrived. Then she prepared some sheets for the event, asking for a help to some guys. At 18:23 L. arrived. P. asks to the guys to say their names. L. brought some “welcome sweets”. P. says to wait some minutes before starting the meeting.
Portugal Appendices

Appendix A (Portugal): Interviews

Viviana Interview :: 4th of October 2017

E: So… Firstly a part about the goals and mission of Cidade+. How would you define Cidade+? How would you describe the goals and mission of Cidade+?

Vi: For me, being that I am very much inside this, that I have a lot to do with this role of always thinking about the mission, the goals… For me they are always evolving or at least getting more complete. However, I think I can define some that have been more fixed over the last four years. These are: First, let projects in the various areas of sustainability that are already doing sustainability be known to the citizens, organizations, so that this will help find concrete alternatives for the citizens who are coming from the outside of this topic and are curious about sustainability but who do not have responsible habits yet. For example: “I want to start cycling in the city but I'm afraid! Who is it that… where can I go? Who can help me? Where can I buy the bike? Who can advise me?” Food: “I want to stop eating meat, but I'm afraid that I lack protein and b12!” (Laughter) very concrete things like these. The idea is to bring together projects from various areas. Some we already knew from our past, others we researched and brought them here, to give them a central stage. Like this visitors could then have immediate access to concrete aspects of sustainability.

I will use our staple phrase for nowadays that is: simplify sustainability. In my experience sustainability is very... we can start by seeing that this word is becoming over spent... and it’s in conferences a lot, before Cidade+ even I went to a few of those conferences... but it was always a very specific public, business or environmentalist like crowds, sometimes with very tightly closed speeches that didn’t quite get to the public out here or their speeches were very abstract things. So we wanted to simplify it, to say that sustainability is the day-to-day and that there are already people being sustainable, it isn’t a future thing. Okay, that's a big and very concrete goal of Cidade+. Then also because sustainability is hugely broad and needs everyone to be in play; it was to put everyone on the same stage, all the various agents of society, therefore the autarchy – local power – citizens, associations, universities and companies. Get them all talking, because that’s it, often there are conferences where only business people go, where only technical staff from the municipality go, where only the activists go and there are few where they are all together, actually on the same stage. Even within Cidade+ we notice that sometimes it is difficult to put them all together. Inside Cidade+ we could still sometimes have sectorial approaches just the same:
intellectual people go to the conference, alternative people come to the open market and we always try to avoid even this, year by year. Try to mix things up a little more... So that's another goal. I think these are really the main ones. Then we have several sub-objectives: one very important is to really contribute to the change of urban policies. We know that we have indirect influence due to the stories that we are told by the municipality crowd; because we have already been invited to participate in a gathering. For example we received an invitation to think of the different ways that the city can adapt to the climate changes that are coming. This shows that the opinions of Cidade+ are already beginning to count for something. Even just the fact that we can also be a civic platform that bridges citizens. For example, now in these meetings where there is work, these collaborative working methodologies, and the *encontros da comunidade*… We can be a communication platform between citizens and the associative projects – which are the main participants that come to these sessions - and the autarchy. We can be an intermediary and reach urban policies in that way.

**E:** Why the choice of the environmental, the bigger focus on ecology and environmental, for *Cidade*+

**Vi:** You are saying that inside sustainability we have a greater focus on…

**E:** Yes

**Vi:** Look, I’m not sure that this is really like that because I had to fill in an application now for a prize, which has an environmental focus and I was reading it. I had to describe all the workshops since 2014, workshops and sessions, and many times there is a large focus on economy, society themes, and business. I was even surprised... but it is also very environmental. In terms of workshops it has a lot of environmental, it also has a lot of well-being; there are lots of yoga types and lots on food as well. In terms of contents I think it is well distributed by the three… four pillars of sustainability but in terms of communication we strengthen the environment. I think we do this by default because both Veronica and I feel for the environment a lot more. We feel the nature-environment more than the rest – the economy, the social theme – even though I'm also very connected to the economy and the social aspects. Another thing is that in sustainability that people speak of the pillars as something that is at the same level – economy, social or environmental – for me it is not. For me the environment is the ground because the environment is the truth, it’s given, it's the environment, isn’t it? The economy is only there as a concept or as a discipline because we created it. We did not create the environment. It is here already and needs to be healthy because otherwise we can’t be here for much longer. From this

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101 *Encontros da comunidade* meaning “meeting of the community” is a precursor event of convergences between friends, mentors, curious people, partners and critics of *Cidade*+. 
aspect, I don’t even agree very much with how the pillars of sustainability are presented sometime. I think the environment is the ground. For me it is sustainability and the environment… and then there are the pillars: economy, social, cultural. The political is mixed in with the social.

E: And do you discuss or talk about your work here in Cidade+ with your family and friends? How do they react?
Vi: A little with the family. Except for my parents, or my mother when she asks when Cidade+ will start to bring money in! (Laughter). And then there are discussions about the fact that I am crazy about being in Cidade+, so it's not really talking about Cidade+. In fact, I have antenna space with them to actually talk about Cidade+ when it brings money in. And then that subject is already solved. With family members not really… very, very little. With friends, I talk a lot about it, even because I think a lot of my friends end up being involved, they are in the open market or in the restaurant or...

E: And do you think that both your family and your friends identify in some way with the goals and mission of Cidade+?
Vi: The closest family yes, because my parents, my brother and I have similar values. Friends yes. Most of my friends yes. As a matter of fact I think I don’t have any friends who do not have these values. (Laughter) I do not know...

E: And how do you see your connection with other structures, such as moving cause\textsuperscript{102}?
Vi: Well then… At first we were just friends, living off a COOPJOVEM\textsuperscript{103} financing. A six month financing was the funding we had to prepare Cidade+. Supposedly at the time of the end of this financing the vision of Branco and Mateus was for us to become a company or a cooperative... but then we never went ahead with it. We did not have the conditions to be a company, we really ended up not seeking for one. What would be better, an association or a cooperative? We never ended up doing that work so we were just a group of friends. As we wanted to present this work, this project, to the city hall, as early as 2014 – Rui Moreira had just entered the Municipal Hall in October 2013 – It was Branco’s decision to look for a company that would align with the same values, so that we went to present Cidade+ to the Municipality with more credibility,. This is why we went to the Biorumo\textsuperscript{104}. They embraced the project straight away. It was soon talked about as a megalomaniac project. It started immediately with great...

\textsuperscript{102} Moving Cause is a non-profit association with the intention of “mobilizing concrete utopias”, creating networks of social interaction, acting locally, aiming at the realization of a sustainable culture, aware and open to the world. It is the formal association that gives “ground” to Cidade+. 

\textsuperscript{103} COOPJOVEM is a program to support young people in the development of cooperative entrepreneurship, combining this with the development of a culture of solidarity and cooperation.

\textsuperscript{104} Biorumo is an advisory’ enterprise, funded in 1998, that provides services in environmental and sustainability areas.
ideas, to be the environment and sustainability event, “The Event” with the great VIP international keynote speakers. Biorumo loved it and the municipality did too… but it was like: “okay, let's see... you don’t have any portfolio”. We had nothing. And that was it. They liked the project… and that’s how these relationships came to be. In the meanwhile, even before the first Cidade+ of 2014 was held, we lost our headman, let us say it this way...

**E: Branco...**

Vi: Yes. He went to Brazil and there was nobody to take his role. It was assumed that it would be Mateus because it was him and Branco who started it. I think there was really no one with the profile to take on Branco’s role in this process. There still isn’t but still, it happened… and it kept getting better and better. As we had the support of Biorumo and because year after year it was always very unstable, we never knew if there was going to be a next Cidade+. Due to the financial instability we never moved forward to create an association, an image of our own. We had the support of Biorumo in terms of paperwork, invoices… these things, so we didn’t worry either. Just the exercise of putting Cidade+ together was already very consumerist. It consumed us a lot so we’re thinking about it… but we went on slowly... we began to hold meetings with cooperatives to see if it was worth it to become a cooperative, we did the same with associations and realized, yes: an association. In the meanwhile I had this idea of: why creating a new association if there are already so many associations? An idea of maybe being practical and sparing, and such things. It's a chip! We were checking what associations we would really identify with and I always had a fondness for Moving Cause because I love their work, their attitude. I knew the people inside. I trust them. I really trust them 100%, I really do even though it has many more people now than when I met them… And that's how Moving Cause joined in a year ago. And we are now renewing the experience with them for another year.

**E: And is this entry mainly in bureaucratic terms, of legality as an association… Or are there other reasons?**

Vi: The idea of this entry is to allow us to be more autonomous in our financial management otherwise we would create an association ourselves. Over time we realized that it was the best thing to do. It was either to create an association or to become part of one. And Moving Cause already has a history, it's also important. It's already 10 years old I think. They are thinking of applying to be considered as an NGO or to be recognized as a public utility. It can have many advantages too in terms of applications, in terms of internships… these things.

**E: You already talked a little about it. How did you become involved in the organization of Cidade+? I do not know if you want to add something to this pathway that made you come to Cidade+...**
Vi: Look, for me it was funny because I was working on a research project at the university. The moment I realized that what I was doing would never reach the citizen, to the construction/implementation, I wanted to leave. And I already was on a path of working to communicate things that sometimes are locked within the university field: communicate with the people. In that project it was for the first time that we made a book which translated our research work to an audience. I was involved in creating this book. That’s when my teacher started saying: “Viviana forget it, there’s no funding in the FCT\(^{105}\) to really build what we have to say to people”. I had already realized that I was on the side of communication, of reaching people, of bringing these issues of biodiversity, of the environment to the people. Then I quit my job. At the time I even just wanted to: “Now I’m going to roam around a bit, I’m going to...” I was going to get my gardens project started. I called it the pocket gardens. It was to choose those unclaimed houses that are falling apart and have already started to have those wild gardens. Go to the neighbourhoods and identify them. Go to the neighbourhoods and talk to people: “Look, let’s build a community garden.” That was the project I was going to start with, if I had not gone into Cidade+. And that same weekend a female friend of mine told me “Look, send your CV here, I have some friends – it was Mateus and Branco – they’re looking for people... it’s just your kind of thing. This event... it’s your cup of tea, this project... it’s your cup of tea”, it was not even an event yet. That was it, I went to the interview. Then later on I learnt that Branco did not like me at all. (Laughter) I did not like him at all either (laughter) because he was full of prejudices. The guy had been alternative like hell. At the time I still looked very alternative as well. I had that shaved hair. I think I went with steel toe boots to the interview (laughter) and he said: “Look, an anarchist is here!” (Laughter). And that was it... that was how he interpreted me: “Look, an anarchist here.” but then they quickly realized exactly all the contacts I had, my work in the civil movements and... (laughter)

**E: Do you consider that the work you do in Cidade+ is paid for?**


**E: Not only for the instability but also for the hours? For the difference between the hours of work and what you actually receive with the return?**

Vi: Also for the content that I bring to Cidade+! I deserved to earn something like 1500 euros! A month! There’s a lot of creative content, a lot. Mentally it demands a lot from me. It demands a lot. It departs from creation, vision, strategy... and because I know the work we do has quality as well. I really know that it has quality because we are stubborn and never have never gone... It isn’t stubborn it’s the identity of the event. The fact that we have never gone the easy, big

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\(^{105}\) FCT – Science and Technology Foundation, the national public agency that supports science and technology research.
patronage is more costly … but it is also the identity of the event. The event would be something different otherwise. In monetary terms it is poorly paid. Let's say that this year it was at the lowest acceptable [level] for the first time. (Laughter) This year I was satisfied in relation to other years but it’s still poorly paid. Any way… in emotional terms there have also been some ups and downs. That is, I think the balance so far has been positive.

E: How would you define active citizenship and civic participation? How do you define these concepts?

Vi: I really have no clue about the definition of normal concepts. Are there many? For me, an active citizen is a citizen who expresses, citizens who express themselves. I think that just the fact that you express yourself already has a huge impact. It doesn’t matter if there is a consequence after this or even any change of laws or paradigms… but a citizen who uses their voice and expression. It can also be different forms of expression: from music, let’s see, graffiti, going to assemblies and expressing. This to me is an active citizen. Also someone who provokes that also expresses in common places, common spaces like: coffee shops, squares. Someone who helps bringing important themes to the public arena, to lessen the mention of telenovelas, football or other things alike. I think these coffee shop conversations are very important. One listens, the other one listens... It has to do with creating culture, it’s to create public opinion. I think active citizenship is more about this: expression. A person expressing themselves. Participation, I think it involves more the act of responding. I think it involves more action. It’s actually doing something. For example, there are several times when the autarchy makes public participation processes, which I think doesn’t truly have much participation. I think if everyone, if most citizens would participate, I’d consider this civic participation. Also, when it comes to people complaining formally, complaining about the various services, this is also civic participation. At the same time, I talked more about municipalities and public services but for example everything that is about volunteering with cultural associations… volunteering or participating in actions of these associations of various orders... I think that if there is a river to be clean up, if it’s a cultural walk to get to know something else… I think that participating in these events that result in more information and the person leaving there more critical... this is also giving of your own time to know more. I also think it is civic participation.

E: If you had to characterize an active citizen, how would you do it?

Vi: Autonomous. Autonomous in thinking… Autonomous but at the same time knowing that they depend on others, interdependent. That is, someone with a strong sense of community, with a sense that they belong. Otherwise they’re an ego-maniac. There has to be a sense of belonging, to the community, to space. So... being a person, let’s see, there are a lot of things
coming to my mind, but let’s see… you know that autonomy says a lot, it already covers loads. The way I used it, I think it covers a lot. When we look at it from here, for me [a citizen] is a brave person is an autonomous person. So… a person… who expresses. They are honest, courageous, honest, (coughing) they don’t exactly have to be intelligent, it doesn’t matter. To be honest and concerned is enough. Being a watchful citizen, out of their box… isn’t it? Therefore, someone who is connected with the community, interdependent… autonomous and interdependent, within the environment where they live.

E: Do you think young people are generally active citizens?
Vi: I don’t want to be unfair because my perception is that... I was probably going to say no. Still… maybe because I get in touch with so many different groups and I think we live in a time when we have very big discrepancies between the attitudes and interests of these young people. I see things daily that scare me and I see other things that… WOW. Also… what doors do I have for reality? In truth I don’t contact with so many young people and sometimes my door to reality is a very bad door. For example, all the Facebook interactions. A horrible door… and why is it horrible? Because in my Facebook I get information from my friends and from the pages I like, all very much inside my bubble. Another example, I remember when I was working at the faculty, I had a girl friend who would say every now and again: “Blimey, what's going on here, I'm always getting this thing shared on here...” I think it was about, I don't know, mini videos or soap operas, or those big brothers and whatever. I’d say “blimey, I don’t get any of it!” (Laughter) and I started to realize “blimey, we have a perception of reality but... I get stuff from the active associations inside my bubble… that have nothing to do with this… isn’t it? And many times these are news [articles] that I receive, even of what is happening in Catalonia and let’s see what else... These are the things that show up in my wall, that I go see.” She received other things and I was like: "Hey, wow, really?!" and it would get me thinking. I think I do not know what’s happening in the world! (Laughter) I don’t have that perception. I feel that throughout these years of Cidade+ I also got to focus more on Cidade+ in itself and my... my contact is with the people who participate there. I do not know if anyone really understands the world, seriously understands it, because we are... for example, I can get an idea of what Iran is or what Iraq is and then I have a friend of mine who arrives from there and says that Iran is the most welcoming country in the world. What do I have in mind for Iran? I can have an idea that they are closed, that you are constantly in life threatening danger or that a woman can be raped and whatever. Maybe I’ve never been there, let’s see! So I don’t actually have a perception of it. If I watch a lot of television, maybe I think the world is lost. If I watch that Morangos com
Açucar\textsuperscript{106}, which I think does not even exist anymore, but... in the meanwhile, I get to
OPOLAB\textsuperscript{107} for example and I have the super gadget making young people who discover
everything for themselves, self-learners, really beautiful beings who just want to know to do all
things open source, free for everyone... I don’t know...

\textbf{E: And: How do you deal with the visions of other members that you disagree with?}

Vi: Well! At first I think I faked having active listening, you know? A clean listening. Then I’d
arrange all the arguments, I’d work all my argumentative art to not accept it or to turn the other
person to my side, I’d manipulate. Now, none of that. Not anymore. This is a community
project, even if I don’t agree, I have to understand that I don’t know everything. I don’t. It was
an idea I had, it was: “I know how to do things well!” (Laughter) I have a bit of shame about this
but there it is... and “No, you do not know everything Viviana!” Also, this [the project] is
supposed to be everyone's image, so that's it. That is basically it.

\textbf{E: What voices do you feel are being represented through the Cidade+?}

Vi: Without a doubt, all the people who feel the urgency of sustainability. All the people who
appreciate consistency with respect to sustainability. I know we're not 100% clean, harmless...
are we? There are no innocuous, clean companies. It doesn’t exist, does it? Even so, we are not
green-washing any brand! We don’t have Coca-cola selling here, we don’t have any of those
things... and for an environmentalist this is important because these big companies and big
brands clearly damage the environment and sustainability and therefore we could not have them
here. I know that this is important to many people here, that consistency, honesty... because
that's how these people live their lives themselves. I think [Cidade+] is the voice of all those
projects that try to survive from arts and crafts in a coherent way, which strive to do things in a
sustainable way. They are not in the same competition market as the others, companies and
other projects. With the restaurants for example, "fresh inspiration" and "Cacao"... they work
on doing things well MUCH more than the others. They are very concerned: that packaging
comes from there, that fruit comes from there and it doesn’t come from Chile. This is the same
with us. As we also assume this coherent position we are respecting this and giving voice to
these...

\textbf{E: You were saying that the most structural or radical change would come from within
each of us because you can have sustainable behaviour without being truly sustainable.
How do you see the connection between activism, political action and spirituality?}

\textsuperscript{106} Words meaning: Strawberries with Sugar, Portuguese soap-opera for teenagers.
\textsuperscript{107} OPO-LAB is a laboratory of architecture and design, created in 2010, in order to give an open space to explore the
creative use of new technologies in architecture, engineering, design and other artistic fields.
Vi: I think more and more the spiritual is very active, very, very, very active. I know the sharp impact I have on my family and some of my closest friends, the sharp impact! (Sigh) from the moment you become happier, you make better choices straight away, don’t you? You listen more to the other person instead of talking and not listening, and being worried about what you are going to say next. In concrete things, I don’t know. Getting my choices to be... the daily choices are much more easily sustainable than before, when I almost suffered with them as if I was “a victim of my love of sustainability”, do you know what I mean? Because if I can’t do this, I can’t do that, I’m a victim. And not anymore. But more than that... increasingly, there are immense spiritual masters, even the one who is now in a coma, Thich Nhat Hanh. They are great activists... and I mean great activists! This is because they can’t keep still. Even the attitude of those Tibetan or Thai monks who emulated themselves by the fire. This is anything but an apathetic attitude towards a political problem! They had no voice, the only way they had to get attention was to catch themselves on fire because they wanted to express themselves! They didn’t get into cave to meditate, isn’t it? Fuck! You catch yourself on fire! Still there are others. There is one now who is an Indian person who has the record on planted trees and is now fighting for the depollution of the rivers in India. I think that the spiritual masters all have their roles, there are those who go to the caves to meditate, man, because it is their nature... but there is a big load of activism. On the other hand, activists who have such a great love and a great energy that they give to causes they neglect themselves and, or they have exhaustions, or... Maybe [this happens] because they are lacking this step that will allow them to perceive the intimate relation in which they are with everything – For example, the Fontinha school. I saw some huge amounts of incoherence there!... And that was a shame! Many people even had actual nervous breakdowns. I remember a time when I was at Casa Viva, that woman from Poland was there... E: Eve... Eveline...

Vi: Yes. It was the first time I: “Wow, that’s really cool”, she made some emotional support cards for activists. I saw those in Casa Viva and I was like: “wow... that's cool, this is going up a pretty path.” The thing is that the activist... gives everything! They give everything and can give to such a degree that they forget they’re also part of the equation. If they aren’t well then the project dies. This woman was starting to give... how did she put it? “It's just a talking time with tea and cakes.” You have to be really well because you are part of the equation! You can’t kill yourself over the precipice because of a cause or... possibly it can make sense. If it does make

108 Thich Nhat Hanh is a 88 years old peace-activist and Buddhist leader, author of many books and founder of six monasteries and many practice centres in Europe and America.
109 Fontinha was a urban movement connected to the occupation of a former primary school building that was abandoned.
110 Casa Viva, meaning living house, was an anarchist space in the centre of Porto.
sense, if it’s conscientious… yes. I think that sometimes the activist may even lose some insight because they don’t have that side of stopping and realizing… even because enemies are also created easily. It’s something I still have to think about but I think this enemy attitude also doesn’t… There is something there that can take away the strength after the action that can take the strength away from the action. Strength and even efficiency! It does not mean they’re a friend. Though there is a lot of energy that you put into hatred that could be used in a more… Because sometimes the enemy… in terms of relationships: how many times have I not felt my parents as my enemies? Since then I understood everything that was happening in our relationship, I realized where they were coming from and I saw them without my “daughter filter”. I felt so much compassion for them and so much love. So much so that these days they can’t push my buttons. Those buttons that parents often push for their children that get make them lose it. They can’t push those buttons because I saw them. I understood. And love is transforming them. If I continued to react… to think: “okay, they’re my parents”, but actually acting like they were my enemies we would continue like that, in conflict. And actual love… There are many beautiful phrases that are said there on Facebook, right? But… Love really does change! We all want the same thing. We all want intimacy. If the truth is the same, if I speak truthfully, if I speak about the truth, your part that is there will resonate and come to the surface. You can be very sceptical, very closed and not wanting to… but you can also be very sceptical, closed and something lights up and you can either react more, get even crazier. We can never really know… but love has a lot of power, it is much more transformative than reaction. And hate is the enemy: “I think it is because it is the truth” while the rest is a construction that comes from this illusion of separation. Damn! I’m talking my mouth out here. I don’t even know why. Why did I come here?… Active citizenship! That’s all I’m feeling right now… It’s abstract… It’s not abstract! Now what are you going to do with this? I have no clue!
Verónica Interview :: 28th of September 2017

E: Hello Verónica. First I would like you to try to define Cidade+, the objectives and the mission of Cidade+...

Ve: So... Cidade+ started as a four day event to be held in the gardens of the Crystal Palace. The main objective was to deconstruct sustainability; to change it into small pieces so that any person and any organization could understand it; so that it could be integrated in their day-to-day, into their daily lives. This being said, the main goal is to change behaviours: from less sustainable to more responsible, conscious and sustainable.

E: Can you give us an example of things that you particularly like or respect... specifically in your group?

Ve: The things that I respect the most in our group is the learning that we are having throughout this entire process, from the moment I became part of this group. It had its ups and downs; even because there were transformations to Cidade+ over the years. Still, all this learning and especially in recent years the honesty that we try to bring to the team. Even because deep down, it is the honesty that allows us all the learning that we are doing, and for the most sustainable growth of Cidade+. Adding to this is also the value that we give to the perspective of each one of us, to the respect that each one of us brings [to the group].

E: We'll get back to the team theme again later. Do you discuss or chat about this work doing with your friends and family?

Ve: Friends, family, yes.

E: Partner?

Ve: Yes, my partner is completely involved and I even approach him with the very profound matters related to Cidade+, even matters that concern decision making within Cidade+.

E: ... And since the beginning of your relationship with Cidade+?

Ve: Yes. Since the beginning. Even because he’s not exactly from this area, maybe the way he got involved with the theme went on growing throughout the event. He became more aware of what this thing called sustainability is all about, what it involves...

E: Are you with Cidade+ since the first event?

Ve: I already organized the first event. The first six months, six… not so many, at least three months. Cidade+ was introduced to the city hall and I showed up after three or four months. However, they already had Branco´s story of opening a contest. So, they liked to meet me and they were missing... actually, there wasn’t a strong reason in the sense of ‘we need someone else’… or maybe yes because someone was leaving and it was important to have someone else of this area. Even because the way the event was initially presented, there was a lot of ambition
there. (Laughs) I don’t think anyone had any idea of the size of the event. And from that point on wards I ended up organizing things to get out of the project [I was in] and integrated myself within the Cidade+ team.

**E: Have you abandoned that project?**

Ve: I continue more or less connected but not in this same way. The research project has also ended. I continue to be involved mainly in the coordination in other urban planning works. However, it has nothing to do with how it was before.

**E: Has your work in the Cidade+ always been paid or was it somehow voluntary?**

Ve: Since I’ve been in Cidade+ there’s always been a way for my work to get paid. From there to be fairly paid is a long way. There may have been a month or another that this didn’t happen. That’s it really, there’s always been a need to have some other forms of [financial] compensation, from other projects or work outside Cidade+. I can however consider that the work has always been paid in some way.

**E: Do you think there is any difference in the way paid workers and volunteers are treated? If so, in what sense?**

Ve: Anyone who is part of or in Cidade+ is always cherished by us for the commitment that the person ends up having, this in accordance to the conditions that we present. When these conditions are agreed upon by both parties we end up having the same treatment. Now, of course the requirements are obviously in accordance to the work and its pay. As in terms of treatment with each person, I cannot distinguish the way I deal with my colleagues, Viviana and Mateus, and the way I treat people who are working voluntarily.

**E: In what way do you consider that the purpose of your work can affect the lives of other young people?**

Ve: (Laughs) that's the dream, is it not? Without wanting to be arrogant, I wish I could influence the lives of all the young people who pass through Cidade+. Just the simple fact that I consider that Cidade+ is not just a project, it is also how I want to face my life and try to be an example. And I think this is the most direct way that we can influence whoever it is. It is to be the example of what we communicate or show through a project like Cidade+. Just in itself this has an enormous potential for influence. Moreover, through the formats that we bring in the initiatives to Cidade+: from the workshops more aimed at children and families, some of its contents, activities with the van, the bus with the contents in the area of sustainability, the environmental education bus and all of that. These always have the potential to influence. This is one of the main objectives, it’s to influence behaviours of adults, young people and children. Now whether it really is effective or not this is what we are... actually, this is one of the main
challenges that we are facing now in Cidade+: how can we measure that impact, this influence that Cidade+ has on its participants? And now I remembered that at the beginning I spoke of the Cidade+ as an event and I did not mention the rest. (Laughs)

**E: Do you want to add something?**

Ve: Yes, because the question was “what is Cidade+”, isn’t it? It started as a four day event, this was four years ago, but in the meantime it has begun to transform into a project, and at this moment, as a movement. As it is something that we are so faithful too, the project turns into a movement. Everything is connected: event, project and movement. So, in addition to the four days, we have the warm-up sessions – close sessions with the population and with organizations – and each year there are new ways for us to try to reach more and more people. Summarizing, Cidade+ is an event that lasts for those 4 days along with the warm-ups; it is a project because it’s more elongated and we are constantly thinking of new ways to achieve the main goal of bringing sustainability to the daily lives of people and organizations; in addition, it is a movement because it brings people together, more and more people, who really want to bring sustainability to their lives in a very real way.

**E: What kind of activities or functions are particularly interesting or rewarding for you?**

Ve: Activities or functions...

**E: That you have inside Cidade+...**

Ve: (Pause) Of all the things that I have been doing and that are the most gratifying... deep down, it is [all] what I do. (Laughs) It’s to always be researching and paying attention to the new projects that pop up and that we want to give relevance to, and pass this information on to people. Another thing that gives me great pleasure is being able to have contact with completely different people, from completely different organizations; some people with positions of great relevance and of great importance – I mean, they all matter –, by this I’m saying with very important positions within organizations, I’m talking about municipalities, companies, universities... And to have contact with the young people, with the children, with teachers, with projects that work with homeless people for example. This is another one of those things that fascinates me the most, to have contact with all these people in all these different ways, and at the same time to be able to put them in the same space to discuss topics that are really important for the society as a whole. Besides the issues with the programming, something else that also gives me great pleasure is to work with the people I work with. Of course I would like the team to be bigger, and it’s getting bigger, is it not? I can already put 5 people in the email. (Laughs) There used to be just two of us. So that's it, working with the people I work with and... [There! Thank you for asking me these questions because it's really good. Maybe I'm not reflecting in
depth but it's good to think a little bit about these matters. ... and there is a challenge every day; not only at a personal level, at the personal organization level, but it is a challenge because we never know what’s going to appear on that day to bring more knowledge and even emotion to Cidade+.

E: Now moving to the other side: the most challenging, difficult things for you, within what you are doing in Cidade+?

Ve: But harder, because they are all challenging.

E: Yes...

Ve: I look at the activities of Cidade+ and they are always very challenging. The most difficult are perhaps the ones related to... [ohhhh sound] I forgot another one which is somehow related, it’s more challenging. What was the word that you used in the previous question?

E: Rewarding...

Ve: Rewarding. The ones I like the most are those related to human resources! This is one of the hardest themes for me and the most challenging because it is in an area that I’d enjoy to develop more and that I need more knowledge to do this. Therefore, despite of being the easiest at the same time, for me the most difficult is... the most difficult one is to create the team. By creating I don’t mean attachment but to create commitment! To get people to commit to Cidade+ so that we are able to count on them from year to year. However, this is also very much associated with the financial matter and that is one of the most difficult issues of the event itself. I have also been involved and I continue to be indirectly involved in the financial management of the project, and for me this is the project's most difficult activity. It’s funny that this is complex... oh, I’m missing the word! (Pause)... it’s a paradox! That is: the same way that it challenges me more it is the most fascinating; to deal with all these people is what makes Cidade+ more challenging for me! This is also perhaps related to my own structure, my profile... is it not? That means, simultaneously what fascinates me – communicating with people – also brings me a certain difficulty, a certain challenge to deal with all these people, from such different... Especially at the conference I think this is what is most challenging for me. Ha! And the question of the schedule, of being our own self-time managers. This is really a very big challenge.

E: Do you remember any period or situation in which you felt particularly frustrated or disappointed in your work?

Ve: Of course I remember! (Laughs) Firstly, because I do not get satisfied with my work. And this causes me to be frustrated several times. And especially this phase that I’m going through and last year as well because I felt like I wasn’t doing a good enough job and that I could do better. But that is somehow already a bit common in my personality. (Laughs) The moments
when I was most frustrated were in the first few years as well. It mainly happened with Viviana, it was when I dedicate time to do a task to do with matters of communication like with the Cidade+ design. I’d go to Viviana and she’d change everything. (Laughter) I think we’ve already… we’ve already talked about it! I was completely frustrated! I had been there for so long, if it was for that I wouldn’t do it and she could do it, isn’t it? Now I look at this moment in a different way because at this moment I can perceive that these were just my insecurities. It was because I was not sure of the work I had done. Today I look at these moments as in 'I did it but the other person can complement it to make it even better'. Probably if she made it first, she’d come to me and I would also change it. I recognize those moments of frustration. However, now they have stopped happening. Frustration with the fact that it is an event, a sustainability project-movement and we do not have our financial sustainability guaranteed. This results in of a lot of frustration. Another issue is also related to the schedules: it is a sustainability event and for one reason or another we sometimes get very tired, especially with the proximity of the event. Being that the event is about sustainability, sustainability also has to do with our healthier moulds of living and these situations turn out not to be so healthy, mentally healthy. And that is also the result of some frustration. This being said there is nothing that leaves me completely frustrated with Cidade+, especially now. There is a lot going on and there are these things that I’ve been talking about. I don’t think I’m... ha! We’re in a borrowed space, which does not really have all the conditions that we imagined in a workspace. That too sometimes leaves me a bit uncomfortable. Ha! One of the things that I can’t really say is frustration, it is paradoxical as well. That is: we ended up starting to develop the Cidade+ without knowledge. At the same time that this brings so much satisfaction, also when I think about the time it took us to learn and develop things, it also brings frustration. I think I already said that it is immense (laughs).

E: Can you give us a concrete example of how your work contributed to the participation?

Ve: I also remembered situations when I ended up going to places that was more related to my professional path and there I also communicated about Cidade+ for example. I had already been two or three times to the Faculdade de Letras 111 to talk about my professional path… I did notice that when I brought this to the university, and I talked about Cidade+… I felt, I felt their eyes shining, in some kind of WOW and I think so, in those moments I think so, it had some impact. I think so.

E: Can you give us some concrete example in which your work contributed to the civic or political participation of young people?

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Ve: The moments of open space technology and beyond this. Deep down Cidade+ appears to raise questions, does it not? To bring knowledge, to create, to provoke citizens. This provocation is only to awaken consciousness, [for people] to become more active, socially more active. Therefore all initiatives of Cidade+ or almost all do this.

E: How do you describe the type of leadership or management that your project has?

Ve: Wow. How do I describe the type of leadership?

E: Who starts, leads, drives?

Ve: Ha! Really? Identify?

E: Yes, what happens in terms of management? How is decision making processed, shared or less shared, how does that...?

Ve: This has been changing throughout the project. Definitely, Branco was very much that element of leadership at the beginning and for me he was always an element to take into consideration, a prospect to take into consideration in the development of Cidade+. Then in his absence there was a moment then... Who would take Branco´s place? There was a lot of pressure on me. Then naturally the leadership matters were taken over by Viviana, I think. Although it is still a shared leadership in a way. Shared in the sense that I think it is Viviana who is definitely leading but she counts on me for support very much as well. So I’d say that maybe it is a shared leadership. Now I don’t know terms, is it not? I don’t even think it’s properly shared… but do you understand what I'm saying?

E: Somehow, you feel that you have an impact on decisions making...

Ve: Yes, definitely in the decisions. In the decision making process I think the presence of all three of us is important. And each one of us has a very great weight in the decisions that are made, really. Then at a strategy level... This speaking of the three, right? Because it is definitely a leadership that is very supported in the partnerships too... the leadership, the path of Cidade+, it is also very supported by the perspectives of the partners and in the very people who, directly or indirectly, collaborate with Cidade+. Yet I would still call it a shared leadership.

E: And when you want to express an opinion on a specific theme within your group, do you feel that you can do it openly? That you are heard?

Ve: Yes, now more than ever... And when I am not heard, I feel it is up to me to say: "I'm not being heard and I want you to hear me because I consider important what I'm saying."

E: How do you deal with the visions of other members you do not agree with?

Ve: Initially (laughs), because I am speaking of four years, four years of project involvement, this being directly related to the growth we are having. Relational growth, is it not?... with the people. Initially I think I wanted to impose my idea, not that I didn’t respect other's ideas but I probably
looked at different opinions as something that would shake my self-confidence. A different opinion. Oh. (Laughs) That’s when we were more immature. Currently, I try to understand what that different opinion is, what that different perspective is bringing, because Veronica related concerns no longer make sense and I started to look at the project as a... What’s important is the project it's not me, is it not? It's not Veronica, it's not Mateus. It's the project and where we get to with the project. So from there, it's all spectacular! When another perspective arrives, it’s to explore: Does it make sense? Or does it not? Is it important? Isn’t it? It is really about realizing what is important for the project, whether it is my perspective, or whether it is another or whether it is the mixture of the two.

**E:** Do you consider that your group is reflexive and self-critical?

**Ve:** Yes, I have no doubts. Sometimes even too much. (Laughs)

**E:** What kind of opportunities are there for members to contribute with suggestions and decide on strategies and initiatives?

**Ve:** Opportunities? All of them! There are only not those that... and I speak against myself here, those that either I’m too tired or don’t want to question. There are only not those from laziness because there are all opportunities to contribute!

**E:** What voices do you feel are being represented by Cidade+?

**Ve:** (pause) All voices, the voices of all the people who we cross paths with in our independent, individual life. All, in quotes. All is a figure of speech. Those voices that pass through us individually and that we in turn bring to Cidade+. The voices of the people who participate in Encontros da Comunidade; I think those voices, which of course are incited to a large degree from our own filters and also our "evaluation" in a way. It is not an evaluation, it is a selection. But we do always try to bring things that come up in our everyday lives as well. As Cidade+ has impact on the day-to-day or it has the goal of having impact on people's daily lives. This means we don’t get disconnected from our daily, weekly, weekend lives… anything really.

**E:** And in relation to participation and citizenship... How would you define "active citizenship"?

**Ve:** (laughs) Active citizenship... Active citizenship is an attention... this is a difficult question! Like this so suddenly and without thinking too much, it is a daily attention for the events that occur in the day-to-day. Daily attention on the part of the citizens, on the part of the people who are going through their everyday lives and have an active stance. A stance of action in matters that interfere, which are all the matters! That interfere with the act of being a citizen, of living in

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112 Encontros da comunidade, meaning community meetings are a precursor event of convergences between, friends, mentors, curious people, partners and critics of Cidade+
society, in community, in a collective.

E: Has your participation in this initiative, in this group, somehow transformed this perception you have of yourself?
Ve: Fully, totally and completely! Even because five years ago Cidade+ opened a new world for me. There were already many things I had, but it transformed me, it continues to transform me. If before I used to think that... hey! No way... Before I was nothing... actively! Active citizen, not at all! And nowadays, I already consider myself active but I know that I still have much more to do, but it totally transformed me!

E: Do you think young people are generally active citizens?
Ve: No, no...

E: Why not?
Ve: At least the ones I have been in touch with. I think it's very related to the education we have both in school and in the education we have at home. It's about being politically correct. It's very related to the Portuguese as well. It's very cultural! To not say something because it may look bad or because it will harm [people’s] susceptibility. Yet there are also ways and ways to act. With this, what I see in young people is related to two things: with education but also with the amount of distractions that exist today. Fully! I think it’s these two things, the strongest.

E: And do you think that active citizenship is important for young people’s lives?
Ve: Completely because it is a way for them to be integrated into society. So it is really fundamental!

E: In terms of a connection with Europe: is the European Union in any way relevant to your work?
Ve: It always is. Even because we are integrated into the European Union. Also the inspiration that we... It's very much that thought of 'global thinking, local acting'. So it's important around this but we're constantly on the lookout for what's happening, not only here in Porto but also on the other side of the world, in Europe and on the other side of the world as well. So to be following what is happening in the European Union at different levels, from legislation to social dynamics to environmental impacts, [all of this] is fundamental to the work of Cidade+, yes.

E: Do you consider that Cidade+ is affected by the political uncertainty that characterizes Europe at the moment, which even includes the possibility of some member countries leaving the EU?
Ve: If Cidade+ is affected?

E: Yes, if it is affected by this political uncertainty that is being lived.
Ve: If we think of Cidade+ as a 4-day event, it somehow ends up... I never really thought about
this in practice. Thinking in a global way my answer is affirmative straight away… That yes, it will be affected if we think about the support that the event has of an autarchy, a political entity. But in reality, I don’t know. In the way that it does happen yes, but in reality what gives Cidade+ strength would maybe not be affected. On the contrary, it would be more of a subject to bring and discuss, to involve all the main actors, I think this would be it.

**E:** How does the relationship with the media affect your work?

Ve: It brings visibility to the event. This is the main goal of any project as well. We do not have a very strong relationship with the media but it is essentially to give visibility, to reach as many people as possible.

**E:** Do you characterize the event of Cidade+ as successful?

Ve: Yes. In spite of all the difficulties, of all obstacles, of all the challenges... Completely successful!

**E:** What social results do you think it produced?

Ve: More conscious people. This is one of the concerns, one of our challenges, to measure this impact. But... the shift of some behaviours, people who are more awake/aware to those matters that relate to sustainability… And it inspired, it certainly inspired people to be more attentive to the matters related to everyday practices...
Interview to Mateus :: 31st of July 2017

E: We would like to start with a more general part, to understand your perception of the mission of Cidade+.

Ma: The mission of Cidade+ is above all to raise awareness of sustainability issues in a comprehensive way. We always have to talk about the environmental issue. In the three vertices of sustainability the environment is the one with the most pressing urgency in alerting people to what is happening and sensitizing them to the dangers that we are in as a species... Therefore for me, the vision of the Cidade+ is kind of in two levels. First of all it has a lot to do with the average citizen. It’s above all to ease access to information, bring alternatives and show people that it’s possible to do something in their daily lives, no matter how insignificant it seems. One person is always one person but when many people do the same thing then the scale is completely different. After this it would be like passing from that level to the other higher levels, within the various points you have because that’s just the way it is: there are companies, there are civil movements... be it through associations, cooperatives... whatever, but they are also linked; there is education, there are state institutions and there is a lack of communication between the various interveners. We felt that it was really necessary to have some points where they would arrive and could all be present somehow, and exchange some information and with this permit and facilitate the approximation between them.

E: Right. You have chosen the environmental focus, why is it the most important for you?

Ma: Because many times, when you currently talk about sustainability, people's first thoughts have started to connect more to the environmental issues; it depends on how the word is spoken, if we only talk about the word sustainability. Also, when it comes to sustainability many times what happens with the media and information that people have access to, is that this sustainability word is very attached to a second one which is financial, financial sustainability. That is, the economic part of sustainability is the part that ends up always being preponderant in the decision of whatever it is. And... sustainability is one three vectors thing; and all three are linked in the background: it’s society, it’s the environment and it’s the economic part. Deep down what we, at least what I felt was that: We are living beings, we are animals like all the others, and like all the others we depend on the environment where we’re inserted. In the last two hundred years, what we have basically done is to place our very existence at risk. It’s as simple as that. We may even sometimes think this is a false issue because everything ends. We all know that the planet is finite; we all know that one day this will eventually all end and regardless
of our good intentions there is an inevitability of things; life will eventually end. The question is: do we have the need to rush this process? Do we have the need to be so completely unfocused from what the near future is to the point of only worrying about today and not thinking that there is also a tomorrow?

E: You talk about your work and what do you do with your family and friends?

Ma: Yes. I wouldn’t say that it is something that I do with a huge regularity, but yes, I do occasionally when the time is right. Just like everything else, sensitization is an important part, or I would not be part of this project. I sometimes try to have some distance in my social life, in a way to be able to have some normality in my relations and not exactly be that... how can I name this character... that little fanatic that seems to have no other subject and must always draw the subject back there. But yes, I do still talk about it. At the family level too, a little, not so much, maybe... but also especially with my parents.

E: Regarding your specific job here in *Cidade+*, how does this work here relate to the broader goals of the event?

Ma: At the moment my specific work is a bit more distant but it turns out to be a necessary part. From what I can say it’s something like: some of my contacts still currently flow into *Cidade+*. Now at this time my specific work has been very much more focused on the logistics of the event, the operations that happen within the event, with the accounting section and also some administrative matters. From what I can say that has been one of the investments of this year, was to have the part of the signage and the bet on materials that were made for the benches for example. Instead of going for the materials that would be the most common, there was a certain concern to look for materials which to some degree transmit a bit of the idea that we’re trying to deliver. That is, we ended up looking for materials that are reused from other materials and at the moment it is a small step; these are small things that – for the ones who are attentive or even for those who are not –, these are things that we know are a step. We could perfectly have made our benches and our whole signage in wood, but we felt that wood was not a resource, at least I felt this. Knowing that there are other alternatives, at a certain point I felt that wood was not the kind of resource I wanted to use. In this case I would prefer, I did prefer the COREtec\textsuperscript{113} and other materials, the concern was there, even knowing that at the level of cost it could potentially be a little bigger. Why would we do what everybody else already does, when we know that it doesn’t bring any kind of change and that there are alternatives at the moment in the market, at this moment; [we opted for] things that are not only more durable but also partially represent the

\textsuperscript{113}Coretech isothermic panels is an eco-friendly, recycled material that is dimensionally stable, and acts as thermal and acoustic insolation.
concepts that we want to implement; things that are re-used from other materials, many of which that are at the end of their shelf life and that are no longer considered as junk, but are now considered as a resource once again. And for me the bet on this type of material is already a way of try to bring some kind of change to the things that are done. We have an alternative and if there is someone who asks us what kinds of materials we are using, someone who pays a bit more attention and realizes that the materials are a little different, it is then that we can give the solutions we have, it works a bit more like this.

**E: What kind of activities and functions are particularly interesting or rewarding for you?**

Ma: Above all, the most interesting or gratifying for me, I think it has mainly been on two levels: one that is what you see during the event... a very relaxed, very familiar environment that also ends up giving people that same well-being in a pleasant space such as the crystal palace gardens; these by themselves allow people to have a moment of relaxation, in a place they usually come to but with a little extra something, all this really shows within the environment we have and it’s something that we are given to convey. In a way we all like some gratification but above all and quite frankly, I do not develop *Cidade+*... it was not my goal to expect some kind of gratification from others. It was a project that was born because I felt that there was a flaw at that level, especially of communication... and if no one else was doing it... why not do it myself? It’s not a search for something external, it’s more like something that I felt. Being that it’s not happening, so... I want to do this.

**E: What kind of activities are the most difficult or the most challenging for you?**

Ma: at this moment? It has been a little bit of an interesting evolution. Maybe when I started I was a bit more focused in that direction, and now it’s something that I keep getting further and further away from, and in a way I prefer to stay away. It has been mainly the part of the partnerships, everything that has to do with partnerships, more institutional or less institutional. These are things that require a certain kind of formality in some sense; I have always had a bit of an aversion to certain types of formalities. Even in sequence of the previous question, I also like the logistic part because it makes me stay in touch with the gardener here, with the guy from *Pavilhão Rosa Mota*, who is there and is not the boss, he's just that person to whom I have to ask for X or Y. As a general rule I like it better when I’m in contact with the people, not very well put but I would say it is simpler. However, as a norm, to form a partnership or to reach certain people in an institution, there’s a need for certain other kind of care, which I also know how to have... Now I’m increasingly less connected to this task but I already had to and have been responsible for that part for some time. It was something that didn’t quite do it for me

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**114 Pavilhão Rosa Mota: formally the Cristal Palace, the structure where Cidade+ is held.**
even then. It was something that didn’t please me, it was not about having to always be adjusting my vocabulary, measuring all the words I say, having to think clearly about what I’m going to say because the word X can be interpreted differently. There it is, with the people with whom I currently contact I don’t have to have these kinds of worries because people don’t tend to complicate things that much...

E: Do you remember any period when you felt some frustration with some function you were performing?

Ma: Clearly. In that one. Especially because at that point the issue of partnerships was very much tied to the issue of funding and so... In a way it was me who had to look around a bit, search for funding and possible sponsors. It was from email to phone call, to booking the meeting, to having to get there and share the presentation... Even when we believe in the project so much, at least for me, no matter how much I believe in the project and it doesn’t really matter how enthusiastic I feel to go on talking about it, to have to present the same kind of speech in ten different places... it gets to a time when it’s a bit mechanical, you lose that first thing... maybe at the first and second time it was fun, from the third onwards it’s something that... and when you repeat this, I don’t know how many times, I don’t know, it becomes a bit... for me, it becomes a bit boring. It was then that I felt that it was no longer for me. I’m glad that there was someone there, internally, who was more directed to this challenge and wanted to get it. This ended up releasing me. And it was a relief! It was a relief for me!

E: How do you describe the type of leadership or the type of management that exists in the Cidade+?

Ma: If we are to look at it at the level of what it is, throughout the year... it is of a shared leadership because deep down we end up being three people. It can be said, people with the same power, that simply speak with each other and decide between themselves, sometimes agree, sometimes disagree. When there is a disagreement there is always a presentation of arguments. After everyone presents their arguments there’s a kind of question. It ended up being three of us so it turns out to be somewhat easy, if there are two people who don’t agree with something, the decision ends up being taken. In the beginning when things are being tweaked, I mean, sometimes it's a bit complex but I think it’s ok for us, at the moment it's already a very... at least for me, it's already completely internalized. I may not agree with a certain situation but in a way it's my team that... it's a team of three: if two people think it's the way to go, let's go that way and if it doesn’t work, at least we tried. People learn from experience. Sometimes it’s necessary that we have already gone through a certain error, but it’s necessary that other people also go through it. There were times when there were things that I didn’t even agree with and I thought these
things were a certain error and ended up being given them as that after all it was me that was wrong. So, the leadership level between us… The leadership is a divided thing, there isn’t a defined leadership as such. There are three people who discuss things with each other, who debate and make decisions together. At this moment we already end up having things somehow compartmentalized there are certain things that I no longer question. As a rule, in terms of the programming Veronica has been with that task for some time, she already has the autonomy to make certain decisions, just as I have the autonomy to take others and Viviana has the autonomy to deliberate over the others. Now if we look further into the event phase, that month where there are some more people who join in and, ok, some leadership is necessary. There are people who are not as much aware of the matter as we are and it is necessary to guide them. I think this is when we have leadership. For me, leadership is done by example and not by imposition. That's one of those things that I try to do, even in other jobs. There are certain things that have to be imposed because sometimes people do not realize the reasons why and there are certain tasks where there’s not enough time to explain the whys. Still, as a general rule it’s something I try to avoid and I do try to do it by demonstrating. There are things I have to hire person X because I don’t know how to do it but as a general rule the leadership is by example. May be I’ve already been through a similar experience than the one you are going through and I have already done the same and if that’s the case I do the same and I am with you and I do it, I just simply have the knowledge that it takes to do it.

E: Do you think that between volunteers and the people who work with the Cidade+ there is any kind of difference in treatment?

Ma: (pause)… Yes, there is. I don’t want to be hypocritical to the point of saying there is not. When I say that there is a difference in treatment it’s from the point of view that a person who usually does a certain task has already been working with the machine for some time. If we consider Cidade+ as a type of machine, there are pieces that are already well oiled and as such they already have a certain type of perception of things. It happens that we’ve had volunteers who’ve already been part of three editions for example. We have some cases, Mr. Júlio, Luís, Abílio... they are the example of three people who have been coming since the second edition and who have been volunteers every year. They have possibly been told a few things in the first year because they hadn’t understood and that nowadays they wouldn’t be told about it again. Maybe there are also people who get here and are given a certain type of input which we have already been given by other people. Sometimes we’ve already understood it doesn’t work that way and as such we also have to know not to devalue the people’s opinion, because we feel that they were given with good intentions. Simultaneously, we also have to know how to filter some
of this information because also throughout all of this there is also an experience of things that leads us to make decisions like the ones we make.

E: Is Cidade+ your main job or are you divided between other jobs outside Cidade+?

Ma: So far it is the main one, probably from now this will change, from September.

E: For any particular reason?

Ma: So far it is the main one, probably from now this will change, from September.

E: For any particular reason?

Ma: Yes. The financial situation is one of them. Secondly, there was also a path that had to be taken to this point, which perhaps needed these three people to solidify a certain kind of project that has been through these four editions, to gain its personality, its identity. Its functioning method and its internal organization have been worked on and there are a number of things that have now been done. Cidade+ still needs people who are working for it all year long, but perhaps not with the same focus that existed up until now. Maybe at this moment one or two people are enough. At this moment, in my opinion, looking at the profiles that we have, either Veronica or Viviana are more essential than I am. Observing the roles they are carrying out, the tasks that are inherent in their positions internally and in what my job currently is at this moment, there is no need for such a huge follow-up. Mainly because I have the accounting part right now, I have been following it all year round but it's not something that gives me a lot of work all year round, the logistic part is not something that is currently needed either. Although it’s an event with some dimension in the city at this time, Cidade+ does not need someone who’s working for twelve months on it in terms of what its logistic reality is and a series of other things. It’s a completely different reality from a summer festival, a music festival for example, with a whole other type of logistics. We do not have anywhere near the same kind of logistics. We have other kinds of things. As the bulk has already been made up to this moment, what I have come to speak to them about is that, probably, from the end of this Cidade+ my position is not so necessary or so prolonged in time. At least it’s not like one of those things where you are doing certain things every day for I do not know how many hours, there isn’t even that much work to do. I will continue to be connected to Cidade+. I will continue to develop the things I do here. However, I don’t have the need to be five or six days a week, for five or six or seven or eight or even nine hours, all year round. There is no need for me to work on a project that at least for now, does not even have work for me. At the most, I would create entropy for their work, or I would be fooling myself and them because there is no work to justify this within the area where I have been now. As the idea for this project is that it will last throughout time, with me also being one of the people who want this to happen, I have to be aware that there are other jobs that are more needed to be kept throughout this time and financial availability. At this moment, there is [financial availability] and it is to pay the work of these people and not mine.
E: Do you think that your participation in this Cidade+ group has changed your vision of what it's like to be active?

Ma: It has changed, but mainly more in the perspective of having to be less active in certain things because there must also be a certain detachment. Here we are currently bombarded with a certain amount of information on a daily basis. It reaches a point when perhaps the call is for a person to want to do a lot, want to get involved in a lot stuff. Later this [attitude/life style] is not healthy and I’ve also had experiences of this throughout my life. In this to say that we also need to take time for ourselves. Time is managed in a different way by each one of us. There are people who are involved in certain causes in their daily lives, it’s almost a hobby, others not so much. I have some causes with which I connect with and I like to be active. With the Cidade+ the input is about engaging more with more and more things. This is something that I soon realized, that in terms of my mental health it would not be positive for me and it would cause me to wear out much faster. So in this way maybe even I participated at that level... my participation became much less active with a series of other projects. I keep doing my things with my time in my daily life but not so much involved with other projects. Then all of it also becomes a little complicated when you have a series of partners, because you get involved with A or B, and why do not you get involved with C, D, and E? So the management here has to be a little smarter. One time or another I can get involved with a certain cause but at the moment I try to make these things very sporadic, so there is also no difference in treatment. There must also be some balance at this level too.

E: Do you think citizenship would be important in young people's lives?

Ma: It is, but it has to be cultivated and it cannot be imposed. It can’t be seen as something that if you don’t [do] you will be less than... It has to be something that is stimulated in such a way that people feel they have something to give. If people are [citizens/participants] because there’s a social pressure to be, it doesn’t work because it creates a series of mixed feelings. Especially going to several places since we were children. Our education is done in a classroom. We stay there during I don’t know for how many years... listening to someone shout a series of information and for me this is not exactly a productive thing. It is productive from the point of view that if we want to prepare people for only a certain knowledge, and to realize what their capacities are within the labor market, that’s ok but it’s a part of our lives. If we effectively want people to be an active participant in their day-to-day lives there must be another kind of stimulus, which will not be given in this place. It will be given with the people. Children and young people going to visit a series of places, going through a series of experiences that will in a way raise awareness when they grow up and make decisions.
E: What do you think *Cidade*+ tries to teach or educate the youth and the public?

Ma: It has a lot to do with this that we’re talking about, planting the seed. I think our seed is a little bit like this: it’s a question of changing people’s daily behaviors and also bringing a bit of awareness to this active citizenship. We have several things that appeal to a more active citizenship. If people change certain behaviors, there it is: active citizenship.

E: Is the European Union relevant in any way to your work? Is there a connection, and why?

Ma: To start with because Portugal is a country that belongs to the EU. While being part of the EU we have a number of constraints but we also have a number of perks. It can be very easy to speak very well or it can be very easy to speak very badly. As a country we have developed a lot since becoming part of the EU. We have made great progress and I am not just talking about structural issues because this is the most obvious thing that we have. Since we entered the EU it’s been the structural question, ranging from the road systems or the modernization of the country in a number of things. This is visible socially as well with a series of changes, perhaps they’re not all better but I also think many of them are for the best. We started having access to much more information, we can go to other places with much more ease, and these are also important things. It’s normal that there are advances and fallbacks but in my opinion it brings a lot of positive [things] just as it brings some negatives. Is it not? Because we end up being much more conditioned by a number of other things. As there are these various factors for us as *Cidade*+, it is an important question because we live in this same ecosystem. This ecosystem is built of: first the regional, the Porto one, secondly the North of Portugal, then Portugal as a whole… the Iberian Peninsula, Europe, the World… is it not? And within these is the question of the EU. It ends up at this moment deliberating many things that the various countries have: rules, norms and a series of things by which we have to be guided by. And as we have to guide ourselves, many of these things become important for us to realize a little bit about what is happening, not only around us but also what we have to do or what content we have to bring. In a way to be within what our time actually is, in fact. Currently, the theme for this year were the objectives for sustainable development. It’s not only an EU thing but it is a very strong theme also in the EU at this moment. We now kind of effectively have to understand: ok… What is this actually? What are people talking about? What are the objectives? How are we thinking through this process that is being done? What timings are there? What experiences are being done and where? By whom? How to reach some of these people? What to draw from this? What is most pressing to bring and to inform [people] about? And bring it to the program… to make the information available to the public, be it general or more specialized public. That is, these are all
things that within the EU are almost already like a kind of macrocosm of what our reality is and something that we cannot ignore in any way. We have to understand how it’s working...
Henrique Interview :: 20th of October 2017

E: First of all, on the objectives and the broader mission of Cidade+, how would you define Cidade+? What definition do you have for Cidade+?

H: For me Cidade+ is the promoter or the facilitator! It is the initiative that acts as a facilitator of networking among people who are interested, involved, in sustainability.

E: How was your entry in this group?

H: Viviana is the director of the communication and commercial part. In addition, she joins many other functions and the communication part is an extensive task. And it’s a lot of work in terms of time, it’s already known, right? The design... It takes a lot of time to do a small amount. So we started the relationship (I don’t know if I can say this...), at that time they were already thinking of joining other people, including Francisca for the small sales, but people who were actually effective part-time with a contractual connection so to speak, as a “self-employed worker”115 but with a serious verbal contract. So they were going to restructure the team and I incorporated that part that was missing, which is the design and communication part. Now, for that part of the graphic design, for the website, anyway... then it extends to a lot of things, to photography, to video… I could have done many more things, but...

E: Regarding Cidade+, leaving your personal pathway a little behind: Can you give us some example of the things that you most appreciate or that you most respect, within this group?

H: I appreciate their courage to do a project like this, year after year, without any concrete funds. It's always a struggle. Every year. I appreciate the persistence, the perseverance, that they believe, and try until the end and that they keep on achieving. And often things are done just for the love of it, without making much money or even spending out of our own pocket and all this for a cause that they believe in and that moves them.

E: How do you think that your specific work with the communication and design part relate to the broader goals of Cidade+? What contribution does it bring?

H: Above all Cidade+ already has an aspect of credibility, in terms of principles, of values of ethics. It is already taken for granted among the people who know Cidade+. And then the part of the communication that it annually transmits... we may have a brand that is unethical but has good communication. With that said, this communication – when I say good communication it is a good image or a good identity – a good placement of communication before the public,

115 In portuguese, “trabalhador a recibos verdes”, means someone who passes his own receipts, with no formal contract normally used for sporadic work.
communication itself can make a good image. Good communication can change the reality of lack of ethics or whatever else of a company or organization. And here in this case, it is to reinforce the value that Cidade+ already has. So, I believe that communication is something that is fundamental, because you can also pass the wrong message. This happened a few years ago when people said that there was some amateurism in Cidade+. Basically, the values, the intentions, the passion and the flags were there but then it is just how things are done! It is obvious that it's all about funding as well, right? You can’t do everything, a lot of things with a few people. As you get more people and who are qualified in various areas, you also keep on improving the aspect of professionalism, in quotes.

E: Do you remember any period or specific situation where you felt particularly disappointed or frustrated with your work with Cidade+?

H: I remember that at the beginning, shortly after the start when I began to collaborate, I did a very detailed research of a task. I did a very detailed research and realized that I could not go into that detail because there was no time, there wasn’t even an interest. Because it depends a lot on the level you want to dig in, isn’t it? The thing is that sometimes a few little levels of deepness are enough and the work is done! And this had to do with the research about how to do a press release and how to create a manual to launch a press release! It was just that there was nothing. There was no press release, there were no directions, manual, I do not know what else! Obviously we all got to know what a press release is and how to do it but eventually there would not be so much need to do such a deep job and I was disappointed. But at the same time [I was] grateful for what happened because I realized that it was not the way to go in this context. I had to be much more direct when doing things. Then it happened, already at the doors of the 2017 edition, the week before there were spelling mistakes some text errors and I remember that it was sent. Anyway, it’s usually always sent for the workgroup proof reading. And if the work group does not do the proof reading because they’re busy and I don’t know what else then all of a sudden we have to send it to the graphic printers. It got out with mistakes. And I remember that there was one or another mistake that I was a bit disappointed with. And it was one of those that we took many prints and that was spread among many people and with a typographical error. It sucks.

E: Now about the more democratic and structural issues of the group, of Cidade+...

How would you describe the type of leadership or the type of management that exists in Cidade+?

H: I feel it’s a mixture between horizontal and also vertical. But it is needed, in terms of core work, of the core group there must be verticality, in terms of the group there must be verticality.
But in terms of concept, much of it is needed to be horizontal. And one tries it to be in terms of co-creation, in terms of encouraging participation, co-participation, of encouraging involvement, it is very horizontal. In terms of concretization of the event itself, of the activities themselves, of the responsibility, slash, functions in itself... within the core group it is very horizontal as well. That is to say that the decisions, even the remuneration itself and decision-making power are all very horizontal. Really even I, who joined a team of three people that was already formed, who are the core of the group, I entered and was super included in this horizontality. I did not exactly include myself because it was obviously little time... still today I do not consider myself within this horizontality but there will be no problem for me to be there. By the very dynamics of the group there is much of that such equality.

**E:** How do you deal with the visions of other members that are different from yours that you do not agree with?

**H:** Normally, since it is not a face-to-face, it is not a one-to-one, it is almost never a one-to-one. It is always in the group... we trust the group! We rely on the various opinions and on the majority. In the opinion that wins, which is the majority, we trust in that.

**E:** Can one person by themselves make a decision that affects the initiative as a whole?

**H:** I think so and it has already happened. But not because you feel like it, it’s because you have to decide, because you have to do it fast or because it’s your department so there's no great need to be announcing it to everyone. And you can make decisions that really affect the whole.

**E:** What voices do you feel are being represented through Cidade+, through this event?

**H:** I feel that there are voices that are still not yet being represented because they do not want it. Because basically we are creating a space for debate and if people don’t take advantage of the debate space they aren’t having their voice. There is however an attempt to give a voice to the citizen, to give voice to even the business context, which is not very easy to include, and to give voice to that political part that also wants to make sustainability something important in governance! Deep down that’s it, it’s to give the space, as it is a platform… to create this gathering, these actors also have to come so to make themselves heard, right?

**E:** How would you define civic participation?

**H:** I think civic participation seems to lead us to the word responsibility. This saying that as a citizen I have a responsibility to also have an opinion and to do something of what I see that can be improved. And it seems to me that this is what brings active citizenship. It seems to me that civic participation brings active citizenship, to me it seems to be this. But it's a lot of a game of words. (Laughs)

**E:** Do you think of yourself as an active citizen? Do you consider yourself an active
citizen?
H: Yes, I could be much more, I have the notion of my boundaries. How can I say this?... of the boundaries of my capabilities, isn’t it? But I also recognize that it is in the small acts that we are responsible, that we are civic. So the idea is that I can be at home and be very responsible, I don’t really need to have an action or a participation in a group or in an activity or something that supposedly has to have a huge impact. I can do my responsibility in a small act, in a simple act.

E: Can you give an example of an action?
H: I can... for example, I make a point of making compost, using products... I think at the moment, I’m using almost all household products, cleaning and that, not all, but almost all of them are organic. It’s not only an economic or an environmental question but I almost always have cold water showers for example, which causes me to waste less water, this means that I don’t waste heat or gas or whatever else, in my case, it’s electricity. Whenever possible, I don’t have much problem with travelling by car. I’ve done it a lot but nowadays I don’t. There have been months when I would rather not travel by car, but nowadays I don’t and whenever possible I prefer a bicycle, I prefer to get a ride, the maximum possible. The small details as much as possible, the action of being a vegetarian also has a lot of impact, right? Anyway, everything that meat production implies and so on...

E: And has your participation with this group somehow transformed this perception you have of yourself as an active citizen?
H: Yes, totally. I wouldn’t say 100%, totally 100%, isn’t it? Obviously I already had some notions but the direct contact made me realize the movements. It made me realize the contours and even become aware of certain aspects of this living organ that I did not have. The living organ that is the co-creation. It is not airtight and yes… we are already at this moment at point zero. To always be at the zero point, isn’t it? There is nothing predetermined and to follow. We are at point zero, always at point zero. (Laughs)

E: How would you characterize an active citizen?
H: There are two parts, I think, you have the action part, isn’t it? It has the action part and there is the responsibility slash conscience part. It might even be upside down, first is the responsibility slash conscience and then it’s the action. And it’s funny, I really like the word responsibility because, it’s easier in English, responsibility - ability to respond. Therefore, I think it is important to have the skills or to be interested in responding. This is why responsibility and conscience come first. This is why deep inside me I think this is something that could be different. A seed is already there and then comes the action. I forgot the question already.
E: How would you characterize an active citizen?
H: That’s it, mindful. Mindful of responsibility. And it is not only about being an active citizen, it is also about being a living human being. I think it’s something more like that. Because in so many details, in small and large details… we are not being an active human being, are we? Because it is not just about civility. Citizenship has a lot to do with society, it's a lot to do with Man, social Man, isn’t it? But Being Human already has another dimension. Being human is already more existential, inserted in life, in nature, inserted in the ecosystem. Inserted, isn’t it? That’s why I am extending the concept to being a responsible human being.

E: Do you think that active citizenship is important for the lives of young people?
H: I think it’s fundamental. As I said before I think that being a responsible human being also gives us a sense of being alive, a sense of life, of dynamism! Many problems in society that begin with the young people who are going to be tomorrow’s adults, is that they don’t have that good challenge or that motivation let’s say, that feeling of being alive. Because in fact, they don’t feel alive because they’re not co-creating! Co-creating is the unknown. So if they are stolen the unknown because they have to go to school, then have to go to college, university and then whatever else, there is a continuous line that one must do in such a way that life is lost. The surprise is lost. The contribution that someone can give that has never been seen before, is lost. And we have to be very vigilant because there’s always a discovery, it is not something that I already know is going to happen or that I’m going to do, it's something that happens in connection with life and with people. And that's very important, that sense. Then young people end up doing things to self-create challenges to themselves and feel alive, and they end up going through already known social paths, even in a social status, in patterns that already exist. And that can be a fundamental question for a richer and more conscious society.

E: Can you explain better what you mean by that?
H: It's very easy to understand that there are collective minds, right? This to say, us the creative people… if we notice, there are several groups, several collective minds, there is the collective mind of the alternative people, there is the collective mind of the young people who have some social and economic status and who do specific things in their routine, there are the collective minds of the unemployed or the young people, in short, a series of them. And we have this ability to insert ourselves in an illusory way, we insert ourselves there in a non-real way. And we often get in there because there is no alternative. And this alternative does not exist because it is also not shown to us that life is co-creating. It is about being responsible and being co-creative! I see it like this. And a mindset ends up being created, it creates a mindset. You have to dress like this, you have to act like that, you have to go to that place, to that one and that one, you have to
do this, and this, and this... in your life you have to follow this line, you have to behave like this. Well it’s just that, it’s creating a prison. This is creating something fixed. But as this urge to create is always there then we create within this circle, which is never free. You are always within the circle, which is never free. The idea is to get out of any circle and become responsible. Because responsibility is always the unknown… in the circles… deep down there is always something [that is] known. This is how I see it. I have this notion of seeing many young people trapped in this responsibility but at the same time locked within a mindset. Therefore they recognize their responsibility, acknowledge their conscience but then think that the collective mind does not allow them to follow that. Because then comes another wrong idea, which is: I can’t get out of what the collective mind is or be different, because it's wrong or whatever else it is.

**E: Why do you speak about collective mind and after about individual responsibility?**
**H: No, I speak of the responsibility of each person. Eventually there is a responsibility of the collective, of the group or the responsibility of being human, or the responsibility of parents, or a family responsibility. In short, a group responsibility. There can be this group responsibility but the first responsibility is what I see, what I feel, what I perceive. Myself: an individual. Yourself: an individual. It is beside me because I'm the one who will answer. I will not answer for you, I will answer for myself. And of course my answer may be different from yours in cases that are eventually or apparently similar. But it is my ability. Myself... my responsibility or my way to respond is also linked to the way I perceive. If I feel I should leave the house to go help the firefighters who are fighting the fires, I must go if I feel that I am able and that I want it. If someone else feels they just want to give money for water, it's their responsibility. It depends a lot on the people too.

**E: And do you consider that Cidade+ is somehow affected by the political uncertainty that characterizes Europe?**
**H: I do not believe that there is a great direct effect that can stir or even change, because in the background the impact of Cidade+ is very connected to Oporto. Obviously there are always ripples, right? Waves that then affect... that such butterfly effect. But I think it’s not something that is very direct.

**E: Okay now to the link with the media, which is even very much your part. How do you think the group uses the media and the internet, technology, including the more mainstream media and the social networks? How do you make use of these devices?**
**H: We use Facebook a lot. For any communication we use the website a lot although it is being improved. That such example of the press releases that could have been there faster... anyway, it's being worked on. What's used a lot is email, newsletter... sending newsletters... and a good
job has been done at the media level... of newspapers. I believe last year we were present in three or four television interviews, which already says something... two or three in Oporto, one in Lisbon. I think a good job is being done in that regard. And all of this is the result of partnerships with some partners who have given support in this area as well.

E: What social results do you think it produced?
H: We never know! It’s almost immeasurable the effect that it makes on the people who come and “ok, I’ll try a yoga class”, or the people who come and get to know that there is a stall that produces something different... because the products we buy have this and this and are not positive. We never know, I think Cidade+... the feeling I have is that it has many results in a silent and invisible way. It's almost this but you can’t prove it! (Laughs)

E: Would you change or do something different?
H: in the Cidade+?
E: Yes
H: Yes. I think I would change: I like versatility, isn’t it? I like the versatility and of the large group of aspects that Cidade+ covers but it turns out that this aspect can be negative. Maybe if there was a slight tendency for a smaller number of aspects they might start gaining strength, at least in these aspects instead of it being something so very much dispersed. I'm talking about conferences for example that could... anyway! I would change the time of the conferences for example! There is that mentality a lot of that people can go... that the ordinary citizen can go to the activities. So things are booked for the middle of the afternoon during the week, or the morning during the week from nine to one, and this is not possible! Someone who is very interested will take a day off and will show up, very well... or someone who’s unemployed or someone who whatever else. But if we want participation it has to be or post-labour or weekend! Those schedules that people take a little time off to do different things. I’d changed that... I think that’s what I’d change. Perhaps, the most concrete focussed shift.

E: What is the role that you see in Cidade+ of this artistic question that you give some relevance to from the beginning?
H: Of the artistic part?
E: Yes...
H: I think it’s always linked because Cidade+ is connected with a festival [by people] not with the gathering to debate problems! It’s seen as a festival, a moment of celebration... and the mentors, the main nucleus of the organization of Cidade+ are cheerful people, are people with a lot of colour and who like to do things joyfully and beautifully, so it could not be otherwise. It would not work otherwise because of this, I think it’s super natural and very good to see it. Because it
could be a heavy seriousness and talk about all problems here and there, but no! It's talking about festivity, and even learning while playing! Learning by playing!
E: To begin with, I’d like to ask you where *Cidade+* comes from. How and why did it come to be?

B: At least in my head the idea came up around 2011, 2012. I had just come back from Brussels and was working in an NGO.

E: You were in Brussels as an advisor for the European Parliament right?

B: As a trainee in the commission. Then with a Galician deputy. Then I came back. In the meantime I had started dating someone and I came back to Portugal. I was working there. I was doing a professional internship in an organization, an NGO, but that… After leaving the parliament…getting back to some sort of stone-age, coal era level, it didn’t work very well. Then at a certain point I began to think: I had participated a lot in the European Verdes\(^\text{116}\). I had followed many of the debates on this topic: political ecology, etc. I started having this idea of doing something [similar] here in Portugal. There was that question with the associations, some environmental associations, but they didn’t do that much either. There was always the question of the Green Party that never came up. *PEV*\(^\text{117}\) was that fiasco I talked about and then I was also in the foundation of the *Livre*\(^\text{118}\). The idea was always a little similar but later it ended up not bringing much either. This was with lots of people who are also in this area, who have been leaving in the meantime… such as Miguel for example and the other old school political ecology people. In parallel with this I found it simpler and easier to do a smaller thing, to hold an event, gather some people and do some things. At one point I was having a chat with Joka – Joka is an event planner – and I was about to say: “Hey Joka, it would be cool to make…” He organized those events in *Contagiarte*\(^\text{119}\), some awesome Joka style stuff… He made the *Porto Ecologia na Cidade*\(^\text{120}\) in 2009 and told me: “Look, I organized some stuff in 2009, the *Porto Ecologia na Cidade*, which was an event in *Cedofeita*\(^\text{121}\). We ran some workshops, some other things, we got the local stores as well as the local people involved and so many other things”… and I was like: “Look, great idea and all of this…” And we started talking about it. Joka is very much in that alternative wave. I had a more structural idea, a bigger thing: to work with a big budget, to involve associations, to involve something much bigger. We started talking. Then at some point Joka

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\(^{116}\) Verdes, an abbreviation for the Green Party.

\(^{117}\) *Partido Ecologista os Verdes*, Portuguese Green Party.

\(^{118}\) *Livre* was an emergent eco-socialist party (born in 2014) in Portugal.

\(^{119}\) Associative venue for Cultural training in the center of Porto.

\(^{120}\) *Porto Ecologia na Cidade*, meaning *Porto: Ecology in the City*.

\(^{121}\) A very central and commercial street in the city of Porto.
called me saying: “Look, I have some people from the Conception project who are also in with that idea. They also sprung out from an event. Let’s have a small meeting there at the Orfeão?” And then… I [said] “OK, let’s do it!” And Joka and I went to this meeting and joined Carlos, Mateus, and I don’t know, Beatriz and Bernardo, who were also there. Mateus and I had met in 2002, 2003 at the height of the student movement in high school. Mateus was connected to the association and I was in another association from Antonio Sergio, in Gaia, - I was the president of the association. And then I was in charge of the Porto district and also of the association. That is, at the time Mateus was a year or two behind me! So the world is small, isn’t it? It’s all the same thing! We went on having meetings and I think we were there going from meeting to meeting. It didn’t advance. Deep down, it was Mateus and I who were interested in making this happen. It wasn’t advancing in that framework. We were in that mindset: “ah, this is needed, something else I don’t know what is needed… a month went by… nothing happened.” It was clearly not working. Since it was Mateus and I who were the people with the most interest in getting on with the project, that’s when I started thinking: “No, this has to be more professional. It has to be done with a specific team.” I also had no interest in doing something small, something for some half a dozen people. I wanted to do something with proper conditions, so it required a professional structure. I wanted to move the buzz of the city forward a bit, that this thing would be great. So it precisely required a professional structure, dedicated people… and in that context it didn’t work.

E: What do you understand by professional structure?

B: Having more people, for it to be a professional event! People were still very much in that old logic. Joka was still thinking about the Porto Ecologia da Cidade. Thinking of making half a dozen phone calls so that half a dozen freaks would do workshops in Cedofeita and that’s it. The day goes by and it’s over, right? And I came from another type of world. I wanted something much more structural, to move the city, to involve the municipalities, to involve companies, to involve universities, to have a lot more presence in the city, [something] mediatic, etc. That the event would be quite a lot bigger so there were two different types of models. Mateus came from Boom, which is also a more cultural area. I came from a more institutional world. I was interested in political ecology. I wasn’t interested in making concerts, you see? Anyone can do concerts. What are we gonna do concerts for? I was interested in bringing the debate of political

122 An enterprise of media and marketing in Porto.
123 A local and public association in Porto.
124 Public high-school in Vila Nova de Gaia.
125 Vila Nova de Gaia, Portuguese city in the North of Portugal, very near Porto.
126 Boom festival is an international electronic/trance music festival happening in Portugal that holds a transdisciplinary vision with environmental, social and consciousness transformation concerns.
ecology to the city, and to the city of Porto where there was nothing. And with this gather interesting people who were doing things!

E: At the time you made a four person team, still without the funding and everyone accepted this condition to try and if it turned out you would be rewarded, otherwise you had invested that time and everyone agreed...?

B: Yes. It was also a way to filter who would be more opportunistic and who would be more dedicated, right?

E: In terms of the vision of the project?

B: Yes... of the project, of who we wanted to work on it. This event is not a 9 to 5 job. It implies that: people have the ability to manage an unforeseen circumstance; they have to do things that are beyond their powers; they have to manage the lack of money...

E: Basically what you were looking for was people in different areas...

B: Yes

E: You were working on the application for a few months and were funded for six months. What happened in the meanwhile?

B: The idea was always to make an event and other things. We had many other projects because there were so many people, so we had to invent. It was very difficult to manage a ten-person machine. This apparently without a well-defined structure, without products. There it was: we had Hugo to sell but we didn’t have a product, so “fuck it, I don’t have a product to sell, what am I going to do?” Rodolfo was there to do video-mappings. There was nothing so Rodolfo did nothing! It was difficult to manage so it ended up filtering out about half of the more defined team, which was Rosa, Norberta, Viviana, Mateus and I, basically there were 5 of us. Cidade+ is an event that happens once a year and we had that one objective of making the project feasible. For you to make 5, 6, 7 salaries viable you must have a considerable financial volume! We got to having 8 or 9 draft projects with things that could be done. Then with the dismemberment of the team there were some capabilities that were lost and we decided to put some projects aside. And the main focus would always be the event. We knew that even at the organization, at the identity level... This would always be what would give us the main visiting card, for someone to end up relating with us. Still we went to work on these projects, but never ended up advancing very seriously. Except for the seed thing, but this too was residual, very residual. Us today, with the reasonable level that we have can’t pay 2 or 3 salaries, imagine at that time! Also the conflict that this was going to bring among the people. Who receives, who doesn’t receive...

127 "Seed bombs", usually an activist product coming from "guerilla gardening"... that they made to commercialize. The rediscovery and popularization of seedballs (or "Clay Dumplings" as he called them) in modern times is typically ascribed to Japanese natural farmer and philosopher Masanobu Fukuoka.
Who receives more, who does not receive... So it was a very complicated thing to manage. Still I think it was a good thing, also a little premeditated, the thing was filtering to reduce who’s more available, who has more desire to move forward and also filtering because it is not possible to manage such a large machine. The financing was over and there were people who were just padding things out. And you were going to lose the good people, isn’t it? You're paying the same to a person who does nothing and to a person who gives everything. With what moral standards are you going to run such a project? All this process was [in] 2013. At the end of the day, it was me, Mateus and Viviana who stayed. So it took a turn. No, then there was still Rosa and Norberta. In another candidacy, the Passaporte por Empreendedorismo Joana who meanwhile entered was the designer and basically made all the graphic line of the first whole year. After that the Passaporte was for one year, it funded three people on a project for a year. Also, it had two phases, the first four months and then the next eight. They had funding for the first 4 months but then they didn’t get the next 8 months. Norberta was already married. She really needed financial viability. No matter how good her intentions were she was not able to give the same follow-up. After six or seven months without pay she eventually walked away. As soon as this financing was finished Rosa and Joana ended up drifting away; Also Rosa came from Ovar [a city 46,7 kilometres away from Porto] every day, it was complicated for her without financing to be doing this; Joana also had her life and they ended up being people who ended up not keeping up with it without the financing, life circumstances. Nothing against it. I understand perfectly… but in the meantime at this stage of the process it ended up being me, Mateus and Viviana. By this time we had already identified Veronica as a person to enter and she entered in a phase where they were still… maybe pulling back a little and all of a sudden we’re about to enter 2014. There was this phase when we initially were in the Orfeão until we got the Coojovem financing. We were still there for nearly a month. That's when we went to Greenfest [Festival], in October.

**E:** to see what was happening at this festival?

**B:** Yes, I spoke with Fernanda Freitas.

**E:** from rtp2 [Portuguese television channel]?

**B:** Yes and she told me: “Look, you have to meet Pedro Norton de Matos who is the organizer of Greenfest, it is a must and I don’t know what else” and I was like: “Okay, let’s do it”. I went to Lisbon and the three of us went to lunch. It was me, her and Pedro Norton de Matos. Pedro Norton de Matos is a posh man from Cascais but a very good person. So “ah… and this and that, a pleasure to meet you. We have to make partnerships and I don’t know what else” and

128 Passport for Entrepreneurship

129 Portuguese city in the Lisbon district
there was a certain political question because he had a consolidated event of 6 or 7 years in Lisbon and we were just starting. Then there was a kind of… on the one hand a competition but on the other hand a good vibe from his side. We got to know him and meet his team, and continued talking to him. People at first even told him “so, why are you embracing them? And I don’t know what else…” And he said “Well, someone's going to pick the idea up in Porto, why not?! Let it be them, at least! It was actually because they also had an interest in coming to Porto, they even tried to negotiate their Greenfest brand in the three regions. He wanted to do it in Azores, I think that this didn’t happen. Now they have done it this year in Torres Vedras. Right, it was a little fathered by Pedro Norton de Matos at this stage. He invited us to participate in the event and we ended up going to their event a week before hand and each of us took on some responsibilities within the event, within the organization. It somehow turned out to be quite a bit like an initial schooling, almost kind of like an internship. I learned a lot there. A lot of what we do is almost copy-paste of what they do there, of procedures, of management. I don’t know how Veronica does at the conferences but I think it's still almost the same thing because there are things that there is just no need to invent the wheel. It’s just how it’s done. After that there was still the need to define who won the elections so we could start negotiating with whoever won. Meanwhile, Isabel Martins, who was on Rui Moreira’s list, is a person who comes from the associative movement, of ecology, of that old school. She’s the only person of ecology, sustainability and the environment in Rui Moreira’s list. She would have been the councilwoman but she refused. Isabel was a fundamental person in this first phase to get us in touch with the municipality. Quickly we had a decision. This decision ended up being maintained and gave some security to the team that [the project] was going to be carried out. Then there were these funding issues that would influence the process. Precisely by this time, in November, the Coopjovem was ending and as soon as that we began to work in another candidacy for the other people so they could continue to work. We realized who had profiles that could compete for Coopjovem. At that time, it was Rosa and Viviana. I went to Brazil in November 2013 but I stayed for two months. Then I came back in January and then went for another three months, March, April and May, so, so. I came back later in May, so basically I still participated 100% in that first year.

E: Biorumo, with Luis as the person, gave you a certain business base right?

B: Basically yes. We didn’t have status, we had no company, we didn’t have this or that, Luís had credibility. So it was an interesting partnership because Luís actually invested a lot of things. With time he ended staying a bit behind because we had a lot more energy and a lot of needs but at

130 A municipality in the Portuguese district of Lisbon
the beginning it was important.

E: There’s a part that I missed: Isabel Martins also comes from the Greenfest part, from Fernanda Freitas, is this it?

B: I know Isabel Martins from Bernardo’s side. I went to meet with Bernardo, who is my friend. “Hey Bernardo, I need to talk to someone from the municipality”, “Talk to Isabel Martins”, “Who’s Isabel Martins?”, “She is connected to Campo Aberto¹³¹, to the associations and I do not know what else”. He gave me her number, and I was like “Hey Isabel, Bernardo gave me your number and I do not know what else”, and she was like “Let’s go then. Let’s have a meeting”. So we had a meeting. It was basically something like that and then Isabel gave us that political accompaniment. It’s because Filipe¹³² who came from a Vodafone, from a PT¹³³ or some shit like that. He was a bit preppy; he didn’t really know what he was doing there. Then he was there a bit… and Isabel was actually really aware of the environment.

E: From that first event, 2014, up until now… what other key points are there that you think define a lot of what Cidade+ is today?

B: I think the financial question has always been the big question and still remains. In an initial phase it was this whole team story and institutional issues but I think that from that first year, it was more or less resolved. From the beginning the question has always been the financial one.

E: Of survival, is this what you mean?

B: … of the financial realization of a project of this level, which implies a large budget. Which we have never been able to satisfactorily solve. At first we had budgets and megalomaniac projects. The liabilities have not fallen, have they? There was never a kind of great sponsorship. So some bits here and there but never that value of 10 or 20 thousand euros that we wanted to come from a company. In the beginning that also created some tension with the Municipality and Biorumo. As we had sold that project with an X budget and then in reality the budget was 10% or 5% of what we were aiming for. That too was a bit complicated to manage, isn’t it? Especially in that first year. Afterwards there was no money to pay the team. It was all on the basis of volunteering and of effort. Basically this [project] only survived because people have managed to keep going in these many moments. Especially the four of us. Other people were also helping at various times but there was only the possibility [to continue] because these four people were always holding the boat there in these critical moments. Cidade+ is still very unsatisfactory mainly from the point of view of the financial structure. It has been improving but it does not mean that we can assume that the thing is solved. It is not, even if it will continue to

¹³¹ Sustainability organization founded in... Rooted in Porto
¹³² The alderman elected in the area of Environment and Innovation
¹³³ One of the first Portuguese phone companies
rise from year to year. The event has also improved; the feedback has also improved; and it has presented results. In spite of everything, in the first year before the thing actually happened, there were moments of tension especially with the municipality; more with the municipality than with Biorumo. With Biorumo too but mainly with the municipality because of the project that had been sold. In a way, what the project was and the reality of it. Regardless, the municipality ended up betting forward and the reality is that the event eventually paid off. It turned out that despite of everything, even with the scarcity of resources, something with quality was able to be done. There are a lot of things to improve but this is normal. Everyone knows that in a first edition there are always a series of things that later on have to be improved. Still, in the first year there was an indicator that “ok, despite of the lack of conditions there is enough substance for this to continue”. The municipality ended up assuming that too. They ended up realizing that with that little a lot was done. With a small budget, everything on the basis of invention. Much more than now. We managed to make a worthy event. A well-done institutional work, with a structure. With errors, with many of these things having already evolved. Still, it surprised everyone and from there we have always had that question and still continue to have. That is, the event usually surprises. We have a very strong peak in the event and the following weeks, and then it falls. We have to capitalize a lot more on the financial issue that we still can’t solve. We have to have someone to deal with this financial issue of the following year so we can close the process. Then the holidays come in August, then the staff arrives in September. A lot has passed, you do not remember it all and so it's quite a bit of that. Then there was the question of ‘me’. In the first year there I was still one hundred percent deep down in it. I managed the project. Then in the second year, my job started to be much more demanding in Brazil. My boss started to... and I could not be on one side and the other too. It was already a lot of stress for me. I started having anxiety attacks. I started to get in a very aggressive space. I had to be here. It was also very heavy here. People also recognized a lot... people from outside Porto recognized Cidade+ was me, it was a problem. It was me, I gave a face to the project. The whole situation was a problem of credibility also with the municipality. “No, but Branco is not here" it was something like that. So either we actually recreated another structure that was not dependent on me or the thing was going to be more complicated from the second year on. So that's when I go out of the scene a bit.

E: How does the group see your initial success and identity, at least, in terms of the goals and mission… at the present point?

B: Well, I think this fourth year was a bit different. It took a bigger leap than in previous years. I think that an event of this type is always an annual challenge. Every year you have to think about
a concept, you have to develop an idea, you have to capture, set up a team, get funding… at that level I think it will continue to be a great challenge. At the concept level it has been flowing. We reached the fourth year, we grew a little but we are always growing. The team has consolidated; I think it has created a brand that is already gaining its space. It’s difficult to make an event too, unless it’s a big company, a big agency, who gets there with the euros to do a Primavera Sounds or some shit like that. It's hard for the staff, us not capitalizing an event of that dimension, managing to grow. That being said, at this level it succeeds. Now there are many challenges, there is a lot to grow. There are many challenges that there will be in the next few years, I imagine. Namely, the financial sustainability that has to improve much more. We have to gain a much more regional projection, then national projection and then get a bit out of here, from this Porto niche. We are going to have challenges in terms of programming. Our programming style has already begun to run out, it does not bring much newness and we will have to introduce novelty for our audience to also be more captivated. Porto is limited and Portugal is also limited. Sooner or later we’ll have to begin to connect with the world, to bring other things in. I think there are many challenges and growth is infinite. Also this too doesn’t always get anyone in the mood if it’s always the same or if it’s always more or less of that same. For the public and even ourselves… to do something that doesn’t bring anything special! But there it is, it always implies a great financial engineering, especially this! Still I think that we were able to build a good vibe, we cemented a good foundation. I think we always managed well our partnerships with the municipality, with Bioruma, with everybody like staff, trainers, participants, the people that come along, the bands, the speakers, etc. I think we managed to build a good spirit between people, from here on maybe what’s missing is to raise more money, to give a greater conceptual solidity to the event. Bring more novelty, be able to give a bit more of the vanguard. Give a more regional, national and then international dimension to the thing. This is just from my vision, now each one thinks things in their own way.

E: In your vision, in what your proposal was… I suppose that to improve at the different levels, the local, national, of the people also, the companies and therefore with this having a vision of what this is all about, the environment and sustainability. Do you see that this is fruitful at the transformation level for a more ecological and sustainable culture?

B: I think yes in general. You see this change a little in Europe. Several lines: you have the line of the private sector that has been changing a lot in recent years, the issue of corporate social responsibility, of those things, isn’t it? That we try to get in there a bit with Cidade+, we still don’t have much but it has improved a lot in Portugal. Companies all work, some as marketing others
are even doing some things in practice. At the society level you see a greater concern, of people in certain niches of course, but there is a greater concern with certain types of issues that did not exist perhaps ten years ago. This being said, there is a process that is evolving. It is still very far from what would be ideal, still very individualistic and still very selfish. People worry more about themselves and their children than about the collective in itself. People are available to do certain things but not others. There is also a view of the problem in other sectors that is still very sectarian. This is to say that there is still a lot of work to be done at the political level. At the mentality level, no doubt. Maybe just to finish, we always try, I think it remains to be the great strength and as long as we continue this way we will succeed. What I mean by this is: we never entrenched into a certain niche because from the moment it did happened or even if it did happened, we would end up closing within. That is, this is why we can never have a vision or a form of acting that is sectarian, you see? Only this group, or just the vegetarians, or only the guys that are like that… because from the moment you do this you will exclude everyone else. That is, we try to have companies – there are good companies, there are companies that are just more or less and there are bad companies. We've tried this as a transition process and the companies are getting better. There are people who are in fact very advanced, who are so on the edge. And we obviously also want to have those. There are also most of the other people who will be here in intermediate stages. There are even people who are going to be right at the end of the line. We also want to get to those people who are at the end of the line, who might be so in the zero but maybe if they do participate in Cidade+, they will start to reach one and two. This is also not a final path; it is an improvement process. That is, we want this to be as wide as possible, not forgetting the people who are ahead but also not forgetting the people who are falling behind. And we also do not want to entrenched it. I think that as long as we manage to do this we are going to have success, from the moment we turn just to businesses, to greenwashing, or just to the freaks… to a closed thing, I think from then on it’s when it stops making sense. We’ll no longer have the strength. Above all, I think that’s a bit it.

E: In more general terms, do you feel that there is some kind of contradiction between the logic more focused on sustainability and the logic more focused on profit and business?

B: I think we keep on managing those questions. Maybe it will intensify over time. I believe new challenges will emerge over time. Still, I think we have always been able to have this inclusive vision. Of course there will always be comments, of course there will always be different views, of course there are people who tend to be sectarian and will always criticize everything that is different. Somehow, I think we can always manage that. No doubt we will have new challenges.
because this issue is very emotional and when it touches the emotional people have little availability to think rationally about it. It's a problem I see. I work a lot around the world so I have a much more general view and when I get to Europe I clearly see that sectarianism is dominant. People do not have enough openness to think a little bit outside of the box so they think at some point that they see the light, don’t they? They were Cinzentão, at some point they saw the light and they became Zé Verde. Then they think that this is the whole process that it’s the only solution and this turns out to become a problem. Then when you want to say “no, this is a process, there are several things that are there, there’s much more, the world is spinning and Portugal is here and it's a small thing”... The cities and the world of each person who will make their vegetable garden on the porch, who will try to eat their best, most sustainable things, there is one large-scale thing here. You're going to have the big mining in Africa, Latin America, the Amazon, things I keep working on! So I feel more and more a shock with this! Portugal is always limited; in this area it will be limited… Do you see? So, it is clearly a shock, I participate in several international conferences then I come here to Cidade+, the debates and the way of speaking is completely different.

E: You spoke of the emotional part there, which is much more emotional...

B: Activism is always emotional. Certain kind of activism is going to be more emotional and activism in this area will end up being very emotional. That is, people are not willing to rationally think of things or even being available to give the opportunity for change.

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134 Cinzentão [Big Gray] and Zé Verde [Green Doe/John/’any common name’] are characters created by the Cidade+ group.
Interview Artur Boa Energia: 135 :: 2nd November 2017

E: How would you define Cidade+? How would you describe its goals and mission?
A: To me, Cidade+ seems to be an initiative focused on sustainability awareness. It also registers on leisure, a place where people go and spend a good evening in an emblematic site of the Porto city. Besides, it alerts to this topic of the paradigm shift. Essentially, I would describe Cidade+ in this way.

E: Can you give us an example of a moment when you felt particularly effective with this partnership with Cidade+ and another where you felt a bit disappointed...
A: I would not point to “The moment” but rather the continuity... Whenever we are approached by people wanting to understand how Boa Energia works best and asking other questions, naturally, we’re explaining to people how they can become more self-reliant, not so dependent on electricity and also how they can spend less money. In this perspective, I feel that we are framed in Cidade+ event and I always feel useful… not I feel… we feel, Boa Energia. The most disappointing moment, I wouldn’t say that it can be said disappointing because I think Cidade+ is also in a process of maturation, is to understand how the agents that go to Cidade+ can take more of a return from their presence. Again, in two years Boa Energia didn’t extract any returns. Simply put, it may have taken some [returns] in terms of visibility but in terms of a practical return, of having a client that came to us and said “I want to count on the energy made in Cidade+” and that we managed to convert into a business, it did not happen in these two years. I also realize that there must be a certain altruism policy of who participates. Simply said, it does not make sense to come into this just thinking about the return, there is also a goal here of... how shall I say this?!... to get the message across and to be… even if the business does not materialize in the short term, we must also think about the life-time value of our presence there, which is that this can generate results in the medium or long term.

E: In terms of involvement in Cidade+: why and how did you become involved in Cidade+?
A: Actually, at the time I was not so involved. I am an associate of Boa Energia, now I have been a bit more involved. Since the last year I have been more aware of the events but at that time I was still working in another company, I was just a capitalist partner. However, we were developing, Boa Energia developed a European project that is the City's Energy, which is a European project of a crowdfunding platform – it is a kind of Trip Advisor of crowdfunding platforms in the field of renewable energy and energy efficiency for several European platforms

135 A company of integrated services in the area of renewable energies and energetic efficiency.
– in this context we also had to be present in initiatives in the sustainability areas. And as a unique and original concept in Portugal, Cidade+ seemed to be a great opportunity to get involved and spread Boa Energia. City's Energy and in the meanwhile also Goparity was a crowdfunding platform, which in effect was a spinoff of Boa Energia. We created in Boa Energia precisely one of the crowdfunding platforms of renewable energies, the only one in Portugal. Parity is made for the companies like Boa Energia, installers that in the face of their clients are able to ... when the clients do not have the financial capacity to advance with the projects, they are able to say “We have an alternative financing solution here that can be placed here in Parity. And in this way it is the citizens themselves who invest in the projects. This year, Parity itself had a stronger collaboration with Cidade+, as we organized a crowdfunding for Cidade+. It was created in a different way from what we usually have in the Parity, where we refund interest to the investors in the projects.

E: What kind of benefits do you get from the involvement with Cidade+, for example in monetary terms?

A: [In) monetary value it brings zero. I believe it can bring [value] in terms of notoriety and recognition. Even, in Cidade+ we presented the domestic kit that goes from 250 watts up to 1500 watts, we’re talking about from one to six panels. This last year we brought a 500 watts kit with two panels to serve as demonstration. Adding to this, these kits we make for single-family housing, Boa Energia doesn’t make great profitability [with them]. That is to say that on the one hand, it’s almost a way for us to communicate, to get them in quantity into the houses and that these people who get them in houses can even work in companies. And when they see that the invoice at home reduces they can be the first to comment in the companies or even if they are the owners of the companies, to think “why don’t I put this in my company?” That is the real business area of Boa Energia. So I would say that the presence in Cidade+ is more to reach people: notoriety, recognition… we can sell one or another kit later on to some or another person but it is the word of mouth. It is someone one day who comments “Ah I saw a company, I heard of Boa Energia” and someone could even come from a company and ask us for a proposal and naturally, if it materializes, then the return is good. We did however understand that Cidade+ doesn’t position itself very much for the business client. Cidade+ is positioned more for the citizen who has environmental concerns and who can go there and spend a well spent day with the family. Also, for Boa Energia it turns out to be more the altruistic question that I spoke of, in marking our presence in Cidade+. It is more of the ideological alignment rather than the financial return, in terms of presence in Cidade+. I don’t know if I’m being clear?

E: Do you think that Cidade+ can contribute to the civic or political participation of
young people?
A: You know... I do not know! That’s a difficult question because we see that people are far removed from politics at this time. I feel that there is a very large gap between population and politics because we have a political-party system that rewards rascalism. Furthering this, usually who is inside the parties is there not to serve the country, for altruism or to think of an economically prosperous and fairer country from the point of view of people’s dignity, but thinking instead “how will I get a good life for myself?” It starts early in the Jotas and I think it is a very urgent paradigm to change. I mean, Cidade+ may be another context, an initiative aligned with... but I think that the problem is much more far reaching than the effect that Cidade+ can have in those 4 days. It is from the financing of the political parties that come from companies, which will later charge this same financing. That is to say that it is a whole vicious cycle here in the logic of the parties. It is very difficult to attract people who reason about this. I would like to be involved in an altruistic logic of contributing with my competence and my ideology, of what will be a fairer and more prosperous country with better dignity of life for all people. That clashes later because when you enter you are totally dismembered by the militants, isn’t it? So, I do not know, I don’t know how I can answer you. I think the impact must be frankly insignificant, even though I would like it to be frankly strong.

E: Yes. You were saying that in terms of process methodology [of Cidade+] there is a “things are getting done”...

A: It is and I think there is not one... I would say that at the limit there are no goals, there are no objectives, there are no end goals. People do not define finishing lines, there isn’t: “we have to achieve this, this and this... and you are responsible for this, this and this... and in the end each one understands: was it achieved or not?” It is getting done, it got done, went well... but I mean, if it had been done with less or with more... it was done. So the feeling is that in the end it is always celebrated, regardless of whether it had run a little less well or a little better. Even further with this, I think that to do it well we have to be demanding with ourselves and we have to have objectives, we have to have end goals. It is just that at the end of each year all companies make a budget for the year to follow. Further, if it is a well-planned budget the year is likely to go well because a budget has to be rigorous, it has to be well thought through and well planned. Then there will probably only be a few deviations. This will occur unless there is a scenario that runs a little away from our hands, an international consumption or an international crisis. I think we can follow those goals. I can give an example of this concerning crowdfunding. When I proposed the crowdfunding it was a relatively basic thing, which is this: let's put a crowdfunding the more they

136 Youth sections of political parties
get the more they have. Then the way in which the *complicômetro* was turned on was to set up different scales and to want to give things and whatever else; when it was going to be: from one euro onwards and the idea was to create affinity. I think it was more important to start communicating the crowdfunding sooner than to be so worried about what people were going to get from the crowdfunding. Actually I don’t think that anyone who has given to the crowdfunding was very worried if they were going to get an X juice, an Indigenous tree or if they were going to the *Zmar* draw! In the end the crowdfunding was almost at the opening of the event and I will not tell you, because I don’t know, that it could have gone much better.

However, to explain it to you from the point of view of coordination and of methodology; I think a lot of time is lost with the little meaningless details, when one should be much more focused on having a person… for example, I don’t know if they had someone all day, 24 hours a day, to contact companies to go there, for example… and explain the concept and be very objective in the commercial part to guarantee financing. I do think they also accommodate themselves a bit due to the *PUBLIC ENTITY A* financing. Because they know that it makes the project viable just by itself. Then I don’t know if they are that much concerned with the stalls, and with some… which is important but that cannot get exhausted there. Furthering this… and even thinking a little bit outside of the box.

**E:** Do you consider the group reflexive and self-critical?

**A:** Viviana has a characteristic that I find very interesting, she has active listening and wants to hear who gets involved to know how they [*Cidade*+] can improve and this is very important. If she had a more closed posture about herself, of a “I am the one who knows” and not wanting to listen to the actors and agents, she could turn the process into a difficult one… and in that sense it seems to me that Viviana always seeks to improve and perfect in by wanting to involve everyone. In fact, not everyone has this ability. Even, people often hear criticism in a constructive way because this is how it has to be. And she has that capacity and I think that it is also one of the keys so that one can go on having processes of improvement over time. Still, the fact that Viviana has this more leading kind of position… I sometimes think she even puts herself into question too many times. Maybe she has a few too many doubts. It is one thing to know the way but to also want everyone involved in the process and also to see where you can improve. Another thing is when you have an idea of what you want but you also have many doubts but this can also not help sometimes either, even from the point of view of team management because you can transmit these doubts to the team. It can bring insecurity, can’t it?

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137 Commonly used Portuguese made up word meaning: instrument to create or measure complication.
And I think Viviana can sometimes have this...

E: Now about participation and citizenship: how would you define active citizenship?

A: I think active citizenship is the capacity that we have to impact and influence those around us. Just to give an immediate example that this is what most legitimizes this, you can demand the change of people around you. Then my wife gets a bit mad at me sometimes because in the traffic I'm a bit intransigent and intolerant when I see people throw garbage through their window... among some persecutions I have already done. (Laughs) it is something that moves me a lot. This is why I think that within our scope of influence we can influence those around us. I would say that this is the minimum required for those who want to have an active and participative citizenship. More than that, I think we must have the courage to get involved in politics, which I think should be almost an imperative amongst most people. I've been thinking a lot about it. I think it's only a matter of time before I get more involved. Not because I have the ambition to make a political career because I don't have this ambition but because I think it is important. The party militants define who is going to run for elections where all the Portuguese vote. If we don’t get involved in this sorting within a political party that we feel more ideological identification with... then we will have to subject to whoever deals with this. And I do confess that to understand how we put such a thing at the front of the country is something that moves me... That is to say, it makes me very confused how it was possible to have such a person at the head of a country. I do not know if this was the demand of the people, whether the quality of the parties are reflective of the quality of the people, whether it is lack of demand. It also makes me feel confused how the United States can change from Barak Obama to Donald Trump. Honestly, these are phenomena that I think I will never be able to understand. So yes, it is maybe important to get more involved. Then there is that, people have their professional and personal lives, and sometimes it is not possible to give more. Though, I do think it's almost a must to seek civic intervention to the limit of your abilities.

E: How would you characterize an active citizen?

A: I think an active citizen is a citizen who has to have altruism within themselves, in the sense of not to wash their own hands away from situations, of seeing things that are wrong and being passive in the face of them. The active citizen is the one who takes responsibility for situations with which they do not agree with, one who intervenes and who draws attention [to what is needed]. I think that is the biggest responsibility. In Portugal we are naturally a country where people, unlike central and northern Europe where if one person calls someone down about something that the other did wrong the person apologizes and thanks... It is normal, isn’t it? If I am doing something wrong, if I am called down “thank you, I was distracted, thank you”. In
Portugal not only do we not apologize but we also insult the person for reminding us to pay attention, which is something I think is absolutely... but I do also think it is a reflection of education.

E: Do you consider that Cidade+ is affected in any way by the political uncertainty that characterizes Europe at the moment?

A: I think political uncertainty has already been worse because the years of crisis have been very complicated but now we are benefiting from very interesting factors, which are low interest rates stimulated by the European Central Bank. We are having that benefit. When the European Central Bank stops charging us such low interest rates we will return to face the problems we faced a few years ago. We have the advantage of a high growth in tourism and thus this can help, for example. Now we can be slightly benefited by this uncertainty in Catalonia. Regarding Brexit we are no longer helped, we are penalized because when the United Kingdom leaves the EU we can be penalized due to the pound itself being very much depreciated relatively to the euro, so...
This is always about the context. We have a big advantage here because in the ranking that got out some time ago we are the third safest country in the world to live in. Also this... if you think of people like the Brazilians with some economic capacity that live in cities of permanent anxiety because of the insecurity, when reading this ranking and realizing that the language barrier is automatically surpassed if they come here, to come to live in Portugal is a marvel for them. That is why I think that Portugal should essentially take advantage of all these external capital gains to position itself and become increasingly competitive, and to make this something sustainable and not just short-term [sustainable]. On the day that the measures are exceeded, those times when we get vulnerable again, with what we should have done and did not. It is essentially this. Now, I think it is important to be aware of what is happening in Europe and the world, and position ourselves there.

E: Would you characterize the Cidade+ event as successful?

A: Yes, for what they set themselves to do, I do think so. Actually it is what I was telling you, if it had run a little bit worse it would have still been successful, if it would have been a little bit better it would’ve still been successful. In all honesty, I don’t think there were any big goals there. There was the need to raise the minimum amount of funding to make Cidade+ viable and then make it happen in an unorganized way, in the sense that everyone was doing a little bit of everything. However I don’t think it can work like this, do you know what I mean? It's a very Latin way of working but I think you have to define your tasks, how you will complement yourself with others, how you will organize in a team, what goals will be defined and what it is that we want to achieve. After that if it is all achieved I think it makes sense to celebrate. Now,
naturally the initiative alone is of course to be praised.

**E: Finally, what do you think is the role of the media in the success of Cidade+?**

**A:** I think that it is determinant. What I'm going to say is a bit of a cliché: “Anyone who has a business without knowing how to communicate, is like winking to a girl in a dark room” I know that I am blinking but she doesn't and neither does anyone else, so... all this to say what? I can have the best product or service, or the best event in the world, if people don't know I exist, no one comes towards me. And that's why I had to tell Viviana at the time that the communication part is a determinant factor. But we do also know that the communication part of the event is done very close to... much of it in the pre-event... to communicate that there will be an event and then something in the post event, in the feedback of the event. Although we do know that the media will invariably go have a glance there. Also in this whole plan that Viviana told me where they were going to have pre-initiatives and I do not know what else. I found it all very small and there was very little capacity to have the critical mass to generate... She did have conference with the municipal hall but I feel that it generated little mass, little capacity to go out to the media, do you know what I mean? The media is what determines the progress of things. You must understand that the media are the greatest illegitimate power in a democracy due to their medium that does not go to votes and can still completely condition people's opinions. If they give skewed news or if the media ostensibly lie or something... Why? Who are the media? They are people. And if a person shares a piece of news that is not true, it will be conditioning all the people who see that news. Then typically, when they have a lawsuit over this because they shared the piece of untruthful news, they make the apology that almost nobody sees. It's almost like that moment of doubt, a priest who was accused of pedophilia or of harassment – I even went to see that play at the Sá da Bandeira Theater and now I am not remembering it. Basically it said: “If you want to denigrate the image of someone climb to the top of a roof with a pillow of feathers and rip it up and then try to catch all feathers.” You will never catch all of them. So I think that the media have a great responsibility in the way they form people's opinion. I also think they have very few limits, this is to say that currently the media have carte blanche to condemn in public place any and all people, they can take society to the side that they want and that most interests them. Furthering in this aspect, I think it would be important to have a deep reflection in the sense that they understand the importance that they have in society. Even if it is like everything else, there are good and bad professionals everywhere, and in the media there are great and horrible journalists. The bad ones should be slightly condemned, in the sense of limiting them but it does not happen. Yet, I think that yes, the media in Cidade+ are very important and I think that the capacity of Cidade+ together with organizations that have an
impact on the media, right away with the Oporto city hall, it should be very important to be able to influence the media to divulge… and to create this warm-up in the pre-event as Viviana said, get the media to generate a critical mass around this to then prepare the event well after this.
Appendix B (Portugal): Field notes

Field Notes

17th of March 2017

The previous day I sent Viviana a message on Facebook. Viviana is an acquaintance of many years, the former companion of a good friend who co-inhabited with me for some time until a few months ago – Chico. They were no longer together. Our relationship has to do with the relationship between them but also with activist environments in which we cross and fought side by side, such as Fontinha, the Trade Fairs, Casa Viva or Garagem Branca. We have always been in a not very close relationship maybe because my main relationship was with Chico and this could have caused some jealousy initially. However, we were inhabitants of common spaces and shared acquaintances and friends.

I was also struck by Viviana’s approach to the questions of horizontality and group dynamics. She spoke about it during the interview and mentioned with praise the work of Peralta with whom she has been collaborating more and more. Peralta is from the Associação Elefante na Sala, which I also later came to interview still in June through Viviana’s indications. Peralta left his very stable job at a large engineering firm and that he highly-enjoyed because he was not satisfied with the management models that were being used there. He quit [his job] to get to know somewhat alternative associations and organisms around the world [that are] trying to solve or find alternatives to this problem. The way that the projects were managed was incompatible with his way of seeing the world to the point of having to leave them (he was project manager at the time). He realized during his stays in various human organizations and associations that the problem was always the same – from more formal and informal companies and institutions to more alternative and informal ones. The problem was the hierarchical way individuals interacted and the way in which they exercised power relations among each other. Peralta is now trying to work human issues through the Elefante na Sala – namely relational issues – that he thinks are the generators of conflicts and lack of creativity and energy of the groups. This association of his seeks to create alternative forms of project management and draw attention to self-management within organizations. In his words in an interview a few days later in June he said “we human beings have serious problems in terms of communication and collaboration. We have to better understand ourselves and our nature so that we can make space for authenticity and self-organization within an organization.” And he thinks they have to be worked on from companies

138 They say to have sociocracy as their base, including the 5th discipline in their “pedagogy”, the theory of the systems as an umbrella for the U theory, dragon dreaming, biomimetics, chaos theory and art of hosting.
to informal associations. To participate is to create, in his words: “You participate when what is created has a bit of yourself [in it]”.

We closed the subject and Viviana asked me, since I was there [already], if I wanted to attend the meeting of the communication plan. It would be an important meeting for the project. This year they had two communication professionals helping them make Cidade+. They wanted to make their project sustainable and to professionalize the work without having only volunteers working with them.

In the meantime they arrived, they greeted us, Mateus handed them two chairs and sat down on the side where there was no one. The one [person] on the right began to ask some questions about the theme of the event this year: they were not clear yet in their heads [about it]. They spoke of a kind of crowd-funding that I did not catch the name of. They already had some of the program closed but it seems they are [still] lacking some funds. There were two investors of 13,500 Euros each, who sponsored the event because if they did not put the money there (or somewhere similar) they did not get funds in the following year: nothing comes from charity or true solidarity but that’s just the thing in the real world. They talked about marketing techniques, making small crowd-funding slots or big ones that would give people more money: they talked about putting their names on a wall, the marketing man talked about making cork pens... they spoke of several newspapers names and of those where it would be of interest to have Cidade+ things. Courrier International, Vision, National Geographic (which has been in Portugal for ten years), JN, Expresso, Público, which doesn’t have a lot of online public. The prices of putting things in the newspaper were expensive but it could be reduced to 80 and 90% of this price, so the initially requested price didn’t even matter. They talked about trying to open overseas and at least bring in people from Galicia this year. Viviana said they already had contact with a Galician company. They talked about the meeting of the renewable energy vehicles that will be at the same time as the Cidade+ but it’s not quite part of Cidade+: it will have several well-known car brands and Nissan too, although Nissan owes them money since last year of a supposed patronage that they never gave them. And they talked about opening up to other countries and about Cidade+ being the first sustainability event, if it is not already. They talked about Greenfest as if it was right behind this one and they said that last year there were more than 15,000 people, with an accurate account. They, the marketing guys, thought that number thing was important information.

They spoke of the need for sponsorship to be exclusive and therefore there are areas where you can’t have more than one entity at risk of never having them again. They said that you can’t start by asking nothing because the car dealers would never accept to give anything because they already had it for free once. And they said that they could talk to a TEACHER A from IPAM to
get the marketing undergraduate students to do the publicity and the communication of Cidade+. The marketing guy also said that before going to meetings it was important to study people a little so that they could feel what they had in common and be able to have a subject and points of contact. Viviana found it interesting. She said that one could look on Facebook for example to see if there were some friends in common and so on, to not let that relevant information pass blank.

24th of March 2017

They started by talking about a new partner – “Boa Energia” that is helping out with the communication tasks – one of them has been working in the field of communication for 12 years. They talked again about GoParity which is a kind of Crowd-funding and how they would do it. Bernardo suggested that the total [amount] required would be asked for at once. There was the proposal to do it by slots – that Verónica pointed out then but Viviana said it was best not to and they went on. [This brought me to understand that they respect well each other's places in the group – Viviana is with communication and Verónica with production and programming – it seems to me that this is respected there. But Viviana also has a kind of leadership role, which may not be assumed in the group but it seems clear from the interactions they have. It is usually her who initiates the meetings, facilitates the communication process and puts the agenda in order.] They went ahead and talked about Strategie21, which I remained without understanding what it was. Afterwards they spoke of programming and Verónica opened her pc in the folder where they made a sketch of this schedule. They talked about the first day – that it would be more dedicated to the municipality and the companies; they will invite Rui Moreira [mayor of Porto] to open the first session. They thought about inviting Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa [republican president of Portugal] but maybe to close [the event]. When they arrived on the second day and Verónica said that they planned to invite Guterres, Bernardo said that they could not have Marcelo and Guterres on the same day, unless they were at different times. And to not even think about putting Guterres with the same lettering format without any kind of prominence, next to Mélanie (the producer of the film Demain) and to Válter Hugo Mãe [famous Portuguese writer]. “In terms of protocol it is quite wrong, it is not even thinkable to do this… you have to change this as soon as possible” he said. He repeated the importance of this protocol two or three more times throughout the meeting. In this first time Viviana still sketched [it in]: “But maybe he would even like to be at the same prominence as Válter and Mélanie, less visible”. Bernardo said “Maybe, but we cannot do that. It's not right!” and they advanced. Bernardo said that Marcelo and Guterres are even friends, they may want to come in the same day. Then it was thought to make a tour for Guterres to enjoy Porto in the meantime, during
two days. And he [Bernardo] told Viviana that he thought it was easy to convince Marcelo to come and take some pictures in the city of Oporto. They went back to the front page and briefly discussed the invited companies – Vodafone International because they seem to get 10% of formerly unemployed mothers as their workers to combat the exclusion of pregnant women from the labour market. They talked about Colour Red and the public impact they have on colour blindness. They have spoken in some public campaigns of this association, which include a symbol they have on the t-shirt or the badges and when someone does not perceive the colour on the right they are easily diagnosed. They spoke of Nice – a vegan company from Lisbon. They spoke of wanting to bring Cristiano Bottone an Italian intellectual of the transition movement and also Bernardo Barros of Future Cities. They talked about Scale Up and Invest Port. Then they returned to the theme of the companies to invite and Viviana insisted that the companies that will be in the colloquium should contribute financially to the event, this would be the only way that we could get them to be co-organizers of the event and not simply invited. They must start to reinforce this very well with the danger of distorting the initial idea of Cidade+ [if they don’t do it]. This means having a group of companies, organizations, groups that co-financed an event that was important for itself, both in terms of publicity as in terms of dissemination and the promotion of sustainability spirit, and really create a different and better world.

Verónica said that they have consulted the “bible of project management”, which came from a course they did at Bernardo’s invitation and they both thanked [him]. Bernardo was happy that they were effectively using this manual and asked questions about how they have used it and [with what] regularity.

After this they spoke of the Warm-Ups and the Porto Innovation Hub – that were planning to hold seminars, perhaps every two months – as they were dealing with a triennium – to address the 17 ODS Environmental topics (sustainable development objectives). They discussed how they could make it attractive to the companies and that it was good to put each company to give its sponsorship – Bernardo said that it was necessary to give exclusivity to these companies – that without exclusivity it was not attractive to them. They discussed the schedule and that they were already late.

29th of March 2017

Then Viviana asked a very strong question that reminded me of Paulo Freire: “WHERE IS OUT?”. When we say “let's throw out the garbage” what do we refer to exactly when we say “out”? Being that the Earth is a finite space in or out does not exist, the Whole is the Earth. If it is not in our house it will be somewhere else, equally in the world. She talked about the quality of garbage (Technological, biological, paper, etc.) and referred to the importance of recycling, and
especially the 3Rs and the top 10 items that are thrown away, cigarettes being the first one. She then spoke of the 17 sustainable goals, explaining that it was a proposal from the UN that will try to ensure that the countries of the European Union can meet these 17 goals by the year 2030. She asked the teacher if he had already spoken about these 17 goals to the students. She said no and then added: “some [topics] are more complicated, like ending the war”. I thought to myself that the others are not at all simple either.

She started talking about Cidade+ and showed some slides with images of the [web]site. She said that Cidade+’s first idea was to try to get on the concept of sustainability and communicate it in a simple way, and give tips on what to do to be sustainable. She said that it was an event within a project – daRaiz – to communicate sustainability in a light but also very juicy way. She spoke of the Fruta Feia in passing and was wondering if they themselves were implicated in the Fruta Feia as consumers. After a few seconds Verónica told me softly “today is Fruta Feia day. Now it’s always on Wednesdays”. I think I got the answer even without asking. In fact, I have Viviana as one of the most congruent people I’ve ever met. In the time when I spent more time with her I remember going to the market every week to get the fruits that were leftover, of being a vegetarian and enjoying to make vegetarian barbecues on a fire in her garden.

31st of March 2017

They asked what the box was and what it was carrying, they said it was the money of Moving Cause139. Viviana immediately said “what did you get yourself into boy! Are you the treasurer now?” Matthew’s fatigue was discussed a little and Viviana said it was great to do a good job but never at the expense of well-being. “But try not to kill yourself over that boy” Viviana said.

Viviana still said that when they set a meeting it would be good that the time was kept to the letter so as to not delay the process – she said that she too was late but it would be better to arrange it for later in case Mateus's work schedule was more nocturnal. Because it was not the first time he stayed working until very late and they should [all] think about being honest with themselves as a group and committing to an hour that they can actually meet. Viviana then raised the various items on the agenda and began by discussing whether money from a loan could be transferred to Moving Cause because it was not an environmental entity. This theme also came from Mateus who with a scrawny and slightly stressed look placed it in the middle of evoking the themes for the meeting.

7th of April 2017

Viviana said that he thought they were only a few months away from the event and so they should focus on this edition of the event and stop trying to find new sponsors… that she

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139 Moving Cause is the legal association that supports daRaiz at this Cidade+ event.
thought that in terms of money they were kind of comfortable and that they could dedicate themselves to the support and partnerships they already have, to work them well, to work the event in itself well because that was what would guarantee the event next year. They should work well the relationship with the companies and the measuring of the impacts of the participation of partners and citizens, in order to have serious and reliable documents… so that in the next year they will consider making new partnerships and have documentation, because that is what will guarantee it to them later. Instead of focusing on the sponsors, focusing on the now, focus their energies on the event and the quality of the event.

Ideally they should have a low public funding relative to the needs of the event in itself. Now they are at 50% but the ideal would be to reach 30% and the rest to be private, or even less because that way they would be supported only by individuals and did not depend on the state. Viviana said “we have no notion but the citizens, the people… is the largest mass that exists: we are an immense [number] and if we join efforts, if each one gives one euro for example, we do what we want and do not need 'them' for anything. The 1% or less of the citizens that exist is who makes decisions. We have to bet more on the decisions of the citizens… and these decisions also result from partnerships with small businesses, crowd-funding, and so, and I think we will achieve it”. At this point she looked at me a bit although I do not quite have this opinion.

Our common old struggles were mainly in autonomous and state opposition projects, such as Casa Viva, Garagem Branca or Fontinha. This support view is natural. She said that if they have well written progress reports, well-measured impacts, they will easily make new partnerships. And now they have the time and money that is needed to gather the material that counts and put [their] energy into the process “because this is going to be gold to sell in the future” she said.

10th of April 2017

“The girls want the contact with the municipality”. “It is just that you have something very valuable that they want and you have to pay attention to this”. “The contact with the municipal hall is very valuable, it is not all groups that have it” Renata said. ”Yes… and the municipality is directing to us much of the budget for environmental issues, that’s the truth” Viviana reflected.

“Yes and companies like theirs do not have a chance, they do not have that clean link. They need your help” said Renata.

Viviana asked Renata “So how are you feeling, when are you leaving?” “I am leaving on May 29th, it is already booked”. ”And then you are going [to travel] around the world?” “For now I need to give the house two months but the worst is over. It was tough when I could not tell anyone, now people are starting to know. [Directed at me] look, this is what is good for your study… all these questions. [And she went on] It is not easy because people trusted me to bridge
the gap between management and their positions and they told me their things and difficulties. I feel they already feel like they are going to miss that... and I feel they feel like they are becoming alone. This crisis was not at all good for the people. For some, it took their jobs away or made it difficult for them to enter the world of work. Others, they were so afraid of becoming unemployed or of getting fired that no one dares to say “no” to another request from the direction. They work like never [before] and in a great anguish that it still is not enough. I feel that people are tired, I really feel everyone is exhausted. Myself... I am exhausted. I do not know what will happen when I stop, I have not done that for so many years and I have nothing, nothing of anything thought out for the following [time {future}]. My friends are glad, most of them are against the system and they were always doing my head in about working there at COMPANY A, and they become really happy. They are going to throw a party for sure. The family needed to be prepared. [With] my parents it took weeks of conversation. It is funny to see people's reaction, it is very diverse. Some think I was very brave, others that I definitely have gone mad, others worry that I will not get anything after this. 'How did you let go of a safe job, you earn well, you have autonomy, why did you drop all of this?' I even understand the questions but I do not have children, I did not get myself in great debts of car and house and everything, I have everything more or less clean, I spend a little [money], everything is under control. But I feel sorry for those people who got into debt, who thought they were in control and bought more and more, and now are slaves to keep this lifestyle. They are completely enslaved by this work and the place where they chose to be. And it is not easy, it is not easy to cut with this because there are many things to provide for and people are not at all used to not having [stuff]. Those who have kind of a lot of things are not accustomed to having less so they cannot stop. They cannot give up what they have because they do not know how to do it differently. This is really not easy. And this is so in every segment [of life], from smaller jobs to larger jobs, people are all like that with a fear and an inability to say no! There is such a subjection to what exists that people are incapable of doing [things] differently. Now we will see... I am sorry to leave, this week people start to know and it is not easy. I am sorry, I do effectively feel sorry for what people may be feeling. An ‘I also wanted’ mixed with some envy or just a feeling that I am foolish... but it is not easy”.

"Will you devote yourself to experiences in the kitchen, agriculture, will you not? You know how to entertain yourself!” said Viviana.

"Yes, I think I will know that but for now I am not quite sure what that is yet. And this month as I have been delegating things already, I have been almost vacationing around there, so I do not have great jobs because I am passing on the work to others. Anyway... I know it was the best [to
do]. I could not stand that rhythm. And now this group with Cidade+, you have to be careful. Beware of growing up.

You are now moving on the razor edge and it is not easy. It is not at all easy”.

“Well we have been talking about it, about the issue of growth, even because of COMPANY B” Viviana said.

“We should invite COMPANY B. Despite of everything, it makes sense to go to the international [level]” said Verónica.

“But will it already make sense to do that? We are only three years old. I feel some pressure on the part of the municipal hall to widen. Even at conferences to go more international. And I feel we have to be careful about being sustainable, in making a sustainable growth”. Viviana

“I feel it more in relation to the business world. In bringing bigger companies. I think we should bring COMPANY C, it makes more sense than COMPANY D”. Verónica

“That is right, you will begin to feel it more and more. And it is not easy to make the choices and I honestly think so... Look here, we are on PARTNER F. Do you know who created PARTNER F? PARTNER F is DIRECTOR’ NAME, directly. More [stuff] on the razor edge than this!!! You have already begun to expand to dangerous grounds in this more ethical sense...” Renata

"Right, we want to at least pay attention to the companies that we get here to function with us. We want to at least make sure that we have the best of the bad”. Viviana

"We are talking about companies. The business world is not easy, you are in the middle of a very unequal market. It is not easy to be ethical here. And I can tell you [that] in this sense with COMPANY B, there is not even a comparison with a COMPANY E, or COMPANY F or COMPANY G. It is much more sustainable. They do not have a square on their website to say ‘sustainability’! They apply sustainability. Vodafone International is based on this idea of sustainability and they do things in local practice. They directly financed the routes that lead people with reduced mobility to the beach for example, in the Matosinhos area. They pay attention to this sort of things, access to minorities and everything”. Renata

“And they do not just do it to clean money and [their] name?” Viviana

"I do not know. You know that in spite of everything, in a world like this we must also value better practices at these various levels. And at that point COMPANY B is seriously far ahead” Renata

“Yes but this idea of the international scares me. I think we have to be sustainable, I think we have to do things very, very slowly. Continue doing and growing sustainably, and ethically. We cannot skip steps. We may not even grow much more but...” Viviana.
“But if we use international companies that make and also transport sustainability, I do not see what the problem is, in this area we are being correct!” Verónica

“Yes but not to forget the place, to not forget that... I do not want to come and invite a COMPANY H!” Viviana.

“Look at where you are now Viviana. Be careful, you may not want a COMPANY H but do not forget that all companies have unethical practices in their processes” Renata

The three of us stayed. They sat at the computer and began to see the Sacks’ profile. I had a meeting at the university so I asked Viviana when the meeting had been arranged for on Thursday... 11:30 she said, “but I am glad you ask”. I would like to talk to you both. It is a pity that Mateus is not here but then I'll talk to him too”. I nodded my head to continue, I was paying attention. “Myself... this is not being easy for me. And I think this is going to affect your study a bit too Joana [the ethnographer]. I am really broke. And this life I am having no longer makes sense. I am 33 years old and this is not the age, it really is not... it no longer makes sense. This precariousness no longer makes sense, this dependence, this constant uncertainty. I feel that we are good at what we do, we have value! Seriously, we know how to do this, this management. We are among the best in [what comes to] human relations, in the contact we make, in the networks that we get. We have to value that. We cannot always be working, working and not even be sure if we have ways to finance ourselves. This is not sustainable. I am now at Henrique’s house. I only have some change left over. I cannot always keep coming here, from Braga. I have to leave Kungsu (a martial art that I still do not know what it is). It is enough of thinking that it can all be done so lightly. My parents loaned me €500 last month. I am going to give it back to them as soon as I get paid, it is just borrowed. Anyway it does not make sense to ask money from my parents when I work every day. The municipality money has not arrived yet. We have been waiting since September to receive this money. We are in April... with what money are we supposed to be living with? I was [living] with last year's [money] up until now. It does not make sense. They must be paying soon, so this is just temporary... anyway I do not know. I have no way of knowing for now when this will happen and then the money goes from one place to another and never comes to us”.

“And I have to get a part-time [job], something simple, basic, making some lattes, chat a bit, without having an annoying boss... also in these jobs it can sometimes be horrible. But a simple thing that I do not have to think so much and at the end of the month I receive [a pay check]... by the seaside... I do not know, something like that, light. That I can be sure that this money comes in and I do not have to worry. We do not even have Social Security. Above it all, we have to pay for this voluntarily. When I had a research grant, for a few years also, yes, they paid for
that extra. Now we have to be asking for this and still leaving money there. It is not working. I do not know, I cannot stay in this for longer.”

“That is it, I am not that well in this either. I have 50 euros until the end of the month”. Verónica

“Also, then these lunches… it is cool, but it [the money] is needed elsewhere. I cannot even spend 4 euros on a meal, I cannot. And I have to be honest with myself and say no, enough of this! I am not being sustainable”. Viviana

“Are you not a designer?” I asked Viviana

“Yes, I have done some work but I do not even have enough time to explore it. I have all my energy in this project that does not even give me any stability. And it is also not fair for me either. I have to change this, explore other things. The design, the web, other things”. Viviana

“Yes, because from one [event] we grab the next one and cannot even breathe”. Verónica

“Right… but that is it. I have to start coming to Oporto less often. I would come once a week. This may not even make sense in a week or a fortnight but now it does and I wanted to talk to you about it. To be honest with you and say that I cannot. I cannot go on like this anymore. And it is good to be like this. On the one hand I like it too but on the other… I do not want it anymore, it already made sense, now it does not. Maybe I have to slow down, stay at home until things change and then we have to evaluate it well, see how we proceed… it is just that like this it does not make sense”. Viviana.

13th April 2017

“He [the artist that could be paid to do the scenery] is going to have a lot of work” “Yes, so he is not contemplated. This will mean that if we set the stage we will have to cut other things out such as administrative [work], which was something that I think is extremely important” Viviana. “We are growing; we have to grow inside too. We are always trying to keep up appearances… have a good, modern, creative appearance to the detriment of internal growth, of structuring ourselves to make better progress. I think an organized database is more important than a crisp scenario. And I honestly think that the scenario is something that we could do with a bit of time and I can tell you already that it would bring me great joy”

“Yes but it would still be aesthetically powerful” Viviana

“We could ask each person to bring one of their bicycle wheels, only to borrow and we would set the scene on people's personal things and of their wheels” Henrique

“This is a brilliant idea, really of genius, to integrate people. Genius” Viviana became enthused [with this idea]. [Pause]. “But that would mean that people could not ride their bicycles those days” she continued.
“Yes, leave us your wheel and come by car instead” played Verónica.

“Stop and come to see Cidade+” said Henrique like if he was exploring a slogan.

“Look, I propose we set a day to explore the scenario and not do it now so we do not disperse. We can book it now, is it not? Next Monday, in the afternoon? Viviana

21st of April 2017

Meanwhile Viviana was under some pressure because there were some statements she had to fill in until 6:00 pm that day. Later in the day Viviana explained to me that these were bureaucratic statements so they could have support from the municipality hall – these were formulas and more formulas of security. It was just that everything was encrypted and she had to put everything in order… fill out endless forms.

But Mateus was at a very fast pace and seemed to want to complete all the established themes, so he immediately said that he did not like the posters as they had been done so far. “We have to think better in terms of marketing – What will people remember? My friends only know what Cidade+ is because they associate it with me. They themselves say 'that event that you organize', they do not remember that it is called Cidade+, it does not get imprinted in the head. And it does not stick because in our posters instead of reading 'Cidade+', we read '17 goals for sustainability', which is a great drag’. We all laughed “right, actually” said Viviana. “That’s right, it could read Cidade+ – ecology and sustainability, at least these are words that do not hurt as much, they are not as heavy” Henrique said. "No, I would just put Cidade+, I would drop 'sustainability' and 'ecology' because even those terms are boring” Mateus concluded. Verónica intervened with more practical and technical things “Well… and the posters are not yet done, it can still be changed right?”

Eliana asked the themes and Verónica said that one of them was the management of public green spaces. “Ah, that I like!” and [she] started talking about the Ponte de Lima forest, where she has a house and her concerns about the fires. “I've been really tormented. The thing is that everything is burning up in the area and my neighbours sometimes say “I do not know why you are having so much work, it is all going to burn”. So sometimes I even do not sleep with this fire issue and everything. And the issue of reforestation and of the green spaces... this will only change with a change of mentalities. It will not be easy. This will only change when the mentalities change. Because I spent some time in Sweden, there they know everything in their forest. They know what to eat, they pick everything for salads and everything, and us here, we know nothing. There they are so accustomed to walking around in the forest, to appreciate it, to take pleasure from it too. Not us! And that changes everything. When you have a relationship, when you understand it, you will treat it well”. “Look, we have a funny example about that too.
In the last *Cidade+* there was an old woman who was very angry with the weeds on the sidewalks and on the roads. When we explained her that the only thing that takes away the herbs is glyphosate and that the Oporto municipality has stopped using glyphosate – which is extremely harmful – and that because of that the weeds grow, she was surprised and the next day came to thank us because now she looks at the plants differently”.

I started the conversation in the car about the people they get together with to have meetings and that in general the partners of *Cidade+* are beautiful people, really good. [I told them] that I thought they were very lucky. She said yes but that it was not always like this. That it had been a very slow and difficult process for them. In the beginning they did everything as it should be done. They spoke with those who they thought they had to speak to, not only who they wanted to or felt like they should talk to. She said that Viviana was always quicker, more detached… that she had more problems [with this] but that they were very much who they had to be, what they were supposed to, they did everything very well… Until they realized that the relationships that worked were something else, it was for other reasons. And who stayed [in Cidade+] were those who felt they would stay from the beginning. She told me that there were two fractions in the way of thinking and conceiving *Cidade+:* Viviana and her, and Mateus and Branco. I asked her if it was about how to operationalize things: a matter of choosing strategies. She said no. It was really the way of thinking and that if Viviana and her were not together surely she would not be there anymore. She told me that initially she was very attached to what was supposed to be and that Viviana had always been looser. They always said yes, only that Viviana would ask questions if she did not understand or [if she] disagreed. Then she began to understand that she could also ask questions, that there was not a right way to do things, that she could also question what exists and she began to not say ‘Yes’ to everything and started to question herself. And they also started understanding who were the people they could trust, the ones that they could not, the ones who deviated from the norm [and] the ones who did not. And that she is very pleased with the way she is now, with the way things have transformed and became closer to her image as well, as if the nucleus has been funnelled.

5th of May 2017

[I had already heard Verónica and Mateus comment on this case the week before. I noticed that something was not quite right because *PARTNER C* – supposedly an event within the *Cidade+* event – was publicizing itself and publicizing the event as an individual, isolated thing. There was no mention to *Cidade+* in their posters. Verónica was the one who said it because her partner – Nelson – had seen the poster on the subway the day before. Therefore, in addition to having
already begun to advertise without the knowledge of Cidade+ there is no mention to the event that welcomes them – which is Cidade+] Viviana replied him with extreme calm. She knew what he was talking about and where Joel wanted to get.

Viviana: “Well I am waiting to see a poster to take a picture and then talk to them. The relationship is good, communication is fast and continuous. There is a problem here on the conception of the thing. They are very inflexible with that being their brand. So it is almost an aesthetic question. And I also did not like the poster that I saw that has the name of Cidade+ because it seems that our logo is hanging there, you do not understand the connection”. J “It is just to be careful as it seems that Cidade+ happens there by chance and it should be the other way around. You are doing them a favour in welcoming them”. I also feel that they never put more than two, maximum three meetings per day and they are always distanced in time. Maximum two [meetings] in the morning and two in the afternoon and not because they did not like to do more. I feel like they know they would need them and it would be fruitful now. I think there is an attempt to be fully present in each of them and this becomes difficult with a very tight schedule. And they usually work with the dedication of whole days. When they get together they rarely leave before 6:00 or 7:00 p.m. Even if they have other small markings they end up postponing or cancelling them to give themselves time.

F: “And now the municipalities have something in their hands that is the climate change plan. This could also be interesting for you, this time. And look, 17 ODS -> 17 autarchies… They could go around there proposing each parish to deepen one of the objectives and to finance it. [It could be] them or a company of their choice… and there they would have everything locked in, and [they could] ask for, I don’t know, some money… because you also need money for other things right? (...) It is complicated at times, not the commitment but [to] materialize it. Then about the Gulbenkian candidacy “And it is the Coordination committee that will evaluate your proposal. It is very subjective, it goes very much from believing. And it is also good that it comes from above. For example, Paiva’s walkways… no one believed in that. If they had not given them the hint. No one would have ever bet on that, it was risky. And this begins with a simple request for a meeting. You present Cidade+, you contribute to your climate change plan and by the way Verónica is helping with the budget for the climate change plan”.

Then speaking of Maia and the lack of funds despite of the very good work he said “You cannot get this fund because you have reached the top of what is requested. Maia already has the brand image. You do not see garbage on the floor. They have received lots of foreign prizes, they come here to learn. They had a very good vision. The guy who had it (Júlio, former civil engineer in the
environment area) began to demand for garbage rooms in the new apartments. This [was] in the 80s. The other municipalities will never again in their life time [have this] because now they are fully built. And they have lower costs than in the centralized collection. *Maia Ambiente* generates revenue! Others have a margin of 5% and the residents separate the trash because it is inside [the building], it is more comfortable. It has the highest recycling and glass national rate. It is not easy to copy that model, is that not it? Now the next step is to change the [recollection] route depending on whether people do or do not have trash at the door. And an electric composter… having an electric composter would be important… She [Marta] is all about these things. You go to her office and it is oriental music and everything… And she goes by bike. Still yesterday with the awkward day, [she] went by bike… The *Maia* municipal hall gives breakfast to the employees who arrive by bicycle… and it is not just about the trend “Oh, this is cool, let’s do the same thing”. No, he takes it seriously. It was Tiago the civil engineer who promoted this. Much of what shows up about the environment is by *Maia’s* hand. It is the municipal hall that has more green areas per inhabitant. Even *PARTNER A* and everything has employees who came from there. They communicate very badly (about the posters). There is a lot going on in *Maia* that nobody knows [about]. For example, even a few days ago there was a meeting of gymnasts. Thousands of gymnasts were there doing try-outs. They had Dutch channels and everything for the live shoot… and here? Here they have not even once spoken [about it] in the media … And it has an obvious indicator, fewer respiratory diseases. They planned it very well. They have a very good team but the communication there is a little short… A Scottish local authority asked them [to the *Maia* municipality] for everything to sell them the service. They refused… But now *Guimarães* is also a good place. *Guimarães* is taking advantage of everything to get the green prize”.

It is really someone who is on the inside of the autarkic system and who knows exactly what is happening at any moment, and what there is among favourable projects and presidents that can be harnessed to a specific subject, sustainability in this case. I was quite amazed even with the amount of information she gave to Viviana at that time and with that gift that is, in itself, a gesture of trust and generosity. From what I have understood, he is a marketing designer and is involved with several companies and municipalities. It is visible that he has a thorough knowledge of what is happening in each of them. At the end, she was still kind of in a silly mode and told Viviana that he was very knowledgeable and asked what his role was in the *Cidade+*. And she replied “Nothing. He is really just helping, made himself available only to give us some tips and some help”. “Wow and what a help!” “Yes, now it is to assimilate all these things. But
you see this is what I would like to do in Cidade+ at this moment, these networks, these relationships amongst companies, municipalities… this is the part I like”.

10th of May 2017

I was very close and she asked me if I minded giving her some help with the English. I said no and placed my things next to that girl, her name was Graça. Gina came on purpose from Peniche for this event. She is working on plastic issues in the oceans and was interested in networking and learning more. Meanwhile Flor arrived and sat down next to her. Flor was dressed in yellow. She was very luminous, in a good mood and presented herself later on in the discussion groups as an “active citizen”, an “activist”. She had a really good look, happy, in her fifties… and had a waste collection organization with two friends, the “Plastic Sundays”. Once together, Graça and her spoke at length before the session began. I noticed that they got along well and exchanged comments and notes between them during the session. In the meanwhile, the audience increased and calmed down. The councilman was the first to speak. Later on at lunch time Viviana said it was supposed to be her but he told her that he was in a great hurry and he was the one who gave the welcome [speech].

Ana quickly finished and returned to Viviana to explain how the dynamics that we would do next would work. She spoke calmly and clearly. She asked us to separate into three groups, in separate rooms, to answer to three separate questions: what can civil society do? What is the role of local authorities and what is the one of the companies?. We would be in each room for 20 minutes and in the last [one] for only 10. We would have to rotate between all the rooms and we could pick up fruit, cookies and coffee on the way to the rooms if we wished. I took the opportunity of that pause to smoke a cigarette, again with Mateus who was satisfied with the way things were going.

We talked about the legislation of the plastic bags, of going shopping and returning the packaging because we are only interested in the product. People talked about the need to provide small tips more often in prime-time [television] so that people would educate themselves about environmental pollution, such as not throwing swabs to the toilet; and that although there are already documentaries on prime-time [television] about these issues it is not enough… because small sketches of environmental advertising are rarely seen and should exist, for example, on the newscast. People spoke about Germany where one coin is returned for each plastic bag that is deposited, and how this has already existed here in relation to glass but has been lost. People spoke about Spain where there is a game in a public computer that can be played for a while for each cigarette butt placed there. Other examples were given. There was talk of publicity in the city about these issues. People talked about the cigarette butts and how much it is still consented
that they get thrown on the floor. There was talk of the lack of inspection regarding the waste that is thrown from cars.

Viviana explained that this was the first part of a session that would have continuity during the days of Cidade+ and if there was someone there who wanted to present their projects they could send a request for the “info.cidade+” and they would arrange a time for it during the event. The proposed solutions would be recorded and then small videos would be made to start the debate of a second part to happen during Cidade+. Mateus was very happy during this part, like if he was listening to a son talking for the first time. It went very well and after all three spokespeople shared [the experiences/discussions], Viviana closed the session. Someone asked her to better describe Cidade+ and she used the site to briefly explain the event. Someone asked Antónia how to get financing. She had given the hint that there was a lot of unused funding in this area and that it would be good if everyone kept themselves informed so that they could take advantage of it and give it use. Verónica asked Antónia for tips for talking to companies, who shared her techniques with a little fear and checking if anyone else was there. “You call once, ask who it would be best person to speak to; then you call again to speak directly to that person; and then you explain [everything], you say that you will send info through the [inter]net and you call again the next day to speak after they read what you sent”. Verónica asked “Did you pretend you were someone else?” Antónia said no. That time was only important to give you more access to the people who were directly involved. The different phone calls were important.

11th of May 2017
I was visibly amazed at the meeting in Famalicão “They were the ones who found us, it was lucky”. “So what is their idea for you?” I asked. “Well, you know it is not clear to me yet. They like the idea of ‘co-creation’ that Cidade+ has and they want some knowledge on how to do it. They are building a virtual lab to run for a fund and they want our help. Viviana even said in a meeting “You know we are no longer at an age to work voluntarily!” and he was impeccable. He said that he did not believe in voluntarism… that he preferred passionate workers.

15th of May 2017
Marta said that in the last session with people about the process of networking and project co-management she had used Legos, for example, for people to portray what they meant by smart cities. She said that she thought one morning was short for that but other ways would be arranged. Marta spoke of the smart-impact project, explaining that Oporto has three URB-ACTs: smart impact; iInvés-Porto (more in the area of entrepreneurship) and one connected to health.

Viviana said that she had thought of something more theatrical and looking at me she said “You could move a bit away from your role of ethnographer and give us some help here”. I just
smiled. Marta suggested doing some sort of role-playing in which someone from the audience would offer their project to be talked about and discussed in the session. She said that, for example they could try to answer the question of “What to do to get everyone involved?” and nominated “The biggest difficulties that usually arise in cities are: how to communicate; how to convince?: what to say?... In short, how to expose to motivate? How to create engagement? I cannot even translate this word! [and looked at me]... we could do a mix of techniques because if we expose some methodologies for 20 minutes, another 20 minutes of final discussion, we have about 2 hours left, it is not much for these things. And here it is not worth having great illusions, what works, works. The groups are always very unpredictable, you cannot make big plans. We could divide into two groups, for example. And it would be important to have someone to write. It is always important for people to get out of things with something palpable otherwise it seems that everything stays in the air. Even if it is two weeks later, it is important to give something physical to the people who participated”. “In this last session we recorded the final responses of each group and now we want to edit it also in video format” Viviana was saying.

On the way to the car Viviana said “Our cars were actually really close”. She told me after I made a positive comment about Marta: “You know, I had a very prejudiced idea about people connected to the municipal halls. Maybe because we started *Cidade*+ soon after *Fontinha*140 and there… you know, you were there. So, I have been changing my view of the municipalities and the people there SO but SO much. It is almost impressive. I still have not gotten a bad person in there, not one.” “Yes, maybe they do exist but yes, I said the same to Verónica the other day “You only get along with incredible people” I commented. “Yeah and maybe the theme does not call bad people, right?” I said to Viviana. She told me about Rodrigo… that “He loves *Cidade*+.

Seriously, you have no idea, we talked for ten minutes and he said he was ready for whatever it takes. That's where this meeting comes from”. We talked about how much these people travel and how much they know about the subject. I said that when a person is immersed they learn very fast. “That is true. I have learned so much, so much since I have been with *Cidade*+. I really do learn a lot but I would also want to travel like that. “We have to take *Cidade*+ to other cities”, said to Viviana in a dream sharing way. “Every city needs a plus” I said playfully as a slogan for the internationalization of *Cidade*+. “That is genius, that phrase is genius”. And she wrote it in her cell phone. We laughed. She introduced me to her car, which is very similar to mine just a

140 *Fontinha* was a process of occupying an abandoned school in the neighbourhood of *Fontinha*. It was mainly conducted by the anarchist group of Oporto that were normally based in *Casa Viva*. It was in 2013, for the month of May. Viviana and I were both involved in the process, in different ways.
little smaller in height, and told me that we would now see each other on Thursday. She would be going to Coimbra these days. And she would tell me the date of the meeting in Famalicão. I gave her two kisses and came.

18th of May 2017
She said she was coming as an individual and that he was what could be called an “activist or active citizen and with that she meant someone who uses their free or non-work time to engage in a specific cause that does not give financial return. “I am part of several associations like XY that tries to find solutions to the environmental problems that there are with our lifestyles”.

After that Peralta spoke and said that he also wanted to say something and it was “That young guy who likes systems and complex things”. He said that he has known Cidade+ for over a year, when Viviana told him about it and that “After traveling extensively and even having attended a huge international conference on sustainability, I realized that what is missing in this movement for sustainability is not greatness, it is actually in the human relationship that are created around it. It is these relationships that will bring change to life and they will truly transform. It is not the event in itself but the relations that are at the base of this event and that do not exhaust themselves in this event, which give strength and the necessary connections for continuity outside of it. And when Viviana told me about the event and after watching and being more involved I realized that they do it very well. It has nothing to do with such conference that I attended, which was great and had good content but it is the relational commitment they [the women from Cidade+] have, it is the importance that they give to this human part that will bring change effectively. It is not the event, it is these relationships they are trying to deepen today that will bring change”. Viviana said “Wow. Thank you”. And asked if anyone else would want to say something.

She continued “The first room is about the concept of Cidade+; the second on the program of the event and the third on the future of Cidade+”. She asked who felt the most identified with each of the rooms and there was only no one for the last. She said in a joking tone “It is a shame because the last one is the coolest one, there are toys!”. They all laughed. Peralta was raising his arm for each room. He wanted to stay in all [of them]. He was very enthusiastic on this day.

They said that in order to not waste time, there were apples, biscuits and water on the tables, which we could feed ourselves while we were discussing. I went to my room, it was the second one, and people kept arriving. I spoke a bit with Isa (who was on my left side) and with Gisela (on my right side), who had presented herself as “I am Brazilian, nobody can be perfect”.

19th of May 2017
Mateus later said “I took two things out of my [discussion] room [he got the ‘Cidade+ concept’]: what in a certain way people expect from Cidade+ – what [were] the expectations. 1- Being part of a network, people want a connection to network; 2- There are two types of people: the most connected to the entities who seek for networking; and those on an individual basis who hope that we can reach the decision-making body, local authorities, etc., that we make this communication”.

“To make political lobbying for sustainability, right?” confirmed Viviana.
“That we have some weight to take their voice forward and these are their expectations” said Mateus.
“I feel how incredible that was yesterday. The room was full. I now feel the responsibility we have to offer the next steps. For her for [comunidade+] to be born there must be accompaniment”.

I feel that there is still not much connection between them and that especially Viviana, she organizes herself and makes decisions very much from the specific person she has, rather than from the needs of the group. And as she still has not been able to fully understand Márcia’s potentials, she has not yet been able to decide what she can actually do. It is like someone who came from above, who was ‘imposed’ on the group and not chosen by them. And it contrasts a lot with the way people are coupled to the event, which always either comes from a very specific – almost magical – chance of an encounter that has to materialize into help; or of a specific need in which people make the best of their social or professional sphere and try to fit into the function in a profile that they feel they could perfectly fulfil, a person they feel suitable for…

26th of May 2017
When I had a break with Verónica she told me “You know I do not know if we are going to continue to collaborate next year. This is handy, the money, the network, but this has nothing to do with us. I feel it more and more. The way they do things… They really are just filling the agenda. We do not like to work like this. It does not make sense to us, you know?” She paused “I am going to have to have a conversation with Viviana about this”.

7th of July 2017 - Day 2 of Cidade+
"Yes, from a long time we have been talking to people slowly and explaining what Cidade+ is” completed Verónica. “Yes and the network is much broader. We have been growing and we have to be careful about this growth, to maintain what we have now, despite of the growth of the thing” Branco said. Then Francisca intervened and said that “In the Ser Educação event there was a poster first thing at the entrance, with the transparent budget and what was being put
together by the donations. And it was the first thing people saw. It was not even the program. It was the budget and maybe we should do something like that here, have it as the first thing because sometimes people do not realize it. I can help with that this year. We could even put the money that was going in”, “It is 15,000 euros so if you want to contribute” Branco said in a playful tone. “Could we not [do it with] parcels?” Viviana asked “2000 euros or 3 at a time”. Then Viviana asked if there was an easel left over and proposed to make the transparent budget, straight away, the next day”. The conversation was not concluded. “Because there are many people who think this is sponsored by the municipal hall and it is not. They think they should not give anything because it is already paid for and it is not true. We have to be able to pass this on to people because the idea is that this is to be something that people themselves want to create not that the municipal hall organizes. And there is already a huge difference about this because in this last news about Cidade+ the municipality hall wrote that it was an event organized by the daRaiz. It was the first time they did not put it as a municipal event and that already means a lot. They got it and it took a lot of talk to get here. It was the communication that changed, nothing else”. “Before it was an event organized by the Municipal hall in partnership with the daRaiz, right?” Asked Verónica. “Yes but nobody reads the partnerships and it is false. The event is ours and we have other partners. It is not a municipality thing. And yes, I think people should know it”. “I think that even the volunteers have a different discourse this year” Branco said. “It seems like they know exactly what is happening here and that changes the discourse in itself within the event, which gets passed on to the people”.

I passed by a friend, [who is] very attentive to the movements of the city, to get a rain jacket already in the evening and he told me about the crowd-funding “I did not understand why people decided to go to one of the most capitalist companies here. This is something I do not understand. I mean, I know the people well, I like them very much but I do not understand some of the choices they make, I do not understand”.

9th of July 2017 - Day 4 of Cidade+

They both went to the celebration area. Then they spoke a bit “I feel like this is the first year that we are reaping the fruits and sharing the gift. For the first time we had an economic return that values our work and we were able to hire other people and therefore share this return with other people” Viviana was saying. More towards the end of the day when we went from being 3 to 8 fixed elements this year. Verónica spoke a little bit about her experience of the Scircle this October “I went in thinking that I was going to deal with Cidade+ but there I discovered that the

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\[141\] A group of young enterpreneurs that want to change the world through enterpreneurship.
project I had written was not Cidade+. Maria who is standing in front of me asked me in the project sharing “Are you sure this is Cidade+?” and when I looked again I saw that it was not.

**Day 2 post-event of Cidade+, 11th of July 2017**

In the meantime, I joined the group where Viviana, Branco and Bernardo [were] about the partnerships. “We have to understand very well what kind of audience is coming to Cidade+ (are they families, what age are they, from where do they come from, why do they come). And that PARTNER B thing was a very good idea because it also called other people and the area is related. So it is to arrange events that can be related and that can attract people” then he continued “We should make a group of young players with their own space and everything [We should] not all be in the same place. Everything together there in the boulevard is very confusing and the little ones should all be together so that we give some organization to the [whole] thing… And those barracks, tents back there, close to the lake, we have to better rethink that. They resemble a medieval fair, they have weirder and such things”. She now said to Verónica. I think it can confuse people and discredit Cidade+. I think we have to better select for the next one, make a more detailed interview”. “Yes, we usually receive proposals and then we interview the people” Viviana said. “Yes but we have to select better… that area there, yoga, massage, shiatsu… that was okay but that thing slipped a little to the esoteric. Things were all very scattered, I think it gives a bad image”. Then they moved on to sustainability and Bernardo asked about the accounts. Viviana said “The work is being paid. There are no funds left, but we have some money to invest in the next one” “then there are funds left” “No, there is none left but the work was paid for” Verónica interrupted “You can be honest Viviana” “and I am being honest” “okay, transparent. We took out of our salaries to have a little for the coming year. There were months when we did not receive and others in which we received less than we would have liked, otherwise there would be nothing left”.

“The environmental ethics must be present. We should have moopies and posters with information of where it comes from to force the reflection “Yes, but from my experience it is not because I have information that habits change, even with people knowing that napkins pollute a lot the second time they go there they are going to take a few just the same, they will no longer remember. Having information is not enough”. Said Isabel

“There is still a lack of information on the environmental impact of the choices”.

Then Ludovico from Cacau intervened. “It is necessary to think about alternatives to the glasses… and there are already some, corn for example. Bamboo for the dishes, if you want [this] I have the contact and some catalogues of some festivals that already do this and are obliged to
do it. For example for the cups, we should go and rent the mugs in the mug shop. The visitor
leaves €1, takes the mug and then brings it [back] or takes it home!"

"People should be sensitize that this weekend is different and [we should] get them trying
vegetarian. I do not understand what the problem is!" André said… “it is only a weekend!"

“We should have companies. What is difficult is the fair where there is an on that time return.
The companies that come are little-medium-size. If a big company already costs a lot and always
makes calculations of the benefits of having a stall [then] in the smaller ones even more… we
have to bring them people in transit! And 20,000 people are already a lot of people… And in an
electric car I am the direct consumer. I am the one who buys. But in the construction of a house
for example, I hire the architect so we have to get to the architects because they are the ones
who need to have this information and give it to their clients” then some disagreed, others did
not. “But this is made for the citizen!” someone said. “But the citizen does not go to the
business square” said Fonseca. “Sorry but that is not why the citizen does not go to the business
plaza” Viviana said. “I do not want to be ungrateful or unjust with your ideas. They are
important but I also have to tell you that we already thought of many of them. It is not because
we do not think about them that we do not do them. It is because it is not being possible to do it
at the moment. So I ask you to do a screening, to be surgical in your ideas. We have to be
strategic now. We have to be focused!” There was a small silence and they advanced to another
panel. In the meantime, Branco asked for his turn and in a serious, very serious [way] said “I
think there is one important thing to decide. Do we want to focus on the city? National? In [the]
international?” A little angry Verónica said “I think that [question] should not even be placed.
We are already in that transition… that question does not even arise anymore”. “It is inevitable”
said André. “Cidade+ is beginning to be a brand” said Isabel. It could be something like
+cidadania [+citizenship]” “cidadania+ [citizenship+]” Verónica concluded. “Yes but where do we
want to see a change? Where do we make the most impact? In the rural, in the urban?” Insisted
Branco. Very convict, Francisca said “it is much more urgent to act in the cities and I can give
you statistics that prove this. I have thought a lot about the subject. Work in the big cities is
urgent! That is where I am inclined towards!”

Then a volunteer (in her 50s) said “I like the positive energy. I have always been greeted with a
smile here. And that builds empathy with the people. The way I was received... even because I
really like people of your age. I like the young people! It was a theme that I did not even know
much about and from these themes new ones came up and I loved it! For the [next] year I want
to have the strength to continue here! If there are things to do, we will do them willingly. That is
what I saw here. If something is to be done, we go at it strongly. Thanks!”
Then we all went for dinner. We went to DaTerra, a vegetarian restaurant near São Bento. We always eat in places where there is a vegetarian dish because at least Viviana and Henrique need it. In the case of Cidade+, Ricardo, André and Francisca are all vegans. There were ten of us. At the entrance while we waited for one another André and I, who had gone by bicycle together, were talking. He told me that this year Cidade+ had an unexpected boost “This even gives me some fear you know? It is a lot of responsibility too, to hurt expectations, because it is growing a lot and it is a big risk. Maybe bigger for Viviana and Verónica but for us all too, as to not defraud expectations”. And the vegetarian-non-vegetarian discussion prevailed inside Cidade+ while we were at the door waiting for the last car. “I think that we should set an example within Cidade+” said Ricardo. Branco came up to me and told me “This is a discussion like Porto-Benfica142, [it] never gets anywhere and it is by teams. We are trying to have scientific discussions and then the people… it is this”. At the end of the dinner António told me “Because they are now on the razor's edge. As such, this will not last much longer. Because I do not think it is anything normal, Viviana getting to that place of saying “Ten euros? I do not know if I am going to have dinner”. We are not talking about €100 for dinner, we are talking about €10! What does this mean? She makes this event and does not have ten euros to come out to dinner once? Something is wrong. And then they are young, they are going to want to get married, of course, to have children and then there is no parent’s house, there is no counting crumbs. Some money is really needed and they do not have that money. And they are giving face to Cidade+. They are the ones who are going to be known so it is easy for someone to see them and want to get them… and what will they say? That it is a no? Of course they have to accept. As much as they enjoy this they have to accept that because they also have to live and they have to have some money for themselves and their families. And Cidade+ is not being sustainable! I mean, this is what it seems to be like for me from the outside, but from Viviana’s comment it is obvious that it still is [not sustainable]. I may have the defect of thinking business and being the bad guy in this but that is how I think. This is how life works. Why do young people so often begin to do things and as long as they have the will they continue... But what when it ends? And when there is not so much will or annoyances start? If there is no financial return people are no longer there, there is no chance. And things have to be sustainable to have continuity. Cidade+ runs the serious risk of ending if it does not change this situation quickly. And we are in the 4th year of Cidade+, it is urgent to reverse this situation so that we do not run the risk of it all ending because this is really very beautiful. I LOVE Cidade+. Everyone likes this, there is no [other] way! And if there is no return that is it. There is no such

142 Portuguese football teams.
thing for anyone. Because they work on this in an amateur way. I mean amateur as the one who loves! And they have to move on to the business side, see this in a lucrative logic otherwise they will not go forward, they will not. It came to the 4\textsuperscript{th} year. This should already be different. They should be making a profit on it. It does not make any sense like this but I do not even tell them anything because they are doing a brilliant job and I am afraid that when I speak of it to them they may take it in the wrong way and think that I am saying that they are doing something wrong and they are not. It is really a matter of thought. I even thought that with the junction of Porto business school this would improve [that] they would council them on sustainability. But nothing. [What] they just want is publicity. Free advertising. What? They give one or two rooms, some meetings and then enter as partners and it is about them?! There is no way!” “But then what is it to think from a profitable point of view?” I asked. "It is for example thinking about merchandising, making merchandise. The workshops, these are all freebies. You do not see this anywhere else. The other day I went to a marketing training and each person paid €300 and the auditorium was full. Have you already imagined the amount of money that they got? If they paid €5000 to the trainer, look at what is left! Thinking about it being profitable is thinking about that too. Were there 20000 people at the event? We could have sold 20000 pins at one euro each, we could have made €200,000 euros in an instant. And it has to be undated things, so that it is cheaper. Cidade+ must have a logo, an already bought image. You cannot keep on looking for customers, customers have to come to us”. “Well it is creating consumer need, is it not? It is the consumer to ask and not to even have the need to call their attention” said André. “Yes it is about the customer knowing the brand, wanting to take something of the brand and you do not see any of this in Cidade+. It is all free, the municipal hall gives X but the rest is what? Sponsors and such? But oh… that is not enough for anything. So €10 for a dinner! And partnering and forming a network, you need money for gas, to move to places, to have dinner or lunch with a client, this is not the way that it can be thought through?! But anyway… who am I? I tell you. They are on the spearhead. He concluded!

\textbf{Day 4 post-event of Cidade+, 13\textsuperscript{th} of July 2017}

“It is very funny the way you talk with the “I” said Verónica with a huge smile. “Seriously, it is really funny and I think it is great. I become really happy because it is yours too, it is ours. And I feel like this is happening to a lot of people, not just with you but I like it, I love the way you are engaging yourself in it. Welcome to Cidade+ “she said with a smile, shinning eyes as always, actually.

\textbf{28\textsuperscript{th} of July 2017}
I asked about Márcia who interrupted us to get something from the room and Mateus told me that she was directed to the project “but she did not have much to do with the spirit of Cidade+. She needs very concrete things and we are not like that at all, of giving clear instructions. We are more of going on doing, see how each one flows in their post. And she gets very stuck if we are not very concrete. It does not work like this for us. Otherwise it gives us even more work: to ask to do, to watch the doing, to verify if it was done, no. So it is really not our way…”

31st of July 2017

“But then you do not count on the fact that we have bands that are concerned with sustainability, the environment and so when they do their concert in Cidade+ they are already publicizing their way of seeing the world with the publicity they make in their media, sites and such? You would count as one but they are five. “The work it gives us, even logistically, is very different from one person to five” continued Verónica.

“Yes but what content does a bass player bring to Cidade+? What do you mean, he is an intervenor?”

“But Viviana, there we would have to separate trainers/speakers from actors. Intervener is someone who intervenes. A bass player intervenes, moves the public”

“But there is something else, it is a message thing”

“Yes but what about that kid who was choreographed by Cândido this year, from Ballet school? They started from a poem about nature. I felt [it]… it moved me… and I saw the relationship with nature and our theme… would you not count with this either?”

“Hmmm, I do not know but I think we have to have criteria for this” said Viviana.

“Then this is what this discussion is about, to find criteria” Verónica said.

“Maybe also I am just a little square, I will admit [it]” Viviana would say as she looked at Mateus to look for his opinion and she continued “Because it is two of you, I am one. I think we are going to have to stay there but I do not agree” (This two to one decision-making relationship had already been mentioned to me a few minutes ago by Mateus during the interview. As there are three elements, to be democratic the final word is up to two if there really is no consensus, but this is sought. As seen in this discussion that occurred).

Then Mateus left, Verónica and Viviana stayed a little longer and in the meantime Viviana invited me to watch a Native American the next day [who was] talking near Coimbra. I said that I probably could not make it. I was told it was enclosed in the Awakened Forest, “Basically they lent their premises” Viviana was saying. Then she exclaimed “What a lyricism to think I was going to do this report in one day”. They decided to leave after a few minutes anyway because she still wanted to cook. We all left together. On the way, Viviana said “Tamera is doing a workshop for
activists that costs €800 euros! €800!” “Wow” “Have you seen that, €800… how are activists going to have €800 to pay for a workshop?” “They may not be activists but at least they get the activist certificate” she said playfully. “Yes, they become certified activists” “but maybe it includes food and stuff, no?” Verónica said “Yes, it might even be but still, seriously… It is really a lot of money!”
Sweden Appendices

Appendix A (Sweden): Interviews

Interviews

3.1 Respondent 1

Yes but I thought we could start right away then, when did the organisation start?

The organisation, in the beginning we were called [name of organisation], everything comes from 2013 when we started this project (incoherent about 01:25) that was 2013 and it started a little bit like a, like a project or like a method that we wanted to evolve, we had worked with youths at a lot of different places, I had worked with them in, through the Employment Service for example they have been job-seekers, we have worked with them in school, we have worked with them like this, so through that we want to come up with a good method to simply, partly build up their self esteem, self confident but also to get this commitment maybe and “go get it”-spirit, to do things, then we created it and it was through that that we created that simply led to “okay how should we run this”, how should we like create it, then the easiest way was to start an organisation (incoherent about 02:10) organisation because then you could simply apply for funding through Öppna Arvsfonden and similar places so that opened a lot of doors then, more than business ideas or something, salesmen or something, so that’s where the Association was started, then nothing was really done with the association except we were working more with the method so we bet more on it and got a pilot group that’s in a municipality, six girls and got started with them

Now let’s see, the purpose was for youths to go get it and build self esteem?

Yes self-esteem, self-confidents and “go get it”- spirit simply

And then you created this organisation, and where did you get the funding from, Allmänna arvsfonden or?

No we didn’t have any funding at all, from anywhere

No no, okay okay okay but you started 2013 anyway to be able to get funding?

Precisely, precisely, precisely simply to easier be able to get funding or to simply get support from different instances and similar stuff and places, so that’s when the organisation started

And how many are you today that work in

In the organisation

Yes

That work I could say it’s two

Okay

It’s me and my partner that are those that work like and we run this on our free time we don’t work with it and it hasn’t been a year when it’s been remunerated it’s only been volunteering

Yes precisely

And then we have [Respondent 3] too who’s seventeen who’s in, in, what’s it called, board member, the board

Okay

Precisely and who are also the most active

Okay so s/he’s also doing some volunteering then?

Precisely, precisely

And s/he was the one I meet downstairs?

Precisely, s/he is one of the active youths that we have

And what does s/he do for the organisation?

S/he is a lot of the target group thus the contact, s/he is a lot of a reference point and can get the reference group, have discussed and we have been sitting and talking, we always involve the target group, youths in, in almost everything that we do, then if you can make an accounting then it’s, then we will have to do it ourselves but everything else we always work from and try

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and examine as well as can be done and then make a balance of the surveys on for example well future youth receivers want, we try to have a balance of that maybe the youths see a, a what they would need and what they would want but we can balance that too with what employers as receivers for example would need and want

That's right

To sort of be able to, because that’s sort of what we implement in the actual material when we work with the coaching sort of that there is a world that will be a receiver that can meet it and such because that is also sort of what we saw, there's a lot missing and that you work with very little right now, especially in the school environment

And what is that?

Well we, we have seen when we worked with the work, work seekers and I too work a lot with recruitment then the sort of difficulty of recruiting youths that is right now started to show, you notice on statistics a lot that sort of that as a recruitment firm then maybe you need to have 10 youths about ten years ago but today you need to have 6-70 youths to be able to fill as many places and then you start to see just this with, with patterns that have started creeping up yes really small easy stuff like not being on time or maybe not being able to get to a workplace and such and it was this that we saw maybe work more targeted toward this, not just finding a solution on now we have an activity where we can have fun but actually also an activity that can be of use and give something of more value that they can have with them in the future

Let's see, you have to have some catchwords that [Respondent 2] talked about last time

Yes we have that o try and bring it all together so, so after we had started this we began to work in 2016 you can say in the beginning of the organisation, we saw that okay we need to have a strong organisation we can’t just come with excuses but every time we got the question “who are you?” we never had anything then, we had nothing to show, we had nothing so we simply betted on building us up with all that it’s called in the business world with finding an image simply and there came (incoherent about 07:30) in, our key value is that you should strive to be brilliant in whatever it is that you are doing weather it’s cleaning your room or work at a workplace or writing a test you should always try to strive in yourself to do it just as well as you are able simply but just to strive to be brilliant and in and with that we believe and have seen when we work with youths when they have strived and feel that they have reached this goal they get a higher, that is a, a better self-esteem in themselves and a better feeling that they have performed something good for they have always been able to have a reference point in that “yes but when I did this and my teacher said that it was really good it actually wasn’t” and when they then have done an actual good job when you have really pushed then, then they were more content with themselves like “this stands, this is awesome by me” both surprises and feels like and then the next step in this is that you should try and stretch as said comfort zone talk there this coaching to just dare to test yourself, go go outside of lines you have not been, dare to meet people you hadn’t meet before and dare have discussions and dare to think about other solutions, just taking those steps it's those steps that make yes where the magic happens as you usually say when you try this and it's also there that you can find new solutions that you otherwise wouldn’t which also (incoherent about 09:10) how fun this is, I have never dared this and now that I have done it then wow wow wow as you have said then and expanded your comfort zone then I won’t be as, then it won’t be any problems at all and then it will and then we have the next which is to think outside of the box but also connect to yourself as a person it’s okay to be different everybody is different if we were to look at it that way which they have figured out themselves in discussions so it’s actually, there is actually no one that’s the same no matter if you wear the same clothes or something else and it’s okay to be different and also to think that these other paths, we usually challenge them, as said, when the teachers say we should use Times New Roman and 1.5 dots, try and do something else just for fun just to see if it works better for you to write a test or something, try in a different way, can you ask you teacher if you can do it orally or maybe visually or something like that to show abilities we usually exchange some ideas there, because we work a lot with
(incoherent about 10:20) versus the formal learning and we use more, use a lot more of the different learning- and teaching processes which are those too then naturally through the different they discover that shit you could do different things you use different ways to get the same result yes you can so it goes to show and there too so we have, we notice just this to have information about knowledge that they have but can’t get out because there’s only one way to get it out so they have suddenly, then they feel shit I finally got it out, to do it this way, yes you see (incoherent about 11:00) and then we have the last and most important and that is to be yourself because no matter if you should be brave or if you should be different or if you should do something brilliant you should never lose yourself in the process you should never lose yourself with these words or be put in such an environment, you should never be someone other than you and you should accept yourself and maybe really look a little more on who you are, find your talent, find what you are good at, what, what is (incoherent about 11:30) good at, what do you want to work, what do you want to know and more just get that connected with all the other, as said, you are you, we have just found that everybody aren’t different so you here are unique but to then build that self well of inner self esteem, self-confidence that is just that

How, how is the organisation run, you talk about a board, I understand you like that, so how many are on the board?

Three

Three, so it’s [Respondent 2] and
Me, [Respondent 2] and [Respondent 3] yes precisely

And you have none working committee or such it’s more?

We have work meetings but we have all meetings and such as you have like, we have annual meetings, we have member meetings, we have information meetings yes or like when people have been away we try to pull together everybody that we have then, we have no big membership number

How many members do you have?

As it is now we have 20 registered and it’s spread

In all of Sweden?

No we are most centered around the region, we have a few support members but I’m not counting them here

No okay that’s, do you have an age limit to join the

No

No it’s members of all ages, what’s the average age that we use there?

You, the average age now is about, can it be now 19 maybe, 19-20 yes

Precisely and how often do you have board meetings?

Boards meetings we usually have at least it’s, it depends a little on, when it gets intense when we have a lot to do as we have had now then maybe we have it twice a month otherwise we have had it at least once a month like

Board meetings

Precisely where we sit, you, me and [Respondent 2] sits

We’ve had work meetings like once a week

Yes

Because of the fact that it’s been intense then it’s been what you count as a board and work but at least once a month and once a week for work

Yes it’s a development phase so it becomes so much more than maybe the normal (incoherent about 14:45) it’s about maybe once a year or three times a year

But formally you have it at least once a month and then in between more informal if I understand it correctly

Yes precisely

And how often do you work with the organisation, it might be difficult to say, it’s volunteer work

I can say we work everyday

Yes everyday
Everyday, everyday there’s a meeting with the organisation, if something is thought about the organisation something’s done, it can be the weekend that really doesn’t matter but it’s hard
And how can the daily work look?
Day, wow wow wow, the daily work yes it’s, that’s, we do everything, everything that can be thought up to do, we’re working on strategic bar knowledge where we work with England, Italy and Spain with doing information web based and ICT-courses and just that have to do a little with Islamophobia, it has to do with counteracting Islamophobia you could say and minorities like them a little bit more it depends completely on what you call minorities, minorities in Sweden is not the same as maybe other countries but the goal is to reach minority groups so they can have like opportunities for education and we are a partner just because Sweden is a very good example of that, how the Employment Service work with their parts and SFI\textsuperscript{144} and everything that we actually have that we offer and like to give the chance and opportunity and how we just translate our (incoherent about 16:25) to so many languages and different things and everything from these welcome act and everything that has to do with integration, then as mentioned we work with the project youth base develop that, we work with writing applications to Erasmus +, both training courses, youth exchanges and now we have been doing our own partnership, we have worked with writing an application to Arbetsfonden\textsuperscript{145} and written an application to Postkoden\textsuperscript{146} and what’s it called As

Adolf Lindgren\textsuperscript{147}

Yes that’s right

Precisely and now we are also looking at, we have a meeting with the municipality to see if we could maybe do something more with the municipality to work with the target group, with the target group with youths that aren’t studying that are sort of in between nothing or that which we would want it a collaboration with schools and such things were you have and students and youths that are maybe starting to lose their motivation so before they sort of take for granted you should sort of start to distribute that you come to us a few days a week and then a few days in school so we can work with motivational tasks in different ways, but more like the informal learning’s temple so to speak

So there’s a lot of networking if I understand you correctly
We try to network but it’s basically impossible because we have sent as said requests to all teachers, all principals, all schools, everybody, and there’s no answer without meeting someone like we did when we went on an EVS-course in Stockholm, then we had such luck that we met a guy that worked at the municipality with youths where we could sit and have a coffee and talk sort of and we got a connection with that person so we could meet and talk about it, s/he thought it was awesome that we had just Erasmus+ and Europe international educations and development and s/he knew one that was of to a upper secondary school and meet someone so we were there last Thursday at the upper secondary school so now we will start collaborate with them so that, it’s about having contacts. It’s, it’s, I would like to say it’s only by contacts that you move forward actually, at least here, it definitely is, so the day to day work is insane we do everything, we build the webpage ourselves, that’s we do everything ourselves, method, material, everything

Lets see you had a strategic partnership and now you have a, a, some kind of at least connection here in the municipality and the upper secondary school is that something

We have a equality project together with one other municipality where we work with newly arrived (immigrant) men in a what should you call it civi, civics but with equality, we will try and see how it goes, we (incoherent about 19:20)discussions in, so we are building a method material

\textsuperscript{144} Swedish for immigrants
\textsuperscript{145} Foundation for financial support
\textsuperscript{146} Foundation for financial support
\textsuperscript{147} Foundation for financial support
there, for that, it’s our part as an association to build the actual material and then act as volunteers together with them then we have the strategic partnership and then we have all of our training courses and exchanges through Erasmus+, international this year and then we also have, we will do a summer camp in one municipality, we did one last year

*Let's see if I understand correctly, youth camp you build that on the method*

Yes precisely, precisely

*And now you build, if I understand [Respondent 2] right, on these catchwords?*

Yes on the catchwords we do that and then we have collaboration, we have started to collaborate with an educational association where we will start holding workshops here in (incoherent about 20:15) study technique and such so we are doing now, we do the workshops and get to borrow the space they get a little (incoherent about 20:25) simply so this collaboration we got thanks to that we had been here as speakers and volunteered so we knew the person who owns, who has this and leads this so it's just luck that we met that person and discussed things so now, no now we will go, I think that is all that we are doing right now except building and building everything

*Precisely and what will it be about today?*

Today it will be about three people, we have been on a youth exchange, [Respondent 3] was down and then we have been two at training courses, one that was about social medias how you can use them and such and then one about facilitation and training so that’s what we will show a little about partly it’s a process that we do, it’s a follow-up meeting so that you can tell sort of, everyone that has been away should tell what they have done, there is always at least one experience that will be told, what will it be, present etcetera and then just to see, we will try now to get members who are members to come like and sit in, watch and support maybe get some more commitment and then it’s also for, also to open up new who are interested to come like then you can come, you get a presentation on how a youth exchange work how does a training course work which is only a few who know because we are the only ones in the region who do these things and there aren’t that many who do it in Sweden either

*So it will be an open there, anyone can come*

Yes we send out, we did one of those Facebook raids where we post the event and where you just sign up, you have to sign up to, to the event because the educational association needs information, so we have one of those sign up sheets where you write that you will come, but it's completely open to come like, for anyone that’s interested

*Okay I haven’t sign up just because of that haha*

No we have a paper where you can sign up your things then yes

*But you advertise on Facebook and the webpage then*

Yes that’s simply what we did now, invite on the Facebook page, not on the webpage, we have a few different models on them, the webpage is more for information and then we post things that we have done and then Facebook we use more the actual page for actual, and Instagram for example is used more actively to in different ways reach out so to speak, we are trying a half year plan that we have in marketing in different ways to see if we can improve and how we can use the different types of media to gain interest, the youths move in different places, we will also start with snapchat to have a snapchat-story and such for the youths are on youth exchanges they should be able to add their own like stories and such

*But you don’t have Twitter it’s*

We have Twitter

*You have Twitter*

Yes we aren’t so active on Twitter, mostly it’s about the time, that is we don’t have the time to be on all places at once like and in the same time write everything, so now I have tried to find so at least on Facebook and Instagram there’s a strategy, because there you can at least plan and add it in, on Twitter you have to be more active right away in the discussions like and be more, so it’s a bit easier with the other ones because you can make a few posts a month and just that you need to remember and simply post them
But you usually don’t invite organisations, you direct yourselves straight to or?
That is we haven’t started, this is like the first time we have this meeting that is now at the local of the educational association like and when we have, that is the hardest thing that has been it is just to collaborate with organisations, because organisations are usually terrified that their members will go somewhere else
Okay
And while we are more whatever like, if you want to be at three different places, then you can be at three different places like
I’m thinking it’s an amazing opportunity to invite the municipality or the region or but it might be hard to get an official to come on a Sunday
Really difficult, we have, we have every time we’ve done something with these international things and everything I’m sure we have invited media and it’s really hard to get a response, really hard, we’ve invited organisations, as said, and talked about collaborations but if we borrow your space that you have then we can be seen together and do something good together, we have an international project for example where we wanted to check and see which it was, it was in one district for example where and have some sort of activity but it’s hard, it’s really difficult that is, it, it, it’s everywhere I can say as they usually do “Noo, I don’t know, who are you?” and no so here, you probably have to get a really big network to be in at least in this region, that you have to know, someone have to know someone that makes it possible to meet that makes it possible to get contact and then maybe you can like this, but they are still terrified to lose members the way they see it
That’s a little sad because I’m thinking that you could join together and do something
Yes it’s a very dumb system that is built in that way that the municipality have it built that way that we get funding based on how many members you have so the more members you have the more funding you get which makes you hunt members because you really want everybody so it becomes a competition amongst them simply
Okay but have you applied for collaboration with (incoherent about 26:15) and such or is it political organisations
We are politically independent as said and chose to be that way because we didn’t want to get any problems that we know that others have had since we want to be there for everyone and we don’t want, what should you call it, excuses for why you would not want to come as we know that others have who are really good and active but maybe they have a Christian background or (incoherent about 26:45) and so you can’t go there just because of that so we chose to take away all of that to be able to reach as many as possible since we work with this project in the school when we go there, we don’t want to have anything that can in anyway become influencers or a parent or something can say “no no no”
Okay so then you also try to collaborate with other organisations who are politically and religiously independent
We try to do it that way but then we try to think about it the other way if there’s an activity that we want to do then we don’t get to do it so it looks like we have a collaboration with someone who, do you understand, so we try to be as neutral as possible, we rather see that you come to us and are on this event, everyone is welcome more than that we chose to be on someone else’s event that’s only for one type of group, so it’s a little difficult but we feel that we want to do it so well that we don’t walk in to that trap simply where someone weren’t allowed to come to us because it looks like we belong with them or yes for example and then we have tried to have one as long as, what’s it called, (incoherent about 27:55) as possible, then it’s the way it happened with the educational association we started with the study promotion because that’s what came natural for us to start with but it’s just that that collaboration didn’t work, it didn’t, and therefore we had to change
Yes no I’m actually content
Alright perfect, perfect
Perfect
3.2 Respondent 2

So then it’s started, I thought we could start with a small background question just, this is an unstructured interview so it will be more of a conversation than a regular interview so I thought we’d start with how would you describe the foundation of your organisation, why were you funded?

Yes that’s because we, it started with the fact that this method had come so that’s what we had as a foundation and was more oriented on that we were gonna work with that, with the method as we then discovered very soon was that it was very hard to find someone, some collaboration, funding and so on with only having a method and not having something behind it but being two civilians so that made us pause the method and realized “okay we build the organisation where we can work with the method” so that was a start to why we even started the organisation was because we had the method and then when we actually started the organisation and we sent a lot of applications to a lot of different things then it was still that we were very unknown and not, well didn’t have a name that anyone knew of so that’s why we’ve worked a lot with Erasmus+ and that’s wh, that was both good and bad because that’s what made it possible for us to build the organisation with that we started with international work so because of well a little bit what you got founding so we have a little bit like evolved the organisation from that

Has it been easier to get funding from, EU than to get, than to get it nationally or locally?

I would say that it’s easier, or you have, it was easier in Sweden because there’s less competition within Erasmus+ in Sweden because there aren’t as many who works with it, so it was easier to get funding even though you weren’t a known organisation which is completely impossible with other fundings as we have noticed then, then maybe it’s harder still for others, that is it’s, it’s hard to know if it’s just luck or I don’t know, but it was, once you get in, and I guess it’s like that with all funding, once you’ve gotten in somewhere you understand the system and then it might be easier later to apply again

Did you have any entryway to Erasmus before you started the actual organisation, have you, haven’t you experienced that, have you been participation before or how, how did you find it and came to the conclusion that you could start there?

Yes I’ve always been interested in Erasmus, before it was Young active in Europe, have read about it and such, I participated in an international project leader education in one municipality, but then I hadn’t real gotten the thing with it so, so then when I well when we had come up with the method then it was that we wanted to get collaborations so I went on my very first Erasmus+ education 2014 that was about social entrepreneurial where we, where I also met the first partner that we still work with and then I went on my second a li, a few months later which was also a training course in entrepreneurial in another European country and it was there that I met a very important keyperson who started the European network and through those two like, I only went on those two but on those two I got the collaboration that has helped to build the organisation

Yes who did you met at the training course?

In, at the training course I met a person who is leader for the East European organisation that we collaborate with in all projects and who we have applied for the strategic partnership with

And how does it look to be Swedish in Erasmus + have I understood it correctly that it’s a little, there isn’t a lot of organisations from Sweden there?

No it’s very unique to be a Swedish partner partly because there aren’t that many and we, and we are very that is active in a different way because most of the ones who are active in Sweden are maybe a municipality or maybe something that has EVS and they might have some international exchange or it’s like most often something that’s connected to the municipality, there are very few organisations in Sweden where it’s purely a youth organisation that runs it all, because it’s quite a lot of work and such so that’s probably why the ones we’ve met in Europe still think it’s cool and like that’s why we have it very easy to get collaborations because partly people want to collaborate with us as an organisation but also with Sweden
And how big is the European work part of the entire business?
Yes up until today it’s been almost the entire, that is because that’s what we’ve gotten funding for then we’ve had a small part locally, we’ve had a few camps and a few workshops but it’s right now and it’s thanks to the Erasmus money that we’ve been able to get the room because we haven’t taken out any pay, because that’s that, we’ve been doing Erasmus since 2015 and had six projects and then there’s a budget post called organisational costs and there you can choose how you want to portion it out, all of the other organisations choose to spend it on salaries, a big part of it, we have chosen not to do that but save the money and it’s that money that’s made it possible for us to invest in the room so that we can rent it for a year and it will make it possible for us to do more locally now that we have a room, so up until now we’ve only kind of like actually Erasmus that’s been these big projects with strategic partnerships and training courses and youth exchanges but from now on we can do so much more
Is there something that’s in the pipeline right now or is it still? You’ve gotten a collaboration with an upper secondary school, and there’s something more that you’ve got that isn’t connected to, to EU?
Yes we have a lot going on, just now the last week we had a meeting today with a woman where we might then, or we will, collaborate with an organisation for young people with hearing impairments s/he thought our activities felt really interesting for that target group because there isn’t much done for that target group and we’ve actually considered it before, we tried for example to get a youth exchange with another country with sign language as a theme, that you would send hearing impaired so then we had thought that we would start the collaboration but no that collaboration wasn’t approved so then we put it a bit on the shelf but now we feel when s/he contacted us “yes now we will do something with it again”
And then you were sought out, so they had heard about you from somewhere
Yes the fun thing is now that we’ve moved to this room, this room is in a collective so it’s a collective that kind of rents this out and all the members kind of help and they have a newspaper and they are doing a story on us and as it turned out this person it’s his/her dad so s/he lives here, so then s/he’d seen our sign on the door and then s/he’d asked him/her and s/he said that s/he was doing a story on us and that we are working with youth exchanges, well youth activities and so s/he went to our webpage and checked, read some more and that’s when s/he thought yes, this, so then s/he contacted me yesterday, so we had a meeting today, quick pace, so now s/he’s gonna talk to the association and we are gonna try to get a collaboration here and we will ask what the youths want to do and t, show our product catalogue and see if there’s something that they feel that yes this is something that we want to participate in too, so it’s a collaboration that I think can be awesome, then we also have our other target group that we also want to work with and that is the countryside and there we’ve always wanted to work in this county because we know that there’s nothing happening there everything is very concentrated to cent, central city and one district and those kinds of areas and then we feel that we don’t need to be there, that is there’s already people there and there might live people there that already know the target group a lot better but the eastern part of the region where [Respondent 1] comes from, me I’ve worked in one of the municipalities so I’m familiar with the problems there so last Friday I met the school nurse and the school counsellor who also became very interested of the prospect of us coming there and have the activities there, I told them about us, so they gave me the number to the principal whom I’ve tried to call today if I only get a hold of him/her it would, because in those municipalities there’s money to be applied for rural projects so that’s always something that we’ve always wanted to start but like now there might happen something with it and then we also have an exciting collaboration, I will meet, on Thursday I will meet a company because they approached us when we were at a collaboration day last Tuesday and s/he just asked if I wanted to change job and then, and I knew because they had a job out that I had been eyeing a little but then I said, because I had been thinking about it “no I’ve decided only to change job if I can work with my organisation because the organisation is what I want to work with but not for anyone else” but then they said, because they’re a study union s/he said like “yes but you can do
it with your organisation” like because that doesn’t affect them because they are interested in getting the circle hours but then it doesn’t matter if it’s the organisation that does the actual activities, so I’m meeting with them on Thursday, and that would be work in another district with asylum seekers, mostly women and do activities which I would think was really exciting and fun if the organisation did

So the organisation because I understood it as you from the beginning targeted youths above all but it’s gotten a greater width now, amongst other things this equality project that’s running right now, I understand it as the target group being men

Mm asylum seeking men

Yes asylum seeking men, and this in the other district targets grown women, so the target group has expanded if I understand correctly or

Yes that is our target group, our primary target group is 13-18 years old because we want to work with them at a young age but since Erasmus + has a target group of the ages 13-30 that’s their youth, so and that we have worked a lot with asylum seekers now and integration it becomes that we feel there’s a need in that target group because those who are younger in that target group for example asylum seekers they go to school, they have the daily activities while the asylum seeking adults have nothing that is they go the whole days without doing anything and then we feel that yes we can do something like now [Respondent 1] is still yes then s/he can have that group instead and work with them so

But then it’s up ’til 30 you have then or can you be even older and still be allowed to participate?

Yes these are even older so that’s

And if I understood you correctly it was, you’ve talked about presentation you had a study, study visit from a north European member state here and you talked about amongst other things then about this equality project and that it’s part of a collaboration with the municipality, did I understand you correctly?

Yes that collaboration with the municipality there, there I’m in my profession here in the municipality, and then we have an organisation member who’s employed by the municipality for the project but we collaborate with the organisation to evolve the method material and hold workshops, that’s why [Respondent 1] s/he goes in as a representative of the organisation and volunteers and holds the group and is a part of evolving the method material

Okay, and now lets see, you’re here today as a professional?

Yes for them

Now that I’m talking to you

I see, baba, I see yes, how; how important is it to be able to do these, these things it sounds like you have some sort of combination between your work and still the volunteering that it marries quite easily?

Yes now it’s been quite grateful with the integration because we’ve started working with the organisation too and with the target group then and that’s what I had to do because otherwise I would not have had so much time and opportunity to do if I would have for example if I were to work with something completely different then I wouldn’t be able to do anything with the organisation now I can like work together so that both the municipality can gain from it but also the organisation, when you can do such co, collaborations but it’s not always possible but, when it’s possible it’s good

You also talked about networking and that’s something that I’ve understood has follow you that it has, that it is a very big key that, that all the time meet, meet the right people, I’m thinking amongst other things on when we were at the upper secondary school, it was during the study visit in, in a north European member state how you kind of came in contact with the school?

Yes it was also, sometimes it’s really coincidences, me and [Respondent 1] was at a supervisor training course in EVS and there we met a person who works at one municipality and s/he was very interested in EVS and wants to be able to send youths on EVS and then we just talked about the organisation to him/her and what we want to do and such and s/he though we seemed really interesting and such and then it was just that s/he goes out to different schools
and such and ta, because s/he really works with those who neither works or studies those who drop out and such, so then s/he was out at the school maybe in that matter but were talking and came in on the organisation because they were probably talking too, yes because it was about this integration thing that they wanted to be able to work more internationally and so and then s/he told wa, about us because then we had also sent out e-mails to all the schools and hadn’t received a reply from anyone and told about us and what we can offer the students that they can go on youth exchanges and so on through us but then it was so good, because it’s this thing with personal relations to someone who can talk for you be, because then s/he had done just that and then if it was the supervisor or principal or who ever, went back to their e-mail, just because s/he recognised it that, that we had e-mailed and so they sent an e-mail that they had talked to him/her and such because that way the key was this person because they hadn’t answered our e-mail like and they probably they wouldn’t have either but when you get someone that they trust maybe and who vouch for us then it’s really important to take that opportunity and that we have really noticed this past week on those occasions when we’ve spoken to different people that if we just get to tell about us then people are often very interested but it’s to get that like Initial contact

Yes

And it’s harder to just send out some information letter and

Yes I don’t know when that worked actually, still we do it, because it’s like now that we have the opening party on Thursday so [Respondent 1] has sent out to everyone who are on the committee in Culture and recreation committee that they should come here, I don’t think anyone’s coming but we’ve tried

Yes I but precisely

Then we can at least say “but we’ve invited you”

But a big part happens through yes personal meetings then, you go on courses and

Yes the most important thing that we’ve seen is just, because this Tuesday there was this collaboration conference that they had here in the region where a lot of people from well all of Sweden came to, from different parts there was a lot who were interested, that is a lot of municipalities who came forward and wanted us to come there and do things but then and then I was on Friday I was, when I was work, for work I was Friday I was also a conference about Justice Prevention but then it’s like when you actually meet someone well then you can talk about the organisation as well like I did with the once in the district so, so then it’s to take those chances, because, because it makes you go to even more of those things because you never know who you’re gonna meet

And today [Respondent 1] works with the organisation

Mm volunteering

Volunteering, yes precisely, but the goal is that s/he will be able to, that you eventually will be able to stop working and support both of you on it then?

Yes

How, how have you, how do you recruit people to for example the Erasmus programs when you have the youth exchanges and how, because we talk first about this formal and you know that that can be hard to get a meeting, how do you work there to find, find participants and recruit new ones, how do you work?

Yes it’s really hard because today amongst youths there’s so much to commit to and there’s so much online and so on so it’s been hard and it’s a big difference between Sweden and other countries in EU because a lot of them has it really easy, then we share the same image as a few like us like Norway, Estonia that is that they have a hard time too, what we do is that we foremost go through our own networks that is buddies, friends, earlier participants and so on and in some strange way we’ve always managed to succeed but it’s always been at the last second when you think this is never gonna work but then there’s some “no but I have someone here who can” and then that happens but we sadly haven’t reached the point that you want to reach where you actually have to apply for it so we can make a selection and you should that is really
be motivated, now we’ve gotten the ones who say they want to go which isn’t always the best but in the same time everybody has like, they have, they’ve wanted so, so all, so it’s given them a good experience then you could have, you would have wanted to have, you should have had, had higher demands on them because it’s more of a selection so, that you don’t know if you’ll be coming along yes you’ll then like it becomes what’s it called extra points like if you say that you’re gonna be committed at least for a while in the organisation then we could get more people in like thanks to these things, now it hasn’t been that way so they’ve gotten their trip and then they kind of like to go on a new trip but they don’t want to do so much in between

No, no, no, okay
But it’s been a lot of me finding people through my network in the municipality and people there, [Respondent 3] has sort of his/her network in his/her, his/her old organisation s/he was in (incoherent about 24:05) so it’s been a little so then I’ve yes it was one time I had to write to my cousins and ask but they couldn’t so I found another way anyway, but it’s been yes well family and friends little so

(Long pause) then I forgot to say we’ve also with the collaboration, with the collaboration with the upper secondary school there we got one participant with one thing and then we’ve collaborated now with another upper secondary school and there we got a whole group for the exchange in, lets see, so that it’s, it’s good collaboration with to get participants

And how did you find the collaboration with the other upper secondary school?
Yes it’s also through my regular job, that there I’ve met or, or in part it’s that I, we have a project me and the upper secondary school with well the upper secondary school students that study the introduction program and then the wo/man who’s the project supervisor, [Respondent 4], I recruited him/her straight away to the organisation so now s/he’s very committed and s/he helped with the recruiting on the upper secondary school because s/he has contacts there but then I also met this teacher, because s/he was in this control group for this project so I spoke with him/her as well so s/he also helped with that recruitment so it’s little like that

Okay but then it’s at least, then the recruitment was in the youth exchange if I understand correctly, yes

Mm
Is this, do you think it’s unique for Sweden to work like this or do you perceive that other organisations work similarly?
No I think it’s quite similar, though it’s, I know for example in an East European country our partner there s/he works actively towards the schools to find what s/he calls “Brilliant Youngsters” that is those who are as forward, inventive and like they, they s/he ties them to him/her so that they can work as volunteers for the children because they work a lot more with children with those who maybe life in orphanages or live, are at social centres and such so in that way s/he collaborates with schools so s/he gets, can be there, because there, because apparently in this country it’s a bit more that they finish the upper secondary school with a certain percentage volunteer work and then they also want to join because they need to have that is have it, which I think is a really interesting thing, that’s why it’s easier for them in a way to get volunteers than we have because like it’s already in the system both from the formal side then I know when I think of all of Scandinavia and that is have like us, how they have to work differs maybe from, like I know also America there, there they get any number of participants because there aren’t so many spots, and, and go abroad like they don’t need to recruit, that is they get in a hundred applications for one exchange so there it’s the opposite

There are different conditions that are put in to play there

Yes
What, what are you thinking, because it’s a very interesting idea this with volunteer work in the curriculum beca, what do you think about that?
I want to work for it, I’ve already sketched a little on a Key Action Three- application where you work with this kind of, that is affect the politics that is and just promote because amongst others the East European organisation did that, not the one who works with children the other one,
they had a Key Action Three-project around just this to get the formal education to, to students doing volunteer work

*And what does a Key Action Three-project look like, what, what does it mean?*

There, there it’s that you can work I, that is locally with, on, affecting the new politics that is with youths through some theme it’s the only, because the other then it’s concrete exchanges and collaborations with countries Key Action Three can be more that you do something that, that benefits the whole sector so but that you can do it more locally because I think it would be awesome if the region would be first to have one of those, yes thing because they have talked now, I listened to, it’s a project, I don’t remember from where but they have tested the establishment I think it was or in general in the labour market programs to have volunteer that is to be a volunteering sector as a work market measure, yes something like that and that you could do with school youths as well, yes some of the points is to actually be out in reality and do something

*And what is the value of that in your opinion except that they get out in the volunteer organisations? What will the value be for them?*

Yes it will be a win-win, of course for the volunteer organisations that they get volunteers so that they can grow stronger and you get a youth perspective as an organisation because it’s a lot of organisations that has become very outdated these days and who don’t get any new members so that’s and also that you as a youth also get an understanding for how volunteer organisations work but then it’s also because that is their future that it’s commonly good to come out into the real world to see how a workplace works what, what it takes, which abilities and so on but also develop their abilities and competences, especially if it’s then maybe like special projects that you can be a part of and build up and take initiative in and like just work in the volunteering sector where you do something maybe for someone else get those abilities like and see the world in a different way than just in your own little bubble that you’re in, in school but you apply what you’ve learnt right away just to be, because then you can think “but this they are doing at my internship or they could be at a company because that gives an even bigger connection to work and so on” but I think it could be good to be in the volunteering sector just because the volunteering sector is important for Sweden that, that the whole Swedish society is built on the fact that there’re volunteering football coaches and there are those who work with art and so on, that is why the youths can do so much more so it’s important to that they see it and can engage and maybe be a catalyst for a greater commitment amongst youths to actually do things but to organize might not be in an association because I don’t quite believe in that form but still organisation like

*Can you tell me more about that that you don’t believe in the form of associations because we’ve talked about that before?*

I don’t believe in it for this generation that is know because it’s too stiff and today’s youths aren’t like that that is they can’t that is and then, oo it’s a really tuff question because in the same time it’s a school in democracy so to speak and being in an association and to have these yearly meetings with where you choose and it’s democratically built and everything and it’s like the whole built to the actual political parties and like the democracy as a whole but I don’t know maybe it’s about to become a bigger change too because it isn’t the way they can, can commit they commit to one question, a certain time and then it won’t work that you first has to start an association and pick a board and have a yearly meeting and a protocol and so on you just want to do so it has to be built in such a way that it’s possible then when you’ve already started like us then an association still isn’t the best because we don’t care about whether we have members or not, that’s not it, but it’s like all funding systems are built on which becomes very unevenly distributed because then there’s those associations that are this old, yes old in the game like, like automatically has a lot of members but might not do so much business but still get a lot of money who can have like hired staff while we do very much but we don’t have so many members because we don’t go and say to our youths that might come to one thing “yes but
become a member” because that’s like, yes it becomes wrong like, it’s just that we want to do things like and there I’ve looked and the best form would be a foundation the way they have in USA where it’s more that you have an activities controlled foundation where you don’t need members where there can be a board but but it’s the activities that matter, while I read that the foundation form in Sweden is very troublesome and most of the time these money foundations that you think about compared to the new ones like social businesses or the youth associations for example (incoherent about 35:50) who are quite big now they are a foundation because they do exactly what we want because they have a theme they have an area they want to work with and then they want to work with that like and they can still apply for funding because they’re a volunteering foundation but they don’t have to care how many members they have

No precisely and the goal isn’t in any way to recruit, to get a written member but to participate then?
Yes they have, yes their thing, it’s a little bit like ours actually maybe they don’t work as much directly with youths as we do but they work with courses, opinion courses and like bigger projects in collaboration with others and that’s how you have to work a little bit more now, that’s why they’ve succeeded because they have, do a little more the way the target group demands today and, and the problem with the members too is that it becomes a competition between organisations which is completely unnecessary when we will, we work with, toward the same goal but it becomes a competition when you take their members but that wouldn’t be, wouldn’t the funding society be built this way then you would get, get more collaboration in the civil society

Yes because I’ve understood it like that too when I’ve followed you that, that collaboration with other Swedish organisations that work with similar things hasn’t been obvious?

No, it’s really hard

But is it because this member phenomenon?
Yes it’s a part then it’s very special here in this region , I can’t see that it would be the same way where I come from but because everybody wants an awfully lot to be with themselves and do their thing so that’s, they have it really difficult to make collaborations and then when you try to collaborate then, I don’t know, or maybe we’re just doing it wrong, that is there’s something that just well it doesn’t turn out the way we see collaborations where we come with our strengths they come with their strengths and we do something together which is even better than if we were to do it by ourselves like but

There isn’t a collaboration culture in this region if I understand you correctly

No that is I was at this collaboration day last Tuesday and then they talked about how well the region was at collaboration, but it’s more on this level that is maybe more between agencies with the municipality and so on but I don’t know if I hear any good collaboration example that is amongst the civic organisations so I don’t know

Does the civic society need to change in that way do you think in, in Sweden?
Yes, that is soon something has to change because you have to realise that it because of something when big organisations that’s been around for a really long time like the scouts and the Red Cross and so on start to lose members that is it’s not the commitment that’s lessened because instead you see a lot of initiatives popping up but it’s just that, that’s like initiative like you are as you want “yes but this thing then lets start ‘we don’t stand out’ because this is our question and we want to work with it “ or now lets create, yes but after MeToo I’m sure there will be a lot, it’s when something’s happening, something’s boiling then people can come and commit to it during that time that is how it will be then maybe there’s a few organisations like for example (incoherent about 39:55) who has an area that’s very current all the time that can form an opinions image, educate and so on, a little like the organisation that is with entrepreneurial and initiative power with the young there will maybe always be some kind of need for it so it can sort of always be there but it’s important that we have it easy to exist then so to speak that our form has it easy to exist but also that we can help youths start their own initiatives because that’s what will be
Was gonna move on and ask a little about how, how do you work with media and how important, how important is media for your work?

Yes media is really important because as [Respondent 1] usually say “if we’re not seen we don’t exist” it’s a little bit like to reach the masses we have to be in the media and we have tried, we haven’t quite found the way, we know that you have to have a personal relation that is have private no not private but have a name for it gives, you get no answer if you send to a common, like the local newspaper.se or someone but you have a person like for example in one municipality there I have a contact at the local newspaper so then I contact him/her “that now we will do this” in my regular job and then came, do they think “yes we’ll go there and write something about that” so that I’ve been able to use as well when we did that during the youth exchange because that was his/her area like, it’s this geographical area so then they wrote a story on it but on the other hand we don’t have a contact at the local newspaper for example so when we’ve sent to them no one’s ever shown up, no one’s ever shown themselves interested on the other hand we do have a contact at Sveriges Radio in this region so they have done at least two stories on us I think it is and then SVT in this region so we have never gotten a response from either, another local newspaper we have no contact, so it’s a little like we try from our end, we always send out to everyone when we do something like now we’ve sent out that we’re having a Kick Off-party so we’re trying with that but we know that you need a contact then we work very actively with social medias because there we are the ones in charge so there it’s easier and there we have breakthrough for example now when we’re in this context that is (incoherent about 43:10) best movie so we’ve still got, that is we’re in first place and it’s probably a lot because we’ve sort of spread it out in social medias very well and that we get likes that is we get around 20 likes a week, that is on the Facebook page just trough us being seen a little on people’s walls every now and then, [Respondent 1] posts, s/he’s the one who’s responsible for it, s/he posts sort of like boosting a bit like adds that pop up on people’s walls every now and then, we usually always get like new likes

Okay so you buy, do you buy add space or how do you do it or?

Yes we buy, on Facebook you can sort of have a campaign and then you can reach out to a certain number of people and then it costs a certain amount but it’s not that much money it’s a very cheap way to advertise to still be able to reach people and show them that we do stuff and that’s why we’ve very strategically has always made movies, short movies about our activities for it to be easy to get out through social media and be able to boost it a little trough it being spread a little more than to the ones we reach for free

([Respondent 1] is speaking) It’s incredibly specific Facebook, that is you can’t have thirteen guy likes this, has this and then send, you can be so specific on exactly who you want it to reach so that it, that’s why it’s so damn good and we do it all the time but in different ways and with different stuff, sometimes we’ve done something I’ve sent it to grandma and grandpa, mum and dad, the youths, the ones who are going on trips that is different movies, different rides that I make on different ages to spread it out and then but then we get automatically because if you like something on Facebook then it’s shown on your friends walls and that’s what’s happening with this internationalisation that it pops up all the time Poland, Estonia and then has, and then with the name it’s spread, we have the whole world, we have USA, South America, Asia we have likes from

You know we have a grateful name to promote us all the time so that it [followers] keeps flooding in because even though, you know, people are like this, they [press] like if they think it sounds cool, yeah, and it is more to… just that you get that “like” on the page because it is not often they unlike it you know, they [are like] “okay it might not have been something I am interested in” but they still like have it in their feed it’s, , that’s that then we think, through us

148 The national public radio service
149 The national public television
150 A commercial broadcasting channel
working a lot with the social medias, we get our page up, now we have four thousand likes but if we were to raise them to maybe ten thousand then maybe it would also interest traditional medias, that when the organisation does something it’s worth to write about because they have ten thousand followers so they gamble a little with each other so you get a stronger voice to

So followers are almost as important as members?

[[Respondent 1]] Yes
Yes it’s a lot more important

[[Respondent 1]] We because that’s what it is (incoherent about 46:30) in a way when it’s us because we don’t actually have any use of being seen in the local newspaper in a way for, for me it’s and for us it’s hard to see that it would actually bring something more than someone on the town saying “yes but you I recognise something like that” but the thing with the local newspaper is that it gives access to the parents who might sit at home that might have youths who aren’t doing anything that can sort of ta...

Yes the local newspaper doesn’t reach the target group, but on the other hand it reaches the secondary target group and above all it looks good for prospective financiers that they read

[[Respondent 1]] Local financiers, and it’s to be seen locally
That’s what we’re

(Other person) This is where you come in, you have a lot of contacts right?

Haha precisely. And lastly, to try and finish of a little what, what, what is the hardest, that you as an organisation in, in a Swedish context?

Yes

Or what challenges are there?

Yes that’s what we’re talking about it is funding, collaboration, reaching the target group in some cases but we haven’t really gotten to try everything that we want because of the funding because of the difficulty to collaborate and if we were to have all that, if we were to have that security “okay now we’re working with the organisation both two hundred percent, we have collaborations with different parties then we could together like focus on reaching the target group and have different strategies to do so, then maybe it wouldn’t, that is it would be the biggest challenge then but it wouldn’t be as big of a challenge as now then maybe you would be able to solve it but it’s, it’s still what’s needed first for now, it’s just like with the method which is a method with which we actually reach the target group yes we can’t upscale it because we don’t have the time because we can’t sit like and do so many coaching talks when we do it in our spare time and you should like prepare and you should do after work and so on so it’s, because then, yes it depends like on do you want to do what we want and still do a lot and do it very good then you need to work with it

What can be improved politically and is there anything there that can be done or should be done and push the association life, facilitate for associations and these kinds of initiatives?

In some way like change I don’t even know how but in some way change this thing with members and that it’s based on members that there has to be some kind of quality assessment that you do it with the actual activity in that is like those, it can be a new just like collaboration of people who’ve come up with an awesome thing and the one who doesn’t have a single member like so it must be, what you do or want to do, what you think like but then yes make it easier to do collaborations with the municipality, that is there’s this with IOP and it’s something that we will look into but it still feels too complicated for us as a new association

What is that IOP?

Leading with official partnership and it’s when the municipality that is can see that “there’s a need here and this association can like go in and work with” instead of the municipality should start a new business and do it, because it is what it is, that it should always be that the municipality starts it, you might not do it in the best way, sometimes it’s the voluntary sector that does it better, and I was on, where was it, yes it was on that collaboration day then a person said it so well it’s that if you take, you have a lot of people and then we will do something and you
could hire then and have people, what they lack is this passion, that is the commitment from the
toes you don’t get that from someone who’s only hired eight to five work just that, so that’s what
you get but what you’re also getting that you don’t think about is that you get the persons whole
network that when you as a volunteer comes in for example like I will say on Thursday to the
employer if they can hire me but that I get to be a representative of the organisation partly I will
have my commitment in a different way if I get to be a representative of the organisation than if I
were to be hired at the company but I get, I take my whole network with me, I can bring
[Respondent 1] as a volunteer and maybe have a guy group that is do you understand, you get so
much more, you get all of the volunteers than if you just hire someone so sometimes the
municipality could gain by joining in an IOP instead and have some association that’s already
working with the target group with this need, maybe doing it really well but they’re doing it by
voluntary powers you might need this reinforcement then, okay you get so you can actually work
with this fulltime during a certain period of time and then you can evaluate but then maybe
actually do more or it will do more than if you were to do it yourself as a municipality, so it
would have been clearly a lot easier to do, that is have it more in thought like as municipality and
then this part with the funding then, then it would also be good if you valued that is volunteered
work that you, that there was a better calculation system on this return of investment to be what
we put in, okay we put in this money but what does it give in values, how can we recount it so
that we see that that which the volunteer organisation does is actually worth a lot so that you
become more that is someone to count as so, it’s not just something that’s just, because if we
were to remove all volunteered work in Sweden then we would not have this society

But someone, there’s some kind of (incoherent about 53:50) technical question really on how to count on social
investments?

That is you could produce something simpler so the associations could bring forward that
argument as a part of what they’re doing now so ha, but then we have based on this calculation
model that is commonly accepted so that there we will contribute with this because it would be
good for all parties like and be able to see the whole value and not just the actual money value

So some kind of system where you measure qualitative parameters maybe like health and

Mm because then I think that you as a decision-maker or as a politician might think one more
time before you say no to a yes we will give this association like, because you might just see, you
only see this artificial grass field that cost this or that amount but if you were also to see the
other value then maybe you could change or whatever it’s about

Is there anything that can be done at a European level? Is there something that is, that is hard there or
complicated there that would need to be changed?

That is now we’ve only been in, in Erasmus + and it’s still a fairly easy structure, they’ve gotten
really far there, that is compared to Sweden because there you can actually be just a group of
youths or a group of people you don’t even need to have an organisational number so you can
apply for Erasmus funding then you just get this (incoherent about 55:45) number that you need
for the actual application but you can do that and only be a lose composition of people, really
cool so with that I think they’ve gotten really far and then sure the applications are quite
demanding so but, but they’ve tried and make it easier and if you have a good national office like
we have then you get help and such on the other hand I know that if you want to continue
working in, with EU-funding like for example ESF that is European Social Fund and such then
it’s a lot, a lot of paper and a lot of documentation so only big organisations can do so that,
when it comes to more long term, that is K2 that is strategic partnerships that’s more like long
term that you can do as a voluntary association within Europe but it would be fun if you could
get funding to run like something a little bit long term so

But that’s also more available to apply for as

Yes, yes like a mini version of ESF that is that it shouldn’t be so

Somewhere between Erasmus and ESF, yes

Yes something like that

781
Thank you very much
Thank you
END OF THE RECORDING.

3.3 Respondent 3

But you can tell, start by telling about yourself and how long you’ve been involved in the organisation

Okay my name is [Respondent 3], I’m seventeen years old, I’m how do you say, I would like to say that I’m very, I have a very big need to do things, I have a lot of trouble to just sit still and to be inactive so that’s a big part of my almost need for volunteering that I’ve had since I was about twelve, but I have still involved in the organisation yes I think it’s, should you say the start was when I finish ninth grade and that’s two years ago, then, yes but, two, two and a half, I’ve been secretary for two years so about two and a half years now, at the end of summer it’s officially three

How did you come in contact with the organisation?

I knew [Respondent 2], we are that I kind of, what to say, one of the few committed youths in the municipality, but I was not committed in the municipality which [Respondent 2] was and then I started to get to know [Respondent 2] through s/he was, s/he was at my school now and again, and tried to start the recreation centre, I tried to help him/her a little to get the recreation centre started and then one day I was at the train, I had just come home from another course in the, from my old organisation, I get of the train, I walk into [Respondent 2] and then this, this was probably about three years ago, then s/he said “do you want to be in my organisation, we deal with international trips” basically and then I said “of course I want that” and so it wasn’t much more to it and so that summer [Respondent 2] got in touch because I said me and [Respondent 2] had added each other on Facebook and we talked a little and it was one time at a workshop that s/he tried to get me a little bit on his/her project but I wasn’t so in to it then and then s/he asked if I wanted to participate in a youth exchange here in Sweden and I got the chance to go to a south European country, I had had one of those, how should you say packed summers of my life then  and already been to a congress and I had been to a coarse in that country already that was about peer support and climbing so then I said “no” because I didn’t see that I had the time, then the upper secondary school started here and in walks [Respondent 2] just up here, just before church where I walk in to [Respondent 2] and then s/he said “hi I want to go, do you want to come to this south European country, I need an answer tonight” and then I said “of course I want to come to that country”, s/he didn’t say much more than that and so I filled in my application and the same night and then I went to my first youth exchange with [Respondent 1] and another group and at just this point of my life I had quit my last organisation, committed to a couple student compounds but weren’t doing so much with it, went on youth exchanges had time of my life finished that part with [Respondent 2] and [Respondent 1], and then we had a little more contact like this but I wasn’t very into involving myself at all then because I had just finished three, three and a half years of commitment and presidency here in the municipality and then I guess it was just one day that I woke up and felt that something was missing in my day to day like, something I wasn’t doing anymore and then I simply realised that it was the volunteering and courses and networking and people and I started to tire of this upper secondary school partying so then I reached out to [Respondent 2] and [Respondent 1] and so it’s on that path and now this is my second year as secretary

How much time do you spend on the organisation?

Yes a very good question, it we count with maybe one meeting a week then we can add five hours there, because we have long meetings and then if we should add in active recruitment, networking, telling about the organisation, write little summaries, reports, assist [Respondent 2] and [Respondent 1], plan, contact with like, how should you say, more than meetings that is contact with other members such as [Respondent 2] and [Respondent 1] have stuff they’re in and assist in, contact now with hotels and such so that’s about two, three, four hours on that too

And that’s all volunteering?
All volunteering but that differs, that depends on how stressed the periods are, and then if you count the time that I lead groups and fix all the members and sit in on meeting with that then it’s even more and then if you count the time that I actually go in projects for the organisation that’s not always for my gain either but for the organisation to move forward then you can have twelve hours a day, a week

And how can a typical week look with the organisation?

A typical week, then we should be able to take this one because we didn’t have a meeting this week but like I said it’s Inspirational lab on Sunday, The Inspirational Lab on Sunday h, I will find a couple participants for [a project in] a south European country, I’ve been in constant contact with my participants who are going to an east European country, been a little go between, checked airplane tickets, checked a little bus tickets, brainstormed ideas with [Respondent 1] about problem solving, called, called a hotel to check living arrangement for the organisation that have still, this was very on productive because I’ve been very busy at school but somewhere there

What, what makes you want to commit, what is your drive?

I think it would be the social benefits, myself fulfilment, the knowledge it gives and this, what should you say, the almost familiar relation that’s in the organisation and also a little bit in role model purpose, that is I want to show other youths that it’s possible and that there’s time and that like school and your workout isn’t the only thing you need to focus on or the only thing you have time for and most of all because it’s so fun it’s my absolute hobby

What, what do your friends and family think about you being involved in the organisation?

Yes it’s both that is
(Something falls)

Shit. Typical, yes

It’s cool. Yes my family thinks, okay if I put it this way, I have an incredible support from my mum and my dad in my commitment and it has since I was twelve both in should I say support in planning, financially, and purely emotionally but then of course they think it’s hard that they don’t see me so much because of all that’s happening, that is I have a lot of meetings, I have weekend plans, I go abroad a lot, I’m several thousands of miles away and they have like no clue of what I’m doing in one way, it takes a lot of trust on their part which they give me and I’m really grateful but, but of course they think it’s tuff and especially when I don’t live at home anymore and it then take quite a lot of weeks, that is mostly when I travel, the meetings are a different thing because they are often had during the weekdays but then of course it still takes time, it does and it takes a lot of energy from me too which does that I might not have enough to spend a whole weekend with my mum or dad or be everyday with my friends because I sort of put a lot of time on a lot of other things that make it, but it’s clear that that it takes energy but it feels worth it, so it’s clear that it feels a little hard for them it is

What do your friends think then?

My friends they, they think it’s fun in a way, maybe a bit odd, I suppose it was more normal when I was in local as, local association but that is they think it’s fun and a little cool I have to say and I get a lot of positive feedback and a lot think that it’s a good thing, some think it’s stran, sort of geeky of course as it always is and the only think that they can think is that it’s a bit annoying when you have something planed for a long time and then some organisational thing comes in between, I choose it before them but there’s also a kind of understanding and sometimes maybe a strong non-understanding about it too but

How does it work with school then?

If I’m being honest I’ve missed about a third of junior year but my grades have never been so high as they are now and according to me it’s a lot thanks to the educations and the courses and the exchanges

That are provided by the organisation then?

Mm
What does the teachers think about you being gone so much, it it

They love it because they think I bring back knowledge that I’ve learnt, and some are questioning and scared that I will lag behind too much but basically all the teachers are like “s/he doesn’t need to be concerned about my subject but the other teacher’s subjects” and if all the teachers thinks so, then you know, of course it’s been tuff with school for my own part and to keep up but like I said my teachers have had quite a strong trust, I have delivered quite good on my own, I guess it’s about deadlines that has been a little flexible but it can be that way even without volunteering too and they I guess that, I’ve reserved praise from my teachers but also about my high absence but still good results so to speak and as said by my last mentor and my mentor agreed that I do what civics teach, that is I do it in the field with my volunteering and my commitment with youths and societal and projects and

Yes but it’s quite uncommon to be as committed as you are, isn’t it?

Yes I think I would have to say that, sure that you do a lot of theatre and such and you take away entire schooldays that is but it isn’t so many times that takes away entire weeks from school

Why do you think there isn’t more who are committed?

I think it’s a fear and a stress over your own comfortable bubble, that your everyday routine will break I think it’s a lot about not daring to take the chance and being so focused on school being everything that can prepare you for life that you, the most common excuse that I hear is “no I have school” both, but school isn’t everything but I think that it’s simply an imprinted system that school is the only thing that can get you forward in life which makes a lot of people not want to go

Should, should more commit themselves?

My dream would be to see a whole country that’s volunteering for it’s like the way to get things moving forward in today’s society so it’s not just about that politicians should do it, pull the whole society forward anymore, it’s not just about that big corporations should take responsibility but it’s about civil responsibility that you have and honestly I wasn’t alive then but I studied up in the 70:ties and volunteering it looked very well and it had a very good image and both public health and endemic disease and it was also the time where you had the most commitment and then it’s not just about it being very high in politics but also study groups (incoherent about 15:15) was incredibly active and sort of lowered the Spola kröken campaign, lowered like a big alcohol abuse through the whole public, a lot of blooming sports clubs got committed youths, a lot of problem children were solved because of that, that is I think that the more people that are committed, as long as it’s about something the better our society will be, and then it can be about everything from international level to a “rake day” in your neighbourhood, it doesn’t need to be big just your, but I think it has started to lose a lot about being in your sports club, sure you go to the games but it’s not that you host camps anymore like and it’s, I think it’s a shame because like there are so many times where you have compared with just a community or arias that’s only started an volunteering association that is not a neighbourhood community but, but a rake, cleaning day, but you do it once a month and all has become so much better and it’s only the initiative from a few civilian people in the neighbourhood and then you don’t have a janitor who works his ass of or a neighbourhood community or a condominium that needs to raise the rent because they need to hire more people to keep clean, that is it becomes more logic that you get a better world with commitment

In what way do you think the organisation contribute to that, what is it, what is it that they do that is good, or what is it that you do that is good?

I think we give a unique chance to youths who dare to take it and I thank that the thing that we do best is that we become more and more of a role model for new thinking in different youth associations that are a lot bigger than us, have more local activities, have more members but

151 A campaign in collaboration with national public agencies and the civic society which aimed to lower the alcohol consumption and change the alcohol culture in Sweden.
aren’t working in the same way as us but are working in this 70ties way that obviously doesn’t work toda, you see massive associations that have huge problems with losing members and while we are a new organisations that’s only growing and growing because we are fresh, we are new thinking but we are still experienced and we are very targeted on our goals and has a completely different way of thinking, we don’t think “we have always done this, this has worked before, why isn’t it working now?”, we think “how do we get it to work now?” so that’s what I would say is the most important thing that we do and we are a role model internationally about how youth projects should work and also as a source of inspiration for a lot of others who wants to start something small that even if you’re a really small group and have very little capacity you can still, you can still do very big things

Do you have any specific example of something that you have done or disposed or that you feel like this this contributed to, to Society

Yes precisely

A project that I was a member of locally that was in collaboration with the municipality it was when me and a few translators and a few co-workers which was led by our president and even the one who hired us in the municipality taught entrepreneurship to refugee children so they could reach their dream and go to an amusement park, even if you shouldn’t talk about integration in everything I think it’s a very big part in society and especially in a small community as this municipality is, and see all the children with different national backgrounds together and see them crush all stereotypes, barely understanding each other but pull together so hard and understand each other enough to make a difference, without parents, without adults just them together with a little bit of hard work and the right guidance provides and get one of their, a lot said best days of their lives and get a diploma as your, two boys that I still have some contact with, their father was so proud that he cried when they (incoherent about 19:40) the diploma and see exited and powerful it was and get all the youths and like see how happy they were when they managed to reach their goal and how willing they were to work for it in the end it, it was then that I felt that this, now I really made a difference this was awesome, they will keep this with them, they will understand that their nationalities, religion or language barrier doesn’t matter again like

Do you see yourself as an active citizen?

Yes

Yes in what way, what does it mean for you?

Active citizen for me is, funny that you should bring it up because it’s actually something that I’m debating, reflecting, philosophize around it very ofte, I usually don’t say active citizen, I usually say an active part of the community, we are by volunteering, school compounds like what to say, social that I hang out with people, that’s what gets me to and like, things I have done through the organisation and before that, that’s what gets me and like be able so sleep at night and feel that I do an active part in the society because I want like I want to improve, I want to do it, I want to be part of an improvement like integration is something that I have worked a lot with and like I’ve really been given a chance to be a part and integration is something of the biggest challenges that Sweden has in front of itself, and just having been out in the field, working with children on my own initiative, that is refugee children like even if I was only there with the University and not the organisation but later when I got to be there then just, like I’m so proud of myself now that I took the train voluntary every Tuesday and was there just because and like hang out with the refugee children at an asylum accommodation, I wouldn’t even see them next week but still, like such a thing, an own initiative is something that I think makes me able to call myself an active citizen and it’s something that I wish more would say about themselves, because being an active part of the society, it’s not so hard, I think it’s an active priority of other’s and society’s bes, best than your own good and it’s not really practically more
ideologically too and that has, I reflect on my own opinions and how I think you should be a citizen and being a citizen is a part for me being active so that’s why I would say that I am active. Are you active in something, you’re active in the civilian, are you active in party politics as well or have you been? The thing is that party politics is something that I’m thinking about getting involved in for a long time and is still thinking about but there has been so many other ways for me to be involved politically when we are voluntary associations and then it’s been questions that has been closer to my heart, even if I have a lot of opinions about the municipality, county, government, the parliament system, a lot of questions that I’m involved in that is I’m trying to keep track on the parties programs and party debates, who says who, what and who, but I haven’t found a party that I feel fully prepared to but my time and stand behind instead I’ve through volunteer programs worked with increase cultural awareness a lot of feminism a lot of fighting drugs, a lot of fighting for everybody’s equality and everybody’s equal rights and like and exist, LGBTQ questions, strong statements in pride and stuff like that I’ve been able to involve myself politically but I haven’t as said, it’s something I would like to get behind and join a political party and I think that I’m gonna stick to that plan the two following years as well, then I think that also, if I were to involve myself party politically I would do it for real and then I would like to have a more leading role in the party and to do that I want to have evolved some more and like I said it’s my absolute hobby right now with the more social organisations, not like non profit in (incoherent about 24:15) and then it’s been that I haven’t felt like I’ve wanted to have, take time from that and put it party politically EU is part of your work Absolutely Have I understood, can you tell me about that? Do you mean my opinions about my work in EU or Eurasmus+ How does it work and also your opinions as well, how, in what way is your organisation involved with EU in EU That’s the question, just quickly about my organisation has gotten me to do is basically for each time that I’m away I feel more like an EU citizen than a Swedish one and I think that it’s a title that is mentally very good, preferably I think that you should have the title world citizen but and feel like an EU citizen and create a connection between youths across EU it’s and like still, and still diminish the “we and them”-feeling and really feel your way around Europe and be quite actively involved in EU as you automatically becomes through the fact that we have EU, The European Commission that is organising the Eurasmus+ program that is where we seek founding makes you more involved in EU because you have the knowledge, that is know that EU, the Eurasmus+ program will shut down “okay what discussions are behind this, now Turkey does this, how does that effect their situation in Eurasmus+? Now Greece’s financial situation has changed to this how does that affect them okay why do they have a lower travelling budget than us? Okay it depends on this.” You get involved in the financials and that way you learn a lot about EU which I think is very important because the way I understand it, Sweden is a country that’s quite EU-critical and that’s not wrong to be that, I’m still as has been for a long time critical of EU but the thought and the idea with EU is something I feel has a high value and then it’s not just through Eurasmus+ and then more importantly just, just the actual thing that such a big what should you say core that EU has taken initiative to focus on the youths in all of EU for them to create social networks for them to strengthen the employability amongst youths for me that’s something that’s truly, it’s a real wow-feeling for me and it’s happened really fast and EU’s development right now and EU’s commitment like I said I’m critical about a lot of points which you should be but in many ways it’s EU that has made it possible for me to get the social networks that I have and actually strengthened the employability of youths and taught a new way to think and learn things that they should have all the cred for Do you have any example of how, how an event EU has affected your work, has Brexit affected? Absolutely, fun that you bring up Brexit because I was just about to say it, Brexit has affected our work with EU we have a strategic partnership with the UK and Brexit has absolutely

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affected, because technically they are about to exit the Erasmus program but since the Erasmus program ends 2020 then Erasmus has pumped out their last money to the UK and that means that they have a completely different mentality towards that money because basically all the money that our project doesn’t spend goes back to the EU, says no that are then sent back to the EU and the goal with the Erasmus+ money is that they should be used wisely and they are to be used, they aren’t to be wasted but they shouldn’t go back either but it’s basically like with all budgets that you post they are there for a reason and that has changed the mind-set of the organisations in England toward their Erasmus money and that also has, yes for us a strategic partnership has been a little unsure “what happens?” the budget has changed back and forth a little wavering, more concrete and the I suppose future partnerships aren’t checked the same way because with other countries that you know are still in the EU then you know that after Erasmus+ a new program will probably be formed, we get to keep our partnership you validate networking in a different way but with England or the UK in this case it becomes a completely different mentality to the organisations in England because you don’t know and they probably aren’t part of that program that will come after Erasmus+ which once again makes it feel like you lose a lot of youths and that it then on the other hand, yes but that you lose youths and you lose networks which is very sad because England is a huge [part] of EU especially educational wise, especially EVS-volunteer work, there are a lot of English EVS-volunteers that I know in my, in o, in our network that are out in Europe and really likes a lot and work, really likes to teach English but it disappears because in that way we have it, but I wouldn’t call it an EU decision either because it was England’s decision

Yes, yes, but what is happening in EU

It affects EU like but also other EU decisions that affects because all that has to do with mentality with countries affects that is the more laws you have, either against economy restrictions or the opposite economy release affects like how the collaboration works in some country, countries because of corruption, none corruption, preventions and above all it’s when you have EU decisions that affects, like also countries within EU that affects it’s when we work with and send refugees abroad, those asylum seekers not refugees but asylum seekers and then see which countries they can enter with a Syrian passport and which countries we need to seek this permission for or so that is that which affects a lot too and since the organisation has targeted a lot towards integration these EU decisions affects this as well of course it does and it does, that is EU decisions makes you very emotionally engaged too that is you become quite disappointed w, yes but when the refugee way into Europe became legal like, those things affect a lot

Do you feel that you have a better understanding of EU thanks to the organisation then others do

Without a doubt I feel that I know more about how EU works, why they work that way, I have knowledge of labour market and educational systems in other countries in Europe, I have knowledge of the cultures, I know the differences, I feel that the organisation has given me a way to gain higher understanding the deciding organ that affects my country a lot, that is also if, yes but in my opinion go and vote in a municipality-and county election but not vote in the EU election is the dumbest thing you can do because fifty percent of the decisions in the municipality and a county will still be affected by EU’s decisions, even to get understanding about how mandates and the proportions works in proportion to the actual EU board that is depending on the population and a lot of that I have gained through the organisation and not just my education so absolutely

And is that a problem that it is that way?

How do you mean?

Is it problematic that you have gained, that, that you have gained this great understanding from a volunteer organisation and not from something that is a societal institution that maybe everybody should take part in?

Absolutely it is but in a way it’s also about that, if one, o I’m sorry, if a societal institution should give some kind of information then seeing it on a piece of paper angles it one way, seeing one
thing on the news angles it from a different way, going down to the actual country and meet people and hear every different version that is something completely different, we can take Rumania as an example from the government that had 200 000 people demonstrate in Bucharest then they would basically make it legal to be corrupt, in pr, that is the proposal was the proposal if you want a concrete example was that you, had a post, if you’ve been a chairman in a certain government and you had been stealing under a certain amount or embezzled money you couldn’t get sentenced to jail because it exceeded a very high amount, it was one thing to hear about it on the news, it was one thing to hear about it from my different friends that lived there, it was a completely different thing to go down there and discuss it with people and hear a lot of different perspectives and stories about it even, you can read as much fact as you want and you should but the best is if you can read the facts and the experience it too so that you don’t go blind

So it’s not a role that, that a societal institution could take over, but it’s about encourage youths to
It’s about youths, about youths and taking the chance and seeing EU, the only societal institution that is a very good decision is this commute card, the train card you get when you turn 18 which is a fantastic thing but then to get youths to go that is just their own decision to take but to get a higher understanding about EU I think it’s a good way and to get a higher understanding about your own culture, the cultural differences and a lot of the government power actually and why some politicians react differently, I think that a lot of the times you forget that how much all of the politicians are involved in EU and how much it controls them and EU forgets how much the own country controls them, the politicians as well

From one thing to another, you work a lot as I understand it with networking and making contacts, how does it
Must I say
Yes how does that work go?
Social experience and a very professional attitude
Do you talk a lot with people on your spare time or do you formally set time aside like work hours to call different people
I get what you mean, that is for me networking that sadly has or not sadly, both good and bad, happens all the time on my spare time since I’m passionate about the organisation and my commitment so it’s a popular topic to talk about and when you meet people that have similar organisations or above all when I have a project then it just happens that when you find someone likeminded you just get, you transfer this to each other and exchange experiences which makes you both better at what you do and also creates a network that can be of use so it’s really difficult for me to say that I assign work hours for net, networking it happens automatically in my everyday life and my attitude toward things, but I can assign hours when I check on my networks if it’s, that is say one night “yes but now I have this project or now I heard about this project and now I want to know more”, then I can assign those two hours to elaborate and get in contact with a lot of contacts in the same time and check how things are and sometimes just one of these social hours like this, not just pro, then not just professional but on an emotional way keep in touch through and have an update and compare stress levels

Yes who’s voice do you think we hear in the organisation? Is it the members’ and the youths’ voices that get represented or is it, is it the refugees’ voices or
That is would like to say that the voices that gets heard in the organisation ar, are the voices we wish to have in the organisation, since we don’t have such a high number of members since it’s almost only the board that does everything then I think the voices are our voices that adjust to, to what we think the youths want to hear to become active. And refugees, generally that is, that is youth refugee for me it’s the same thing in a way to, that is youth as youth

Yes one does not exclude the other
What? No precisely
One does not exclude the other so to
But I think that our voice is heard by the board adjusted to those receivers that we want it to reach out to.

*How do you get information on what they want to hear? Or how to get a hold of them?*

Yes networking

*Networking yes*

Yes when you compare different needs in different countries, other organisations like “yes but how do you do to and talk to your members, give your members, what do your members, what does your members usually want?” and then we try our way forward a lot, like “this doesn’t work, this doesn’t work, this works, can we improve what works? Can we improve what didn’t work? Can we try this? Do they want this? How do we best adjust?” but our highest wish is still to hear the youths’ own voice and see their commitment to and do things they want.

*Are you democratic?*

Very

*Mm tell, in what way?*

That is when you have a board of three then majority decisions might not apply so hard but, in the end it is in the br, all discussions the board has had then it’s, they, the point that is two to one is like the winning point but I don’t think I’ve never, this will sound too good to be true, but I feel that there has never been any kind of team forming against one person to take kind of advantage of the majority but it has been democratic in the sense that whatever the person says then we tear it apart and see if it’s possible and if it’s a good idea which is slower of course but it’s part of the democracy also that things should change, be torn up, be worked through and become as good as possible and in all formal contexts now we’re talking yearly meetings, etcetera board meetings and such, then it’s a democratic voting that stands.

*Has it happened that you have received critics from someone that’s been partaking in something like a youth exchange or been to one of your, your camps?*

Not really, there was one time we had a training course and there was a few too many that, we had a very big group, there was a lot of people that were new to non-formal learning, non-formal learning, and then there was a little bit like this “this was a bit childish” and so in the beginning but the more that came the more it disappeared because that was when people started to get the point and that’s, has almost all organisations from the beginning those that has never experienced it, they think that they are playing but they realised how much they were learning, so that’s the kind of criticism that we’ve received and then maybe we’ve received, maybe not criticism but opinions that we are taking on too much all thou we over and over prove that we aren’t because we always manage in some magical way

*Where does the criticism come from? Is it from participants or from others?*

No it hasn’t been from participants or youth (incoherent about 40:25) yes but MUCF has on several occasions e-mailed us about our capacity and it’s a form of criticism according to me at least then how the rest of the board interprets it, I can’t stand for that but my own opinion is that it’s criticism from MUCF who thinks that we have too few members to do as much as we do but once again over and over we prove them wrong and that we ta, when we receive criticism we see it as feedback and if it’s criticism or feedback that is worth to assimilate then we do that and improve based on that, so criticism or feedback is invaluable to us, most of all feedback and it’s something that we ask for, from MUCF, from our participants, from everyone around that we work with, from each other but like real sharp, negative corruption criticism is nothing that I’ve experienced during my years here at least, and I suppose that’s nice

Yes but if I understand you correctly then you experience some scepticism from amongst others MUCF that you are a small organisation and how will you be able to do the work?

Absolutely yes. I stand for that we have received that.

*Does that affect you?*

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What?

*Does that affect you in ways of being able to get money or other things?*

It does but on the other hand that is we still get our money and most projects were approved since we time and time again proved them wrong but most of all a certain, how should you say, criticism we’ve received has come from schools and other associations and organisations in the region because we’ve been so small and they sort of hasn’t ever cared to open the door for a collaboration so I wouldn’t say it’s criticism I would say that’s arrogance because of our size

*And that’s why you sought out EU to start with if I understand you correctly?*

Yes it was, there wasn’t anybody who wanted to collaborate locally and it’s still no one who’s considered, now the municipality has begun to loosen up a bit, we’ve gotten an amazing collaboration with a school and but other organisations are still that is it’s horrible because it’s often just “yes of course we can collaborate, just sign all your members over to us”

*Oo okay yes*

Yes “collaboration” in quote characters and we have loved to say “no thanks that’s not how we work” like so, that is a mistrust because of size we’ve always experienced but it has instead of feeling sorry for ourselves it’s been more pushing us toward “now damned they are gonna see” for both good and bad, then if you have to much mistrust then of course it gets hard in the end, especially when you put in a lot of hours, blood, sweat and tears like we do

*Yes if you don’t feel like you have something to add then I feel that I’ve asked all of my questions*

No it’s more that I want to encourage all people to organise themselves and or what am I saying involve yourselves not organise yourselves, that I would like to encourage all people to involve themselves because I think that’s the key to a healthy life and it doesn’t like I said be a big deal but something small I think like working out, meditation, reading a book and some sort of hobby or commitment like something that can give the ultimate standard of living

How, how do you get youths do that then, how do you get them to agree to these youth organisations or (incoherent about 44:00)

Yes basically the only way is a long and complicated process that is to attract them, to whatever it’s been it’s about attracting youths and not serve them things on a platter even if it’s, sadly that’s what a lot of youths want today and I’ve discovered when they get it, like when they have a taco night, when you ask them to set up chairs and they get to cut the vegetables and you stand there and throw a little food at each other in the kitchen and they get how fun it is it’s then that you get this commitment but you have to attract them and you can basically not drag someone there which is sad and most of all it’s about crossing the comfort zone because to stand and talk about how much it actually gives you to be involved obviously doesn’t help it’s just to attract and scoop up

*And what do you attract with, taco nights?*

Yes sadly, that is in my experience of recruiting and attractions then, then attracting youths is something of the hardest thing to do it’s very individual and it’s been a lot of times that a taco night and pizza night “yeeey works perfect, I want to do it every night”. Then just “yes we have a meeting next week”, “no my younger brother has broken his leg” there are a lot of bad excuses so you lose everything, it’s that youths have to understand that it can’t be fun all the time sometimes there’s a little sacrifice even if you do it for free and most of all life isn’t just about cash

*Is that what it’s about for a lot of youths today?*

Yes sadly those who isn’t about cash is about a loose and comfortable lifestyle which is also sad but you should absolutely not have a lo, loose or passive and you should have as a goal to be successful but success isn’t money so that’s what I think (incoherent about 46:05) in today and feel

*Yes thank you then I turn of.*

END OF THE RECORDING.

3.4 Respondent 4
[Laughs] Yeah, no, but of course, it’s totally okay. Eh, but I thought we could begin with you talking a bit about yourself and how, how did you find the organisation?

Mmh, eh… you were thinking like: location and age and basics like that then?

Mhm.

I’m 22 years old. Eh… my background to finding the organisation I suppose is that I’ve got a new job in the municipality and the municipality collaborates with another municipality in this project and this municipality is where one of the organisation leaders works.

Yes, right.

Mhm. So it’s, since I got this new job I had to go on a job interview and there was this representative from the municipality and one from the other municipality and that’s when I met the organisation leader.

Okay, so it was in relation to the organisation leader’s [inaudible ca 01:20] eh, profession.

Yes, precisely and what happened, what has happened was that s/he and this, like, the counterpart in the municipality has earned, applied for, eh, funding together from… eh, region-, what the heck is it called…? Oh well, anyway they have applied for funding [inaudible 01:39] the regional administrative board who has inquired.

Mhm.

Yeah, so. But anyhow they have applied for funding for this project and then they got it and then they needed someone who, they read, they hired a person to be the project coordinator or whatever it may….

This project then, it’s a cooperation with the organisation?

No. No?

No, nothing at all it was a bit more like I had this-, that job interview and then the organisation leader thought that, well, we have some things in common.

Oh, okay! Okay, mhm.

I’m pretty-, very in-, involved, I would say, in integration and with… well, pretty strong opinions and I work a fair amount with it and stuff like that so I guess the organisation leader thought that wow, that sounds impressive. Or like, interesting and… then s/he told me about this project like, just when the interview was over like: hey… just a little personal question, what are you doing this week and I was just like yes, yeah, no, I’m not doing anything in particular you know and…

[Laughs] Yes.

And then s/he started to tell me a bit about the organisation, what they stand for and about the coaching and eeh… and I got instantly hooked because I think that things like that are really interesting and I have a background in coaching ball sports for seven years. So I’ve played myself and I’ve been a member of the board and a member of the district board here in the municipality, region and hrn, stuff like that so I feel, I have like some experience of what I thought was coaching you know. Eh, for, for me… the word coaching for me has been or wa-, eh, up to like, well, a we-, this week, It’s been about sports. Because we say that someone is a coach.

Mhm, right. [Laughs]

But you’re not, like, that’s really not what… it’s coach and coach, it’s not the same thing. Eh… but at the same time I feel like I still have some experience in some way since I’ve worked with youths in that way

Mhm. Do you have any other commitments?

Hrm, you mean other things I’m passionate about or what I’m doing or…?

Yes… exactly. To-, one of the organisation leaders has told me a little about you being involved with a network for unaccompanied minors’ rights?

Yes, exactly.

Yes. [Laughs]
Yes, that’s cor-, yes, that’s correct. Yeah, as you can see, there’s a lot-, there are many strings to the bow. No but I really try, that network and… eh-, kinda like in this, oh man what-, I forgot the name-, [name of the network]

Yes, right.

Eh, something like that but not… n-, like, not really anything other than to with the group try to support people, like, I’ve not worked really like actively with-, because it’s more of a web based group really or like… organization…

Yes, more of a network?

Yeah it’s more, exactly. So it’s kinda more like I’m a part of that network and you’re trying to, well, actively trying to steer conversations in a more sensible way and… well, something like that.

**How come you started to get interested in integration in particular?**

Well… good question. Like, I feel like I’ve always been… raised with and always thought that… all us humans-, like really like, everyone has the same worth and everyone should have a chance at a good life, like, it all comes down to the-, like, in that everyone should have a fair chance, we’re born in different countries but that should not be the thing that sets the limit for-, like, you can’t help where you’re born but you should be able to control your life, eh, and… for me it’s really been about people on the run who flee their home, who flee their country because of wars they’ve witnessed and experienced things we can’t even… imagine or comprehend.

Mhm.

So for me it’s been so very much like… like it’s shocking to me how the migrations policy is conducted at the moment eh, because… it has a-, it’s about a number, it’s not about the people anymore it’s about the money, it’s never abou-, it’s never been about the money and it will never be about the money for me because… we can afford it, that’s how it is. Period. And… I don’t think it’s about like picking one for me but-, I think it’s about being there for everybody else because we’re all a part of the same thing you know.

Mhm. *Was it the migration treaty 2015 was that some kind of starting point for…? This…?*

Yeah something like that actually because I think that… for me it’s been like, you’re just like: wow man, feels good to be from Sweden, we help so many people… it’s not always picture perfect but we blend-, we’ve taken in too many, that’s what I think on some… no, I think we should take in more, I think we took in too many too fast and we can’t manage that, people haven’t been living very well, they haven’t had very good living conditions and things like that and that’s what I think has been… a problem. But I don’t think that-, But as I said when things like this happen… eh, I have… during this time when I’ve worked as a teacher but also when engaging in the ball sports and you meet people everywhere, you go to school-, like you meet people who doesn’t originate from or have a background in Sweden. You learn very much lately I’ve acquired many more pret-, like, friends who have recently arrived eh… and you like discuss with them and like try to see things from their perspective and… I can tell you that tha-, this situation is not very simple, no. It’s not residence permits we’re discussing I would say it’s more like in the opposite direction so…

**How long have you been active in associations?**

… Let’s see, eh, what do you mean like, active in the association in-, like as a player or just as-, or do you mean th-, like…?

Yeah *m*, both, actually. In general.

Well. Eh… I started playing ball sports when I was twelve… and now I’m twenty two, which makes it ten years. But I’ve be-, I’ve been coaching youths for seven years.

And *when did you start to become engaged civically?* How do you mean?

Eh, engaged in these matters of integration. *When did you become a part of, of these networks?*

Ehm… I think it would’ve been… in this last year actually, is when I think it would’ve been. Apart from being… not been in the network but still maybe… like the networks might not have been around for that long, but I think I’ve been a part of these networks during this last year.
Eh, some things-, the network for unaccompanied minors’ rights and have not been around as long as I’ve been here for example, eh… and before that it wasn’t really that you were a part of a network but you tried to take the discussion when you had the energy… so… and th-, I think that it’s an awesome network because I feel like they’re very good at taking these discussions the right way, they’re very good a-… keeping themselves to a higher standard, those who write belittling things, racist thi-, every and all of those things. Eh, belittling things or, yeah all those things. They keep themselves to a higher standard and I think that’s great and I’ll gladly support that and be part of like something that, that doesn’t stoop to that level and instead rise above the rest.

Are you engaged politically?
No.

Do you think you have a political interest?
Eh… I haven’t had that before… and I wouldn’t say that I have a large interest in politics now either but I’m very conversant with mi-, like, with migration politics and in the subject regarding which party stands where in, in that. Eh and that’s really where my interest is at, so I would say that my political interest has grown generally also because when understanding a thing like the migration politics, there’s a whole lot [inaudible ca 14:23] which goes with it and to understand… more of what-., the individual party you have to understand a bit about them so I would say that it has kinda kick started some kind of political interest though I don’t feel like that is what I’m passionate about, eh, so, but it has absolutely increased lately.

Voluntary associations, has that been a-, a big part of your upbringing, do you have parents who are active in associations or siblings or…?
Eh, my parents have never been active in any associations.

No.

But they’ve been very engaged, eh, they’ve tagged along and helped out around the club very much, my parents, so, I would say that they’ve not been active themselves but they’ve been pretty active through us so to speak.

Mhm. What’s the value in being active for you?
In an association or in general?
Both. [Laughs] Again.
You make it easy for you and difficult for me… to me, being active in an association is… it gives me so much for me to have a place to belong to. Eh, somewhere-, I feel safe and welcome but also where I feel like I can contribute with something, where I can be… supportive. I want to be a role model, I want to set a good example, well-, like, I want to help with stuff like, like I think that I would’ve wanted help with, be someone you can talk to about everything under the sun, someone who can help you with anything from homework to heartache or, like-. But I wouldn’t say that I lacked someone-, someone like that since there were people there for me too, like, around me but… I didn’t really have someone that I knew you know… eh, I didn’t have anyone like me and I suppose that’s who I tried to be, like, what I’ve wanted to try to be to have someone like me who I would’ve wanted at that age. Even though I didn’t lack anyone it would’ve been like, a, an asset when I was younger, to have someone like-, like me. So to me it’s about this-, to be active in an association was about both taking and giving, I guess you could say. That it, it gives me so much more to be able to help and to get to see them grow and to get… try to be a part of and… like shape them into the person they become in some way you know and it really feels like you’ve gained so much-, like, we’ve always had lots of discussion in, eh, amongst the team that this-, like [inaudible ca 18:10] discussions we’ve had HBTQ lectures, there’s been diet lectures, we’ve talked very much about, like, team spirit what is okay not-, like, very much about valuation issues back and forth during all the years so yeah, we’ve worked actively with them to-, it’s about so much more than ball sports like it’s about something completely different for me too. Like it-, than just ball sports.

Has there been any backsides to your involvement?
Eh, yes, because I have trouble slowing down.

_Mhm._

So I guess that's what I've felt a couple of times in that… I do too much, I don't have the energy to like do it in the way I would want, you know because it is like that when you're in, especially when you've done this coach week when you've been coached yourself.

_Mhm._

You've really been… like, it's something I've never-, it's something I've thought about but now you got to-, you had to tell someone else how it actually works.

_Mhm._

Not like this person themself-, like brought up any new reflections but it was still like I had to explain a little bit what it's like and… and I know myself that I take on too much and I know that I won't always have the energy but at the same time it's hard to say no. Because in our association it doesn't really work for me to say no because then I know things won't be done or it falls on someone else who already have too much since there are so few of us who all have too much. So there's… it's been very hard for me to ho-, to hold back, I think that is the thing I feel like it… sometimes it becomes too much and then it's not as much fun anymore.

_Mhm._

So that's the biggest problem, I'd say really it-, and when it takes up so much time other parts of life gets affected too like, you know, relationships with friends or with family or like, there are things like that, when you went to school then maybe the school suffered a blow because you were so very active with the ball sports so, there's always another part which suffers a blow when you take on too much…

_Mhm._

... within voluntary associations.

Have you had any comments like that from others around you from parents or friends or siblings that-, or partner perhaps?

Yes.

Yes. _What could it…?_

From all sorts of directions I can tell you. Like, from every one of them, basically, yes.

[Laughs] _How does that feel then? Or, have you taken…?_

Well… like, of course it's-, it depends a little on how you say it and when and where and why and you know. When my parents say it I know it's more them wanting what's best for my health rather than them thinking that I'm abandoning the famil-, you know like I don't care enough about the family and It's more about them being worried that I… take on too much.

_Mhm._

But for example if it's my friends, partner, or sibling who says it then it might be a bit more like, well you know, you only do that. You don't prioritize us, you know, like that. I've actually not had a friend who has told me that though but-, of course people can be like: Yeah, but you have so much to do all the time, like that.

_Mhm._

But it doesn't have to be more than that I guess it's more that my sibli-… and part-, you know when you've had a partner [inaudible ca 21:05] who has… thought that… and it is like that when you involve yourself to that magnitude as I have, it's not like it's been one evening every week and one hour every week so of course other things suffer a blow.

_Mhm._

And that's tough and it's tough when you… in some way know a little bit how I would want it to be…

_Mhm._

But I feel like I can't really get there either because then… the association gets-, like, then the whole club suffers. If I back out, you know because it-, then you get that feeling and… then you'll always all the time be just… torn in between all the time is what I feel is the… you'll be just like
is it-, is it even any fun? Or, you know, because it… it creates some form of stress around all that… in some way.

Mhm.

[Long silence]

Mhm… What… Are you… Right, here we go! Now I found the question again [inaudible 22:04]. Is it mostly voluntary work or do you get paid…?

Well- eh, I’ve never been paid.

Never? No?

No. So, yeah… voluntary work.

[Both laugh]

But I will get, starting… next Monday I’ll be hired part time within the ball sport club.

Oh, okay, okay.

But… it’s not for doing what I’ve already been doing. A little bit of what I’ve already been doing, so it will lighten my burden a little bit but it’s also expected of me to take… like, that percent is quite the large amount.

Mhm.

So I will take on some other tasks too that other people have been doing… so hopefully it’ll lighten my burden but also enable me to take on some additional tasks too, you know, which will be during the day and like when I’m at work.

Mhm, right.

But no, apart from that everything, everything, everything has been voluntary work all the time.

Mhm.

And also I’ve been involved in the student union at school, been a part during all my years there and… yeah, the club board and the district board of the ball sport in the municipality, region and eh, coop-, like, we’ve been cooperating on a pretty… national level. So there’s been a bit of this national work with the ball sport also.

Is that civic participation, in your opinion? What you are doing?

Oh wow, that’s not an easy question… because it’s also: what is civic participation?

Mhm. [laughs]

Eh… but yes, I suppose I would say it is.

Mhm.

Are you gonna ask me why?

[Both laughs]

Yes, please.

Well I think kinda like… hopefully what we are doing for the youths in the club, or what you do when you engage yourself in these networks or when you engage yourself in the organisation. Hopefully… it will lead to, even if there’s not that many people but perhaps they’ll feel a bit better, that they get better support that they develop a bit better or feel better than they would have if they weren’t a part of the organization, this actual organization… eh, so I do think and I believe t-, personally, for me the ball sports were very important for me for a period. Eh… it wasn’t at all like I-, was bullied or anything, that’s not how it was. But, I might not have had that many friends who I hung out with after school, I had friends at school but I didn’t have that many who I hung out with on my spare time so for me the ball sports were tremendously important for a period because that’s what I was doing on my spare time and I had my place there, you know.

Mhm.

And to me it meant very much-, it’s also a little bit about that feeling still being there in some way that… that is what I want to give to someone else too. And I feel like that’s c-, like a civic responsibility to… to be able to take on people who don’t need support or who need support or who need to get away from other stuff, who doesn’t have friends, who has problems at home. We have all kinds of eh, youths with pro-, different kinds of problems you know, who, who in
some way can get a safe haven where they get to feel good. And I think that, in the long run, it
gives-, and since we talk about so much more than just practicing ball sports
Mhm.
It’s pretty much given in our association what we stand for and how we do things and we’re
always having lectures on proper diet, there’s much talk about, you know, youths in a certain age
not eating very much and then engaging in sports to that extent, you know like, we try to… to
not just shape them into ball sport players but rather making this into a lifelong… like… lifelong
wellbeing in some way in multiple aspects. So, yeah, I would say I probably think it is.
Mhm. What, what are politics for you? Is this different from politics? Or is this politics you’re engaging in?
I don’t think it’s politics… but I haven’t really got any, like, you know, good… answer to why it’s
not politics.
No. [Laughs]
But for me it doesn’t really feel like it but at the same time, for me-, since I haven’t been like
active politically, I don’t have a really-, had that big of an interest in that so for me politics are
very up here, you know. They are the ones in charge, they are the ones who makes decisions, it’s
like… at the same time I do understand that there are people who are committed down here, in
the end that’s what… shapes what’s up there in some way you know so, eh, if you understand
what I mean.
Mhm.
But no, I wouldn’t say that I think that that’s politics but I haven’t got a good answer as to why I
don’t think it is.
Mhm. Ehm… I want to continue with asking a little about this specific course. Can you, can you talk about,
what you’ve experienced?
Yes that is a very good question, what I have experienced… there’s been a hell of a lot actually.
[Both laugh]
Ehm… No, but… I can start with saying that, like my expectations I had prior-, it could be
interesting to know a little about what I thought prior to this because… for me this has been
associated with, like I said, with, with sports, coaching. I did understand prior to this that no this
is not coaching in sports, this is coaching in general. But what is coaching in general? You know,
since… for me, I had like not… no actual thought about that, you could absolutely try to have a,
eh, a person, youth or adult or child or so that you could try
to coach in a certain direct-, or…
like, try to help in some way. Absolutely. But I really didn’t have any other thoughts or
expectations or-, so really I had no idea of what I was heading into and that was… very scary in a
way because I am somewhat you know, like to plan, like to know what I’m doing and stuff like
that and… to me that was very, you know, I have no idea what will be included, I don’t know if I have…
sufficient competence to even be in this course really or… is it this right for me and you
know, ehm… but I thought it was… yeah, I thought the whole week was really amazing. Eh…
for me the big, big part has actually been the participants, the international exchange you have
received. Eh, like not just the friendships you’ve acqu-, you know gained and the contacts you’ve
acquired but more like the actual le-, like the actual exchange when you learn so very much about
others and, a-, and I’ve learned about several countries I wasn’t familiar with before and cultures
there and interesting facts and stuff like that which I think contributes and which I think gives
me a better view of the world.
Mhm.
And a better view of the world is very interesting to me and that I improve all the time, I think
all the time that… in some way that makes me… also makes me change slo-slowly but se-, you
know surely my views a bit sometimes about Sweden too. How we stand in comparison to
others and… you know. Eh, but… I also thought that the approach taken with the concrete
content regarding the coaching was very interesting and very good and… as I said, this was not
what I expected but I didn’t have any expectations either but since-, yeah, it was-, it was
something completely new to me you know.
Mhm. Eh... and I... I thought it was a little... abstract at first for a start like, you w-... there was one part of the theory, you felt like: Yeah, yeah, no problem, I get what you mean, I understand English, I’m keeping up with... but what is it though? Like, it was hard to really get that last little you know con-... like connection, but you were there, weren’t you when [name] and [Respondent 1]? When [Respondent 1] got-, that’s when I really felt like you just: this is what it’s all about, yes! And it was like really cool and stu-... I thought and, and then I felt like you could really appreciate getting the theoretical part first like, behind, when you could really think about like how [Respondent 1] asked their questions, how s/he used his/her body language, how s/he guided... like show-, him/her a bit where s/he wanted to go and that s/he in some way had figured out how they should get to and...

Mhm. I thought that was incredibly interesting and that it was designed very well, because before that it was just like: alright, now I’ve got this great amount of knowledge... but I don’t really know what I’m supposed to do with it, but I have lots of factual knowledge but... how does it connect to reality.

Mhm. So, I thought the week had a very interesting layout and I thought it kinda like moved forward pretty well and it started pretty basic with... or, basic, you know like fundamental with the large perspective on... the theme for the week with unemployment and stuff like that and... comparing the different countries so you had that like in the back of your head and then in the last days... get to come back to that well then suddenly you have the large perspective which you got at the start and you’ve got the coaching and then you can make it a little more concrete because you have like the whole picture, I think, in some way.

Mhm. Eh... was this something new or was it, did you get that: oh, but this is what I’ve been doing this whole time or?

Eh... I thought that there were quite a lot of new things but I also felt like I recognize this in very-, like in a whole lot of stuff because... some of them, like, I-, I don’t know the methods and like these specific methods with the name and the meaning, but I still feel like I, a little like I... like the sport coaching style which I’ve had... is actually somewhat in accordance with this, but absolutely not all of it and it’s not like I’ve kept to the coaching but it’s maybe been more of some kind of mentorship or ter-, like, trainer.

Mhm. But everything... you also learned that everything is somewhat intertwined in some ways.

Mhm. Eh, but also a lot of these you know collaboration exercises, like I recognized many of them and that’s the kind of thing we’ve been working with like I said, quite rigorously for seven years and... we work quite tenaciously with team spirit and teambuilding and stuff like that with the whole club so... I felt quite comfortable in several parts of this because I feel like I have some experience in it, partly... the different kinds of exercises and-, but also somewhat since you’ve been a part of shaping a team it makes you understand in some way a little bit about where, where it’s headed. I had this like, you know when we did these things you kinda saw what happened to the group-, you understood it, because you’ve done it yourself. Like, that journey but with a different group.

Ehm, so I felt like I recognized this then there were all these methods, somewhat... in some way how... how rigid this is but at the same time as coaching is very much not rigid but at the same time it kinda is because you should really keep yourself away from-, or try to keep yourself away from... like, psychologist, you should keep yourself away from mentor and from consultant an-, like, so it kinda is a bit rigid In how-, how a coach should be but it’s still incredibly free too
because, you can’t make it to a little box where you’ve got these questions and those are the only ones you use so it’s like so incredibly open and… yeah.

Ehm… what, what did you think of the actual teaching method? They’re working with informative… learning? Or… informal learning? Is that something you’ve tried earlier or was that, was that a new technique?

Ehm, yes and no. I think that what I’ve experienced myself when I’ve learned things has often been, like, school and schools don’t really work this way. Not many schools, not many teachers at least. And I think more for myself that what I have used is a bit more o-, informal learning since in ball sports…

Mhm.

But a little bit like from the perspective of the association, from perspective of the ball sport, I felt like it wasn’t like something earthshakingly new because it’s kinda how you have to work there, I think, like… for me it… doesn’t really work to… just stand and give a lecture like that. So for me… it felt familiar but as I said it still felt kinda new in the aspect of the school, so…

Mhm. What-, what was the most difficult part, during this… whole course? Or what…?

Yeah, like, challenge?

Yes.

Good question. You know for me… I don’t think… for me it was the practical part. Like, the theory, I didn’t have any problems with taking it in and I didn’t think that I had any problems understanding it either and understanding how everything is connected and the logic behind it, that’s not what I thought was the hard part. I thought that the hard-, the hard part was… when we-, you were there when we did those stereotypes when we got to coach each-, Piglet and Winnie the Pooh and…?

No.

No. Well they gave you a… eh, half of the group left the room and they got a, like, stereotype who they were gonna play so you could be for example-, like later when we switched I got to be Tigger. And Tigger he’s like this super energy, lots of ideas, lots of goals, you’re like-, the confidence is on top and I got to go in and then I was-, then you got to decide some, you know I’m like… I aspired to be a celebrity in Hollywood, I was gonna marry rich I was gonna win the Nobel prize in literature and I was gonna… be very beautiful, and you know, like that…

Yeah, many and…

Yeah, many and big and broad and… like loads of energy and just jumping up and down on the chair like, you know and we really got to try that Tigger there and then we have Piglet who is… so very shy and doesn’t know what he wants and almost br-, you know and then there’s Eeyore who’s so very negative so you got this like, you got this, the first, like, contact you got to coach on your own was ve-, eh, some kind of extreme form of something which I thought… didn’t feel very good. I think that I-, in hindsight, I thought it doesn’t feel very good afterwards, for me.

Mhm. It’s a bit of acting in there too…?

Yeah. Acting was not a problem the problem was just with coaching, like coaching that partic-, I felt that the coaching of a person like that who’s like… you know in the outer edges is pretty hard.

Yes.

And I got this like Piglet who was like: I don’t know, on all the questions and you were like: hmm… yep! And then you like have to try to get around that somehow and it was really hard and it didn’t feel good afterwards, for me.

Mhm.

Then you got a new chance and you got to coach a real person, I though-, that went… well, to say that it went well is-, like, what is it that-, how are things when something goes well? Well
that’s not clear but at the same time it felt so much better, it felt like I… I got what I wanted out
of thi-, the person who I coached got what they were supposed to like, we followed all the bread
clumps and you know and all these methods we’ve le-, I had learned and it felt like I know this,
this will work out fine.
Mhm.
And then it kinda felt like you actually appreciated that you got this extreme person first and got
to really fail with them one time because after that you got a much simpler but still hard task at
the same time because suddenly there’s this real person who you have to think differently with,
like, you know.
It was a pretty particular case you got too.
Yes.
Yes. Eh, tell me. What-, what happened…?
Well, later with-, you mean at the actual coaching? With or-?
Yes, exactly.
Yes.
Because it was easier but it was still…?
Yes! But no, I got this-, this was in between. First we got this like, Winnie the Pooh stereotype.
Mhm, right.
Then we got to coach each other in the group.
Okay.
And that was what felt so good.
Yes, okay! Yes, okay! Now I understand.
So that’s when I got [name] from a north European country and got to like coach her/him for
rea-, like, really like, it wasn’t just a made up case cause it was her/him, personally like, you
know. And that was really really nice and like, really… felt good afterwards and s/he thought so
too so that was really fun.
Mhm.
But then as I said we got these-, we were doing the practical part in the sch-, eh upper secondary
school. Eh… and there I was handed, I guess you could say, a girl/boy who… well, thought it
was so incredibly tough so s/he couldn’t even stay with us when we had… briefings and… s/he
didn’t want to speak English and… s/he was so shy that when we discuss-, like, when we talked
s/he didn’t look me in the eye and avoided eye contact and… very guarded. At the same time I
thought we got a very nice connection already and I thought that was very nice because before
this you were very worried and I got assigned with her/him and then I just: oh man, like, this will
not end well and you know. But then got this really nice connection I thought and that’s like…
we foun-, but like, because then it was like but you need to find a person like th-, it might be
even more important with someone who is a little bit confident and autonomous… then you
might not need to have a really sta-, as strong a connection but here we did get this, like, a little
relationship pretty quickly somehow. We only had five minutes to do this…
Mhm.
So I thought it was really nice and really important and it felt like-, and then instantly if felt much
better that you were… we also got this goal they had so that you could think a bit about, like…
how you wanted, eh, what you wanted to get-, kind of questions to ask and how you would try
moving it forward you know.
Mhm.
And it was nice to have that relationship, is what I thought the goal had like-, that was not the
important thing for that particular person who I coached it was more the connection because I
think that this would’ve been extremely tough with this particular person… to not have had any
connection before this because I think s/he would have clamped up and become very shy but I
think you could tell the difference now, day two yeah well then it was more like, there s/he-,
then it was eye contact from the start and we talked quite openly and there was this pleasant
atmosphere and stuff right from the start so I thought that it was… then you could tell the
difference that you had gotten just those short five minutes before and that made that person
feel more safe and I thought that was really important.

Mhm.

But then there was this very special coaching session or session, it wasn’t really… in that s/he
chose… such an incredibly personal goal, or like, a personal dream. Eh, and when s/he’s this
insecure in perhaps both herself/himself and what others think and a little… well, unstable c-,
you could say perhaps… eh, then… it’s very difficult to take on such a personal goal without
trampling straight down into that quagmire of psychology. So I suppose it was that line which I
thought was so incredibly difficult to stick to and even so I thought I did that pretty well, I
thought that… s/he mentioned a couple of things and I instantly jumped in the completely
different direction and just: uh huh, but what do you think about this, and really tried to avoid
this sentimental and tried to… keep to, like, focus forward and like… we managed to-, s/he
didn’t have any other goals other than to become more confi-, or, become better at talking to
people, you know.

Mhm.

And we managed to tone down, like, to a specific goal which was to be able talk in front of the
whole class, we came up with some different… thoughts about what could be a first step to get
there you know like practicing with smaller groups and then successively make them a bit bigger
and to be able to do that then maybe you need to talk to teachers… or just get friends to join too
who you-, because a-, there wasn’t anyone who knew about this, a bit about how s/he thought,
how s/he felt… so then… s/he could’ve told some friends who could’ve been able to support
her/him and encourage her/him and helped her/him because they don’t think s/he’s shy and I
didn’t think so either, that’s not what this is about.

No.

The problem was also that when we started to pick it all apart the issue perhaps wasn’t really that
s/he is shy when talking but maybe more the confi-, you know and self-confidence and self-
esteeem and… all of that. [inaudible ca 42:35] you start to unravel stuff like that then it’s very hard
to keep to coaching, I thought, at the same time I also thought that it still went pretty well, when
I thought it through in hindsight I think in some way that I… I did keep myself on the line of
coaching as well as I could but I also think-, like, I think that for her/him… this I understood in
hindsight, the thing was that his/her friend were with us in the same room…

Mhm.

And s/he hadn’t shared this with his/her friend previously and then suddenly it all became too
much, it was like it you know… well, then s/he had to show to-, that s/he was vulnerable to
her/his friend and that was too tough you know, so… so I tried to-, and then I had to
completely step out of the role of the coach and just try to like… we ended it there when we-, I
ultimately said that like, no but if you feel like you think this is too much, that it doesn’t feel
good then I don’t think we should continue.

No.

Eh, and then you had to step into the role, you know like: we-, I hope that you understand that
the thought with this was not to open up old wounds, that is not why we are here and…

No.

And that’s when you completely had to let go of the role of the coach and just: I think that
you’ve been incredibly brave. Eh, I also feel like you’ve opened yourself up to me, I think that is
amazing of you and here you are telling me that you’re shy-, like, you had to more like… finish
up with encouragement and try, you know, to cheer him/her up instead, because… well, you
couldn’t really keep up… the coaching because then it was more about repairing a little, try to
make him/her feel better.

Mhm.
Well but I still didn’t think that it felt good af-, immediately afterwards. Because like, to have made someone cry on their first coach session feels a bit so-so.

Yes.

At the same time it didn’t feel terrible it was more just the fact that s/he… cried, other than that it felt you know totally okay [inaudible 44:09] then when we were about to leave s/he came up to me, or I went up to him/her and just asked him/her how it felt and you know and… like, if s/he felt okay and then s/he was very like: oh man, I’m sorry I cried and it wa-, I was like: no you don’t have to apologize! If I-, you felt like I pushed you-, if I pushed you too hard then I’m really sorry and I hope it-, like, you know. But s/he didn’t think so and… and s/he gave me biscuits which s/he had brought which we had talked about the day before… so yeah I got biscuits and then I was just like well thank you very much and s/he was like can I give you a hug as thanks? So it felt like-, and I was like of course you can! And then it kinda felt like you… got a little confirmation that this didn’t go as badly as you might… you always expect the worst you know. Wha-, you really do. If someone started to cry you draw those parallels incredibly far pret-, like pretty quickly that, that those-, that they-, you know that you have done something to re-, have destroyed this person’s life and that it will affect them for a long time, like that’s how it goes you know.

[Laughs] Yes, I understand, I understand.

Yeah. But it felt then and there like my worries truly disappeared and… you know, I think that s/he-, an-, because then you started with the, when you start talking, you can discuss with this person who was a-, o-… what's it called, observer? Eh, because my-, like, who sat with me you got to discuss: did you think that I asked too many questions or what was it… and when we discussed we didn’t really come to any conclusions either but, I think it was just about that person being so incredibly sensitive.

Mhm.

But I still thought that it felt like you know, well, not completely fine but… I spoke with both [name] and with [Respondent 1] and with [name] about it and they all pretty much agreed that well, sure, absolutely, it’s never really fun when someone’s crying but at the same time… if this is some-, a-, like something you’re gonna continue with and have additional coachi-, like coaching-, occasions then maybe this is the kind of thing that has to happen to a person like this for them to be able to move forward.

Mhm.

And I kinda feel that in hindsight it really feels like eh… like when I think back I really feel like s/he did get a-, s/he has a goal maybe, now, hopefully and that s/he feels comfortable having that goal.

Mhm.

S/he has some course of actions to get there… since his/her friend was there and, and s/he was forced to tell his/her friend and now his/her friend knows about it and can support him/her too, so I think that… it actually will-, could lead to something positive, that we’ve like in some way… burst this particular little bubble at least.

Mhm! Ehm… when you think back on, on this course now generally…

Yes.

… is there something you would want to change or something you would have done differently now that you… no-, now that you know how everything went and how things work?

Mhm. Good question… You know for me, since this was my first time I kinda don’t have anything to compare it to at the moment really an-, and I feel like my head is still kinda you know in the middle of it all and you had to say good bye to everyone this morning and-, well you know like still a little like… you haven’t had the time to process it either but I feel like as of right now I don’t think I would change anything, like in particular, I don’t think and… at the time, as I said, I didn’t feel like the layout was particularly you know very good in that you were faced with this extreme stereotyp-, like this stereotype right away but in hindsight you can truly see why and
then it suddenly feels like it was a good idea so yeah… hrm, well, there was maybe this one thing that was… a bit high of a threshold and perhaps for me-, I speak English well but I’m not very used to this world but then there were some who were completely new at-, in the same way but didn’t know English, eh, because we had a few who had a really hard time with the English, especially one. So I think the threshold was pretty hi-, it was a pretty high threshold to start at… but at the same time it is supposed to be like that in a train-, this kind of training course.

Mhm.
So yeah that’s the one thing I suppose I felt like… like I thought it was tough perhaps one or two times that I didn’t quite understand, like… but they were also incredibly open in my opinion in that-, you know kinda like: ask questions, we’ll explain again and… they really tried to ma-, make it work.

Mhm.
So well yeah… I didn’t feel like it was chaos and catastrophic that I didn’t understand anything or that I didn’t have the courage to speak up about it but… sometimes it might have moved forward a bit too quickly but at the same time I do understand why we do it like that.

Mhm. Would you say that this was a successful course, did it go well?
Oh, yes!
Mhm.
Oh, yes.
In what way?
[Inaudible, ca 48:32]
[Laughs]
I think that I-, hrm, you know like when you’ve discussed with others about what expectations they had and what kind of goals you’ve had during, during the course like, about what this whole exchange I feel like everything has you know been achieved… eh… I feel like, you know, a part-, a big part has was this international exchange, I think we accomplished that more than well because I think there was a fantastic mix of people. You don’t connect with everyone equally but I didn’t feel like there were anyone who couldn-, you know which I couldn’t handle either so there was this wonderful mix of people: different ages, different backgrounds and thoughts and ideas but at the same time a very wonderful group so yeah the, the international exchange felt for me like it was a successful part in all of this… and I really think that the training course… made me get more experience since I didn’t have any knowledge about it at all. But it’s still somewhat up in the clouds because I truly believe that this is a… a process, like, you have to do it several times, you have to test it out, you have to like start thinking along these lines, perhaps when you’ve got a… like, in my new job then yeah, I might not need to have a you know coaching session but you might [inaudible, ca 49:45] start to think a little in these terms, how do you ask questions or what do you try to lead the conversation or, well, you know. So yeah I think you-, you have to try it out a little too before you truly can evaluate the course you know, because…
I’m very satisfied at this moment with what this has given me and the breadth you’ve gained, I think, in different things.
Mhm.
Ehm… so it feels very good at this moment but as I said I really think that you’ll also know more when you have some experience.
Mhm.
One thing I might think like you know, well yeah this is something you… could change a little was that I personally thought it was very fun with all this that you got to play a role and you got to hold presentations and all that…
Mhm.
But at the same time it felt like a bit of tomfoolery… and the question is… what do you-, like, is that what you want to achieve, is it a part of the teambuilding? Well fine then, perhaps the result’s not that important. But at the same time it became kinda like, you know… some went all
in and you tried to do a good job and some were just: well, it’s all just a game and did-, like, something like that, you know...

**Different levels of ambition.**

Yes.

*Mhm.*

And in this in particular it became so obvious because you could just slope-, like, in some other way. Like, you could slope off and… as I said, I thought that this was very successful and I think it was jus-, good just as it was. I guess perhaps the only thing was that there were quite a lot of these, but at the same time it’s a nice break since I-, you wouldn’t have had the energy for a whole day with only like lectures so I really like this thing where you get to discuss with each other and I thought it was really good that… the discussions you had were very nice, we sat around these tables where we had different big posters, I thought those were very, like, inspiring to the discussion and… several who engaged themselves and really… took on the question and didn’t just sit and talk about something else so the partici-, participants were very goal-oriented, in my opinion. So I think lots of things were good but like I said I suppose there were like some of it which led to a bit of tomfoolery and when you didn’t have a question to get the answer to or to really discuss so you just did whatever.

*Mhm. Eh, what are except-, your, except-, expectations here with the organisation then?*

Well, I became hooked kinda like I always become, that’s what happened so, so now I’ve already been at this thing and hopefully will be able to do two projects next summer as Youth Exchanges.

*Mhm, mhm.*

Where I will hopefully tag along as group leader one time to a south European country and one time to eh, an east European country, eh… what’s it called in Swedish? [Name of country], [Name of country]? Yes, [Name of country], I’d say.

Yes.

Yes, *I think so.*

[Both laugh]

Yes.

Yes.

Yes. So in the blink of an eye I’ve joined them properly because in one way it was like: yeah, well, purely hypothetically I didn’t have to… eh… do anything more, this could all be over you know, like, so the thought was that I were supposed to take this course, the end.

*Mhm.*

But I truly feel that… I like much of what they’re doing, but I’m still, in my opinion, to unfamiliar with what it means and what… I-, I’ve understood the foundations, I’ve grasped what the as-, the organization stands for. I’ve just not understood how that manifests-, like, how the organization presents itself during the course of the year, you could say, you know.

*Mhm. mhm.*

Eeh, so yeah I guess the expectations you get, well, like I said, to-, to be able to be a part of and implement these… Youth Exchanges and to get support in that and that I believe-, we did discuss this [inaudible ca 53:11] already that… it feels good. Eeh and later on the-, you know hopefully since I work-, actually will work some with one of the organisation leaders you’ll probably get a pretty good contact with it and gain better knowledge too in what… because that’s something I hope to get to know… a bit of how you know the organization works and manifests itself. Maybe not really like, well, the board work but something more like: what does it mean to be a part of this? What do you do on the regular? You know.

*Mhm. Mhm. Mhm. Exactly, but now you’ve seen a, a part of it all.*

Yes.

*Wha-, what’s the value in this?*
To be a part of the organisation?
Yes, in what they do. Like this course… for example. Or, well, of this… of this which you’ve told me about, about the organization and their main pillars.
Well. Eh… I think… if you just look at this like you know organization-, my view of the organization as a whole.
Mhm.
Then I think that… it’s also like you know what’s the word you used? Civic…?
Civic participation.
Yes, exactly. And the positive in this, that they try to get youths to involve themselves, to, like I said contri-, it’s okay to be different, it-, you should be brave and, well you know, those are all main pillars and… I think that more things like that are needed to be able to make a bett-, an even better climate than we have because it’s… even though I think we have a somewhat good climate in Sweden if you compare it to other countries I still think there are several parts to work on.
Mhm.
Eh, and I think that I-, eh… organizations such as the organisation can change people’s lives and it is a bit exciting even when just talking a little bit about [Respondent 3] with… that s/he him/herself says that this was some kind of, like, s/he hasn’t used those word him/herself but you kinda understand it as to that this was some kind of turning point, this was a bit-, it has been important to him/her to get her/himself on the right track, or what s/he thinks is a better track at least.
Mhm.
Ehm, and I truly believe that it can make-, and I also think that it’s, it’s sad that the organization is so small but at the same time I-, it’s like it’s-, it does grow, that’s how it is you know. But you feel like it’s such a good organisation that everyone or additional people need to know about it and…
Mhm.
… could be you know an opportunity to additional people because we-, yeah, I honestly do think that it stands for good things and… I think it-
Is it unique or is it-, do you think it’s the same as the Red Cross?
Like, for me personally the organisation is a bit… more modern. The Red Cross sadly has the mark that it’s a bit… extinct, like, at least I think that’s the view of it I have personally and the one you… that a-, like, the youths at least in my home-, like from my town. There’s obv-, no youth who’d join the Red Cross, like, it sound so ex-, like [inaudible, ca 55:58] and dull.
[laughs]
Well that’s how it is. But at the same time they’re doing lots of good stuff and… [inaudible ca 56:05] they’re arranging lots of language cafés which are incredibly interesting and… they do lots of nice things, absolutely. But it sounds so extinct.
Mhm.
Yeah. So kinda like how we talked about doing Erasmus [inaudible ca 56:18] I think that the Red Cross could really use a makeover an…
Yes. Kinda like-, you think it’s perhaps more about the brand...
Yes.
… brand part of it all rather than the activity?
Yes. And I think it’s interesting that in this organization it-, the view I’ve got is that they base themselves quite a lot on the youths. To make-, you know to, get them to grow, well, to get them to grow in and of themselves, like, they are… they are the ones who influence the development, there won’t be somebody who shows up and, you know, tell them how it’s done and what they’re supposed to do all the time so it feels like it’s a pretty open organisation where there’s a lot of… you encourage them to take control and do it themselves, like, you know, in some way.
Mhm, mhm.
But I think I have a somewhat incomplete view of it... since this is like the only thing I have as a reference.

Mhm, yes, I understand. Mhm. Eh, I have this one final question and you can say stop if you think it's too personal... eh... how do you see yourself, in terms of identity? Have you felt, do you feel like, do you have a strong Swedish identity? Or do you feel like a European or have you reflected anything along those terms?

Ooh, nice question!

Yes. [Laughs]

Well, in some way I've kinda got you know like... I would see-, say, I do feel Swedish to a large extent.

Mhm.

But I would perhaps rather say that I feel more almost like... m-, I wouldn't say European either, more like a human.

Mhm.

Like, I think that... the more you learn about others, the more you meet from different countries, different cultures, different backgrounds you realize that you truly are so very similar. And to me it really gives me a-, you know a, not just-, like, the idea with this project to give you a European you know more than you to feel like a European and well, you do, but at the same time I feel like it goes beyond that too.

Mhm.

Like, I think it goes further beyond, that you... because I feel like... I have so much o-, stuff which, which I like, and which I think are interesting which are not typically Swedish.

Mhm.

You know like, I'm trying to learn Arabic, because a-, because I like that you know, that culture...

[Laughs]

That I...

Yes.

... that I wa-, suddenly, you know, got to learn a Turkish dance, I got to learn how to s-, a few words in F-, in Greek-, like you, you gather bits and pieces here and there which I think are interesting and that's what I think of as Swedish.

Mhm.

But I don't think others perhaps think that-, like... that might not be the view people have of Sweden but to me that’s what I think of as Sweden.

Mhm, mhm.

In some way.

Mhm. Interesting. Eh, thank you very much for, for your answers I will [inaudible ca 58:51] ehm...

[The recording stops at 58:54]

3.5 Respondent 5

Ehm, as you know I working in a research project called Catch-EyoU which has been founded by the European Commission eh, and i-, it is aiming to study youth, eh, political engagement and the [inaudible ca 00:19] across Europe. Eh, and this sub study is an ethnographic study where we do observations and interviews with certain organizations eh, so the organisation is a part of this study in Sweden, eh, and eh, eh, this sub project is aiming to explore how youth engagement and [inaudible ca 00:43] can work in practice. Eh, yep!

Oh yeah. Good.

[Laughter] And this interview, ehm, will-, eh, it's aiming to get a pri-, a better picture of how, eh, youth work and youth organizations, eh, work in practice and it will focus on your engagement in the organisation and your experience as a member of the organisation.

[Inaudible ca 01:11]

Yeah. Eh, and before we start I would just like to remind you that your particip-, your participation I voluntary and you can stop the interview or skip questions, eh, if you don’t want to answer them, ehm... eh, and you answer
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will be confidential and the recording will be destroyed once the project has ended, eh, and we will report the result anonymously without mentioning name or position...

Okay.

Yeah. So any questions so far?

Oh that’s okay. That’s fine.

Yeah. Eh… so, can you tell me how, how did you, eh, become engaged in this organization?

How? Actually I was working, ah, with the municipality and during our work actually project that we-, ah, I’m hired with and somehow so-, sort of joined, ah, project within the organisation and the municipality.

Mm.

And before I get the job for five months actually, I had, ah, practicing of the internships within the municipality and they were-, ah, projects which was implemented during the summertime ah, through municipality with the school, ah, students.

Mm.

So for the trans-, ah, ah, wa-, within that activities that [inaudible ca 02:53], ah, newcomers or immigration students were also involved. And for giving them more information and precisely to know exactly about activities and projects there was a need of a translations of material into their mother tongue.

Mm.

And there I had my [inaudible ca 03:17 because of interrupting conversation in the background] …

Mm.

… and work with this project ah, so far five months and then we built up the trust [inaudible ca 03:29] relations and also prove myself that I can do ah, some activities so that the fate within the framework of the project. That’s why it’s so-, this relations of, ah, working with the municipality [inaudible ca 03:50] ended to have a one year contract with ah, [inaudible ca 03:55]…

Mm.

… and there was a joint, eh, cooperation between the organisation and the integration section of the municipality then I learned about, ah, the organisation and then… since activity was the same, I was involved with some other parts with the the organisation and I got interested be member of the the organisation so it’s-, my work was voluntary work and then I [inaudible ca 04:45] ah, had so much work to do apart from-, on the-, the s-, the municipality work…

Mm.

… then I was interested if my input is useful to have it with other organizations which was the organisation a part of it and I showed my interest and I became member with the organisation.

Okay. Eh, and, what’s your role in the organization right now?

Ah, here in thi-, this, ah…? Actually my role, ah, is not so… crucial…

Mm.

… but, eh, in terms of training or conducting training, workshops, ah, so if they need my help and assistance that as a translator material and also to be a interpreter, ah, within the workshop or trainings I do decide of activities [inaudible ca 05:46]

Okay, mm.

And also sometimes the political discussions between the management about the [inaudible ca 05:56] activities of the project and sometimes we share, ah, ideas, opinions for the betterment and improvement of the project and implementation of [inaudible ca 06:08].

Eh, and if I get it right, you are a part of the European network, you’re working with the network. Can you tell me about the work you do in the network?

So this European network is, ah, kind of international activities within sixteen countries in Europe.

Mm.

And the organisation is a part of it for the betterment of the life or activities of the youth.
Mm.
And there-, so I, ah, do some parts in case of this translations of-, ah, so when-, whenever they need me I will work with them.
Okay. So it's a lot of work with the translation?
Ah, n-, not too much but sometimes when there is a need, yeah.
Yeah. Mm. Ebh… and you told me before we started the interview that you are working with this gender equality project…
Yes.
Eh, and if I got you right, this project is a collaboration between the municipality and the organisation…
Yeah.
… how does it work?
So, ah, so far-, because in the beginning where we got this, ah, we wanted to implement this project a little bit different because, ah, we wanted to, ah, teach the participants of target group, ah, a book, ah, about Sweden. Which is this published and it is for all newcomers and immigrations in whole Sweden.
Mm.
So normally this book is taught, ah, or-, as a-, or given as information to newcomers within the framework of educations or a specific program. But since the situation in, eh, immigration has changed and to the inte-, investigation process takes longer time…
Mm.
… and there was a need for such [inaudible ca 08:26] information for those people that are waiting for their decisions.
Mm.
And we are working with this under the first [inaudible ca 08:35] we tried to implement it a little bit different it means that we wanted t-, to do it by-, by exercises so in training the one of the method is using the exercises so through the exercises we are, ah, ah, transferring this information to the target group.
Mm.
And, first-, for-, to-, ehm, at the beginning we were busy to make the materials, to do research, find out a good, ah, training-, or ah, training, ah, model for-, ah, for the teaching then we, ah, came up with number of, ah, activities or tra-, ah, training exercises…
Mm.
… so that they matched with the gender equality theme and then after that we, ah, had a translation of this. Now the materials are, eh, reading and it is a time of implementation to implement it and see the pilot the first group now is, ah, [inaudible ca 10:06] and we are working on implementing this material on them…
Mm.
... and definitely, this is a testing period and after that when we knew each and everything we can make it a precise plan for the next groups.
Okay. Ebh… so when you're working, are you working for the organisation or as a-, as a member of the organisation or are you working for the municipality?
I work for the municipality - [inaudible ca 10:41].
Eh, okay. Eb, and what's the role of the organisation in this project?
Ah, actually, we as a, mm, municipality people we work with this material, prepare that and also the organisation for the implementation they're helping us. We have [Respondent 1] as an instructor, s/he is helping us and I'm as a translator making this project happen.
Yeah, okay. Mm.
So the-, [Respondent 1], ah, activity is also voluntary based.
Ah, okay.
Yeah.
Yeah.
Ah, not-, s/he’s [inaudible ca 11:37]

But you are paid by the municipality…
Yeah, municipality.
… but you’re also a member of the organisation…?
Ah, I get the-, my salary from the project.

Mm.

Yeah.

Yes, mm. Ebm, and this project is, eh, quite divergent from other projects that the organisation are doing because…
Oh yeah.
… these people are adults, harol-, bow-, how old are they?
Ah, it’s-, so from [inaudible ca 12:06] years or above.

Ebm… and… what other kinds of projects have you been involved in? Have you been involved in other pra-, other projects where you have worked specifically for the organisation?
Ah, so the other project I was not so involved with the implementation of the project…

Mm.

… but, ah, so in order to be a good, ah, reserve for the n-, organization, ah, I do my best sin-, since all the activities are with youngsters and, ah, just-, I went for, ah, and participated with some of the trainings…

Mm.

… that the organisation are, ah, conducting so I like to learn the methods, ah, and also for the insight that they are conducting the training I participate and also has a representing the organisation abroad so I go and participate for one side to gain the knowledge about the projects, ah, Erasmus for example [inaudible ca 13:19]. Ah, so I just go and gain knowledge to be a good member for the future.

Okay, I see. Ebm, what’s good with the organisation? Why this organisation? [Laugh]

Actually, you know, when you look at the organisation and look to the philosophy of, eh, establishment of this organization you see that there is a sense of aim that I have behind the-, this project. They-, there-, there was initiative of the two people…

Mm.

… that they realized the need for helping youth or youngsters…

Mm.

… and this made them to think about making an organization and since they did it voluntary and they want-, or make people to feel good about themselves they put their organization of the name…

Mm.

… so the organisation is, it’s a… combination of different parts where they call it corner stone and they have put the corner stone-, whole aim is that somebody when there are involving themselves with the organisation they learn how to first become the best version of themselves and then help others to become the best version of themselves.

Mm. Eb, and how do you feel when you eb, engage in these activities, eh, organized by the organisation?
Ah, first of all I feel myself young…

Mm. [Both laugh]

… it’s a work between youngsters and it’s a good opportunity to help people so the experience, the knowledge that we have gained through our life…

Mm.

… we wanted to put to practice on how [inaudible ca 15:38] true to what we have in our [inaudible ca 15:41].

Mm. Mm, eh, do you perceive it as active citizenship?

Yes because, you know, ah, when I came here, ah, I noticed that there are many areas that if some personal ones to, ah, use it we can have our [inaudible ca 16:08].
Mm.
So I think as a start, for me it's the best place to feel myself as an active citizens here.
Mm.
So then future I do not know what kind of activity or can I do for feeling more happy and con-, confident.
Mm.
Ah, but for the time being yes. By doing this activity I feel an active member of the society.
Yeah. Mm… eb, what do you think make the organisation successful? Or do you perceive the organisation as a successful youth organization?
Their honesty their hardworking and the vision that they set for their self, I see that most of the time that they do voluntary work and they are not thinking about the a-, other aspects, the financial aspects of it but more concentrated on delivery of the services for the betterment of the youth organizations [inaudible ca 17:29].
Yeah, I see. Ehm… eb, can you give me an example, eb, of a time when you felt like your work was making an impact on-, on young people?
Actually, ah, there was a camping activities with youngsters last year in one municipality…
Mm.
… and there was-. And there-, ah, so school, ah, students were there and we taught them how they come-, ah, they-, their dreams come true…
Mm.
… and those activities that we did it on the-, in real life we experienced that our work pays of and, eh, so the students reached to their targets and end of the project whatever that they said [inaudible ca 20:02-20:04] so it was a good feeling and I realized that it was a good [inaudible ca 20:08].
Yeah. [Laughs] Ehm, have your work, eb, in the organisation contributed to any political or, eb, civic participation among young people in [inaudible ca 20:24]?
So far no because, ah, mostly I was busy with my old project…
Mm.
… but just only wherever there was a need or [inaudible ca 20:34] help so I did it but in the future definitely I intend to be more in part of their activities.
Mm. Mm. Ehm, [inaudible ca 20:53] go back to, eb, to that youth camp you talked about last year, eb, what kinds of young people participated in-, in that camp?
What kind of the students or the young people?
Yeah.
Mostly th-, there’s students from, ah, school.
From s-, from the school?
School, yeah.
Okay. Yeah.
Because there was a summertime and student had time to come and participate on that youth camp…
Mm.
… and also it was designed for student, school student.
Mm. So they had to apply to….?
Actually tha-, th-, th-, they-, yeah, they applied we an-, we had announcement we-, we sent out the materials, ah, [inaudible ca 21:37] information through internet, through website [inaudible ca 21:41] so, eh, municipality and also to [inaudible ca 21:44] schools [inaudible ca 21:46-21:48] they applied.
Okay.
So we had a number of th-, the participants and when the time came and there-, there was a summer, ah, holiday they came and participated on that project.
Mm.
Yeah.

_Eh, and is it a common way to recruit, eh, participants to d-, to projects to-, to let them apply or bow-, how do you recruit people to your projects, how do you find them?_ [inaudible ca 22:17]

Ah, so we-, on that paper we explained to them that we have a [inaudible ca 22:20] in municipality then they can-, they can go and fill the form which we already put, ah, put it on the net…

_Mm._

… so they could write their names and just, ah, part of the, ah, games that they were interested…

_Mm._

… and those people that they registered for the youth camp so we-, we had their list and then contacted them and invited them to come and participate.

_I see. Eh, so the camp was a collaboration with the municipality as well?_ [inaudible ca 22:20]

_Oh yeah._

_Yeah, mm. Eh, bow would you describe the leadership and [inaudible ca 23:00] of, eh, the organisation?_ [inaudible ca 22:20]

_Actually the management they are good all the times there are, ah, after or looking to, ah, to broaden, to wider their activities…_ [inaudible ca 22:20]

_Mm._

… so always they are thinking that… ah, there should be some sort of activity to make-, or change the life of the youths and their goal that they set for them they hardly work on that and they’re on the way to reach to their goal so the vision that I have and also the goal that I have they always are busy to make it happen and so by hard work by-, by, ah, knowledge and contribution and the relations that they are establishing so I think that the capacity that they have can future that there will be success they will have more projects to implement._

_Okay. Do you feel, eh, do you feel that you are a part of the management can you affect the decisions…_ [inaudible ca 23:00]

_Ah, I feel-, I feel part of it and even I have a proposal to be part of the management but since, ah, it is the beginning and I do not see much, ah, a role of mine in the management engagement because now it’s a small organizations and these, eh, two guys they can manage it…_ [inaudible ca 23:00]

_Mm._

… but whenever there’s a need so of the third person or another person then definitely I will be one of the person with the management.

_Mm. Eh…_ [inaudible ca 23:00]

_Mm. Eh, and as you said before, eh, you’re working a lot with Europe if I get you right? I work…?_ [inaudible ca 23:00]

_With Europe. The European Union_

_Just for getting the knowledge of trai-, participating in trainings that they offer._

_Yeah, okay. So just for the funs?_ [Laughter]

_Both, it’s for funs and also for gaining experience._

_Yeah, okay._

_Because, ah, so, I have my whole experience from the Asian countries not the [inaudible ca 23:00]_ [Phone rings 23:00]

_Sorry. [Answers phone]. [Hangs up] I’m sorry._

_No problem. So the-, all experience that I have…_ [Phone rings 23:00]

_Mm._

… it’s all related to the Asian countries…

_Mm._

… these areas I know better about the project implementation and way of work [inaudible ca 23:00]. But here, with the cultures-, of European cultures [inaudible ca 23:00] I prefer to start from the culture knowing the-, the different people and sort of the training that they’re
interested in because the training methods or the way that they’re handled is different definitely because of the religion, the culture, all-, all those backgrounds completely different…

Yeah.

… so in order to work with the European youths it’s better to know the culture they’re from so that you can be better at their service.

Mm. And what’s the benefit with working with-, because you’re collaborating with organizations from different part of Europe eh, what-, what’s the benefit doing that? [Inaudible ca 27:48]

Actually the benefit I think personally is they’re bringing the youths closer…

Mm.

… and make them to understand each other better so to have a better collaboration and better contact and close contact with each other and also working, ah, activities together so sharing the information, sharing the id-, ideas and experience so from one side that it transfers knowledge to the youth from the other side that they are [inaudible ca 28:25] them with the close relations or, ah, activities or-, so that they are feeling closer and easily have conta-, access with each other and help each other.

Mm. Eh, and what’s-, what’s the challenges? [Laughter]

Definitely sometimes is does not work it needs a lot of patience, ah, so that something can [inaudible ca 28:55]. It takes time but the result will be better…

Mm.

… like for example that-, the working systems in Sweden is different from the working system in other countries the chain of hierarchy fra-, from other countries and the chay-, chain of hierarchy here are different because there’s-, here in Sweden it’s a friendly environment yeah the decisions everybody has their input in the decisions…

Mm.

… definitely it takes more time to come up with a decision but when the decision is made there will be a concrete and a very good reason decisions…

Mm, mm.

… so that’s why I’m thinking this is better.

Yes. Ehm… do you think your organization, eh, is affected by the political uncertainty [inaudible ca 29:56] the European Union in any way?

Ah, s-, definitely any project when it is in place there are many factors behind…

Mm.

… ah, tha-, the-, it is of political or [inaudible ca 30:15] social or any other reasons which is behind it is but as our organization has our people that we are working with [inaudible ca 30:24] youngsters since our aim is very sincere and we want people to benefit from our services for us it doesn’t make sense either it is a political or other issues but our aim is to work with the youngsters, to be at their service and so-, try our best to, ah, be o-, ah, po-, positive or have a positive input…

Mm.

… with their activities. Does it affect, eh, European network? The work in the network?

I don’t think so that it will affect but, ah… still… somehow, yeah. It [inaudible ca 31:17]…

Mm.

But not big [inaudible ca 31:20]. It’s not that big a issue?

No. [Long silence]

Yeah, I think that’s all I had.

[Both laugh]

[Inaudible 31:42]

Thank you very much. Do you have…
You’re welcome.
… any questions to me?
Ah, no, especially-, but just only about this, ah, project that you’re, ah, working on…
Mm?
… how would that end with benefit this organization…
Ehm.
… so would it help to eh, ah, close the organization to their ai-, aim in some sort of way for example to having access with the other, ah, stakeholders and, ah…
Yeah. Or… ehm, we hope… for, eh… to provide, eh… policy recommendations to policy makers, eh, at a national and at a European level eh, to stimulate, eh, youth engagement so that’s the, eh, one part or one vision eh, but of course we also have a scientific mission eh, to build knowledge about eh, why and how young people engage.
Mhm.
Yeah. And this sub study will, eh, result, eh, in of course a report which will be, eh, compiled with other, eh, national reports, a cross national report and this report will be, ehm, available as a blue paper we call it.
Mm.
Eh, so it’s like a summary of the key findings and/or recommendations, eh, and this is just one part of, eh, ten sub projects, eh, but its specific focus is on-, eh, on how-, a-, a bottom up perspective how do, eh, do organizations, eh, work with young people, what challenges do they face and what-, what can we do, eh, to-, to stimulate this [inaudible 34:00].
Mhm.
Yeah.
[Inaudible 34:02].
Yeah. [Laughter]
[Inaudible ca 34:06-34:08] with your projects will have the-, this type of organization which rarely work for the youngsters and so-, sort of the trust is built because they-, these organization are quite new…
Mm.
…and they need to stand on their feet.
Mm.
But if at the beginning that they are-, they cannot have any help and support then [inaudible ca 34:33-34:34] definitely they will [inaudible ca 34:36] stand on their [inaudible ca 34:38-34:40] they will not be able to offer their services in a way that I want.
Mm.
So definitely the stakeholders will be crucial for these people to have a sort of collaboration and help and support…
Yeah.
… so that they get more and more projects…
Mm.
…and, eh, [inaudible ca 35:03] provide such a opportunity for more people better.
Mm. Yep. Thank you very much.
[Inaudible from 35:14 and forward, speech and laughter mixes with background sound and fiddling with the recorder, recording ends 35:15]
3.6 Respondent 6
[Recording starts]
[Telephones the respondent]
Hi this is [Respondent 6] I can’t-.
[Hangs up]
[The recording stops and resumes ca 00:47]
Yes, exactly!
Yeah, I had it on silent unfortunately so I didn’t hear it ringing I’m truly sorry about that.
Yes, yes, no don-, don’t worry about that.
Yes.
Yes. So, are you at a better place now then?
Well, I’m out and about but I can talk.
Yes. okay.
So feel free to ask, what you’re going to ask.

Alright great. Eeh, yes, I’m going to start with a small presentation about the project, eh…
Yes.
I work with this project called CatchEyoU which researches about the civic participation and political participation amongst youths in the EU.
Yes.
And Sweden is one of eight participating countries.
Mhm.
Eh… and this particular study is a part of, eh, how do I put it, a-, it’s an ethnographic study in which we study different youth initiatives and organizations around Europe.
Yes.
Eh, and this is where the organisation is a part.
Yes.
Plain and simple. Eh, so what we’ve done, eh, is that we have followed the organisation along different activities and then we also interview a number of members in the organization.
Yes.
Ehm, yup. Eh, and before we start with the actual interview I’m just gonna tell you that it will be recorded if that’s okay with you?
Yes.
Eh, we record and then we do this thing called transcription and that means we, eh, write down what has been said on paper and then we destroy the recording.
Okay.
And in this eh, how do I put it, transcript you’ll be anonym-z, anonym-, anonymized so no one will be able to identify you as a person.
Yes.
So you’ll be anonymous. Eh, and yes, if there’s any question that-, that you don’t want or can’t answer we’ll just skip it.
Yes.
Eh, and you’re free to call off the interview whenever you want.
Okay!
Yes. Great, great. Eh, I thought maybe you could start with bow-, how it happened that you became involved with the organisation?
Well, it was because my friend [Respondent 3] you know who’s involved in the organisation needed some additional participants for a project in an east European country and s/he asked me if I wanted to come along.
Mhm.
And, then I felt like you know it seemed like fun so I tagged along. So I… got involved with the organisation on accident I suppose.
Yes. How long have you been, eh, a member?
I’ve been a member… since perhaps May this year?
Mhm, mhm. Ehm… and, eh, was it a youth exchange you attended this first time or what was it?
Yes, it was a youth exchange in north European country as my first project.
Mhm. Have you participated any more after that?
Yes. I went to a south European country eh, this summer also you know…
Mhm.
… for a youth exchange there.
Mhm.
And I was also hired to… be in charge of the food at a youth exchange we had here in Sweden.  
Mhm. Yes right. Eh…
Mhm.
… can you talk a little bit about how these youth exchanges usually work? 
Eh… yeah I could do that… [inaudible ca 04:25]. Eh, it-, like it’s very, very different depending on what kind of youth exchange it is you know, because all youth exchanges has kinda like… a theme they work with.
Mhm.
For example in the north European country we had eh, inclusion and eh, exclusion you know. Inclusion and discrimination, kinda. And there’s you have like workshops and discussions on that topic. Eh, we worked a lot on that exchange with artistic aspects and like, expressed ourselves artistically on inclusion and stuff like that so it’s not like you’re attending a lecture like that, it’s more like you learn things through fun activities I would say.
Okay!
Mhm!
Yes. Eh-, and… and what, what’s your experience in, in youth exchanges? How, how is it? [laughs] 
My experience that this is one of the most fantastic things have I personally done in my life and attending a youth exchange has given me friends for life and I’ve got to learn so much I didn’t even eth-, th-, think I would learn.
Mhm. Eh-, how active are you in the organization currently?  
Eh, I wouldn’t say I’m very active, eh, because I live in [city] and the organisation are based in another city.
Mhm.
So I can’t be as active as I would want.
Mhm.
But if I could be more active I would be but I try to do what I can do.
Yes. Eh- and-, and to what extent are-, or is it like specific periods you’re engaged? 
Well it’s like tagging along in projects like I did this summer…
Mhm.
… or like me helping them in projects like I did here. More stuff like that.  
Mhm. Wha-, what are the good things about the organisation? What is it that makes you feel like you want to engage with them?
Oh man… what’s not good? Is what I’d say. [Laughs]
[Laughs]
Eh, no but like I just think it’s a good organization and you feel you know safe when going somewhere. They like know what they’re doing, they feel genuine… eh, and like… there-, there’s a good atmosphere when you go somewhere with them.
Mhm. Eh, what’s your thoughts about the organization’s goal?
Organization what?
The organization’s goals, what eh, what are your thought about that? Wha-, what are they working towards? 
Oh… oh, I-, I thought you meant an organization-, a specific organization called Goal, I was like what?
Oh, no, no! [Laughs] Like the organization’s…
Well the organisation’s…
… The Purpose.  
… vision is that young people should be and feel good.
Mhm.
And I think that is an incredibly good vision and I think it’s tremendously good that we have an or-, or-, organization who commits to young people in that way.
Mhm. Do you feel like there’s something missing or… eh, is it-, if you think about, what separates the organisation from for example the Red Cross…
Eeh… well I’m not that familiar with the Red Cross…
No.
… but… I would say that the organisation organizes more for youths I think.
Mhm.
And like, activities on a completely different level.
Mhm… mhm. Have you eh, previous experiences in other nonprofit initiatives, or…?
Eh, I was very active in a youth organizations eh, between thirtee-, between the ages thirteen and eighteen.
Mhm.
I’ve been in both the board of the association and as secretary, chairman, eh, accouter and I’ve also been in the district association as commissioner.
Mhm. Eh, wha-, what drives you to eh, to engage yourself?
Ooh man, what drives me…? That’s a good question. Like, I-, it drives me to see other people happy.
Mhm.
It drives me, I want to… do something that make others happy, I want to you know… learn things too, it drives me… very much to learn new things.
Mhm. Ehm, has it… do you think [inaudible ca 09:47] been any different if you compare the organisation you were engaged in before and this organisation or is it like the same incentive and…?
Ehm… well… perhaps it’s that the organisation don’t really have any demands, that’s what I would say.
Mhm.
Eh, the other organization have this you know very obvious demand you have to… like, they also don’t have as many, as large activities as the organisation. Sure they had some large activities but I think you also had to pay a bit more for them… you know.
Mhm.
Eh, so I was much more locally involved in the movement but I was also much, much younger at that time… that, eh…
Mhm.
… that’s what I’d say if it seems logical? [laughs]
Yes. Do you think there’s any difference in-, in the way that the organizations are structured…? Is it…
Oh wow, that’s a hard question…
Yes. [Laughs]
Well I suppose I’d say like… youth-, the other movement is much, much, much larger is what I’d say is the difference the organisation is a relatively small and internal organization.
Mhm. Mhm. How does that affect the commitment? Or is it something that affect the commitment?
I would not say that it affects the commitment.
No.
It all depends on person-, it all depends on the persons in the organizations.
Mhm, mhm.
But there are people who are equally as committed in that organisation as there are in this organisation.
Mhm.
It’s like the people are the core of the commitment.
Mhm… mhm. Which-, what type of youths eh, do you think the organisation aim towards?
I would say that the organisation aim towards youths who hasn’t got as much…
[The call is disconnected ca 12:15]
Oh, it disconnected.
[The recording stops and resumes ca 12:20]
It disconnected…!
Yeah, I suspected that to be the reason. [Laughs]

815
Yes!
Yes. Yes!
Do you have everything set up?
Yes. I have.
Yes. Good.

[Laughs]
Well, I would say that the organisation focuses on people, youths who don’t have that many opportunities might not have a lot, a lot of money, who doesn’t have those opportunities to do such things like traveling abroad, to discover other parts of the EU.

Mhm. Ehm… what, what, what, where’s your part in, in this? Are you someone who works for the organisation, do you see yourself as working toward this group or… how, how do you look at you role in the organisation?
Well I would say that I used to be one of those people who had it tight with money and who didn’t have many opportunities and things like that.

Mhm.
But here and now I would say that I have it pretty good, I live by myself and study and things like that.

Mhm
Eh, so yeah… my role today is to… help youths you know instead.

Mhm. Eh, are you involved anything in the recruitment of youths for these activities which, which the organisation arranges?
Eh, I am not and it’s because eh, they are located in [city] so they focus on people within the region and those parts.

Mhm.
It wouldn’t work that well if I were to recruit people in my city.

No. Eeh, you were recruited via contact, via [Respondent 3]?
Mhm, mhm.
Eh, is this a common way to eh, to recruit youths?
I have absolutely no idea.

No, no. No.
No.

Ehm… what, what would you say about eh, is there any specific issue which you think the organisation … eh, or is there a specific problem which the organisation eh, cover particularly well or where you can see that this…
Can you repeat the question again?

Eh, if, if you feel like or experience that the organisation has any particular focus eh, in-, in their work. Earlier we talked about you having participated in some youth exchanges, eh…
Well you know the organisation’s focus is in making youths… to… feel better in and of themselves and be strong and like, grow as people.

Mhm.
And to take more space in the society and you know learn more about the EU.

Mhm. Mhm.
Is what I think I’d say…

Yep.
… is their focus.

Mhm. Ehm… what, what are you thought about the organisation? Do you see it as-, do you see-, how do you see-, b-, do you see it as a form of civic participation or… what, what do they do? Are you engaging in civic participation…
Okay…
… when you’re a part of the organisation?
… I-, I didn’t quite catch that question.

Mhm. Eb…
Mhm. I'm thinking a-, eh, my question is if you feel like what the organisation are doing and what you are doing in the organisation...
Mhm. … if you see it as a form of civic participation?
Yes, definitely!
Mhm. In what way?
Well, it is a commitment, I don’t really know what else to say…
Mhm. The things they do are good for the society and good for the youths within the society.
Mhm. Mhm. Ehm… ehm, and they ha-, work a bit with, with the EU…
Mhm. … ehm… and… what, like, what is your view on that? How big part would you say the EU is of their work in your opinion?
Well if I'm honest I don’t really know how big part the EU is in their work but I’ve mostly been involved in their work-, or projects which revolves around the EU you know since I’ve been traveling-, or you know worked at a youth exchange.
Mhm. Mhm. Eh, but I think that they’ve got a pretty large part eh, with the EU but they also work a lot on a local scale.
Mhm. I'm not familiar with the local part of it at all as I said.
No, so it's more the EU-part you've been in and been a part of an-, and also worked with in-, in eh…
Yes. … in that municipality then. Mhm. Ehm… what-, like what's your view of the governance of, of the organization? Is that something you have eh, you know, given any thought to?
The governance?
Yes. Do you think it's built-, eh built on democracy?
Oh! Yes, I think they’re democratic so…
Mhm. … it is… it is you know… I don’t think I have anything else to say about me thinking that they… they’ve got a democratic governance and it’s a democratic organization.
Mhm. What, in what way?
[Both laugh]
Well that’s where… like just say it’s a democratic organization that’s like, it’s not… like I don-, I don-, I don’t know how I can explain it further other than that they are a democratic organization you know.
Mhm. Mhm.
It-, I-, I don’t know how to explain it.
No, no, alright. [Laughs] Ehm, eh, do you feel like eh, like the organization is critical of and reflecti-, eh, reflecting in and of itself, can you like express opinions and questions, eh, about-, about decisions or activities they arrange...
Yes, yes, I would certainly be able to do that, eh, I don’t really think I’ve felt the need to express like something specific though…
No.
But I… I definitely feel like I can trust them, eh, fully to be able to express myself on a question or reflection or an opinion on something.
Mhm, mhm. Mhm. Ehm, and what-, what's your view then on, on the pedagogy, or this-, they have a specific method.
Mhm.
Mhm. Wha-, is this something you’ve experienced before they’re working with informal learning, is that something you recognize from before or has that been something new for you to work with… Well… informal learning-, like it is in some way experiencing that all the time…

Mhm.

… you learn stuff all the time when you’re not thinking about leaning them but I haven’t experienced it in this way… you know, like, that [inaudible 20:06] attend some kind of course, if you can call it that, I attend some kind of course where I’ll learn stuff through informal learning and I haven’t experienced that before but I think that this whole concept with informal learning is really, really good…

Mhm.

… because I learn an incredible amount things without even being aware that I’m learning them. Mhm. mhm.

And I think that’s really awesome.

Mhm, mhm. Mhm. Well, those were the questions I had, is there any question that has popped up for you?

Eeh, no, not really.

No. Eh, well in that case I’d say I’m quite content…

Yes! Good!

… eh, and would like to thank you very much. Yes!

Yes. Thank you.

Thank you, thank you.

Have a nice day!

You too! Bye, bye.

Thank you.

[the call ends 21:00]

[The recording ends 21:03]
Appendix B (Sweden): Field notes

Inspiration Lab
2017-04-23, Sunday
13.00–16.00

The session is a dissemination activity involving members who have been on youth exchanges organized by the organization via Erasmus+. The event involves seven members, three girls and four boys, and one of the organization leaders. The youths are between 17-20 years old. Some of the members have been engaged in the organization ever since the beginning in 2013, while others are quite new. The person who holds the first presentation tells me that s/he have been involved in just 1-1 and ½ month, and another one tells me that it is his/her very first meeting. Both were snowballed by another organization member.

13.00 The session starts with a coffee break while the organization leader and his/her assistant are struggling with the technical equipment. They are also waiting for one member who have not yet arrived. The members are playing music and are talking comfortably to each other.

13.30-14.00 The late member arrives and the event starts. The organisation leader presents the event and the three training courses in focus. A young participant then enter the stage and begin an enthusiastic presentation about a training course in a South European country. The course focused on facilitation and training, and more specifically how to make people learn by themselves through a specific technique and how to be a ‘facilitator’ of such learning processes. S/he illustrates his/her experience through a workshop, where s/he first asks the audience to turn to their neighbor and discuss cheese. S/he then asks them about their experience, what they thought was difficult and what they have learned. One participant says that the most difficult thing was to keep to the subject and to keep the conversation going. The task aimed to make the participants aware of how to strategically ask a question that make the receiver interested and responsive.

Thereafter the presenter shows a diagram, the x-axis indicate technique – the far left answers and to the far right questions. The y-axis illustrates power and the resource from person to client. S/he then presents five words written on yellow paper in the shape of clouds; ‘Instructing’, ‘Teaching’, ‘Training’, ‘Facilitation’ and ‘Coaching’ and asks the audience to place the words on the diagram where they think they fit. The whole group switch over to English during this task since one of them is from a foreign country and have not learned Swedish completely yet. The group discuss and are placing the words on the diagram, when finished, the presenter asks the group to reflect on the task and they start to speak about different learning processes and what characterize them. The presenter then places the words where they should be, according to what s/he have learned and explained why, and the group then discuss the replacement.

Lastly, the presenter shows a picture of a drawn, giant hamburger, with the word ‘Feedback’ written on the top of the page. S/he then asks the group if they know what feedback and a hamburger have in common. One participant describes it as a way to motivate an answer, for example why do you like hamburger? A basic answers could be – it tastes good, and a more developed answer could be that it is good due to the fresh bread and juicy meat and thirdly a comparative answer between different burgers. One participant says ‘it feeds you’ – in English. Another member then suggests the right answer, that it is about how to give feedback, at first you have to tell what you did like about it - the bottom bread, then what could be improved – the meat including salad to illustrate that the critique has to be constructive, and lastly a reminder.
of what is good – the top bread. The members are then asked to write feedback to the presenter on post-it labels and stick it on the hamburger.

The presentation is ended with a discussion on how to give and receive feedback and a movie with pictures from the training course. The whole presentation is characterized by a relaxed atmosphere where all the members openly discuss their views, tell jokes and laugh together.

14.00-15.00 Two participants, one of the organizations first members, hold the second presentation about a training course in east European country, aiming to strengthen young people’s abilities to find and/or create their own jobs, develop their skills and self-esteem, as well as getting to know other cultures. The presentation starts with an organized dance activity, where the members shall imagine doing a ‘flash mob’. Despite some problem of finding the right sound track, the participants seemed to enjoy the task.

They then continue with a power point presentation about the training course, showing pictures and telling the others about their experience. They are both very enthusiastic about the course, and even though the event was supposed to take place during 9:30-22.00, they stayed together from early in the morning to late in the nights. During the course they applied for jobs, attended job interviews, practiced on writing CVs and personal letters, got lectures on how to start their own enterprise etc. They also had a ‘living library’ where the participants get to meet professionals to learn about their work, experience and situation. Among else there were international night outs, a thematic night were the participants got to learn more about each other’s home countries. They participants were also able to introduce and present their own topics, where the contribution from the organisation and its members was ‘social innovation’, indicating that entrepreneurship and work does not always have to involve paid work.

The presentation was finished by a last interactive task, which I participated in. The activity involved writing a portrait of each other, but just one characteristic. After 20 seconds, the drawing was handed over to another person in the group, which continued to draw another characteristic.

15.00-15.30 The organisation leader presents the last training course which took place in central Europe and was focused on the use of social media. Since none of the original participants were able to come, the presentation get very basic involving a power point but no workshops or activities.

15.30-16.00 The organisation leader ends the session and the participants stayed to chit chat with each other while the leader introduced two new members who will soon participate in another training course.

During coffee breaks before and after the session I got time to talk to some of the members, for example the participant who held the first presentation. S/he was very excited about the organization and told me that it was like being a lonely artist which have discovered an arts club. The organization leader told me about the funding of Erasmus+ and that there were few Swedish organisations who applied for funding, even though it provides great opportunities for youths and youth organizations. S/he said they were like a unicorn, to be Swedish in the context of EU youth programmes is very rare. One explanation according to the leader, is that few organizations know how to apply for the funding.
2017-05-21, Sunday
13.00–16.00
Inspiration Lab & Preparation Meeting
The session is a dissemination activity involving members who have been on training courses organized by the organization via Erasmus+. The event involves three members, one girl and two boys, and one of the organization leaders. The youths are between 17-20 years old, and all of them were attending the meeting 2017-04-23.

13.00 The members are talking to each other about the courses, summer job etc., before the event starts.

13.15-13.30 The session starts with a coffee break consisting of grapes, cookies, buns and lemonade. The members and organization leader are talking to each other, mostly about the data stored by enterprises, public agencies and other organization and the pros and cons with the current law of data access. The members expressed awareness of how it affects for example the prize of flight tickets, which they have experienced during their trips, but also as how it can be an instrument to stop crime.

13.30-14.00 Two participants present a training course they attended in a south European country. The course was about how to teach and lead different groups as for example 10 year old kids. The presentation is conducted in English with the use of a power point, and starts with a name-play where you say your name accompanied by a gesture, the next person will then repeat the name and gesture, and thereafter add their name and a new gesture, which the next person will repeat and add their name and a gesture to. The game helps the respondents to recognize and learn each other’s names as well as creating a comfortable atmosphere.

They then continue with another game in order to get to know each other, where you write four things about yourself in the corners of a paper. One thing should be a lie and the others have to guess which one by writing an ‘X’ behind the false statement. The activity is conducted with pop music in the background. The participants seem to enjoy it, and even though they have met before they learned something new about each other.

The presentation goes on with information about the course, the city and the travel. They presenters are telling us that they had to sleep at the airport and had a budget of 360 euros/each to cover the travel costs. They did not have any problem to stick to the budget, but since it was the host organization’s first time of organizing a training course there were some difficulties regarding the food. It was barely enough to feed the participants and did not included much vegetables. They shared rooms with other participants from different countries, in total 25 youths attended the course.

They thereafter talked about the workshops and what they have learned. The course begun with a lecture and workshop of different kinds of leadership and how to use different techniques dependent on the target group (the techniques were very time-consuming to present, so those who were interested were told to ask them about it after the session). The participants were then placed into different scenarios, using role play, where they should try to teach different targets groups about an issue. One of the presenters chose the target group of 11 year old children, and his/her aim was to teach them how to take care of animals. S/he decided to show them a movie about a girl who was adopted and mistreated, but in the end it turns out that the girl actually was a dog. His/her point was that you should respect animals just as you should respect another human being, but s/he realized that the method s/he used did not work the way s/he intended.
The movie was very sad and gets personal, which made it hard to reconnect to animal rights. However, s/he thought it was very fruitful way to test and learn about different methods.

The course also included studies in mindfulness and meditation, which one of the presenters was very excited about and s/he told us that it contributed to new insights about him/herself and his/her mind.

The presentation ended with a movie made and edited by one of the presenters. They both seemed to have enjoyed their journey, both the course per se as well as to meet new friends. As one told me; one of the best things is that no matter where I go in Europe from now on, I got a cough to sleep on and friend to visit.

14.00-14.30 Coffee break
We sat down and came to discuss the Erasmus+. The organisation’s intention have ever since the start been to work locally, but since it was hard to get funding and attention from the local level they turned to the EU and have now grown enormously internationally, which in turn made local stakeholders interested in their work. They experience that the national agencies and municipal administrations do not dare to put money in small, untested ideas, and that they always are faced with scepticism due to their smallness. But as one activist told me; we might be small, but we are effective and therefore manage to accomplish a lot. It seems hard for new organizations to establish on the national arena. Although Sweden tend to brag about our active civic society it seems to be dominated by old, well-known organizations which “eat” newcomers.

Another thing discussed is why young people do not engage in youth organizations, and one activist told me – you know what the first thing other youths ask me? “How much do you earn?”, and I earn nothing economically but there are so much more in it for me than money. If you do something you love, you will be really good at it, and even if it does not pay from the start, the more you effort you put in it, the more likely it is that your avocation will become your job or lead you to a job. S/he told me about a person s/he known which had worked voluntary for years with dance courses, which lead the person to an occasional job which sooner offered him/her the opportunity to start his/her own enterprise. S/he is now very successful and earn a lot of money, but the intention was never to become rich but to do something s/he loved. I am told that young people in Sweden might be too spoiled, they do not need to worry about a summer job cause their parents will pay for them anyways, most of them have an own car and are able to travel every year. They do not see the value of voluntary work as they do in other countries where they have to work in order to get these things.

14.30-16.00, Preparation meeting
The meeting is a preparation meeting for a youth exchange in east Europe with 36 youths from seven countries. It is held via Skype with youths from different parts of Sweden, from the north to the south. Two girls and two boys between 16-20 years old attend the meeting. One of them lead the meeting. At first it was some struggle with the techniques, and the conversation was disrupted two times during the meeting.

The meeting starts with a presentation of the organization, its history and goal, as well as the five leading words of the organisation. Thereafter follows some practical information, where and how they shall live, how to get there etc. As well as some explanation of words, good to know before travelling:

- NGO – non-governmental organization
Thereafter they talk about how to be a good participant including checking and responding to emails, be prepared, be active and stick to the schedule, be in time, take care of each other, give feedback, take photos and make videos, write a report or diary of the day and be professional and kind to people you meet. The features are developed in a template by the partnership which the organisation is engaged in, though copy righted and not possible to hand out to the researchers. The leader also pin points that they are not there to party or to sightseeing, they will neither be in school. They will have fun but also learn a lot and you are expected to attend the sessions as well as enjoying the country and the human company. S/he also states the importance to be a good representative of the organization – to help and support each other and to actively take part in the activities.

S/he then informs about the mandatory dissemination, which in this case will be solved by making and distributing a movie with interviews with the participants, since it will not be possible to arrange a physical event due to the geographical distance. The conversation are then disrupted and the last parts are discussed on Facebook.

What hits me is the professionalism of the young activist holding the meeting, with just small support from the organization leader which now and then hands him/her post-it notes with important things to mention. But s/he conducts the meeting independently and with self-confidence, and it is obvious that s/he knows every single part of the organization and the upcoming activity, and that s/he will be able to guide them through the journey.

Youth Camp
2017-07-03, Monday
11:00 – 15:30
The formal objective of this camp is to improve young newcomers’ results in school by teaching them different study techniques. But it also has an informal aim to make the participants explore their capability and make them more confident, that they actually dare to talk in front of a group and that they can handle whatever comes their way. The camp is in cooperation with a municipality and takes place day-time Monday-Friday 3/7-7/7.

Eleven youths participate in the session, all asylum seeking boys around 15-16 years old. They have been recruited via the existing networks, for example did one of the organisation leaders previously worked to support them. They have all lived in Sweden for a maximum of two years and talk in general good Swedish. Many of them know each other from before for example by living in the same neighborhood or playing in the same soccer ball team.

The leader talks in Swedish, but with a foreign accent just like the youths. At first it appeared like s/he tried to make fun up them, but later on it was evident that s/he used it as a way to make them feel comfortable by using their way of talking, to make them able to relate to him/her and in the prolonging make them more interested in what s/he tried to teach them. The youths seemed to be very comfortable with the leader, they dare to talk, tell jokes and be themselves.

11:00 Name play; the first person tells their name and makes a movement, the second person repeats the name and movement of the first person and adds their name and a movement. This goes on and on until it reaches the first person again and a whole chain of names and movements are created.
11:20 The leader introduces camp, its focus and how it will be structured. The themes of the week is study technique, planning and health – three keys to success in school. S/he also tells about a group on Facebook where the participants will find relevant information about the camp.

11:30 Get to know each other play; the participants are divided into pairs who shall interview each other, asking questions about name, age, interest etc. The interview lasts for two minutes, then interviewer and respondent switch roles. Thereafter everyone present their partner in front of the group.

12:00 Cooperation activity; the leader places a long rope on the floor and then asks the participants to stand with at least one foot (or hand) on it. Thereafter s/he tells them to line up, firstly length and secondly by date of birth without speaking to each other and without losing contact with the rope. The activity works quite well, though the second one appeared a bit harder since the participants had to communicate by own made sign language. The participants seem to enjoy the activity, although some of them have difficulties to get the instructions.

In the end the youths get to reflect on the aim of the activity, some things that they propose is to get to know each other, train the balance, communication and lastly cooperation. The leader makes a point by saying that “by working together we can improve our learning” and asks the students if they use to study by themselves or if the use to study with friends. Most of them appeared to study alone.

12:05 The participants get to look at one image with a lot of different motives for 45 seconds and try to remember as much as possible. The participants are given notebooks and pencils, but won’t get to use them until the picture is gone. Thereafter they get to write down in the notebook what they saw, in Swedish, their official language or by drawing. They should then tell the group what they have wrote down and if they used any certain technique to remember it. None used specific technique and most of them remembered about ten motives out of 22.

12:15 The leader talks about different ways to remember things, as for example mind maps, s/he then shows the image again, but just half of the time, and asks them to use a mind map to remember what they see. The participants then again got to present what they remembered, and most of them remembered about 20 motives. Thereafter s/he presents an up-coming home task – to read a text available both in Swedish and in the official language of the participants, which s/he will publish on the Facebook group. The participants shall read the text and make a mind map and use it to present the content next session.

12:30 Break with fruits, a lot of talk in the official language of the participants.

13:00 Lunch at a middle-eastern restaurant close by. The leader tells me about his/her and the organization’s experience of culture clashes, both between their partners in the EU, but also between the bureaucracy in Sweden and the work of the organization where s/he experiences an unwillingness to try new things, to be creative and to let the structure be flexible to whatever comes up. S/he feels that many of the financiers and partners want a fixed plan for the work which suppresses the innovation. S/he also tells about their role models, which are all outside Sweden and are operating on a European basis. This makes them diverge from other Swedish youth initiatives which usually are working and focusing nationally and hence are just reproducing a Sweden specific practice. The leader talks once again about the commonalities and differences between young people in Sweden and other parts of Europe, where a general trend is
a decreasing engagement which seems to be even greater in the more wealthy countries due to all already exiting possibilities.

S/he also talks about youth exchanges and the feedback s/he gets from the participants, which are always positive. But it is hard to find and encourage young people to take the chance, many are scared and sometimes want to drop off just before departure. However, they have always managed to make them go somehow. S/he says that one of the greatest things is to see how much they have grown after the exchange and it is not just knowledge from the education that they attain, but it is something more.

14:00 Warm-up activity – the participants shall touch a certain color with a specific body part. Since the room was not so colorful, some tried to touch each other’s’ clothes, which brought up a lot of jokes and laughter.

14:05 Discussion about good places to study – the library, a park etc., the importance to make one thing at a time, not using your phone or listening to music at the same time when you are studying, to take a break – a real break where you do nothing at all to let the brain rest. They also discussed the difference between skimming and reading a text in depth and when you can use these techniques.

14:20 Exercise – post it notes and pencils are handed out and the participants are asked to look at a movie about study technique and at the same time make a mind map about the content. They should then write a summary about it with the support of the mind map till the next day.

14:55 Play in order to make the participants refresh their minds and concentration; the participants are standing in a circle and are asked to look at each other, thereafter to close their eyes and think about two of the persons they just saw. They shall pretend that one of them is a pooping cow and the other one a shield which they shall use to protect themselves with. When the music stops they need to have the shield in front of the cow, otherwise they lose. Since everyone have chosen a different cow and shield the activity got quite turbulent with a lot of laughter and quick moves. It appears to be really appreciated by the youths.

15:00 – The leader shows the Facebook group and talks about the organization and what you can take part in as a member. S/he also asks them to pay the member fee of 50 SEK, which the organization can exchange into 300 SEK through the national youth organization support. The money will be used to organize more activities.

Youth Camp
2017-07-04, Tuesday
13:00 – 15:30
Day two of the youth camp. The session starts a bit later than what is stated in the announcement to give the participant time to conduct their independent task from yesterday.

Nine participants attend the session, one new participant.

One member of the organization participates to support the organization leader during the session. S/he recently arrived from a youth exchange with focus on communication in a south European country and is very excited about his/her experience. S/he told me that it was one of the best thing s/he have done, but that it is hard to explain to others the great worth of it.
13:10 Warm-up activity – "Ha-Ka-Cha"; the participants are standing in a circle, one person begins by saying “HA” while pointing at some person, that person raises his hands and says “KA”. Thereafter the two persons behind him shall as fast as possible “cut” the person in the middle with their hands saying “CHA”, the person who is the last to cut loses. The cut person continues by pointing at another person while he shouts “HA”, and so it goes on until it is only three persons left and the activity ends.

13:20 The leader talks about the importance to read the posts at the Facebook group to be sure to not miss any information. S/he also asks them to like the posts so that s/he will know that they have read and understood the information. Thereafter s/he reminds the participants to fill in the member template and to hand in the tasks in time so s/he gets time to read and give feedback to them.

The leader then presents the next task, a group work with three members in each group. Each group shall find information about a specific Swedish city, create a mind map about it and thereafter present the information to one other group. That group would in turn make a mind map of the presentation and then presents it to the third group, each group will in the end have a mind map of each city. The activity aims to improve the participants’ ability to make presentations and to take in information from presentations by others by using mind maps.

They are allowed to use their phones in order to find information about their city.

It is a relaxed climate and the participants are chatting and joking with each other and with the leader. They seem more comfortable in comparison to yesterday’s session.

13:30 Work in groups, the concentration is high and the participants are taking the task very seriously.

I walk between the groups and ask them questions about what they think about the activity and the camp so far. Most of them seem to enjoy it, even though they have some difficulties with the language. Those who I talk to express a willingness to continue in the organization to meet new people and to improve their skills.

15:30 Presentation of city 1, another group takes notes.
15:40 Presentation of city 2, another group takes notes.
15:45 Presentation of city 3, another group takes notes.

The participants listen carefully to each other and show a great respect.

15:55 End of session, information about the next session which will be about planning.

During this session I note that the understanding of the content of the camp (and about the research) is not that good as I previously thought. Some have been recruited by friends and might not have been provided the original information. Regarding the research I get to explain myself and the study once again.
Inspiration Lab and Preparation Meeting
2017-08-13, Sunday
11:00 – 14.00

Four men, three women, including the two founders of the organization participate in the session as well as their child. The session is a dissemination event of a youth exchange settled in south Europe. The theme of the exchange was communication, and more specifically how you can reach a person by trying to use his/her perspective.

The session is like an interactive event. It is a really relaxed and friendly atmosphere. The participants are joking and chattering with each other. It feels more like a group of friends meeting each other, rather than a formal event.

11.00 The session begins with a presentation by two members, both around 18-20 years old, who attended the youth exchange. They first describe the travel and the geographic setting. The accommodation was a student district in the outskirts of the country, with shared kitchen and bathroom. They liken the exchange with a summer camp with a lot of activities from the early morning till the late night. The social climate was perceived as very familiar and the participants express that they have got a lot of new friends. What is remarking is that they barely appeared to have talked about their everyday life such as school, or leisure time interests even though it is probably one of the most common topics when you meet a new person. The phenomenon is illustrated in the below quotation:

“When I came home I told my dad that I have found so many new friends and he started to ask me a lot of question about who they are related to school and family and such. I was like, I don’t really know… You know, you don’t talk that much about what they are doing in their everyday life, but you get to know each other on a completely different level by doing things together instead of just talking.”

One example is a collaboration activity where the participants were mixed together and should transport the group by using delimited amount of “foots” and “spots”. The activity demands that the participants cooperate both physically and psychically.

One of the presenters also describes how the activities effectively connected the participants to each other:

“I learned all the names from just one activity”

This lead on to a discussion about the difference between a “training course” and a “youth exchange”, ending in the conclusion that a training course is focused on professional development, and a youth exchange on personal development. But also that when you attend a training course you attend as an individual, but when you attend a youth exchange you attend as a part of a group.

They also talk about what they have learned from the workshops as well as the content of them. During the exchange they got to learn about different communication strategies as for example passive, aggressive, defensive communication. They also got to fill in a questionnaire in order to try to describe and pin point themselves, using different wordings and perspectives to construct a certain picture of their persona. The aim of the activity was to make the participants reflect on who they are as a person and how they communicate it to others.
One participant asks how the workshops connected to the overall aim of the exchange. The question is raised in English and the group therefore switch language at this point. I note how comfortable they are in doing so, without any hesitation the members naturally switch over.

The answer of the question is that all sessions were about using other peoples’ perspective in order to reach them. For example, the participants got to do roleplays with the outset of a specific story, were they should try to imagine themselves in specific positions of for example a migrant, student etc. and act it out. The idea is that when you talk with other people, you shall be aware of who you are talking to in order to reach them.

11:30 A game called “zip-zap-swosch”. The participants are standing in a circle, one person begin by saying either “zip”, “zap” or “swosch”, to pass over to one other. “Zip” to the left, “zap” to the right, and “swoch” to whoever you want. The activity brings out a lot laughter, and even though it seems simple, it appears to be very difficult in practice.

After the activity the presentation continues with the cultural event, a reoccurring theme in all youth exchanges. Among else, the participants got to try cheese with maggots, a delicacy which appeared to be illegal to ship over board, but which some members somehow managed to bring with them (they did not know that they were not allowed to). The Swedish team made up a mini version of a Swedish midsummer party.

In the end the presenters show the Facebook group where pictures and videos from the exchange are distributed. Two videos are displayed, one “goodbye” video accompanied with violins, and one other which summarized the event. The first one was very sad and among else showed a table where the participants used hang out, but now was empty. The other one was more motivating, and you could clearly see how they enjoyed the event. When they did something, they put it on the wall, and in the end the whole event hall was full of posters. The movie was recorded and displayed at the local news channel in the country where the event took place.

At final the presenters are asked some questions about the event:

What was the worst?

“The “blue day” which often happens in the middle of a youth exchange when you feel overwhelmed by all impressions.”

“We arrived late, the other participants had already begin to get to know each other.”

“Participants who show up late to the activities.”

“The breaks were sometime too long.”

How did you feel two days after the exchange?

“Why couldn’t it last some more days?”

During this session I raised the questions of how they successfully managed to get the group together, compared to our team building experience from Athens (wp9). They suggested that it might be due to the length of the camp, but also that they got to live together. The members also raised the importance to let the youths organize some parts on their own, as well as having one
or a pair of adults to support them, and not to forget a lounge or similar where the youths get to hang out and meet each other.

**12:00 - 13.00 Preparation Meeting**

The meeting is held in English and targets the up-coming training course organized by the organisation. Two boys and one girl will attend the course as well as the organization leaders. The participants have all been approached by the organization leaders and are members which currently have or will have coaching roles within the organization. The theme of the training course is coaching.

One of the leaders shall be the host who is responsible for the accommodation, food etc. and the other one will be a trainer at the course. The participants will live in cabins in connection to a conference centre. It will be five people from different countries, but the same gender living in each cabin. The majority of the event will take place at a conference hall, but the evening sessions will take place at the house of the organization leaders since the center is closing before the course does. 28 participants from eight different countries will participate.

Besides the formalities, which are not as much as when the organization travels aboard, they discuss the importance of attitude and how to behave at the course. For example to not complain in front of the others, but bring up the issue with the leaders to not make up a bad atmosphere. They also talks about the use of networking and to really utilize the opportunity to meet and get to know new people, as well as what it means to be a member of the organisation. The latter brings up a discussion about the t-shirt and logo of the organization – a black background with white text. A member with roots from country outside Europe associates the black color with sorrow, just as the black color represents in the flag of that persons home country. The organization leader clarify that the color is just because young people think it is cool and easy to wear and combine with whatever they want. But if the color does not have any specific meaning rather than for practical reasons, the logo has, where the five edged star represents the corner stones of the organisation.

At last, the participants are asked to sign a contract that they will attend and fulfil the course. That is a new feature to make the participants attend all the different stages of the course – from preparation meeting to the particular course, and in the end the dissemination. Sadly, some people do not show up at the dissemination event (inspiration lab) and the organization leaders have to repay the funding with their own money. Hence, the contract states that if you do not attend all the different stages you get to repay the course yourself.

**Study Visit from a North European country**

*2017-08-15, Tuesday 10.00–16.30*

We meet up at a municipal center in a small, rural municipality. But the train is late and the group do not show up until after ten, the time we had agreed. I wait in the reception and at last the group arrive. The group consists of one of the organisation leaders and a number of representatives of youth organisations from a north European country. The visitors are on a study visit arranged by the umbrella organisation to which they belong. The study visit is financed by Erasmus+. Six women and five men participate, one organisation leader and representatives who work within different areas targeting vulnerable youths attend the session. The aim is to exchange practice on the subject.

We start by having coffee, since the room we should use is still occupied. The organisation leader have previously told the participants that I shall come, and it is shown that the participants are somehow vigilant to me.
10:40 Me and the organisation leader prepare the meeting. We start the technical devices and hand out folders about the municipality on the table. We are in a conference room in a municipality center. In the room is a big table with seats for about 20 participants and in the front a presentation screen. The leader tells me that the other leader could not participate since s/he is busy planning the course which will take place the next week. They need chairs since the dinners will be at their house.

10:45 - 11:00 The participants begin to drop in, it is a formal but good mood among them and they talk to each other in their official language. The leader welcomes the participants and starts with a presentation about the municipality. The presentation should actually have been hold by the tourist center, but it had been a misunderstanding in the communication. The leader tells among else that the municipality is an old mining village, but is today more famous for its nature tourism. The municipality is very small in terms of population and is currently fighting with exodus among young people and an aging population. The unemployment rates are moreover high, and far-right parties are flourishing. It has received a high amount of refugees during the last years' refugee crisis. It has resulted in some population increment, but it has also caused a great pressure on the municipal social services. The phenomena generated a discussion among the participants who recognized it from their home country. The leader finally tells about his/her job with integration.

The presentation is in the meantime translated to the participants’ official language, even though most of them appear to have good language skills.

11.00-11.15 I hold a short presentation about the project, its aim and my role. The participants are interested and want more information. I am asked to send my presentation which I do later on.

11:15-12:00 Break. We visit the municipality’s courthouse where they have a temporary flea market, before we go on to visit a church. I get the possibility to talk with one of the participants. I am told that the organisations are a part of a project which aims to improve youth work in their country and in the E.U. The organisations do for instance work with group therapy and activities for children and youths who for some reasons are in a vulnerable position. Most of the participants appear to be professional youth workers and have been involved for a longer time in their respective organisation.

12:00-13:00 Lunch at a restaurant nearby. I get the possibility to talk with one of the leaders of the project. S/he tells me, like the leaders of the studied organisation has before, about the challenge to get youth organisations to collaborate. They have previously organized several events in order to improve co-operation and learning between organisations, but the engagement is low. They have a big budget, but have difficulties to spend the money. The organisations do not see the value of collaboration, and there is a fear that it might end up in out-competing each other.

The mood during the lunch is good, but the language spoken is mainly the official language of the participants. The restaurant is quite big, but we are alone besides some pensioners.

13:00-13:30 We go to the municipal center and I talk to the leader of the organisation. We start to talk about work and voluntary work versus private life and rest. The leader tells me that s/he part of the day works in his/her ordinary profession, but that it is not always possible. In this case it means that s/he will switch role to his/her profession in order to present the work s/he is doing for newcomers.

13:30-15:00 Changes in the schedule. A presentation form another project was planned to be held, but since the public transport was late it gets postponed. Therefore, the leader holds a presentation about some projects s/he is working with in the role of his/her profession. But it will also be shown that the organisation is a part of these projects. Two men, one younger and one older who work in the sub-projects join the session at this time. They work at the project and I notice that one of them is engaged in the organisation since we have met each other before.
The organisation is formally a partner to develop methods and workshops, but the boarder to where the organisation starts and ends appear to be unclear in practice. The leader utilizes his/her professional role in the voluntary work, concurrently as the voluntary work improve his/her professional efforts. The same can be applied to the other organisation members – compare for example [Respondent 3] who describes that s/he despite high level of absence succeed with his/her studies because s/he manage to utilize his/her experiences and skills in school (see interview with respondent 3). One of the leaders have worked with supporting young new comers which made the organisation in a short period of time able to organize a camp for the target group and quickly recruit participants. The leader is highly appreciated and have a good relation to the participants, which can be understood to encourage the participants to participate and actively engage in the activity in a way which would have been much harder for an outsider. It probably has pros- and cons, but appear to be a key for the engagement.

15-15:30 A women who works as a social worker in the municipality in order to decrease school drop-outs is entering the room. The women know the organisation leader from work, and have by this way received an invitation to the meeting. She feels very unsecure to speak English and the presentation is therefore hold in Swedish with continually translation into English by the organisation leader, and thereafter to the official language of the participants. The project include among else work to develop instruments to make youths go to school, as well as to make students who have dropped out to go back again. The women tells that the work involves parental support as well as work with the teachers in order to find and test new methods which work for the youngster. The group found it strange that there is a group hired to specifically work with this, especially since the municipality is so small. After the presentation the group applaud by knocking in the table.

15:30-15:45 Break

15:45-16:20 Workshop. The participants get to test different exercises from the gender equality sub-project. The exercises aim to make the participants to start to reflect about gender and how it affects our lives. The group are divided into pairs during the first exercise, since they are an unequal number I get to join the activity. Pencils and papers are handed out. One shall now close his/her eyes, whilst the other is exposed to a picture for several minutes. Thereafter they switch roles, the one who have had his/her eyes shall now look, whilst the other shall close his/her eyes. The one who keep his/her eyes open is now exposed to a new picture for several minutes. When it is done, the picture is closed down and the couple shall now draw together what they have saw without talking to each other. The picture that I had looked at was a man, whilst my partner saw a woman. The aim of this perspective is to make the participant aware about the fact that gender affects our way of understanding the world.

The participant shall in the next exercises draw an own timeline from birth to today with important moments marked out. The exercise are conducted individually with a pencil and a paper. When the exercise is done the organisation leader asks them to think about if something in the timeline would have looked different if they were born into the opposite gender. An intense discussion starts within the group with thoughts from it would not cause such a great difference, to that the career would have turn in another direction if the person was born as a man. One person claim that the difference would not be that significant for persons in their country, but might be more visible if they were born in a country outside the EU.

16:20-16:30 The session ends. The organisation leader gives information about the travel back to the hotel and the dinner.

**Study Visit from a North European Country**

**2017-08-17, Thursday**

**09.00–12:30**

The session takes place at an upper secondary school. The school collaborates with the organisation.
09.00 The group are late once again, but I am welcomed by a women who works at the school and I get to sit down in the staffs’ coffee room meanwhile.

09:20-9:30 The group arrive and I meet up the organisation leaders. We are led to a conference room with a table set with coffee.

09:30-09:40 The room is filled with participants. The mood is good and a bit more relaxed than before, yet a bit formal.

09:40-10:20 The women presents herself and welcomes the participants. Thereafter she holds a power point presentation about the school in English.

The participants is engaged and attentive, some are taking notes. The presentation is continuously translated into the official language of the participants by the two organisation leaders.

The women tells that the school puts a lot of effort in the relation between teachers and students in order to create safety and in turn a good basis for learning. Many students with low socio-economic status are coming to the school, which demands the school to work with other methods to make them reach the learning objectives and graduate. Instead of focusing on the grades the school strives to make the students reach as far as possible.

It is also told about different projects within for ex. recycling, mentorship between students and voluntary work.

Quote from the presentation:

“We hope that the students shall write their final thesis within the framework of these projects that the school organizes, that it will bring value to them.”

It is under this theme that the organisation contributes as a partner – for example will students from the media programme produce a move about the upcoming training course that will be held during the next week, and a number of students will participate in the course. Moreover, the organisation and the school collaborates within the framework of youth exchanges, where the school hitherto have sent one student.

10:20-10:40 Question time and discussion.

One participant asks whether the school gets any feedback of their work from the universities, but they have not. Neither do students always manage to get a diploma. This starts a discussion among the participants about the importance of a diploma, not just to be accepted to universities, but to get a job at all.

Questions are also raised about the Swedish school system, if the students have to pay and how the appliance works. The women tells that the students apply to the school because it is in the outskirts of the city, but also because it is not hard to get accepted. Some students are disappointed if the get accepted to the school at first because it might be their second or third option. But they use to change their mind soon. Others choose the school actively just because of the school’s unique teaching method.

Another participant wonders how the school work in order to change the students’ approach that the teaching process is more important than the grades? The women explains that it is something really difficult because many students are really into the grade approach. A significant part is however collaboration and to show the student that they can reach longer just by changing their perception about what is important. She is convinced that strains of this method exist in other schools too, but it does not get as much attention. Parents have told the school that they have always seen their child struggling with the grades and that it has resulted in a locked mindset. The student has felt misfit and demotivated, but when the grade pressure is reduced, the student’s stress is decreased and they can perform better.

10:40-10:50 Tour of the school. The group get to, among else, visit a class who is doing a collaboration activity where one student with blind folded eyes shall bake a cake with guidance from other students.

Afterwards I follow the organisation leaders to a classroom where they shall hold a presentation about their method. The aim of the presentation is to offer the student to work with it within the
framework of their independent exam work. The north European organisation does not attend this activity, since it is separated from the study visit schedule.

11:00-11:30 Presentation by the organisation leaders. The leaders ask for two volunteers in order to illustrate how the method works, but they finally have to pick them out since no one signs up voluntary. Two students get up, a girl and a boy to exemplify the activity. The method is described according to the following: The girl has a dream and the boy shall fulfil that dream by social entrepreneurship, to his help he has a coach. The difference between social entrepreneurship and ordinary entrepreneurship is claimed to be that the latter is focused on raising as much money as possible. The other is focused on the development of your own competencies and to do something unselfish for someone else. The boy and the girl do not get to meet each other until the dream is fulfilled. The girl is then asked if she wants to fulfill someone else’s dream.

Quote from the presentation:

"It is fun to get your dream fulfilled, but it is even cooler to do it for someone else."

The engagement from the students during the presentation is moderate, but it is not noisy or chaotic. It is apparent how important the social contact is – it is hard to build up engagement among persons you do not have a relation with. The leaders also express an awareness concerning this, which is brought up during talk after the presentation.

Study Visit from a North European Country
2017-08-18, Friday
Visit at a Foundation for Foster homes
13:00-15:30
We meet up at the top floor of an office building. The group are late once again and it takes a while before all is gathered. Two officials, a man and a women, one of them the manager of the agency and the other a social worker, are welcoming us. The agency works with family houses, to recruit and support them. The organisation does not have any collaboration with the organisation like the upper secondary school has. However, it will later be shown that the organisation leaders are familiar with the organisation from before by private contacts. This constitutes all activities during the week where the involved actors are either private contacts, work related partners or collaboration partners to the organisation. The actors do not seldom belong to more than one category (compare 2017-08-15).

13:15-13:50 We meet up in a conference room with coffee set on the table. The male official welcomes the group and starts a presentation about the foundation. The presentation is continually translated into the official language of the participants. He tells among else that Sweden has a long tradition of foster homes where private persons are receiving and taking care of youths. It immediately starts a discussion about the difference between Sweden and the home country of the participants, where it is more common with public solutions – so called shelters. The mood is attentive and a number of participants are taking notes.

The agency collaborates with the social service and is based on procurements with the municipalities, from where they get economic compensation for the foster homes. The latter results in great confusion in the group and it is difficult to explain how the procurements work out in practice.

13:50-15:00 A female official takes over to tell about how the foster home placements works, as a guide she has document with common questions and the answers to them. She starts by presenting what the process to become a foster home looks like. At first the applying family is appointed to an information meeting. During the meeting they get to full in a paper from the National Social Service Agency where they get to answer questions, but also get information about what the commitment means. Thereafter the organisation visits the foster home in order to check how the family lives, which is a part of a bigger inquiry to prevent children abuse. The official pin points the importance that foster home is not driven by an economic interest, but by the wish to help. The inquiry takes between a couple of weeks to several months to finalize and
involves besides the home visit among else references from for example the school and register copies from the police and the Swedish Enforcement Agency. Some foster homes have previous experiences of abuse and/or drug addiction, something which the women claims to be both a strength and a weakness.

She continues to inform about who can be placed in a foster home, whereas the women tells that everyone from infants, children, youths, unaccompanied children but even adults can be placed in the family. Sometimes even couples. All in Sweden can apply to be placed in a foster home, but it is not certain that the application will be accepted.

Adults who are placed are often drug addicts or abused women. This starts a discussion in the group, since you in the home country of the participants only are allowed to live in shelters up to the age of 18-21 depending on the agency. One participant asks for the requirements to become a foster home? The official answers that it differs, but it always required some sort of experience, for example own experiences or that you are educated within and/or work with these kinds of clients or issues. Another asks how the agency gets in contact with children and youth, whereas the women explains that the child/youngster often contacts a social worker by themselves, who thereafter contacts the social service.

The presentation goes on with a presentation of what kinds of problems that the clients may have – everything from not getting enough food or no food at all at home, lack of home work support and structure at home to psychological diagnoses and drug abuse. She also tells that the organisation gives guidance in these issues and that part of the work involves meetings with for example the psychiatry and the social service.

Most of the employees of the agency are educated at university, but they also get extra education by the organisation.

The women furthermore tells about how it works when someone needs a foster home; the agency gets a request from the social service which they thereafter match with a foster home. The client is the placed, with subsequent evaluations and treatment plans. The official also tells that there is a great concurrence between private and non-governmental agencies in providing foster homes. She tells that the clients sometimes refuse the provided foster home as well, for example is it not always appreciated to be placed in rural areas.

The official further brings up the problems that exist with the current law and the processes of foster family placements. For example that it previously have been revealed that children have been exposed and been abused. Therefore, the law is in constant development in order to secure that it will not happen. Another problem is that the children often get to change case officer. One other that some children get to change home often, something which use to worsening their situation.

A discussion is started about two-ness and heterosexuality, something which seems to be important in foster home placement and adoptions in Sweden as well as in the home country of the participants.

In the end the official tells about a conflict to on the one hand try to find a cheap solution, and on the other create a good milieu for the children. She tells about politicians who had sometimes tried to push the case officers to place the children in a foster home, even though they have assessed that it is an unsuitable solution.

The official finally thanks for the attention and the group applaud by knocking on the table. The north European organisation leaders are thanking for the information and gives the officials symbolic presents.

15:00-15:30 It takes a while for the group to gather after the presentation, and we walk to a local to end and reflect on the day. On the way to the local I ask one of the organisation leaders how they have organized the study visit, it appears that all involved actors have been existing contacts, either job related or related to voluntary work or private relations (study colleagues etc.), besides one who the leader only have had small contact with before. Some contacts are also directly involved with the organisation, for example an official they had visit. The contact with the upper
secondary school was for example established via a common contact who the leader met at a conference. The organisation has previously sent out request to all schools in the municipality as well, without any response.

We also discuss the difficulties to get funding, whereas the leader claims that it is often easier for youths to get economic support, but that it is more difficult for adults who want to organize activities for children and young people.

The leader tells that the civic sector needs to be updated with new organisation forms. S/he expresses that the current organisation structure is too bureaucratic and inflexible, and the private counterpart too focused on profit. S/he tells that the foundation structure is a potential form, but is disrupted before s/he gets to develop it (for more information – see interview with Respondent 2).

15:30-16:00 We meet up in a classroom like room to end and reflect. One of the leaders of the north European organisation starts in the official language of the participants. The participants are asked to fill in their reflections in brought broadsheets, which they do with music in the background – something that one participant facetiously likens with “soft porn”. It is a good mood and the participants are chattering with each other as they finish.

16:00-16:15 When the participants have finished the broadsheet they all get to tell what they think in general about the week. The participants seem satisfied over all. But they would have wished a better introduction to the Swedish system from the beginning in order to understand better. Now they got more or less thrown into different projects ad they had a hard time to get them.

A pair of comments that are raised:

"The last days were more interesting since I better understood how everything are connected”

"It should have been a lower speed in the beginning, a better introduction. The pieces got together during the presentation today this morning.”

"The language was difficult”

16:15-16:30 Final and thanks to the organisation leaders.

The activities during the week of the study visit form a north European organisation have been organized in a similar way and were based on presentations by different actors – non-governmental as well as public, whereas the participants got to ask questions. The structure have been very formal and the participants have to a limited extent tried different methods themselves. The participants seem to be paid and in different ways working with children and youths within the framework of voluntary organisations, which are connected to the umbrella organisation that organized the event. The actors are familiar with the organisation leaders since before and it is apparent that their network and positions is an important part for the organisation’s work. Another remarkable characteristic is fast changes of the schedule and postponed times, which sometimes have made the event hard to follow.

Training Course
2017-08-21, Monday
9:30-18:30

The course takes place in a conference room at a conference center. It is organized by the umbrella organisation to which the organisation belongs. It is led by five organisation leaders (two women, three men) from the organisation and two other organisations from other parts of Europe. The course is financed by Erasmus+. All participants at the course is connected to an organisation which in turn is connected to the umbrella organisation – some of these organisations have the name of the umbrella organisation in their name too. The organisations are working with different kinds of youth issues such as vulnerable youths, but also exchanges
and similar. The aim of the course is to educate youth workers and leaders in coaching to support other youths in entering the labor market.

In total 22 youth leaders (11 males, 11 females) from different parts of Europe are participating in the course. The minimum age to attend the course is 18 years, but one participant has got dispensation and is only 17 years old. The participants are living in cabins at the camping at the conference center in gender divided groups, but with participants from different nations. Many of the participants have been at similar courses before, whilst it is the first time for others. One more participant should have attended the course, but missed the transport. One of the organisation leaders tells me later on that these kind of losses are problematic, since they got lower compensation concurrently as the fixed costs such as food and accommodation do not diminish.

Computers are used to a limited extent during the course. Instead they are using so called flip charts. I am later told that it is standard because the internet access varies a lot across the countries, as well as because a lot of activities take place outdoors which make computers not a suitable facility.

09:30-10:05 I meet the organisation leaders at the reception and help them to pick up things and organize the room. Chairs are set up in a circle in the room and at every chair is a black textile bag with the different watchwords of the organisation printed.

09:30-09:35 The participants are welcomed by a male youth trainer. It is a good and expectant mood. One participants have had birthday and they are therefore singing “happy birthday to you”, which is followed by laughter and applauds.

09:35-09:45 Presentation by the leader group consisting of three men and two women from different European countries. One of the leaders is working full time with training courses. During the presentation it appears that the men will moderate the activities and workshops, whilst the women are responsible for the administration even though they have a diploma in coaching as well.

09:45-09:55 Presentation by me and the project.

09:55-10:05 Information about the schedule of the day.

10:05-10:20 Team building session – the activity is led by one of the male leaders. The participants are standing in a circle and the leader starts by saying his name and doing a movement to it. The next participant shall now repeat the name and the movement and say his/her own name together with a new movement, and so the activity goes on. The activity results in a lot of laughter. The participants seem very comfortable in the activity, even though it is difficult to remember all names and movements. The speed is heightened after a while. What is noticeable during the activity is that the male participants tend to choose body-pump moves – lunges and similar, whilst the female participants choose moves related to dance.

10:20-10:30 – Team building session – this play is called ”The pew-pew game” and is led by a male leader. The participants are still standing in a circle, but the leader is now standing in the middle holding a fictive pistol. He shoots one participant who then ducks. The participants who are standing beside him/her shall then “shoot each other” by making a fictive pistol with their hands and say each other’s names. The one who is slowest will then be the one standing in the middle of the circle, and the one who was standing there before gets to go into the circle again. The participants shall mix up and find another place in the circle when someone says “shuffle”. The play generates a lot of laughter and the participants are not afraid to take space.

10:30-10:50 Team building session – the next play is called ”Mosquitos” and is led by one of the female leaders. The participants shall now imitate mosquitos and when the leader tells them to, they shall form groups where the leader decides the number of participants and discuss a specific topic during three minutes (for example dream job, which countries they have visited, what they would have done if tomorrow was their last day on earth etc.). The groups get very gender homogenous the first time – women with women and men with men, but they are then mixed up without anyone having to mention it. The groups do not seem to have any difficulties to
make the conversation going on. It is also apparent that the participants get more comfortable and willing to speak with each other as the play goes on.

10:50-11:30 The participants are asked to sit down again and a male leader takes the lead. He hands out notes to the participants where two questions are written, one ordinary and one strange. The participants thereafter get to go away and discuss the questions with each other. The participants are leaving the room and are spreading out all around the house.

11:30-11:35 The participants come back and they have a short ending session, and thereafter break.

I speak to one of the participants from another European country during the break. In similar to what previously have been observed s/he is not just voluntary engaged, but is also professionally involved in coaching young people. It also comes out that s/he has personal experiences of being young and vulnerable herself, where she had to take care of her sick dad and therefore missed a lot of school and social life during adolescences.

12:05-12:10 Team building session. The participants are standing in a circle again and shall now try to get eye contact with some other participant. If they succeed they shall switch places with each other. The participants actively moving across the room.

12:10-12:15 The group are gathering together again and the leaders are now telling them to go outside to do a new collaboration exercise.

12:15 We go outside and the participants get to do collaboration activities under the lead of a male organisation leader. They are asked to divide themselves into groups after body type (length and weight) with approximately equal number of participants in each. They shall then form a circle and let one of the members be passed around in it. Another exercise is about pretending to be a leaf, where the other participants shall lift up one of the members and slowly, swinging him/her to the ground. The groups are mixed without any gender pattern.

I ask one of the organisation leaders they have any formal demands on the gender distribution at the courses. S/he tells me that they are striving for an equal gender balance, but it is unclear if there are any formal demands.

12:35-12:40 The participants are asked to find one person who they have not worked with before during the day and sit down and look at each other for two minutes. The participants soon find someone to work with, and are talking to each other before the activity starts. The groups are mixed without any gender pattern.

12:40-12:50 The couple shall now lead each other, one with blind folded eyes. The participants are at first walking very carefully and close, but they soon dare their wings and try to run and jump.

12:50-13:00 The participants shall now try to lead the one who have his/her eyes blind folded to where s/he wants to go.

13:00-13:20 The group are gathering in a circle in the grass and are asked to reflect on how the “blind-folding” activity relates to coaching. Some comments that are raised is that different persons want to be led in different ways, some by holding hands, other by a hand on their back. This also applies to coaching, where different persons have different needs of being coached in a certain way. Another participant claims that it is also about trying to understand the other’s perspective – to try to get where s/he wants to go. An additional reflection that comes up is that different persons have different goals, it is about helping them raise the goal and not to define them.

13:20-13:30 The group are gathering together in the conference room where the forenoon is ended.

13:30-16:00 Lunch at a restaurant nearby.

16:00-16:15 The participants start to drop in and the session can start five minutes later. The sessions starts with a small gathering and a so called “energizer” aiming to make the participants more attentive and alert. It is led by a male leader and is called “the wind blows”. The participants are sitting in a circle whilst another person stands in the middle. The person who
stands in the middle says “the wind blows to those [insert optional statement]…” Those who are hit by the statement and the person who are standing in the middle shall now try to switch places, but since it is always one chair short one person gets left out. This person then gets to stand in the middle and the play starts over. The activity results in a lot of laughter.

16:15-16:30 The group are once again gathering together in the ring of chairs and a male leader takes the lead. He starts by a short presentation of the course – that the participants are there because they are voluntary engaged in some youth organisation to learn more about coaching. That the project aims to strengthen youth leaders coaching skills which they in turn shall implement in their own organisation. The mood is very attentive and formal during the presentation. After the presentation the leader places out notes with the course’s different objectives at the middle of the floor. He then asks the participants to go and get one note and read it out loud, as well as tell their interpretation of it. Two of six notes are read by women.

16:30-16:45 Presentation of the schedule of the week by a male leader. Formalities are mixed with jokes. The aim is to in the end of the week conduct a workshop where the participants get to organize a coaching session which they get to test on upper secondary school students. They shall work in pairs where one will observe the session and thereafter give feedback. The leader pin points that the schedule is quite restricted by the Erasmus+ guidelines and there is not much left for flexibility.

16:45-17:00 After the presentation the leader holds up four different flip sharts. It is written “Challenges” on one, “Contributions” on the other and “Expectations” on the third. The participants are asked to write post-it notes about what challenges they think they will encounter during the week, what they can contribute with and what expectations they have. The fourth contains a schedule for “Morning Energizer” – to organize the first energizer of the day, “Morning time keeper” – to make sure that all participants wake up in the morning and leave the cabins, “Daily reporter” – to sum up the day and publish it in the Facebook group, and “Photo maniac” – to take picture and publish it in the Facebook group of the course. The participants are asked to sign up as the responsible persons for these activities during the week. A rule is also set stating that if someone is hearing a participants talking another language than English, they shall say ”Bora Bora” and those who are talking have to switch language independent of subject. This is to make everyone able to participate.

17:00-17:10 The participants are starting to move around the room to do the task. The posters are filled with post-it notes.

17:10-17:25 The group are thereafter asked to form three groups to sum up the posters for each other. No gender pattern or national distribution can be observed, but the groups are mixed. The groups are taking turns to present what the participants expect, can contribute with and what they think are challenges. The participants are starting to get tiered and the mood is quite tedious. Many of participants think that it is challenge to hand over the control to someone else (to be coached). Another challenge relates to the social community, to stay positive.

17:25-17:30 The leader takes the lead and talks about what they can expect but also the importance to behave, to not littering down or destroy the cabins, to be in time etc. He also pin points that all participants are free to come up with and organize their own activities. Thereafter a new rule is set; the participants shall switch places if someone says “tornado”.

17:30-17:50 A female organisation leader takes the lead and talks about the administration. How the participants shall get the refunding for the travel, what they need to do to make the organisation able to get refunding – fill in a questionnaire in the end of the course and make some sort of dissemination activity when they get home.

17:50-18:00 Energizer called ”the dragon and the princess”. The group are divided into two and are forming two circles, one inner and one outer circle. Those who are standing in the outer circle are “dragons” and those who are standing in the inner circle are “princesses”. One participant do not have a princess and shall try to call someone else’s princess to him/her. His/her dragon shall then try to catch him/her before the princess gets to his/her new dragon.
Both women and man are dragons as well as princesses. The activity results in a lot of laughter and the group get more alert. The participants get to switch places after a while, those who have been “dragons” shall now be princess and vice versa.

18:00-18:15 The group are gathering together once again and a male leader takes the lead. He starts talking about Erasmus+ and the three “key actions”; mobility of youth workers, youth exchange and EVS (European voluntary service) and what they mean. This is followed by a discussion about the difference between “youth exchange” and “mobility of youth workers” where training courses are included in the latter. The conclusion is that “youth exchange” is about personal development, whilst “training courses” are about developing professional skills. He tells that the aim is to encourage mobility, collaboration and support for policy reforms and those who can attend the programme are people of organisations from the European member states, as well as Norway, Turkey and other nations such as Russia. He further tells that there is one responsible, national authority for the programme in every country. The presentation is finalized with the challenge to promote Erasmus+, to communicate the advantages to attend the programme. The participants are therefore given an assignment to in groups of four, including participants of different gender and nationalities, prepare some sort of presentation in order to promote Erasmus+. The activity is called “Make Erasmus+ sexy again” and I am told by one of the leaders that these kind of exercises are mandatory in all courses and exchanges within the programme.

18:15-18:30 The group are splitted, some are staying in the conference room. The work is conducted with pop music in the background. I follow a group who have decided to like Erasmus+ with a pizza of eight slices. The participants are writing key words such as “authentic experiences”, “new friends” and “developing skills” on the slices.

18:30-19:00 The group are gathering once again and it is time to present. One of the groups perform a theater that tells how it is to participate in Erasmus+ and how it affects you in a positive way. Another group conduct a more formal presentation where every participant gets to shortly present why you should attend the programme, what made them attend as well as ideas about how they could promote the programme by for example movies. A third group have made a theater from an employer's perspective, where one of the participants is the employer and two others are job seekers. The job seekers are standing in a row waiting for an interview with the employer to get to present themselves and their competencies. But it is hard to impress and actually prove what they can, besides the last one who has a “youth pass” and can tell what s/he have learned during Erasmus+. The Erasmus+ participant is employed in the end of the play. The concept “EU citizenship” is present both implicitly and explicitly in all presentations. Values such as being a part of a whole is present. Cultural differences are described as something positive and enriching, something to explore and is a part of the European community and of yourself. To feel “at home” even outside the boarders of your home country and on equal terms meet people from other nations. One group are talking about authentic experiences, outside the European community you are just a tourist that gets to see a limited part of the country. But in the EU and via Erasmus+ you become a part of it and get a real experience. They also talk about a shared labor market, shared networks and knowledges. That you often get a job through contacts are not seen as a problem but neither something positive, but as something to act on. Networks are also pin pointed as an objective of the course itself. The European citizenship is in this way both a foundation as well as a vision. Another central part is to do something meaningful for the world, to change something.

19:00 The leader takes the lead again and shows a feedback sheet where the participant shall reflect upon the day in groups of three in the end of every day. This is done independently outside the conference.
UK Appendices

Appendix A (UK): Interviews
INTERVIEWS (2 from MLMS, 2 from Momentum)

**Interview 1: MLMS CEO Michael (pseudonym)**

SM: Could you tell me about your current position and what your overall tasks are, and if you want to do each position sort of what you do as a local councilor, and what you do for My Life My Say, that would be great.

MICHAEL: Yeah, so to start off, I was elected in 2014 May as the youngest ever councilor in Hackney, and the youngest at the time in London as well, and I think one of the youngest in Britain sort of historically as well. So my role as a councilor, local councilor, so I was elected for a specific area called Stoke Newington. And my role essentially is to make sure that I represent the people and I don’t work for council so I actually represent the people rather than working for the council. So I’m an advocate on behalf of the people, so my role sort of ranges from different responsibilities and duties, so one of them, which is the sort of champion, like local events. So for example this morning I was at a Stoke Newington school championing an event for young people. It involves sort of raising sort of case, case work on behalf of residents. So, if residents have issues with the council, so it could be such as like recycling, or if delivering on an estate where there’s planning works and it’s not getting done, or, you know just general sort of like pavement problems and street scene, all that sort of stuff. My job then is to represent the residents to the council to make sure that those works are getting done, or there is a sort of solution to the problem. So I deal with a whole wide range of issues, such as like housing, re-housing residents, so helping residents in that aspect, in terms of like you know green space, parks, schools, health, accessible transport for like disabled people, people in need. So it ranges from many different areas, so yeah, so overall on the council I’m actually a member of the children and young people commission, which basically means that I scrutinize the services for children and young people in Hackney. So a part of the commission which scrutinizes the officers and the directors of that, schools and everything, is just to make sure that the young people in Hackney are getting services provided in the best way. So I’m basically an advocate for people.

As for my role as chief executive of My Life My Say, so we are sort of aiming to engage young people in politics, and specifically my role within MLMS is to really, is to create a sustainable growth for a fuller organization. So I am constantly dealing with like working with new partnerships, that support our activities, such as like campaigns and events, our education programme as well. Yeah so, really it’s just to make sure that I can put food on the table for my staff. So the ultimate aim obviously is to engage young people in politics, and how I do that is through lobbying, parliamentarians and other politicians like myself, in different areas. And working with key institutions like the European Union, the UK parliament as well.

SM: Excellent, thank you. A couple of quick follow up questions. So, how old are you? And when were you elected?

MICHAEL: I’m 23. [I was elected] In 2014, so I was 21 going on 22 in July.

SM: But you were 21 when you were actually elected.

MICHAEL: Yeah
SM: And how long will your position last before you need to go for re-election?

MICHAEL: So the position will last until 2018, in May, when there’s the next election. My reselection process starts in 2017, so a year before. So I was actually a candidate when I was 20.

SM: Oh wow, that’s great.

MICHAEL: Yeah, so I got elected when I was 21.

SM: Ok. I want to ask you more about that, but really quickly, when did you start MLMS?

MICHAEL: In 2013, January.

SM: My question would be, sort of before we get to the other questions, at 20, what made you want to do, get involved in local politics, but also what made you want to start MLMS?

MICHAEL: So, I’ve always studied politics at university, college. I was involved in the Labour party since the age of 14 [laughs].

SM: Oh wow. How did that happen?

MICHAEL: Again, so I come obviously from a background, like a Turkish background, and I don’t know if you know, but Tukey people just tend to be, or most continental people tend to have keen interest in politics. So my father, you know, is one of those people, from aside [audio not understood] from my Mom. He’s always watching the news, so as a young person, going to school, coming back, always seeing him watching the news and everything, I always had like a ‘why does my dad do this?’ So I started sitting in with him, watching it. So then I started, so I guess I gained that knowledge a bit earlier because my father taught me a lot as well. So I had an early understanding of how politics can affect our day-to-day lives, which is why I wanted to get into politics, which is why then I thought I’ll join the party.

And in regards to sort of like how did everything come because of MLMS and being a councilor at the age of 20, is, as I said I’ve always had a keen interest in politics. I found that the existing structures in terms of creating MLMS, so when I went to university, there was no sort of platform for an open debate or sort of an independence. So I find that most organizations or societies all had a political ideology behind them, so there was no sort of like active organization that just focused on engaging young people into the political system. So that’s what sort of the frustration of that, sort of led for me to create this organization. And in terms of like being a councilor, you know, sort of for that age, second year of university, you start to feel like you’ve studied politics for a number of years at college, been involved in the party for a long time, I have a lot of interest in my local community, I always go to events and stuff, so I thought you know why not, I want to have an impact on my community, in how people are governed, and also you know, I’ve always been a strong advocate of young people. So institutions reflecting the people it represents, and it was quite daunting, that actually the average age of councilors in 65 in the UK. So, I thought to myself, well why doesn’t these chambers have people that are younger, so, and represent the views of the young people? So that’s why I put myself forward for it, because I had a keen interest in my local community and wanted to make sure it was represented.

SM: I’m just curious about the election process, how many people did you stand against?
MICHAEL: So when you apply to be a candidate, how the process normally works is, there are hundreds of people who apply to be a candidate. And you obviously select which area. You go through an interview stage, you select which area you would like to stand for, but this is obviously the party internally. And then the members in that area will shortlist you, will shortlist 6 or 7 candidates, and then you'll have to go through sort of campaigning.

SM: Like hustings?

MICHAEL: Hustings and stuff like that, yeah. So it was very difficult, both at that stage and at the stage where I was selected as a candidate during the election stage as well. Because, obviously I was gonna get people who say, ‘Oh well ain’t you a bit too young for this,’ or ‘Maybe you should wait until the next time, help us campaign now and [run] next time. But I guess it’s up to you as a person to really prove [to] people otherwise that you have that knowledge and what it takes to be a councilor.

SM: Did you find people were encouraging you to wait until you were a bit older?

MICHAEL: Yeah. Definitely.

SM: Was there anybody else close to you in age, even in like their early or mid twenties, who was going for it.

MICHAEL: No. So the earliest after me would have been like, probably like, 30s, late 30s. And that is quite young considering average age of councilors. But saying that, I did have support from like quite a few people. The majority of people was against the idea of having someone young. But a lot of people, there were a few people who did support me which helped me.

SM: Ok. So you’ve already done this a little bit, but just going through some questions here, can you describe to me how you work with youth issues in particular? And what that process looks like? And so that can be through either role, or both, up to you.

MICHAEL: Ok. So, working through like, through MLMS, I’ll start with that. So what we do, we sort of often consult with young people. And we always have like discussions with young people around what the key issues are and what the need is, obviously in terms of what MLMS does, we tend to just, we’re more focused on the democratic engagement rather than the specific issues, like housing and stuff. And through identifying that, what we then do is, we tend to sort of use that as a vehicle to then look at activities we deliver, and how we then go about lobbying the necessary instiututions or politicians to be able to make change in that area. So that’s the main, primarily what I do, so it’s all like a conversation process.

In terms of with like on a more youth issues basis within as my role as a councilor, obviously a lot of the issues, in regards to youth issues with like youth clubs, and social clubs, those sort of things, like having open space for young people to play in, or those areas, we, yeah again it’s something that I’m aware of anyway as a young person, growing up in Hackney, that we as I said you know, we’re always in talks with different youth organisations to find out what all those issues are, and then to address them. But, the biggest issues we find with young people are recent stuff like housing. Because obviously housing, a lot of, I think now it’s predicted that you’ll be in like your 40s until you can buy a property.

SM: So is it buying housing, or just affording rent, or both?
MICHAEL: Buying. For rent, you can rent but studies show that actually most young Londoners, over 50% of young Londoners are spending more than two-thirds of their income, not two-thirds, more than 60%, yeah, so more than two-thirds of their income, on rent.

SM: Which is not really sustainable.

MICHAEL: Yeah, exactly. So, one of the biggest problems we find now, and it’s also in terms of sustainability, in terms of tenancy agreements as well, so we find that a lot of young people sort of, tend to be the ones who switch a lot of properties in terms of where they’re living.

SM: Right.

MICHAEL: Partly because you know, because if they’re privately renting, they get evicted, there’s no sort of sustainable, and they keep spending lots of money on sort of letting agencies in terms of like, paying for the fees they charge. So for me, that’s the biggest problem, so the biggest problem for young people right now, it’s about how can we ensure that we can get young people on the housing ladder. Both be it rent or be it thing without getting ripped off.

SM: So what does youth policy then mean to you? So if someone asked you how to describe it, what is it? What works, what doesn’t work?

MICHAEL: In terms of youth policy, what youth policy means to me is sort of, see I don’t know, it’s one of those things where, I think a lot of….so for me youth policy would mean policies that are more targeted at helping young people, the problems that young people face. But I find that one of the sort of common occurring themes is that, actually a lot of the issues that are facing the general public are also affecting young people as well. So sometimes I find it sort of problematic when we sort of look at it as two different pictures. Because sometimes a lot of the issues that young people face are the issues, like sort of housing for example, it’s not just affecting young people. Education, you know like there’s so many different areas in which you can look at, so in terms of how to go about you know resolving youth policies, or coming up with youth policies, I think that we need to have a clearer, I think we need to take a step back and look at the issues again, and actually look at it in a bigger picture rather than sort of specifically, because I think tend to be that when people talk about youth issues, or youth policy, they always tend to talk about the same things in regards to us. So like education of students, or for example, youth social clubs, those sort of areas. But actually we forget that the biggest issues affecting young people could be stuff like mental health, so health issues. Could be stuff like housing, could be stuff like transport. And these are issues that aren’t exclusive to young people. And when we are formulating these policies, we shouldn’t exclude young people from having a say in these policies, because the people who tend to have an impact on these policies are people who are generally you know in their thirties or beyond. So we need to include actually younger people into these discussions as well.

SM: And do you find that with these policies, young people generally aren’t considered to be part of the constituency?

MICHAEL: Yes. So with these issues, I’d definitely agree with that. So I think that young people tend to sort of not be consulted on these issues, because they’re seen as like, ‘well you’ve got these issues’

SM: Youth issues
MICHAEL: Yeah youth issues. But you haven’t, housing is not an issue for you, for example. Because it’s seen as like, you know its, but actually the discussions I’m having right now, it’s quite interesting. Because a lot of people before in their 20s used to think about stuff like housing and everything. Whereas now, I speak to a lot of teens who are actually starting to think about that. Because the narrative now is, you might not actually be able to buy a home. And it’s brought it back home, because in places like Hackney, whether you’ve been brought up in Hackney, or like Brixton, or like wherever it is, you know many young people are actually having to face the reality that they’ll have to move out. So that’s why it’s become more, sort of like, more of an issue for them, because it’s become more of a reality. So I think we definitely need to stop looking at it as a…I think it’s wrong to look at young people as one bloc, yeah. You need to look at it like there’s more, it’s a bit lazy to look at it in that sense.

SM: Ok, so in your view, who are ‘active’ young people and who do you think are ‘inactive’ or ‘excluded’ young people?

MICHAEL: So, I think active young people tend to be people who have the sort of, in terms of how they have an impact on policy, they tend to be people who’ve had better education, more access to sort of like NGOs or you know organisations who offer them that support in terms of how to go about making change in their communities. In terms of inactive young people, you know you’re looking at, tend to be people from disadvantaged backgrounds, deprived areas, and these are people who, they’re not inactive because you know they think they want to be inactive, but it could just be that they don’t have that, they don’t know what the vehicle is to make an impact. And I’m sorry, but I think there is a wider problem in trying to make people understand that politics affects your day-to-day lives, and I think not a lot of people are still aware of that. so I think what we need to do is, like for me, in terms of activism, and trying to make sure that all our policies are representative, young people are represented in it, I think we definitely need to go down the route of improving or looking at reviewing the citizenship education and the curriculum, they can look at sort of improving that. Because that’s where it all starts. You know, sometimes what happens is, and it tends to be young people, when they get to their early twenties, if you don’t have that knowledge, sometimes you might be sort of feel ashamed to not be able to, yeah, so you just sort of tend to stay away from it altogether. But actually you know like, we’re just having a coffee right now, so where does this coffee come from? Are they getting a fair wage? That could be something that you’re very passionate about. So how do you go about making change for that, or how do you go about making a campaign, or how do you go about sort of requesting that information? And that’s, the key for me is information, and where you get that information is in schools. And that’s where we need to have a serious think about what we’re doing.

SM: So if you had to say five key policy priorities for young people, and rate them in order of importance?

MICHAEL: Housing would definitely be number one, I think education number two, and the reason why I’d say education is because there is a new sort of funding formula that’s coming out soon by the government, that’s gonna impact 2017, 2018, it will have a massive impact on the sort of, the local authorities in terms of provision of education. So, as an effect it will have an impact on young people. And also like you’ve had stuff like EMA, the education maintenance act that’s gotten scrapped, that’s had a massive impact so I think we need to, and also like the delivery of education itself. I think one thing in Britain, or like as British people sometimes is that we’re scared of change. And we sort of, what works, we just stick with it. But we need to sort of always be open to ideas of moving forward. In terms of other important areas, I wouldn’t
like to rate, I wouldn’t know. But I say like definitely stuff like sort of transport, I mean especially in London, it’s just, there seems to be no, uh, limit on the increase every year.

SM: It’s crazy.

MICHAEL: Yeah, and that has an impact on your work as well.

SM: Coming from New York, there’s a blanket fee on where you can go, for basically 2 quid you can go anywhere in New York and the price doesn’t change.

MICHAEL: So, just to give you an example, when I was in secondary school, so I finished secondary school in 2008, and I remember, I think 2008 was the big change, 2006, 2007, until then, to get an adult travelcard was two pound. All zones, they charge for a travelcard one pound. Now it’s like, 9 pound, you’re talking about a 900% increase, within like, not even ten years.

SM: Less than 10 years.

MICHAEL: Yeah exactly, and that like I said that has an impact on where you work, on your housing, on all that sort of stuff. But I think like housing is key because, with housing it links to employment and everything as well. Because you could be for example a teacher, or a nurse or whatever it is, in a specific area. But if that area is too expensive for you, then as a result you’ve got to leave that area. That has a big impact, not just on your life, but at the same time on the provision for services in that area as well. So, if your borough, like Hackney for example, you’ve got really good education right now, where we used to have really bad, really good education and we’re possibly in a position where actually we might lose our best teachers because it’s too expensive to live there. And that will then have an impact on the education that young people have. I think for me, like the biggest issue is definitely housing. And it links with you know like, with education, with transport, and different areas basically.

SM: Ok so these are questions about Europe, so they might be more connected to your work with MLMS. What is your knowledge of and opinion of Europe in relation to youth policy making? Answer however you want to answer, it’s a very broad question.

MICHAEL: Ok, so can you repeat that again, sorry?

SM: Ok, what’s your knowledge and opinion of Europe in relation to youth policy making. So, how do you think about how youth policies in Europe?

MICHAEL: Yeah I mean in terms of youth policies in Europe, I’m not the most clued up on it, but I know of stuff like, for example Erasmus plus, and those sort of areas. I think the biggest problem is, is that that information is not in schools, is not in universities as much as it can be.

SM: So there’s a lack of voice of what Europe is doing?

MICHAEL: Definitely, I think there’s a lot more, like through MLMS, I’ve learned about so many opportunities within Europe, sort of like Erasmus plus, sort of like the youth mobility, and all of like those different programmes. But, if, and the only reason why I knew about that is because I worked with the European Commission on certain projects and such. But if it wasn’t for that, there would be no way I’d have that information.
SM: So a lack of access.

MICHAEL: And I think that actually those opportunities are fantastic opportunities for young people in the UK but it’s a shame that they don’t know about those opportunities. And as a result, what they might think in the future is, ‘well what does Europe do for me?’

SM: Why do you think it is that information is not getting to young people?

MICHAEL: I think it’s, I guess I think it’s a mixture of different things. But I think, I think there’s only so much the commission and the European Union itself can actually do, you know, you gotta think about costs and everything as well. I know that they work with institutions or organisations that can possibly get this information. But I think there needs to be a, or sometimes what the problem is, what the bigger problem is, is that when the information is available, it’s only available to a certain type of young people. So it could only be, for example students. So students more tend to be aware of sort of opportunities available to them in Europe, as opposed to people who, young people who don’t go to education, don’t have go to university and stuff. So I think there needs to be a serious like think about how, which organisations and which institutions you work with, to engage with different types of young people to make that information available to them, and obviously provide more support to them.

SM: Great, thanks. Ok so the other part of that question is, and I already know the answer but I’d like you to answer. Have you had any interaction or contact with anyone in Europe through your work or is Europe an aspect of your work at all?

MICHAEL: Yep. So, both things. It’s an aspect of our work, because what we realized is that, you know, we can’t look at the policies in the UK, you can’t just look at it separate. It’s not just Europe but the global context as well. So something that could happen in Syria right now, can impact on our security policy in the UK, which has an impact on young people for example. So it’s the same thing in Europe, there’s so many different areas that obviously cross cut each other, so impact. So Europe is definitely at the fore of what we do, and obviously in terms of who, we are in touch with the sort of commission, to sort of look at innovative ways in which we can get that information to young people, not just in a sort of universities but much wider.

SM: And MLMS, you guys are starting some sort of European initiative?

MICHAEL: Yep. So there’s a democracy caff sort of series that we’re starting, and what this does, is basically it was in the run up to the general election, you get like 20-30 people in a café, like this for example, and you talk about important issues, but you have an app, we have an app for it. And it will be headlined under different topics. It could be immigration, it could be economy, it could be democracy, whatever it is. And what you do, the aim is, is basically, there’s a facilitator, and what they do is they’ll go through each discussion, people will discuss it, and at the end of it all they’ll vote for what they would rather want to see or whether they agree with it or don’t agree with it. So you have like an hour discussion and debate, and it’s an easy way, you have a coffee, it’s sort of [words unclear], seventeenth century, people getting together, have a coffee and let’s talk about politics.

SM: Have you started it already?

MICHAEL: So we’re hoping to start that in the second week of March.

SM: Ok and it’s called Democracy Caff.
MICHAEL: Democracy Caff.

SM: And the subject, is it about politics in Europe, or is it about both the UK and Europe?

MICHAEL: Both the UK and Europe. It was piloted in the general election, which was just about the general election. This one is gonna be more focused around Europe. And at the end of that, there will be that information access for young people so all the sort of some of the youth policies or programmes that are available to young people, that are because they're European citizens, will be given to them as well so they're aware of that.

SM: That’s very cool.

MICHAEL: And we’ll be delivering that in sort of like Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, Bristol, um, London, uh Sheffield, Leeds.

SM: And so they’ll all be happening kind of at the same time?

MICHAEL: Yeah, so they’ll be running from March til I think halfway first phase will be March to halfway May. And then it will restart in July all the way to October. And the aim for us is to train the facilitators, and then the facilitators will always have the resources to deliver it at any point they want.

SM: That’s excellent. Can you give me an example of a youth policy that worked really well that you were involved in?

MICHAEL: Youth policy.

SM: It might be something you were working on with MLMS? Or just through your local councilor work.

MICHAEL: Trying to think of which one. Um, so there was a policy. Could it be around cycling?

SM: Of course.

MICHAEL: Yeah. So, cycling is a big issue, not least because obviously it’s good for the environment, you know we’ve got big air pollution problems, environment air quality problems, it’s good for your health, it’s good for a free gym. It’s good for convenience and timing as well. So like, you know you’re never gonna be late. Or you know what the time would be to get somewhere. So, one of the policies, one of the, in Hackney one of the things that we recognize is that actually that young people aren’t really getting involved in cycling. There are lots of opportunities so we give them lots of like schemes where you can have a bike for free for a month, to try it out and see how it goes. But because of these barriers, there are certain barriers for different areas, and cultural as well, barriers as well, that stop people from cycling. And we recognize it’s a good thing for, like I said, for the environment and that sort of thing. One of the youth policies that we started was actually trying to engage young people in cycle. So what we started doing was working with schools, to have like I think it’s a roam where you have like a cycling bus, I think it is? Where you get, young people just get together and then they cycle to school together once a month. So we done, basically we had to do that in Hackney.
SM: So has it not started yet?

MICHAEL: It started partially like as a pilot, it’s pretty cool yeah.

SM: Ok so I have to ask also, is there something that you tried to do that hasn’t gone too well?

MICHAEL: Hmmm

SM: If you can’t think of anything that’s cool.

MICHAEL: Yeah I can’t think of anything

SM: So how would you, this is another sort of general youth policy question, but specific to UK and London. How would you describe the state of youth policy, either in the UK or in London or in both? Justin your view, what do you think is happening right now in the country and in London?

MICHAEL: In regards to youth policy?

SM: Yeah just generally.

MICHAEL: I think it’s not like, in terms of the ways the policies are formulated, it’s not really representative. Simply because I think that the people that tend to sort of engage with the initiation of the policies tend to be the same type of people. So a lot of people are excluded from the actual policymaking process. Now the problem that has is that, you know the policies don’t reflect society. So people don’t feel like this is impacting them. Or when there is a scheme or policy that comes out, it’s not relevant to people, because it’s not something that’s mainstream. So I think the wider problem with the policy aspect in terms of London and the UK, it sort of comes down to the engagement level. And what we need to do is look at ways in which we can engage people in youth policy, both be it through using digital means - we need to explore that now, I think we’re living in a digital age where we should definitely explore some digital means of engaging young people. Because I mean like, when people usually follow policy or youth policy just generally it’s always like sort of like gathering representative sort of organisations, or like get 20 young people and speak to them in a room. And I think that’s a bit of a patronizing approach, and also like, not everyone is gonna turn up to those meetings. You tend to see, like I said, the same type of people. So I think what we need to do is to look at the way in which we actually engage, and then once we get that problem resolved, and we get the education problem resolved in terms of how youth policy can affect you, and what is policy. Even what is policy – a lot of young people don’t even understand what that means for example. If we can get the education and the engagement avenue sorted, then we’ll start to see more youth policy representing young people in the UK and London.

SM: Great, thank you. Just a couple more questions. So if you were asked by somebody who wants to set up and implement a youth policy in another context – so if I said to you, I’m gonna start my own NGO, or I want to create some good youth policies, what would be your first and more important advice?

MICHAEL: Ok. My first advice would be, what is the need? I think that, you gotta start from that. You’ve got to understand: what is the need for your, so if you’re thinking of starting a specific NGO or to look at creating a specific thing. You’ve got to look at what a need is, so why do you need that policy? Or why do you need that NGO? And then from there, that will then
give you the sort of, what’s the word for it, it will sort guide you to then understand what your activities are gonna look like, what your vision’s gonna look like, what your mission’s gonna look like, what your strategic objectives are gonna look like. But I think the main starting point is always looking at research and what is the need for what you’re doing?

SM: And how do you get, how do determine that information?

MICHAEL: So that’s where you can use, so one of the things that we are undergoing at MLMS at the moment is precisely that. So, when we first started it was three years ago, completely different needs to the organization from what we have now. So what we had to do is taken a step back, looking at the vision and mission of MLMS and saying, ‘ok hold on a second, we’re at a different stage now in our sort of growth, what is the need for MLMS?’ It’s a basic question, but it’s about getting people around the table brainstorming, speaking to people that work in different sectors, both be it, it could be young people in the institutions like in the schools. It could be young people who are, it could be a young person who’s homeless, it could be a young person who lives in a resident, uh in an estate, which, I mean so yeah with all politics you gotta realize it can be very local to people so it’s not always a national thing. So you can be living on a, like in a housing estate, every housing, sort of tenants association, which had like a pot of money on how they spend the money within their estate to improve their estate. Right? Tend to be people that go there are older people so young people are excluded from that. So, what we do at MLMS, and how we go about doing that, it’s about getting people around the table who represent different areas. I can bring that, to make me understand what that need is. At the same time, once you have like a rough idea from those discussions, those forms of discussions, and research that you conduct yourself, than what I would say to do is looking at, look at the digital element, put it out on the digital side and see if you can get young people to actually sort of like agree disagree with what you’re talking about, and respond to it. Because then that will give you, as opposed to reaching like a hundred people face to face, that will give you like maybe a thousand people that you can reach. So you’ve got both sides. Yeah.

SM: That’s great, thank you. And then finally, from your experiences working with youth policy, are there any additional things that you could think of that might be valuable for other people to know? For anybody that’s decided, ‘I want to work in youth policy,’ what do you think it really important for them to know besides, you’ve identified the need obviously.

MICHAEL: Yeah. So identifying need, I think um, the most, in terms of like through the work I do with MLMS, as well as identifying the need, I think it’s really important that you know how, so there’s a few things. One is how you know how what you’re gonna do is make a change to the need. That’s really important as well, so like, identifying the need is one thing, then coming up with solution for it is a completely different thing. And also making what you do niche and sort of unique is another thing as well. Cause you might have actually other NGOs or other people that are doing the same youth policies as you. So you might want to, if it’s similar then you might want to just, really just help them and grow that. Because sometimes the problem is that so many people do so many things separately, when actually if they all come together it’s the same aim.

SM: It’s more effective.

MICHAEL: Yeah. So for me it’s really just trying to identify again like how youth can make a change to it. But I think it just all interlinks really. But I think it’s just looking things very sort of face, just taking it a step at a time, and it all sort of interlinks with one another. Yeah. But, you just need to have like passion for it obviously. Because a lot of the time, a lot of these things are, you know it’s not something that you spend a lot of time for, you probably won’t get the sort of
financial reward for it. Because that’s obviously not what you’re doing it for anyway. But it’s, you know at the same time you know you’re gonna give a lot of time for it, so you need to have the passion to drive you to it. And you’re gonna hit a lot of setbacks, yeah you’re gonna hit a lot of closed doors. But you need to have the sort of mindset that you’re gonna have to keep, you know you’re just gonna have to keep pushing on. And you know, you’re not gonna have to, you know, I’ve had a lot of setbacks with MLMS, but now it’s one of the biggest organisations in the UK in terms of membership-size wise. And also in terms of like what we do as well. So you just need to have that, a very strong mindset, but you need to collaborate and work with others, and have good people around you to be able to help overcome those.
**Interview 2: MLMS Staff member Alison (pseudonym)**

SM: Can you start by just telling me your name?

ALISON: Yup, Alison.

SM: And, what do you do here at my Life my Say.

ALISON: So, my role at My Life My Say is programme and partnerships lead, so essentially what I do is I…help facilitate all of the different partnerships that we have here with all of the different organizations that we work with. So I organize the preliminary meetings, and I kind of oversee the correspondence going forward. Um, so I often attend meetings with potential partners with Michael, and I do the follow up and make sure that we kind of forge that partnership. So that’s one side, the other side is programme, that’s essentially operations, so I oversee the different projects that we do, and coordinate the different events that we hold. At the moment it’s of course Café Europe’s, or Café’s and the APPG. So I’m kind of overseeing that and making sure that the different um, kind of MLMS staff that kind of have responsibility for those certain aspects are fulfilling their roles and doing things like that. Kind of yeah, it’s quite a fluid role, but I essentially oversee what MLMS does in general and kind of the different parts of it.

SM: Great, so I have bunch of other questions, first of all, this does look like it’s recording, isn’t it?

ALISON: Yup, yup.

SM: Great, so um, how did you come to work for MLMS – just sort of your background, how you became interested in this type of work and then how you actually started working for MLMS.

ALISON: Okay, so I have a campaigning background, so I campaigned really heavily around the referendum, in the summer last year while I was at Nottingham doing – staying for my Master’s. And a lot of what I focused on was voter registration and voter engagement of students specially, students and young people more broadly. And what I found was young people were completely overlooked in the referendum, in terms of the timing of the referendum, which was – obviously just at the end of exams, so a lot of students actually were going travelling, were going to Glastonbury, a lot of them were going home.

SM: Mm hmm.

ALISON: And…um, they weren’t made aware of the different voter registration systems or deadlines. So it was a real uphill battle for me, because a lot of students didn’t realize that you had to register at home or at Uni, if that’s where you’re going voting, they didn’t know you could do both. A lot of people were already registered at home for the general election and didn’t realize that you’d have to register at Uni too, and a lot of young people didn’t realize that you could vote by proxy or by postal. So once - when they did find out about that they had missed the deadline. So a lot of students that were going away on holiday to celebrate the end of exams, or going to Glastonbury could’ve easily voted by proxy or by postal, but they didn’t know. So that was a real struggle for me, and I consistently felt that young people were being overlooked. I became the spokesperson for the national campaign. But I was often ruled out as the kind of
token young person. I don’t think that – I don’t think that, you know young people were truly represented, I mean.

SM: Who was ruling you out?

ALISON: Students for Europe.

SM: Students for Europe, okay cool.

ALISON: But, um, so they focused on students and young people’s issues. But actually the – both of the campaigns, leave and remain, didn’t really focus on young people at all.

SM: Okay.

ALISON: And in fact they were horrendously misguided. And if they’d actually spoken to young people they’d have had much more effect. So for example, Open Britain did this – oh not Open Britain, Strong (doesn’t complete phrase)…as they were then…

SM: Right.

ALISON: …launched this kind of #votin’, where they dropped the g, and it ended up being on a flier for it that went out. And with all my friends, I was completely annihilated, because it had #votin’ on it. And then it was like #sleepin’, #ravin’, #chattin’.

SM: Oh, wow.

ALISON: And it was horrendous.

SM: Yeah.

SM: Um, so it just really kind of – it just left me with a lot of frustration. Um, from a lot of on the ground campaigning, I felt that frustration amongst a lot of young people as well. So I campaigned every single day till the election. A lot of it was just making sure they turned out and voted. In the end it didn’t matter, I didn’t care, it was just ‘please do’.

SM: Yeah.

ALISON: A lot of them were like, ‘ my vote doesn’t matter’, because they didn’t understand the difference between first past the post and one person, one vote, etc., etc., so that was me. I graduated – still made it till the end of my Master’s – graduated, and I was at this European society conference that Michael was, um – he was presenting about their Café Europe sessions and the APPG, and I was already quite involved, still quite involved…

SM: When was this, what month?

ALISON: November.

SM: November, okay.

ALISON: So I got in touch with Michael and I was kind of like ‘look, I’d really like to help out with what you’re doing.’
SM: So you got in touch with him?

ALISON: Yeah, but I was also recommended by someone from the European society who was like she’s really – she’s really passionate, you should plan to speak to her. So I started interning here, quite flex – not very - quite casually, coming in and doing quite a lot of things, and then I, uh, ended up, I suppose, um, and now I work for them.

SM: When were you offered a role, a formal paid role?

ALISON: Literally last month.

SM: Last month, in January?

ALISON: Yeah.

SM: Okay, and that’s two days a week?

ALISON: Two days a week, yeah. I was already kind of doing it virtually. And coming in to them whenever I could, doing kinds of things, and then I went from campaigns - so I started with campaigns, and then because I got really involved and did above and beyond what I supposed to.

SM: Yeah, that’s great.

ALISON: So now I’m in.

SM: So I have a question about what you hope to achieve working with My Life my Say, so what do you – I guess I have two questions. One is sort of do you see your own personal career or objectives, or what you’re passionate about, how does that link with My Life My Say and what do you see yourself doing here?

ALISON: So, I think the reason why I really wanted to work for My Life My Say, um, because having had this campaign experience where young people were really overlooked um, in the referendum and they didn’t really have a say, um, it seemed perfect to get involved in APPG that was essentially trying to give young people a voice in the negotiations, and it really resonated with me as an individual, so I really wanted to get involved. And…the idea that…I have this – I’m kind of at, I feel kind of at the center of a lot of goings on around kind of young people, and I like the fact that My Life My Say is youth-led, and it’s quite new, and it’s quite innovative, and I like the way we work here, more than actually being sucked into a huge corporation, or a youth-engagement charity that’s actually got a whole committee of old people and your token young person.

SM: Yeah.

ALISON: You know, I don’t want to be involved – I like the fact that we’re completely youth-led, so I’ve kind of moved up to where I am now, so programme and partnerships. And I’d eventually like to work here probably full time, um, going forward. Especially while APPG still runs, because it’s something that I really, really like being part of. Long term I actually want to work for the EU, wanted to work in a European institution, or be an MEP or something like that. Well I can’t anymore.

SM: Well you can marry a European.
ALISON: Well, I might do (both laugh). But I probably would – would look to work here. I’m – I have – I’ve just got a job at the Greater London Authority as well, three days a week. That starts on the sixth. But that’s only three months, so once that ends, if it doesn’t get extended or if I don’t move to something else, I’d like to carry on here, work here full time, into the end of the APPG or into the end of the Brexit negotiations, and then essentially try to move onto somewhere in Brussels, or somewhere, or even just do an internship or something like that. And I do envision myself still working abroad, probably in France or Brussels eventually.

SM: Nice!

ALISON: But my dreams and hopes were dashed.

SM: It doesn’t, you know, it’s a fluid situation. You never know, things might change.

ALISON: And actually I think to be central to what’s happening in terms of Brexit you need to be in London really. Because a lot of what’s happening is right here. And I thought we’re quite central to everything at the moment because we have APPG, and I feel like I’m most useful here.

SM: Yeah.

ALISON: And then…depending on what happens I’ll just have to see. I’m actually going to see where life takes me eventually.

SM: Yeah, great. Thank you, that’s great. I have a question about just sort of, it’s a bit of a conceptual question, and there’s no wrong answer for anything. But I wondered about My Life My Say’s ambition to rebrand politics – I guess my question to you would be how do you see the work that you’re doing, and also maybe the work of the APPG, as contributing to the mission? Do you feel like there’s a strong sense of mission here, do you feel like there’s a way to understand how you’re achieving your goals?

ALISON: I think the idea of rebranding politics for My Life My Say is making politics seem relevant to young people.

SM: Okay.

ALISON: And then the whole of work that they did before I joined was about showing young people that actually politics is all around them, it’s not separate from them in parliament or in government or something. And I think that the work we’re doing now by bringing in people together to discuss these issues, to make them aware of the opportunities, to have their views listened to. And yet we’re feeding into a parliamentary vehicle, but I think that through these sessions we’re showing them that what actually happens during negotiations is relevant to them, is directly relevant to their futures. Have a say, and then I like the idea that we are quite a pioneering charity that’s saying that we’re actually going to use the APPG. We’re not just going to talk about it, we’re going to really push it. And…a lot of the time where you’re really trying to affect change you have to work through the processes that are already there in place. You kind of have to go through the system sometimes and then come from the outskirts. So the way it computes with me is that you know, we’re carrying on with a lot of the projects that we did before, that were to do with making politics relevant, rebranding politics so that it isn’t far away but close to home. And a lot of the sessions that we already run just have a new Brexit dimension to them. And I’d
like to think that we’re making sure that you know, politics becomes something that is a bit more accessible, that people feel as though they can change and that their views matter.

SM: And how do you measure that, is it – is it in the way that you see young people respond – what would you feel is a good way to measure success?

ALISON: Well, so I think this year, in terms of measuring success, it would be how many Café Europe sessions or Café sessions we’re able to hold over the year. So last year we had – I think we engaged with like 400 and something young people directly through these Café Europe sessions. My measurement of success would be really good regional spread, because I feel as though campaigning and everything being very London-centric made me incredibly – I feel really passionate about moving out of London. I think it’s really important that we tap into areas.

SM: Yeah.

ALISON: So my success would be holding as many Café Europe and focus groups as we can, in as many different locations across the UK as we can. I would like to see the APPG really taking off, I’d like to see the report that comes out of it be really comprehensive and have a lot of backing. And I think this time next year we could have all of these, you know, all of the focus groups and the data behind this report and say, ‘Look, this is what we’ve got’. That would be really good a really good success for us and to then go forward next year and to use that report and to use the APPG to hold the government to account. To make sure they’re you know, listening to the views of young people.

SM: Yeah.

ALISON: So I suppose that’s how I would measure our success.

SM: Excellent. And have you- just a very quick question about what you just said. Have you guys talked at all about strategies, about what you’ll do with the report or is it just something that you’ll just get done as you go?

ALISON: I think, well it’s something that I think we’re going to develop as we kind of go forward, as we look at the different partnerships we’ve made, as we look at what happens, ‘cause obviously, it’s difficult to strategize what’s going to happen next year, when the political climate is so changeable at the moment. So we don’t know what’s around the corner, we don’t know what’s coming, we’re trying to capitalize on certain Brexit milestones that are coming about, that we know are going to happen, but really, anything can change. So one of strengths is really, that we can adapt to those changes and that we can try and be as flexible as possible. And I think we just need to…really keep our finger on the pulse of what’s happening with the Brexit…

SM: Right, no go on.

ALISON: …and plan accordingly.

SM: Okay (both laugh). And then my last question would be sort of about challenges. What are some of the challenges of the work that you’re doing, so the obstacles you’re trying to get through in terms of the day-to-day work and also just long-term challenges. Things that you think are going to be, um…important for you sort of to deal with as you try to make an impact with your work.
ALISON: I think one of the biggest challenges we’re going to face is the fact that in the Brexit negotiations issues concerning young people will just not be at the top of the agenda. And we’ll obviously try to push them up. Things like Erasmus plus (?), things like funding for higher education and science, things like that. And I think a big challenge for us is going to be, you know, how do we offset things that are actually quite important for young people against issues like the economy, or different environmental pacts and different human rights pacts and all the things that are going to be negotiated, I think we’re really going to struggle to push young people’s issues to the top of the agenda. But I think it’s something that, you know, what better to do than through the APPG. I think in terms of – another challenge would be – we’re already doing it at the moment, but bringing together all the different youth organizations that have the same k – kind of aim, running parallel to one another.

SM: Hmm.

ALISON: It’s kind of knitting them all together and have a kind of collective voice. But that’s happening at the moment and it’s just about – lots of organizations that are quite long-standing and that have their own processes, it’ll be about trying to kind of oversee – not oversee that, but kind of given that do they have these own processes, it’ll be trying to integrate them into this common cause as much as possible and trying to have that kind of collective action.

SM: Yeah, and I know that you guys have been doing that now, have you seen– has it been successful, have there been kind of challenges within just communication with different organizations, or…

ALISON: I think there’s going to be challenges with communication with different organizations no matter what because there’s so many.

SM: Yeah.

ALISON: But I’ve already seen the kind of different organizations connecting with one another as well, and connecting through us…and how I think it’s organizations that are aware of one another but have never actually formally kind of partnered up. And now trying to do this under this umbrella is, I think, you know even going forward, even the different issues that do – I think having that kind of platform where everyone’s kind of doing so will benefit all parties involved going forward. It’s just the case that you’ve just got to keep at it. I mean it’s not going to be easy, it’s going to be incredibly busy.

SM: Yeah.

ALISON: Like the next few months are going to be hectic.

SM: Tell me about it.

ALISON: Like crazy. But I’m really looking forward to it, I think you’ve got so much opportunity right now to really kind of – there’s lots to mobilize young people, there’s lots of focus on what’s going on right on right now, a lot of focus on the Brexit. A lot of media and lot of people are interested in what’s going on. So we have such an opportunity to kind of – make waves. And it’s just we’ve got to keep at it, don’t lose our energy.

SM: And how do you like working, I mean – it – it seems like this is some kind of shared office space, do you find it affects your work at all, do you like it, do you not like it?
ALISON: You know what, I was thinking about this, and I really like it, ‘cause it reminds me of like university libraries, you know when you go in – and I’m so used to that kind of work environment. Also, what I like about this space is that there’s so many kind of small, start-up kind of youth-led…

SM: Are there other youth organization here?

ALISON: They’re not essentially youth organizations, but they’re…

SM: they’re youth-led, yeah.

ALISON: …youth-led. So there’s one right at the end there, they’re a start-up. They weren’t here in the middle, they’ve moved.

SM: Okay.

ALISON: And they seem to be entirely run by young people.

SM: Cool.

ALISON: They’re so cool.

SM: So have you guys – do you guys interact or do you like…

ALISON: I mean, we chat, like in the kitchen we chat…

SM: Yeah.

ALISON: …but um, I just like the fact that it seems to me that a lot of the young people that work here are all from a similar kind of quite small teams, but they’re all seem to be doing quite cool things, and I really like that, it’s kind of cool. Although, this does remind me a bit of like an IKEA showroom.

SM: Cool, I think I’m going to stop it there, but thank you so much. That was really, really great.
Interview 3: Momentum volunteer Joanna (pseudonym)

SM: Okay so we’re just going to talk a little. So I’ve explained to you a little about what I’m doing now. I’m doing a research study so I’m talking to people who work with Momentum about why they’re here. So the first thing I want from you – just so I can have this – give me your name…

JOANNA: Yeah.

SM: who you are, and where you’re from.

JOANNA: My name is Joanna. I’m 24, I’m from North London.

SM: Perfect, thank you. Um, and how did you…start working with Momentum?

JOANNA: By chance.

SM: Could you give me the story?

JOANNA: So there was a young girl called Khloe, and she recognised me from another campaign. And she told me that oh, they’re looking for in the office, so would I like to come along and I said, wow, yes and never left.

SM: And before that were you involved in politics at all?

JOANNA: Yes, city council and it’s sort of in my family anyway. They have like socialist roots.

SM: Do they? Okay, so when would you say you got involved in politics, how old were you?

JOANNA: 23. Like I took it seriously.

SM: But like were you interested in it before?

JOANNA: Before, yeah. But I didn’t do anything about it.

SM: And you said that that was because of your dad’s family?

JOANNA: Yeah, my dad’s family.

SM: Okay, so you grew up around – what was the environment you grew up around in terms of politics in your house

JOANNA: Yeah, the thing is that my dad’s a lawyer, and then his great uncle was a president for a while, and stopped a military coup and brought peace to our country, so you know, it’s there. It’s there. #00:01:30-0#

SM: That’s pretty cool. Um, and what’s different about Momentum in terms of how it gets young people involved? #00:01:39-8#
JOANNA: I think that Momentum manages to do something that many, um, political pressure groups can’t do, it that it has this voice, that all these other people that maybe they don’t fit into progress or other labor strand or Fabian groups, and it just transcends more than politics. So you can come in, show your skills and then learn some more skills. So it's this exchange of knowledge and political ethos’s and outlooks. So yeah… #00:02:12-2#

SM: And what makes that more attractive you think than just like young Labor, something like that? #00:02:21-6#

JOANNA: Young labor has so many structures, and it’s not really…inviting. It doesn’t invite everybody, you know not everyone likes to go to LYO events. Because they’re a bit, you know stiff and…too formal. Whereas… #00:02:32-0#

SM: Have you ever been to an LYO event? #00:02:32-0#

JOANNA: Yes. #00:02:32-0#

SM: Okay. And why did you go, because you were with Momentum? #00:02:35-5#

JOANNA: No, I just went for sake, just to see what it’s like. #00:02:36-7#

SM: How old were you when you went to one of those - like the first one you ever went to? #00:02:39-7#

JOANNA: I think it was 23. #00:02:41-7#

SM: Okay. So about a year ago you started going, inched into politics. #00:02:47-5#

JOANNA: Like it got really, really serious, but before that, I was just enjoying myself. #00:02:51-7#

SM: Was that - I guess I’m curious about - it sounds like, and tell me if I’m wrong - about a year ago, you became interested in politics… #00:02:57-1#

JOANNA: Mm hmm #00:02:57-1#

SM: …and you sort of tested the waters with Labor and you sort of found Momentum. Is that - would that be an accurate description? #00:03:02-7#

JOANNA: Rather, it was the other way around. #00:03:06-1#

SM: It was the other way around, you found Momentum? #00:03:05-5#

JOANNA: Even Momentum first, before the membership, because Momentum you could just sign up. And then April, they emailed everyone, they were like ‘oh yeah, we’re sending some memberships, set up your papers’, and uh…so I did that. And then from then onwards they had events across London…across the country, just go to whichever appeals to you, so you know. #00:03:29-1#

SM: So how often would you, say like in a given month, that you would go to different sort of event? #00:03:34-3#
JOANNA: About two a month. #00:03:34-3#  

SM: Okay. Okay. And how often would you say you actually like - did you go to monthly meetings? #00:03:39-9#  

JOANNA: Oh, yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. #00:03:45-4#  

SM: Okay, and are those Momentum meetings? #00:03:45-4#  

JOANNA: Yeah, and I’d also do my CLPA ones. Like that’s just standard labor ones. #00:03:47-8#  

SM: You do CLPA and monthly Momentum meetings - do you do the local Momentum chapter or is there… #00:03:51-1#  

JOANNA: There’s the local one, yeah. #00:03:56-1#  

SM: Okay, so wow, you’re actually quite politically engaged. How do you find the time for all of that? #00:04:02-5#  

JOANNA: I don’t know. I’m actually not sure how I manage to find that balance. I think at first you find it a bit overwhelming because you’re trying to find your feet. But once you start doing it, it feels like breathing. #00:04:10-6#  

SM: Okay, and what, what do feel like you get out of being involved with both Momentum and labor? #00:04:17-0#  

JOANNA: You feel as though you’re part of something bigger. There’s something very satisfying about working as part of a team for a bigger outcome. You feel like today, for some bizarre reason, you feel like ‘oh my gosh’, you’ve worked to this point to see this day, to meet this day. You feel like you’re part of something bigger, supporting Jeremy, supporting people in the office, you know, what they need doing. You know, just get on with it. #00:04:50-3#  

SM: Sure, sure. And what do you think um, what does the future kind of hold for young people in this country and politics in this country? #00:04:55-4#  

JOANNA: There’s a concern because if tomorrow, everybody doesn’t get it, you do wonder that, you know, the opportunities that I had to do my B.A., and then go straight onto doing my M.A., would that be there for someone that’s 18. You know, it is a concern that is it going to be as bright, the future, as I had it.  

SM: And what do you think, why do you think – there’s so many clichés in the media about how the youth is not reliable, and how the youth won’t turn out. There’s such a, this very clichéd notion of what young people will and won’t do in politics. But as a young person, what is your view about you know, how do young people get into politics, what, what gets them interested?  

JOANNA: I think that the media are afraid. There’s this innate fear in them – you know, when you don’t understand something, you wanna do it down. So, I think that that’s their issue, that sometimes they’re afraid of the people power, and they underestimate it.
SM: Yeah, okay, and what gets young people interested in politics?

JOANNA: I think they want to be part of something bigger and see if they can change the way society could be for their own generations and generations beyond that. I think that’s what drives them into it.

SM: And how do you keep them from getting bored?

JOANNA: I think it’s how – I think it’s how passionate you are. Because you can get bored with anything.

SM: Okay, that’s a good point.

JOANNA: So it’s your commitment.

SM: And do you feel comfortable talking to young people your age about getting involved in politics? Is that something that you do?

JOANNA: That is the point but – sometimes politics can be like religion, you know you force something down people’s throats, you force feed them, these soundbites and ideas, and it doesn’t work. You just leave them, and you allow them to come to you. That’s what I do. One of my friends, she never ever bothers to register to vote. She was like ‘Julie, I voted. I’ve registered and voted’. And I just - I’ve never told her that go and join labor, I’ve never told her anything.

SM: Did she tell you why?

JOANNA: She was consuming (?) - unclear at 7:04. For free.

SM: Oh wow, okay.

JOANNA: No she’s my age group, but she feels like something had passed her by. So wants to…

SM: Thank you, fantastic, that was great.
Interview 4: Momentum Volunteer Leslie (pseudonym)

SM It’s great. I’m thinking very positively here. So, OK. So… did I tell you about my study and everything? Do you want me to give you just a quick background…

LESLIE Vaguely. I mean I don’t think I… yeah

SM OK yeah yeah. So, ehm… I work at the London School of Economics. And I’m working on a project which is EU-funded and it’s looking at how young people get involved in citizenship. Ehm. Here in the UK, but also across Europe. And we’ve been doing it since 2015. It’s going until 2018. And the portion that we’re in right now is we’re following different organisations that have shown, sort of, success at engaging young people in politics. So Momentum—we started following you guys in March

LESLIE Mmmmm

SM And then the snap election was called and I’ve been here kind of a lot just helping out but also sort of observing and talking to different people. Ehm. So basically we’re just trying to get a sense of why young people get involved in different political movements

LESLIE OK

SM So… let me just ask you some questions. So first of all if you could just tell me your full name, your age and where you’re from

LESLIE Ehm…

SM Sorry, let me make sure this is on

LESLIE Shall I spell my name as well.

SM No no no, it’s OK [UNCLEAR 02:14]

LESLIE Eh… Leslie. I’m nineteen. And I’m from Oxford

SM OK. And when did you become involved in Momentum?

LESLIE Ehm. Pretty much when it started. So in the 2015 Jeremy for Leader campaign, I was involved in Oxford doing all the phone banks. Ehm. And then when that… ehm… very organically transformed into Momentum, I was involved in that. I was involved in the first Oxford Momentum meeting. And then, ehm, got a bit more involved nationally, especially through the, ehm… the Young Labour movement

SM Mmmmm

LESLIE Ehm. I was involved in sort of the Momentum section there

SM Of Young Labour?
And that’s where I first, kind of, was exposed to the… firstly to the internal Labour, sort of, tensions. Ehm and the national picture

Yeah. How old were you when actually you came to Momentum? Were you seventeen?

I woulda been seventeen yeah

OK, so when did you actually, like… what age were you at when you actually got involved in politics?

Ehm. Well my house has always been like vaguely political, because my parents are trade unionists

OK

So I would have always voted Labour. But it was never really further than that. Ehm. So, it was when I first heard of Jeremy Corbyn. Ehm. After… because it was my MP who was the last vote to get him on the ballot for 2015

Oh wow. OK

He literally… he had like a couple of minutes or something before the deadline. And so, yeah, it was my MP. And so… I was having a lot of like Who is this? He sounded incredible

Yeah

And yeah. That motivated me to get involved. I searched up on Facebook what was going on in Oxford. I saw this little group which was mostly older people at that moment. But…

So were you the youngest in the group?

Yeah. At first. But, ehm, we got a lot more young people getting involved. We had students getting involved especially

So would you say it was Jeremy Corbyn and his leadership that made you more interested?

Yeah

OK. So you weren’t necessarily really involved in politics beforehand [UNCLEAR 04:08] Did you do anything beforehand?

Not…

Were in you in Young Labour?

Not really, no. Not even that. I wasn’t a member. I wasn’t anything
OK, cool. That’s good. Eh. And so what do you do here? Like how does your role…
what is your role now? How has it changed since you started?

Ehm. So when I started I was mostly… ehm… so I was mostly focusing on
Momentum Oxford and local campaigning as a volunteer. I was on the committee there. Ehm.
Now I do a lot more stuff nationally. So I’m the regional organiser… ehm, now… for… ehm…
South West and South East. That was very recent. But for the past two years, I’ve been mostly
volunteering

Sometimes in the office. But mostly local stuff

Are you still a volunteer or are you actually staff–paid staff now?

It’s paid staff now, yeah

OK. Part time or full time

Ehm, full time

Did you say you were going to uni next year?

Yeah, off to Manchester University. Yeah

Aw Cool. So you’ll stay connected with… with… Momentum after… when you go to
uni?

Definitely. Definitely. Ehm. But yeah, I’ll go back to being a volunteer then

Cool. Alright, so I’ve just a few questions about, sort of… ehm… what do you f… so,
one of my questions is what’s the thing that’s gotten you into politics, because some people
usually aren’t interested… young people aren’t interested in politics, but you say it’s because you
saw Jeremy Corbyn speak and OK…

Well… ehm, so I have parents that used to… eh, be in the Labour Party and they
left because of Blair. And there was always in our household a very, sort of… aura of vote
Labour, but internally its’ a mess–democratically, it’s a mess. There’s no sort of accountability
from the membership. What’s the point of being a member when actually you’re just following,
ehm, a political line which you don’t agree with and it’s quite a toxic place to be. Ehm. And so.
When I heard Jeremy Corbyn speak for the first time and what he was offering to members,
ehm, that was incredibly refreshing. Ehm. And, yeah he was describing a Labour Party that my
parents first got involved with… my parents were first, like, excited by. Ehm… and it was stuff
like that I wanted to fight for, definitely

Yeah. And… I’m just curious because, you know, there are quite a few young people
working here in Momentum. But what do you think separates you from other young people your
age that are… you know, why aren’t other young people more interested in politics? Or do you
think that it’s changing?

I think that it’s changing, definitely
SM  You do? OK

LESLIE  Eh. Cos the thing… when I… when I first got involved in 2015, like, all my friends were having the same conversations. Eh. I think… and they’re getting a lot more involved, especially now.

SM  Yeah

LESLIE  There’s a huge sort of feeling of… it’s now or never and actually this… you know, we are getting the… the… the sort of… the bulk of the cuts. This is affecting us. They are targeting us. And here’s a guy that’s standing up for us. Let’s do it. Let’s fight for him finally.

SM  Yeah

LESLIE  Eh. I think… there’s… there’s still a feeling of But really what can we do? Who’s going to listen to us?

SM  Yeah

LESLIE  I think that’s wh… that’s… that’s the difference. That’s where… there are some people. Some people [UNCLEAR 07:17] Eh. No… [aside] Heya

OTHE MALE [UNCLEAR 07:25]

SM  Cool. Yeah yeah. Great. Two minutes

OTHER MALE [UNCLEAR 07:30]

SM  Alright. OK, cool. Thanks.

LESLIE  [laughs]

SM  [laughs]

LESLIE  Eh. What was I saying? Eh… So I think… I think people are a bit nervous to… eh… properly invest into it, because you know they’re still quite disillusioned from the whole political world. Doesn’t seem like it’s for them. You know? Jeremy Corbyn is rare

SM  Yeah

LESLIE  And they still see the Labour Party as this sort of machine which is not, ehm.. not made for them

SM  yeah. And what type of conversations do you have with friends of yours that are around your age that are maybe not so politically engaged? Do you talk to them about politics? Or is sort of like…

LESLIE  [laughs]

SM  I feel like it’s a tricky thing, isn’t it?
LESLIE  It’s… I mean they’ve learned not to bring it up with because I just go a bit mad [laughs]

SM  Really?

LESLIE  [laughs] Yeah. But I always get really surprised buy actually how much, ehm, they do research on their own and they do, like, watch the broadcasts and… like, a lot of them have read the manifestos

SM  Oh wow

LESLIE  Eh. Just on their own. Eh. So actually, like, I’m getting more and more surprised by how, ehm, in the know they are. Eh. But yeah, especially like… they’re loving the Grime for Corbyn. Absolutely

SM  Mmmm. Yeah it’s huge. Grim for Corbyn. I couldn’t believe it. Yeah, it’s great

LESLIE  And it was really, really effective

SM  So, last question. The future. So let’s say Corbyn doesn’t win on Friday. Well, Thursday-Friday whatever. We know he will, but let’s say he doesn’t win, what do you think that means for young people in the future?

LESLIE  It’s going to be interesting to watch… So after 2015, a lot of young people joined

SM  yeah

LESLIE  And that youth vote transformed into a sort of… the young basis of Jeremy Corbyn’s support

SM  Yeah

LESLIE  Eh. So, it could go two ways. Either, ehm, people… ehm are like Oh shit after all of that, after all of the effort—because I think a lot of the people are optimistic. They’re seeing good polls. They’re seeing celebrity endorsements. They’re seeing the… the huge contrast between Jeremy and Theresa May and they… at the moment they think how on earth could it go back to the Conservatives

SM  Yeah

LESLIE  How on earth can we have a world like that— that we actually vote for this type of a person?

SM  Yeah

LESLIE  And they could be more disillusioned than ever. More lost than ever. And think I gave it a go, it didn’t work

SM  Yeah
LESLIE I’m stepping back. There’s no point. Or they could get angry and they could rise up and they could be like Shit

SM And push even harder

LESLIE …I’m going to join the Labour party. I’m going to support Jeremy Corbyn. And I’m going to make sure that we get it next time. Because I think it’s about how Labour… what… basically people are going to be lost and people are going to be angry. And it’s about what… what doors we offer them. And what sort of… what steps we offer them. So it’s about the preparation for that. Ehm. So it’ll be interesting to see how people react. I don’t know

SM OK

LESLIE I don’t know

SM That’s all I ask for now. Thank you so much Leslie. I really appreciate it. I… you know, I agree with you. I think one of the things that I’m really surprised by is that every election cycle you sort of see this thing… this truism trotted out in the media that young people aren’t reliable to vote. Do you think that’s different or do you think like this year it…?

LESLIE I mean, two million joined the election register. Which is not only, like, really exciting and really positive, but also like in the long run that is a generation dedicated to Labour. Because the Tory vote is going to die off

SM That’s a good point. That’s a really good point

LESLIE And that’s a generation that we can rely on to get the vote out. So that… that’s incredible. I think… I think it is… the young vote is… unreliable. I think that time and time again we have seen it. And I just hope now, ehm… but I think there’s a much bigger push. I think the Labour Party have done a much larger push to… I’m fighting for you. I’m fighting for your future. Rather than trying to get a middle ground between young people and old people [UNCLEAR 11:23]

SM Yeah

LESLIE … it was actually No, all of us. Let’s do it for them

SM And it feels like the first election in a while where there is a really large focus on young people…

LESLIE Yeah

SM …and actually on people’s futures

LESLIE Definitely

SM Cool. That’s it. I’m gonna…
Interview 5: Momentum Volunteer Mary (pseudonym)

SM: First. Um. if you could just tell me your name, your age and where are you from?

M: My name is Mary. I am 28 reaching 29. Um I’m from Edinburgh.

SM: Ok and when did you get involved in Momentum?

M: Um I guess properly involved quite recently. Um like. Yeah. When…when Corbyn was first standing for leader I was kind of like getting excited a bit and um.

SM: What made you excited about it?

M: Um he was my MP actually growing up.

M: Cause I grew up in London so like I knew he was good and like it was the hope of having something good of left wing happening in mainstream politics and it all seemed like this great optimism and also like really confused with. Yeah I mean as a start of the Labour Party kind of having a weird antagonism with their own leader. So I got excited then and joined as an affiliate member so I could vote for him. And then kind of left it. Um and then just after Brexit I think on the day that Brexit happened. I was like okay I'm gonna join the Labour Party (laughs). Um without expecting the kind of cool things will happen. Um just the like I'm going to show some solidarity with Corbyn. Um and that was when I started kind of I went to a lot of government meetings in Edinburgh. Um but I’d been involved in like political activism before but not anything like involved in political parties and found it quite kind of weird and confusing and like all the talking about the internal politics of the Labour Party. I guess it was also the beginning of a thing like people making like long speeches about stuff that was just like uh I'm going back to my like non party activism for a bit. Um and then with the elections I was like right okay I want to do something against the Tories. I'll only get involved with like actual voting stuff.

SM: With the snap election you mean?

M: Yeah.

SM: Did you. So you became a Labour Party member after Brexit. When did you become a Momentum part...um Momentum member?

M: I think I joined like at the time that I first was going to some Momentum meetings but then I stopped going after a bit cause I was just like this isn’t fun this is exhausting (laughs).

SM: Yeah what what got you in the politics sort of originally? Cause you know sometimes we see a lot of young people. uh not necessarily here but a lot of young people don't really get into politics. But I'm wondering what got you interested in it.

M: I mostly got involved in like politics activism when I was uni. Um but I was already quiet kind of left wing and thinking about climate change and stuff like that. So I went to a climate camp. That was the kind of... you've probably heard of it (laughs)

SM: I've not heard of it actually.
M: You haven't? Oh I just thought there'd be more people from that. But um yeah it was kind of...it probably was around like 2010 there was a series of camps every summer like doing activism about climate change in specific focus places. There was a coal led power station. There was one at Heathrow and

SM: Oh wow.

M: yeah it went on for a few years.

SM: And it was run by. Was it run by Labour? or was it run by just outside groups.

M: No no it was like it was run by climate camp (laughs)

SM: Climate camp is the name of the group. Okay sorry.

M: So it was mostly kind of anarchists left wing groups, activists going and they were like doing kind of like local direct action kind of thing. Um And have a kind of big action day. Targeted at the thing they were kind of camping outside of.

SM: Oh and you did this while you were in uni or before or after?

M: Pretty much when I was a uni actually I did that.

SM: Did you study in Scotland or did you study here?

M: No I studied in England. Yeah I was in Cambridge.

SM: Ok.

M: So I got involved in groups that was. It was very small actually so I got involved in a group that was called Cambridge Action Network. That was doing all kinds of [inaudible words] can

SM: Okay. Okay.

M: Yeah. So yeah we were doing stuff around climate and around kind of left wing politics And. but yeah so definitely outside of kind of parties and stuff like that. It was much more kind of like. yeah

SM: So what's your feeling in terms of Momentum and how they're sort of. they're separate but also really part of Labour like do you feel...cause this is sort of on the cusp of institutional politics and how do you feel about being involved with Momentum?

M: I don't really understand how it works (laughs) and yeah I'm not very sure. I guess that like. There's a kind of hope and optimism with the chance of like maybe getting Corbyn elected. But it's it is this the first time where I've been getting involved in institutional politics through institutional like that and it's a bit of like oh wow yeah I think this is a good idea actually let's do this.

SM: Yeah so what was the process. So like you were in Scotland yeah cause you live there now right? And you heard about snap election and you thought you wanted to get involved what did you have to do to actually get here in the room to volunteer?
M: It's quite confusing actually. So like on the day it was called or like the next day I had this like Okay actually I'm going to get involved with kind of like party politics and voting stuff I haven't done before. and we'll try to work out what to do. and I also thought I don't really want to do that in Scotland because there's not so many Tories, I wasn't that into my MP who's the only Labour MP in Scotland. But had been kind of refusing to be minister, yeah [inaudible words] into Scotland and stuff like that with Corbyn. Um so I was like okay I can take some time off I can go somewhere else and then I was just trying to work out what to do and could have voted quite a lot of different people it was like asking friends. I had friends in Scotland who were getting involved with things like...Yeah I don't know what you should do (laughs)...trying to work out what people were doing in London. Yeah but I didn't really have links to it particularly. So spent quiet a long time working out what I might do. And then one of the people that I spoke to was it like Momentum things [inaudible word] could I get involved. I want to go volunteer somewhere that is not Scotland...what should I do (laughs).

SM: Oh wow.

M: and then in that time it worked out that there's stuff to do in London and my mum lives here so that was the easiest to do.

SM: Right. I see. [inaudible word: Islington?] I'm guessing.

M: Yeah.

SM: That's true okay.

M: Yeah exactly (laughs)

M: So then I was like actually I could come to London. Do you have stuff for me to do there. and they were like yeah come to London.

SM: So you did this. You contacted through somebody in Momentum here in London or through...just like.

M: Yeah I think it was a like general kind of helping kind of helping kind of like just a general email address on Momentum site for info and I was like hey how can I help?

SM: Oh cool! okay and you just rocked up last week?

M: Yeah they were like come to the office! and I did that. It was basically (laughs) that. No they talked to me on the phone first actually.

SM: Okay um and then once you were here did I mean...are you just turning up every day? or do you check in with anybody you do just.

M: So I've been. Last week I was working with Steven doing [inaudible: text?] banking stuff and then um actually yesterday I stayed at home. On Monday I stayed at home was doing that stuff online. Um just like doing.

SM: Yeah no I was here and then I went home and did a bunch of relay for a couple of hours. You can do...it's cool you can do it at home yeah.
M: Which is great.

SM: Just some nice conversations.

M: This is nice. cause I'm going to have to go back at some point soon and then I can take stuff with that. And then yeah today I showed up and I was like is there anything for me to do? And hopefully there will be.

SM: There will be. Cool. Well that's it. I appreciate it.

M: Cool.

SM: Thank you.
Interview 6: Momentum Staff Member Roberta (pseudonym)

SM: Cool. You know who I am right? We've met. We know each other. You know that I'm here doing my research with LSE. I'm going put this here to capture your voice. Cool. Just ignore it.

SM: So one of the things we've been doing over the last eight months is trying to get a sense of how you guys not only work with young people or for young people but also like a lot of you are young people. I think you just said it in the office which is that most of the people that work here are young. So that's really very interesting to us. So basically just a quick little ground rules. The way we do these interviews is you have complete and final control over every aspect of it. So I'll record it. We'll get it transcribed and we'll email it to you and you can say OK this works, this reflects the conversation. And also you know that I want to take this bit out. If at any point you need me to stop or (inaudible) it's fine. We can use a pseudonym for you if you want, you can choose to use a different name. You can choose your own name that's up to you. We default to usually just providing different names. So I'll call you like Roxanne instead of Roberta or something like that. But just to let you know like obviously this this is about you feeling comfortable, I'm not going to ask you difficult questions. I'll just ask about your experience. So the first thing is just if you could just start by telling me just so that I have it on the record - your full name, your age and where you're from.

R: Roberta, 22, Islington London.

SM: Oh! So you're from Islington. Cool. Okay. Is Jeremy your MP?

R: Yes.

SM: Oh very nice. So you grew up in London.

R: I did.

SM: Okay. First question I ask you if when were growing up did you discuss politics at the dinner table.

R: Umm... I never engaged in it. I always thought it really boring. But my parents discussed it a lot.

SM: Did they? And were your parents of a particular political persuasion?

R: Yeah. Always on the left. Trade union left.

SM: Okay. Trade union left. So you knew about Jeremy Corbyn and knew who he was?

R: Yes.

SM: Okay. And when... when did you get into politics?

R: Umm... When Jeremy stood to be leader. I knew that it's like a really important thing.

SM: And it was... you think it was because of the connection that you had being in Islington?
R: Yeah I knew him personally also I knew that he was like or his politics was good. There's if there's any cause to get involved with especially... like from the day he stood there was clearly like a massive spike in youth getting involved as they believed in him. And yeah I thought that this is the point to start getting involved in it.

SM: So you had never been really involved before.

R: I mean I campaigned during the general election earlier that year.

SM: Okay so you had... So was that your first time getting invoked?

R: Yeah. Kind of did a bit of door knocking.

SM: And how did you meet Jeremy Corbyn prior to his first official campaign?

R: I mean my dad's known him since I don't know.

SM: Okay. So he's like a friend of the family?

R: Well not friend of the family it's more like... my dad... cause he's the same trade union as my dad. And my dad's M... obviously our MP and my dad's worked with him. So it's more like a...

SM: Okay. So there is was a connection there already.

R: ...met a few times.

SM: And so how did your involved in Momentum was it through the leadership campaign?

R: Yes so it through the leadership campaign and then when the leadership campaign ended I was actually his first volunteer. So it was in the early days in the office with (4 other staff members – names redacted)

SM: Okay so you've been here since the very beginning. Okay. And what are some of the challenges that you've sort of seen Momentum facing in sort of building itself up in the last few years?

R: Obviously it's like a big force, and it's difficult to control. Lots of people even if they say like join real politics they have different different views on things and that can always be difficult when you're trying to this group that involves everybody.

SM: And in terms of young people so why would... what what is it about Momentum that appeals to young people. Why do you think Momentum as an organisation has been so successful. Getting young people involved, getting young people's interest?

R: I because think it does things in a new interesting way like the Left is know previously for being quite old and I think quite white and quite male in an environment and Momentum has done everything in its power power to change that and like create spaces that are much more interesting, lots of debates, socials. The world transformed (inaudible) massively changed how politics is done with this kind of mix of politics and like fun. I'm basically like having socials, having musicians, having political discussions all in the same place. It's definitely like... it's like
you don't want to be at a conference all day and then not have some fun afterwards. Like if you combine that with the politics it makes people want to get involved and be involved.

**SM:** You know it's interesting that you said that the world has transformed because I was just reading online on the Guardian and it was this article talking about the world transform at the Brighton conference and how it's signalling Momentum becoming more mainstream. Do you think momentum is becoming more mainstream?

**R:** I think it is becoming mainstream but in but in the best kind of way. It's so ... it's like an open honest organization. Everyone knows what it is and the fact that is becoming mainstream is really good thing. 'Cuse there's no hiding behind them.

**SM:** And so would you say... I mean Momentum... mean Momentum is obviously going cross generational you know membership and support (inaudible) obviously but also as you come into the office at any given day and you'll see this cross generational mix. Do you... do you think it's more of a movement for young people only want... I'm just trying to...

**R:** Definitely not. I think it's a movement that unlike others has attracted young people it doesn't mean it's only attracted young people it's members age goes across the spectrum.

**SM:** And do you... how much of a reaction would you say I guess Momentum or (inaudible) have had with Jeremy? Is it not... I know that there was this thing in the beginning...

**R:** Actually surprisingly not too close. It's more about the politics of Jeremy Corbyn. It's not like he is on all the videos or he's... he's really not. It's just more about Momentum as a kind of a organisation itself and the policies that it backs.

**SM:** And if Jeremy Corbyn decided in like three or four years to retire and Momentum was still going do you think... how would that change Momentum? Do you Momentum would just keep doing its thing?

**R:** Momentum would definitely be doing its thing.

**SM:** The last question here actually I have two more questions. So I just want to ask you, you mentioned some diversity a little bit earlier. What do you think... you know how is Momentum tackling issues of sort of making Momentum and Labour more inclusive? Do you see that happening in the organisation what are some of the challenges?

**R:** I do see it happening but I do I think it could happen more... Like it could be more encouraging towards different... different range of people. It’s always difficult to get for example (inaudible) women involved because it's such already like historically it's been a male environment. And that's the same with politics. It's been like a male a white male environment and it is always difficult to change that but Momentum probably could be doing more.

**SM:** And you started as a volunteer so have you transitioned to being a paid staff member?

**R:** Yeah. I began becoming a paid staff member in the leadership election in 2016.

**SM:** The second leadership election?
R: Yeah and then I've been paid since as an intern and then I... when I finished my internship I stayed on.

SM: Okay. Great. And so you starting (inaudible) next week?

R: December eleventh. So in two weeks.

SM: Okay. That's really exciting. So how do you feel about leaving Momentum? I mean you look obviously like you're connected with them.

R: Yeah. I'm actually excited to see what they do. Because you're never going to removed fully from Momentum. There's definitely doing to be instances where I continue to be involved. (loud noise, speech inaudible). See what the digital... What Anna does, what new and interesting ideas they have to bring to this organisation. And I think it's always a good... Like leaving a job is always going to be sad but it's also exciting to see what it does next.

SM: Yeah. And have they figured out... Have they identified the new... your replacement?

R: No applications are open.

SM: Okay cool. Okay. Last question. Last last one. Looking into a crystal ball. How do you feel about the future of you know politics, news engagement, just sort of what you guys are trying to do. How do you feel about.

R: I'm really excited. Because in two years I have got to learn so much and in two years it can be so much more.

SM: Right. That's it! Thank you! Really appreciate it.
Local Appendix B (UK): Field Notes

FIELD NOTES (20 pages, Arial 11pt single spaced)


Representatives from various youth organisations enter the room where the meeting will be held, while the MLMS organisers and Parliament chairs prepare at the front of the room. Across the room different groups of people are talking with each other. I noticed that some of the attendees knew each other from other networks and were catching up, while there were a couple of other conversations that happened as a result of people introducing themselves to each other. Maybe it’s because we’re in a parliamentary committee room but there was definitely a sense of excitement and I felt a positive energy amongst people there.

I see CEO discussing with COO where the best place to put the MLMS standing banner should be, in order to maximize visibility. I’ve seen them debate about where to position their logo banner two other times: at the focus group that we co-convened in December 2016, and at the Warwick conference at the Shard he presented at last week. It seems like an important thing for them.

The two participating MPs (SK and SD) take their seats at the front of the room with CEO and COO from MLMS. CEO is wearing a t-shirt, and while he is preparing to start I hear him say to someone ‘the great thing about working for a youth organisation is that I can get away with wearing a t-shirt.’ – I found this comment interesting because his public casualness to me contradicts how serious and focused he was on making the APPG as professional as possible so people would take its work seriously. Saying that, it could also just be a thing that he likes to do, not dress up, and he’s able to play the ‘youth’ card which allows him to do that and not lose ‘face’ or respect that might happen if he was an adult who didn’t dress appropriately for work.

SK, as the chair of the APPG, introduces the meeting and project, and comments on the number of youth organisations and stakeholders that have attended. As the chair of this APPG SK seems to be very happy about the number of organisations that are in attendance, and twice during his comments refers to how impressive MLMS have been to get all of these stakeholders around the table. So seems to be a bit of acknowledgement of CEO’s political acumen.

CEO gives introductory speech. Like the other public appearances CEO seemingly recites from memory some background information about MLMS, what they do, and what the point of their organisation is (to rebrand politics for young people).

COO talks next. COO introduces the APPG, drawing on her own background as a remain campaigner during the EU referendum. She is clearly wearing her ‘remain’ credentials on her sleeve, but is quick to frame the APPG in a nonpartisan way, as she says “it doesn’t matter how you voted, or whether you voted at all, what matters is that you have your say now.”

SD talks. SD mentions his role as a ‘young’ MP, noting that he is the second youngest member of parliament (behind his fellow Scot and non-participant in this APPG, Mhairi Black). He is very enthused about the possibilities of the group.
Organisations and participants introduce themselves. This is perhaps the most interesting part of the meeting so far, as each organisational representative speaks in turn to explain what has brought them to the meeting and what they hope to get out of it. It is an interesting mix of groups that include youth citizenship stakeholders and also explicitly pro and anti-remain groups who work with young people.

SM gives an LSE research presentation and has Q&A. [NB these notes entered after session ended as I was directly participating in the presentation and Q&A]. In these 10 minutes I outlined to the group the intended research plan for the APPG from Jan-June 2017, explaining how we were going to conduct focus groups across the country and invite the organisations present to help us collect data.

My general impression of the response to my presentation on the APPG research project was very positive. There were a number of clarifying questions about which age group of young people were most important, what some of the main issues that we wanted to know about were (economy and immigration were the two biggest), and the areas in the UK we were going to visit. There were concerns voiced about how the research could actually achieve impact as well.

SK speaks next. SK seems very impressed by it all and very enthusiastic.

CEO speaks to wrap up, invite the organisations present to get involved in the research, and asks a Bite the ballot rep – who has had experience working with a similar APPG on youth and democratic participations – to speak. The BTB rep — suggests that this APPG could in addition to producing original research also help to scrutinize legislation, and try to bring in young people who are disengaged. There is a lot of talk about being inclusive, although no specifics on how this would happen in the context of the APPG.

CEO insists on getting all participants together for a photo at the end of the meeting, which SK refers to as ‘the usual thing we do at the end.’ This was interesting as I got the impression from SK’s response that a big group photo was something he was familiar with doing with MLMS in previous events, but not something that he would normally do at such meetings. He had an air of amusement while it was getting organised, a kind of ‘well of course we need to get this bit done’ type of attitude I thought.

**Post-observation thoughts:**

This was an event in which the ‘participant’ part of my participant-observation was particularly evident, mainly because this was the first meeting of the APPG and required a thorough explanation to participants of the role LSE was playing. Our reciprocity for MLMS participating in the WP8 ethnography has become arguably more important for MLMS than they are for us in conducting our ethnography. MLMS has, in my view, very clearly used the LSE name and our CatchEyoU-related expertise in youth active citizenship to demonstrate to the stakeholders who attended the meeting that they are both competent and serious about trying to use the APPG to actually help young people achieve a better Brexit. This speaks to a savvy choice to ‘use’ LSE to demonstrate how he has a good university supporting his work – it’s important to note that when CEO and I were first discussing the WP8 collaboration and we offered to support them with research, he let me know that they had had a few other universities approach them about doing research, and that he had ‘selected’ us because he knew LSE produced top quality research.
One thing I noticed in this meeting is that, as with the general population, there is still so much uncertainty and anxiety about both what will actually happen as a result of Brexit, and how anyone (much less young people) can actually influence the process. During my presentation I noted how important it would be for the APPG as a group to carefully reflect upon what ‘a better Brexit for young people’ actually means – surely for remainers it might mean something much different than to the leavers who were in attendance?

A few other things stuck out to me. The entire event felt like a validation exercise by Parliament (and specifically SK) for MLMS’s efforts in convening the APPG. CEO had told me that MLMS had done past events with SK before, and that he and SK had a good relationship, and that SK had a lot of faith in the work of MLMS. Still, I was interested to see both SK’s incredibly positive (impressed) reaction to the APPG attendance and content as it unfolded, and also to witness how diligently CEO/MLMS seemed to be working during the meeting to get that precise outcome. It was all so intensely political. CEO – a local Labour politician himself in London – seems to inherently ‘get’ what the political game is about: using networks to generate action to create influence.

All in all, the session felt very optimistic, and I think mainly because everyone in the room was really excited to be collectively part of a Parliamentary platform for young people. No matter that there are over 800 APPGs with varying degrees of (in)activity, or that anecdotal consensus seems to be that they are very difficult venues through which to have meaningful policy impact. It was the sense of possibility that animated attendees – who were mostly remainers – about how a strong and politically-networked representative body for young people could actually do something good on their behalf.

12 April 2017 – MLMS Public launch of ‘The Better Brexit’ campaign, held at a local social venue in East London

The event started at 6:30pm, first hour spent socializing in a party type space. Non alcoholic drinks! It has the feel of an art gallery party, with low lighting and chairs set against the wall. There are many familiar faces here, young people who have been involved in past MLMS events as either participants or volunteers. This is a very multicultural audience with mostly black and brown young people here. There is no seating except at edges of the room. In the center of the room, there are standing round tables. The CEO announces that the tables should be used with the whiteboards on them to write what they think about Brexit, to use the tables to chat.

At the front of the room is the stage area with a microphone and speakers set up. The event’s host is a young person who started a charity dedicated to giving black university students in Bristol a voice. The event has been billed in advance by MLMS as a night of ‘TEDx style speeches and breakout debate sessions, along with spoken word, poetry and comedy performances.’

The host introduces the night, encourages audience to Tweet, using a Snapchat filter. She introduces the first performer, a young black female who performs an original poem called ‘Who will give her a voice?’ It’s really good, very Brexit focused, a rallying cry to include young peoples voices, and it’s also pretty angry. She is talking about the experience of marginalised women of colour, and connecting it to the Leave campaign’s scapegoating of refugees and migrants. I really enjoyed it.

There are probably 200 people here now. After the poem, the host introduces ‘the King of Hackney, the amazing Mete Coban!’
Mete, who I have seen give easy, confident, and captivating speeches many times before, begins by saying ‘Welcome to the amazing London borough of Hackney! Quick question: what’s the average age of a councilor in the UK?’

People shout out random answers, ‘35,’ ‘40,’ etc.

Mete says: ‘66!’ He then proceeds to give his speech. One of the lines he says that the audience responds to is ‘Politics is about picking your trash up on time.’ He is seriously passionate about and knows his stuff and really believes in making sure that marginalised people are involved in the conversation. It’s at the heart of what he is talking about – getting young people like those in the room with us, from different ethnicities and cultures, involved in politics to make a positive change in the world.

He shows a video MLMS has made for this event, called ‘My Brexit’ and showing many of MLMS’ volunteers, staff and trustees reading an original poem. It’s got a very similar message to the earlier poem about making sure young people’s voices are part of Britain’s future.

After the video, the next speaker is up, and it’s Neil Coyle, a Labour MP, a white middle-aged man. At this stage it is interesting to observe that everyone is basically standing and watching a series of talks. Neil is going through his talking points. Seems to realise that it’s a bit listy, and tedious! Makes a joke about it.

He is making it political: ‘the little Englander right wing mentality is taking over.’ He says, ‘There are some people in this room, that if this doesn't work out, will be campaigning to rejoin the European Union.’

This is starting to feel like a bit of a London Remainer bubble!

He wraps up, and the host returns on stage and explains that ‘before we go into our Ted x style talks, we’re going to have some discussion at our table.’ She gives three discussion questions and puts them up on the projector:

‘Do you think we'll eventually be trying to renter the EU?’

‘Do you think young people's views were taken into consideration?’

She says, ‘In five minutes we'll take some responses from audience members.’ People begin chatting and there is a lively buzz around the room. I really like that this kind of prompted audience political discussion is happening at an evening social-style event. It’s something MLMS do at all their Café Europe and Café Brexit events, but as those are normally daytime and are about discussion and debate, this seems a little more out of the ordinary.

Audience members are taking the mic and giving their thoughts. Lance (pseudonym), a northern youth councilor and staunch Leave supporter who has attended many MLMS events and is part of a separate youth Brexit campaign called ‘Undivided,’ says his usual stuff about getting on with it and making the best of the situation. An Asian male speaks next and says ‘75% of young people voted for remain so I think it should be an option for us to remain at the end of the negotiation period.’
This event continued with several more speakers; overall it was clear from the evening that the event was a hugely pro Remain speaker lineup and audience. MLMS did give a prominent (second to last) speaking slot to a young white male, who organised a pro Leave campaign at his university and gave a passionate speech about seizing the opportunity of Brexit, although he faced a very skeptical crowd.

The event was a vivid example of MLMS’ efforts to create inclusive spaces for young people to share their own stories, creative expressions and voices about Brexit. It showed how youth civic action could enable the creation of interactive youth communities around specific political issues. MLMS’ inclusion of an audience discussion and feedback session in particular offers an unusually participatory and reflexive forum within an event style that would normally follow a performer-audience dynamic. However, it also reveals the challenge of fostering meaningful political debate in an era of emotional politics in the UK; amongst both Remainers and Leavers passions run high regarding the other side’s arguments and perspectives. At this event, its London location and networks gave it a distinctly pro-EU and pro-Remain feel. While this is to be expected considering London’s cosmopolitan outlook and British young people’s general preference to remain in the EU, and was explicitly addressed by including pro-Leave performers, it still nonetheless created an atmosphere of easy consensus during the event. Still, our observations allowed us to see that within youth political activism networks in London there was a significant desire for such opportunities, to give young people a space to air their (often frustrated, but also hopeful) views.

Saturday 25 March 2017 – Momentum National Conference, Birmingham

10.30: Queue outside: a few left-wing paper sellers, predominantly white, sprinkling of other ethnicities, more middle aged and up. My impressions are that many seem like people who are not new to politics. They have that feel that they have been here before! I suspect they are either people who have been on the left and been involved in activism at some point or are latent Labour Party members/supporters who may have been disillusioned or disempowered by New Labour over the last two decades, and thus not involved but have been motivated by this new ‘movement’.

The building/structure looks like a warehouse or a place where you would expect to see market stalls or a flea market. As you enter the building/structure you meet the organisers of the event. They are wearing Momentum T-shirts. Broadly speaking, they are younger than the attendees. They have an energy and enthusiasm about them. There is music in background (soul with a slightly retro feel). There are a range of stalls; local Momentum groups, local organisations – e.g. local Stop the War, Cuba Solidarity, Ethical T-shirt business, Red Pepper magazine, Alliance for PR in House of Commons, Sheffield Needs A Payrise, etc.

11.39am: The first person to address people is named Fatima. She is a young black woman in hijab. She is an interesting choice to open with. I am not sure what her position is in Momentum (NB post notes: She was elected as Young Labour’s BAME officer in February 2016, and also works on BAME issues for Momentum). I don’t know if she was chosen because of this or to promote ethnic diversity. She says she was new to politics and activism when she joined. She admits that Momentum has had ‘rocky’ year. She comes across as an honest and open person. She is full of praise for the current Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn - she talks about the ‘successes’ since he took over. She is positive about the work of her local CLP. Her address to the gathering is deliberately upbeat and positive. She informs everyone of the twitter hashtag - #momentum2017.

NB: It would be worth looking at what the Twitter feed says.
Fatima then introduces a South Asian man late 20s/30s from an ethical clothing company. They produce Corbyn/Momentum T-shirts as well as a range of anti-corporate/anti-consumerism t-shirts. I subsequently spoke to him and he said he was disappointed that he did not have longer to speak – he wanted to explain in more detail how their business operates and what its rationale is.

Fatima introduces message from Jeremy Corbyn on big screen. There is hushed silence this time. Most people turn to look at the screen – more so than with the previous speakers. There is a big round of applause suggesting support for Corbyn in the audience.

N from Birmingham Momentum is next up. She is a White woman in her 20s. People now stay focused on stage. She only joined in June 2016 – she says it had been a 'brilliant experience' for her. JC appealed to her when saw him on the tele. She talks about cuts to Birmingham council. She says that the three Momentum groups in Birmingham help out at food banks, support anti-cuts marches (e.g. NHS) and do a range of other things. She said she would have 'given up' had she just attended local Labour Party meetings. She says Momentum has changed things and it's 'just the start'. She ends by saying that 'we will win the General Election in 2020' to cheers.

Then a man of African/African-/Caribbean descent who has been a labour councillor for 15 years addresses the room. He seems in his 40s. He makes jokes about ‘secret plots’ and people laugh. He says that the Labour Party should be about its members, not its leaders. He talks about the importance of ‘capacity-building’. He encourages people to join the network - become a councilor, for example.

**European Connection - Internationalism**

A young woman by the name of ______ who is a Podemos Member of the European Parliament and a spokesperson for London Podemos then addresses the audience. This seems like a clear attempt make links with movements/organisations beyond the UK. She says that Podemos is excited about Momentum. She pays tribute to the international brigades when talking by about the rise of the right recently. Her speech is rather long. She seems experienced in politics and at delivering speeches.

**National leadership – connection to established politicians**

John McDonnell, the shadow chancellor, then takes the stage to huge cheers. He starts by talking about the recent terrorist attack on Westminster in which four people were killed, and sends condolences to the families of victims. He talks about visiting one of his local mosques. He delivers a message of ‘unity’, saying we all in the same race- the ‘human race’. Everyone in the hall is watching him. Any conversations that were going on have now ended. He deliberately emphasises that Labour got a ‘Socialist leader’ when JC was elected and this is met with loud cheers.

He explains how Momentum ‘came about’ and that it was about building a ‘movement’. He says that ‘we should appreciate how far we’ve come’ and that Labour have been transformed into an anti-austerity party. People cheer. He explains that JC was ‘set up’ around the European Union referendum. He says their position was always ‘Remain but reform’. He adds that ‘we mobilised well’. He says that ‘they blamed JC for the Brexit referendum result and used it as an excuse for the coup’. He adds that the ‘media is at us continuously’ according to ‘independent studies’. He says that these are attempts to divide and demoralise. He does admit that ‘we’ve made mistakes’
but adds that that is admission is the only ‘headline they use tomorrow. He says that he often hears ordinary members of the Labour Party saying they need to be ‘more radical’. He says that tax needs to be ‘more redistributive’. Significantly he talks about the ‘need to work cooperatively’ with those ‘we don’t agree with in the party’; he explains that ‘we should meet provocation with comradeship and solidarity’ in the party. He adds that ‘Momentum needs to be a healing force in the Labour party’. And finally he says that he knows that meetings can be ‘boring’ but adds ‘let’s make them interesting’. He encourages members to offer to serve in local parties. It’s just an impression but JM seems a little weary. You get the feeling that he feels somewhat ‘battered’ but is fighting on!

Although, much of the talk in these speeches is about ‘members’ and not ‘leaders’, it is clear that both JC and JM are held in great respect by Momentum members. There is a clear message of working together with others, including those who you disagree with. Overall, there is an understanding that politics and activism can be ‘boring’ but there is a drive to keep people upbeat, energized and interested in what they are doing.

**Newcomer to activism - session.**

There are two male presenters and one female. They seem in their 30s. They are very upbeat, very animated. They move around a lot as people come into the room. They are playing a scene from the film ‘Brassed Off’ – a classic British drama about working class people’s struggles; the music from the film fills the room. There is a clear attempt to lift and energise people. This is followed by a track by a leftwing folk singer Pete Seeger – ‘solidarity forever’?

**A large container of chewy sweets** (Starburst, Love Hearts, pick’n’mix) is passed around and this gesture is received well by people. It is draughty and cold in the building. **I am an experienced political activist, and it is unlike any political meeting I have been to.** There is a big element of performance on the part of the hosts. They begin with warm up activities; people are asked to ‘shout out boring things in meetings’ - people reply 'men talking over women' and 'acronyms we don't understand'. A brief discussion ensues about how boring meetings ‘put people off politics’.

One of the people delivering this session says they haven't done this sort of thing much before.

After this introduction, **there is a ‘presentation’ that begins by looking at ‘motivation’** – how it works etc. The facilitators keep taking turns to speak to keep things interesting. They begin by looking at ‘psychological theory’ in relation to ‘motivation’ – a topic which is a little dry. At the same time, there are constant communicative efforts to keep people engaged. It is like they are ‘serving’ the audience. Engaging and stimulating people seems their primary aim. They're make jokes and fooling around quite a bit to entertain the gathered group. Then they list activities and ask how much fun these are; (e.g. Branch meetings, door knocking). Different people have different views. The facilitators explain that there are three reasons how you get to level 1 of motivation: autonomy, competence, relatedness. It's almost like they are re-educating old left-wingers here. They clearly feel it is important to make explicit the psychological component of political activism for both young and old. They mention a range of other related issues; they say that most people don’t like conflict and they talk about the importance of ‘positive implementation plans’ i.e. how to focus on positive way that you can improve things in politics and everyday life instead of listing faults and flaws.

**This is followed by a game.** In groups of three people are asked to choose an activity they don't like and ask how it could be made better (e.g. “If meetings were closer to my house I'd feel better about attending them”).
The second session ‘Nice People Finish First’ is led by the same people. It is about conflict and conflict resolution in politics. They start with a warm up – ‘what's the easiest way to piss someone off with no effort?’ Someone shouts out ‘Talking over women’! I left at this point.

**Some general observations/thoughts:**

The chosen speakers were more diverse than the attendees. Evidently a clear attempt to promote diversity. Fits with what Roxanne and Alan told Shaku and Sam on their first meeting.

There is a vibrant and interesting *local groups notice board* that lists all of the achievements of the different local groups. Much of it is *hand-written* – it has an *organic and sketchy feel* and is a work in progress (see photos). It comes across as very grass-roots and bottom-up.

It’s almost as if the organisers (the people wearing Momentum T-shirts) are trying to model and convey political energy; they seem to be conscious of the need to engage at all times. It's as if they want the people in attendance, young and old, to want to come back.

The programme notes reflect an understanding of the dynamics of ‘doing politics’ - what it feels like – I haven’t seen this at other left-wing events (e.g. Marxism) before. So there's quite a self-conscious strand throughout.

It's almost like the youth component isn't just about attracting youth but about young people re-educating elder activists - or healing the wounds of older supporters and activists scarred or dissatisfied by the past way of doing things.

**Saturday 8 April 2017 – Momentum and the World Transformed host ‘Take Back Control,’ a day of events designed to engage the Labour left in discussions about Brexit – Croydon, London**

10:20 Arrival: there are a few people handing out socialist worker leaflets in front of the venue. Walking in, there is a doorman and a few TBC workers at a front desk who are checking people in(who are all wearing white t-shirts with a red logo, clearly id’ing who they are). The front of the venue is a café and is busy with both attendees and people who are just getting something to drink. Most attendees appear to be white, with some ethnic minorities. They seem mostly older but there are definitely some young people in attendance. Two young black men, each sitting alone in the rowed seating, stand out amongst the mostly white attendees.

The venue itself (the TMRW hub in Croydon) has the feel of a hipster coffee lounge that also does events, with cool designs and couches. The main stage is a large warehouse-style room in the back of the coffee shop, with three rows of seating, and it looks like there are around 60-70 people.

10:34: Two TBC organisers introduce the venue and the agenda for the day. One male, Asian, looking like between 20s-40s, and white female, aged 20-40. She encourages everyone to speak up

10:36: C, the national coordinator for TBC, introduces the first panel which is one of a national series of events. ‘We wanted to run a series of events, after brexit, how can we deal with and discuss the issues that brexit throws up in a way that goes beyond the divisions we see in themainsteam. ‘A progressive way of taking over this idea of taking back control.’ ‘Every event is
going to begin with a session like this ‘we’re gonna see what comes up when we don’t talk about how we voted, when we don’t put ourselves on one side of the binary.’

10:38: E, the union organiser and community organiser, is the first speaker. ‘We’re both really nervous because this is a such a conflict riven and driven issue and processs. It threw up a lot of marginalisation, tapped into a lot of marg that many diff communities were feeling, and it also marginalised a lot of people themselves in terms of how it was framed, who was an insider, who was an outsider.’ ‘it exposed pre-existing polarisations, which is why we’re not trying to reinforce those polarisations.’ ‘the goal of this session is to find awareness and to not be afraid of conflict,’

She starts off with an exercise, ‘how did you feel on the morning after the vote?’ people pair off for five minutes to talk with each other. I spoke with a lefty Brexiteer.

10:49: A whole row of young people turn up behind me, 3 young black people and 1 young white person.

10:50: E brings group back together and asks people to feedback. Young black male in front says that Brexit ‘had the effect of closing down discussion rather than opening it, that’s why I’m here today.’ An older man says ‘I had to spend all my efforts defending Jeremy Corbyn immediately after, it was a huge diversion of energy over that period into proctecting what gains were made in the labour party.’

The impression I am getting from all the people volunteering to talk about their feelings after the Brexit vote is that they are all knowledgeable, well spoken, politically active and progressive.

One man says ‘I voted remain’ and everyone laughs because he has broken the rule of the session to not say how he voted. E reminds latecomers that we are trying not to put labels on people.

A young black woman behind me tells a story about how in Tottenham after the vote, people were going around to ethnic minorities offering to help them pack. Is very vocal and upset about racism in the UK.

An older black man cites the press as being at fault for manipulating and ‘impose their opinions on the people’ - talks about institutional racism and how that affects people, naming the role of the media in stoking these divisions. E: ‘the institutions that treat white people differently from black people.’ E: ‘unaccountable politicians who are playing politics and playing with our lives’

NB: This session is really about getting participants’ views about Brexit, and as such has become a forum for people to voice their complaints and concerns about the state of affairs.

Black male, middle aged, sounds American: ‘I’m a constitutionalist, I read the Shengen agreement, Dublin protocol and Lisbon treaty. I went to 20 debates and asked prethi patel questions that they don’t want to answer. Constitutions outline the frame of how governments work. My vote was can you solve the constitutional issues, yes or no.’

Next speaker is someone that couldn’t vote, older white man, refugee. ‘I’m directly affected by this and I could not vote. I don’t want this to become…what they’re doing now in the NHS is legally they ask for passports in hospitals, and that implies that if you’re black or have a strange accent, they can decide whether you pay or not.’ ‘they are approaching people in children’s center, asking them to report to the home office the children who are subject to the same rules.’
Young asian man: ‘Referendums are crap aren’t they. Croydon it’s a pretty mixed place, I grew up here. If you go on the bus, you work in one Croydon but live in another. With the general election you think we can overturn it in five years, but with this, you think what next.’ ‘Croydon’s one of the few places where, if you see a bunch of kids, you’ll see the most mixed group you’ll ever see.’

E asks who is local to Croydon, about 20 people raise their hands. ‘From my limited knowledge of Croydon, I know that there’s a lot of racism, lot of issues.’ Mentions last week’s incident, that the home office is located here.

‘I know there’s been mention of the white working class, you know ‘everyone’s favourite subject,’ does everyone want to talk about that.’

A white working class northern female responds: “I was traveling to city airport to pick up my daughter in Ireland, when I got the news, I was distraught and traumatized actually. The asking of the q has taken me back to that place. White working class northerners are not all thick as pig shit racists, because we’re not. There’s been an awful lot of energy from initially bnp, ukip, to try to pervert the way the traditional white working class think and vote. And it’s despicable. BBC started giving voice to the BNP, that was the start to giving voice to fascism in the country. That was the start.’ ‘this has become very much a proto-fascist state in lots of ways, and it is really really dangerous for everyone. I’ve heard so many voices today that I agree with. I work in the NHS with victims of sexual violence, trauma, there is racism in every aspect.’

E asks if the rule to not discuss how you voted is useful or not.

An older white man says ‘it was undermined as soon as you asked us to talk about how we felt.’

E says ‘ok let’s ditch the rule?’

A few people start feeding back as to why keeping the rule is good.

This is an interesting and very openly reflexive and democratic way of organising a discussion, and I get the sense that this type of participant buy-in is a feature of how these participant speakers try to frame their activism.

There really is a strong cross-generational representation here.

For final 10 minutes, E says we should break into clusters of 5-10 people to have a discussion of ‘what taking back control means to you’ ‘if you feel like you haven’t got power, or if it exacerbated disempowerment you already experienced.’

Charlie: ‘I sense a real sense of solidarity in the room, hopefully that sets us up for a real productive day. Take what we’ve been discussing here, what it means to take back control, think about that throughout the day. Is that a phrase that we can or should use, what does it mean?’

11:30: What are British Values Anyway panel

Panel composed of S, a young black male and artist; M, young female (white or possibly mixed race), and J, an older white woman who is a local councillor.
E is facilitating the session.
A man named T on the panel who is not staying for the whole thing starts to talk by speaking about the recent hate crime in Croydon. ‘We will not tolerate such a hate crime, can’t believe that such a crime has happened in this borough. It has seen communities coming together across the borough. I’ve been inspired by the community’s response to say that Croydon won’t tolerate that.’

E: What does it mean to be British?

S: We really urgently need a root and branch reform of the way we view our country’s history and past. What it means to be a white Briton, a black Briton, whether these terms are useful. ‘the terminology of white working class is problematic. At what point in history was the working class deemed white?’ Look at music, trap music, northern soul, anytime there was a proximity to poor and black people, there was alarm in the ruling order, and a reaction.’

‘We need to completely reframe how we view Britishness. I am extremely patriotic. It wouldn’t be ‘great’ Britain without the sacrifice of my ancestors.’
‘We have huge selective amnesia’
‘We need to discover new things to be proud of. Our version of british history affects…’

M: I entirely agree with the idea that we need to redefine what it means to be british. Even last night Michael gove was tweeting that empire was racist has been done to death.’ Talks about revisionism, it ‘totally belittles’ history. History not taught in schools of black people contributing to Britian for years, centuries. We need to grapple with the notion that British elite do have a notion of Britishness that is intrinsically tied to whiteness.’ Brexit as a working class revolt is a rewriting of what happens. The left tends to reduce it to economics, but if you look at polling, 81% of people who voted to leave said that multiculturalism is a force for ill.’ A key thing for left to recognise is that racism is deeply embedded in the UK.

J: I don’t know what contribution to make in some ways, because I am what I was born. Born in the 50s, and we all look back now, we see the faults, the racism, sexism, all those isms that influenced my life. What I find today is I am having to relearn. Those things that are so biased, that is what I was taught, and may people in this room were taught, it is about unlearning that, learning the truth, what is real, and accepting it.’ ‘we need to be re-educated’ ‘I am being taught every single day [as a resident of Croydon], the attack did shame me, but then we all came together, and then I was proud again.’ ‘What is brutishness? I don’t know. I’m from a Scottish family, they came down here for a better life, and so who am I? I’m not English, I’m not European.’ Today I’m actually here to learn from all of you and I hope that by the end of the day I can tell you who I am and how I am british. I’ve got a long way to go, we probably all have.’

E: ‘You sometimes get this kind of battle between people about ‘who’s more down,’ black person can get to oxford but not a white working class people. Is there a way to talk about that?’

S: On Andrew marr show last year, ‘you should be grateful as a black oxford graduate!’ ‘when you try to organise debates, Africans never enslaved themselves, this is british history.’ ‘how are these ‘white working class’ perniciously affected by racism themselves? How are they given unrealistic ideals of what it is to be a white man? And how they fall short of it.’ ‘if you systematically destroy families, these problems are gonna be felt by whatever community,’ ‘no other country had a history of black and white people working together for equality, and that’s what we should be focused on.’
E: also interesting to explore the construction of whiteness

M: The white working class label, which has come back with brexit, allows politicians to say to them, we’re gonna address the real poverty in your communities,’ but it totally erases color. This is about signalling privilege in whiteness. ‘We need to begin to reframe the debate to move away from those lables. But sometimes stragetic essentialism is needed, there need to be spaces for people of color to organise, but it shouldn’t be at the cost of a wider community.’ What Farage does is win consent for the current exploitative system by blaming the other. They don’t want migrants to get together and create unity. We should be highlighting these moments in history when people did come together and challenge the elite.’ ‘We need people to organise and to fight back against the scapegoating.’

Conversation is mostly happening between S and M now.

E brings it back, asks J, ‘how do you see working class people coming together across racial divides, and migrants, to achieve improve conditions and solidarity? Do you witness that in Croydon?’

J: I have my own prejudices, about coming from the left and being brought up from the left. I have been brought up to look at the upper classes, the fox hunting people, maybe it’s indoctrination, but I despise them. My father was a miner at 14, my great grandfather was a hurrier, 8 years old in a pit that was max 2/5-3 feet deep, and he dragged along cars. My parents brought me to the south where there was work, and we got a council house, my goodness a council house. My experiences and indoctrination is about my parents experience. As I said earlier I’ve got a lot of learning to do, maybe I should try and unblinker myself from my hatred.’

Someone in the crowd says ‘don’t do that.’ Laughter.

J: ‘You have to see things from the other viewpoint.’ She tells a story about being a national trust member and ruining trips to places with her husband because ‘whose backs were these buildings built on’ ‘in Croydon we do come together, and I have felt that and do feel that in the panel. So I just go back to re-education again.’

E: ‘there does seem to be a theme about people coming together.’ ‘I’ve been a union organiser, working with hotel workers, factory workers, drivers, airport workers, blue collar minimum wage jobs. My job was to bring migrant workers together with britsh workers.’ Bosses try to prevent unionisation, create barriers to take collective responsibility.

S: ‘At what point do we remember that we’re all connected? Everyone is implicated in this joint British history. How do we choose to engage with it. With guilt? The idea of tolerance….why are you tolerating me?’

M: talks about her partner who is a primary school teacher, the students just recite ‘tolerance’ and learn the idea of british exceptionalism. ‘You’re british until you get on a plane, like Mo Farah.’ ‘Look at how these stereotypes are constructed, break them down at local and national level.’

NB: This session is packed. All seats taken even though there is a parallel session upstairs.

J: “I wanted to talk about the politics of different structures in Britian. I’m a councillor in South Norwood, by next year projected to be 50% made up of ethinc minorities. Now there are 3
white councillors. I think we serve well, we have been re-elected, we do our best. But I’m very conscious about how that is observed by the constituents. But I don’t know if I am being representative – I think politicians have to listen.’

S: “we’re very fortunate to have a leader like JC that embodies these types of things. The interconnectivity of emancipation, that’s what it’s all about. How will I become a better Briton by engaging my past, understanding my culture.’

E: ‘I feel like the theme of collective liberation has emerged from this.’ She then breaks people down into groups. Clusters of 6-10 people for 15 minutes.

12:37: Momvement for Justice are here, and they took about 20 people and announced that they were going to the march and that everyone should come.

I followed them. Basically I followed all the black and brown young people out of the room.

Went to the march and talked with A, who seems to be a de facto leader of MfJ. She basically said that the TBC event could have adjusted their schedule to get everyone there to march, but didn’t. She expressed frustration that rather than taking to the streets and protesting the grave injustices committed against young refugees in Croydon, the leftist activists at TBC just want to sit around and talk. She is highly critical on what she perceives as passivism and inaction of large parts of the progressive movement.

Came back at 1:30pm after marching, entered session on refugees and migrant. ‘Migrant voices from the frontline’ featuring facilitators from One Day Without Us

Audience members are being passed microphone to make comments on their thoughts on refugees and migrants post brexit.

One young black female emphasises that there needs to be a political distinction between refugees (who have been granted status) and asylum seekers.

The older man from Greece who made the point earlier this morning about the NHS asking for a passport from anyone they think may look or sound foreign.

This session is about half full, there seems to still be an ok mix of young and old people, more old. 26 people total. Can see about 11 people that look ‘young.’ The audience at this stage are mostly white.

A disability rights campaigner makes the point that the UK has laws that allow residents to claim citizenship in five years but they don’t tell anybody.

This session is, like the others, really designed to be audience interactive/participative, but I get the sense that these are meant to be forums for talking and not much more. There seems to be no agenda for action connected to these workshops, even though that is ostensibly what the day is designed for.

S (a young person, looks like he could be in 20s/30s from Momentum group in Lewisham) gets up to talk. ‘Talks about anti-union laws, but ‘within the laws there is a lot more that unions can do.’
Speaker (French, black, looks like in 30s/40s): Makes point that trade unions don’t see immigration law as a trade issue. ‘Nobody want to touch that’

This session has gone over 2pm when scheduled to end, and as a result a wave of people are coming in. Perhaps some of them are coming from the march? Or from upstairs. Hard to discern.

Female speaker (in 30s/40s, non British accent): makes the point that UK immigration laws are not too lenient when they separate families.

Young black female who spoke earlier: ‘it’s very important that we’re clear on the legal terms, because knowledge is power, if we know what rights we have and where the law stands we can use that.’

Post-observation thoughts:

One of the first things I noticed when sitting down at the TBC event around 10:15am, just before the first session started on the main stage, was that there wasn’t much minority representation. The room was laid out in three long rows of chairs (about 30 per row, with a split in the middle for an aisle), and I was sat in the farthest right chair of the last (third row) – about as in the back as I could be. About five minutes into the session, a group of mixed ethnicity (but mostly black) people walked in, most of them young but some older, and the TBC organisers found folding chairs and made two additional rows directly behind me to accommodate them. A few of them had green t-shirts on that said ‘Brexit was a racist vote.’ One of the group, a black female, during the portion of the first session where audience members were being asked to share their thoughts, spent her time talking about the fact that Brexit has increased the amount of racism in the UK and that it was a racist vote. (see notes above)

It is obvious that these people are in a group together, and at 12:30 during the second session, they made clear their purpose for being there, which was to encourage all the participants to leave the TBC event for an hour and go march in Croydon town centre to support the rights of the asylum seeker who was beaten by a group of people earlier in the week in Croydon. A young Polish woman (M, I later learned) stood up with about 20 other people and said, ‘I am sorry to do this but there is a march happening right now in support of refugees and asylum seekers and we should all be going to that. Come and join me.’ A, another black female supporter said, ‘we’re coming back, but we’re going to go now.’

At that moment I decided to go with them. I decided to this rather than stay because I had previously done some research on MfJ and was interested to see why they felt they needed to turn up at the TBC event and then very publicly try to convince TBC participants to leave.

So I went to the march with them, meeting and speaking to a few of their members. Both M and A explained to me that they thought it was much more important to be out and fight the racism and hate happening right now in the streets than to be debating Brexit in workshops. Both of them were serious and passionate about what kind of activism they thought people who were anti-Brexit should be doing, and they definitely had an air of militancy about them. A in particular was adamant that TBC were being irresponsible and missing an opportunity to be doing something more important for the anti-racist cause. She explicitly said that TBC should have postponed their events for one hour to allow everybody to participate in the march. I suggested that it was perhaps just a coincidence that the two things were happening at the same time, and that TBC had put in a lot of planning for their event so it might be hard for them to

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just casually ‘pause’ everything. A responded that it wasn’t a coincidence, the organisers knew that the march was being planned in reaction the week’s events, and that they could have been smart in uniting everyone together to support that cause but chose not to. I conceded that this was a fair point.

I also had a conversation with C, a gay Ugandan woman wearing a Ramones t-shirt, who was an asylum seeker in the UK but who was in extreme political limbo. Originally a visiting student to the UK, she decided to apply for asylum on the basis of sexual discrimination in Uganda after a friend told her she could do this, but had been swindled by a fake lawyer who stole her money and passport. She is now without a passport, has overstayed her original visa, and is waiting to hear how her case will be decided in the courts. She told me of being scared to be here and turning to MfJ because they are fighting for rights for people like her.

I marched with MfJ and ended up being in a bunch of their pictures. I made a joke about how they’d be looking at these pictures and asking ‘who’s the random dude?’ But generally they seemed to be inclusive of my presence. I gave them my business card, signed up for their newsletter, and told them I’d like to follow up with them. One soft spoken member, a young black man named I, had seen me taking pictures of the TBC event when we were in the session and had asked me to take pictures of him and his group using his phone. He continued asking me to do this throughout the march.

The march started at the M&S in Croydon town centre, and went in the direction of the TMRW hub where the TBC event was taking place before turning around to do a loop. I went halfway and then back to the TBC event when they looped to go back into the town centre. Back at the TBC event, the contrast was particularly odd. Outside was a peaceful march with close to 150-200 people passionately chanting, ‘Here to stay, here to fight, refugees have the right!’ and ‘When the immigrant community is under attack, what do we do? Stand up fight back!!’ Inside was a workshop for individual audience members to make points and observations about the problems they perceive as a result of Brexit, for poor people, minorities, housing and travel. Action vs. talk, as the MfJ people reminded me when they came back.

At about 2pm after a talk on Brexit and housing had finished in the downstairs main stage, I went upstairs to check out what was going on there. The upstairs area is about three times as large as the downstairs main stage, and featured an open plan office area (restricted to staff), a bunch of couches and standing tables, a ping pong table, a kitchen bar, several classrooms and a crèche, and which wrapped around to a second stage and seating area. One of the classrooms and the second stage area were holding sessions, but they were far enough away from the common lounge area – where TFC and Momentum workers and other local Croydon labour groups had set up information stalls – that people could mingle and chat. At this point the event had been going on for about 4 hours, and many of the TFC/Momentum volunteers were just milling about and chatting with each other. I used this opportunity to interview a few people to get their thoughts.

Overall they seemed like a young fun club of people committed to the Momentum/Corbyn cause. I did three interviews, with the Polish female speaker from the first two sessions, and two Momentum staff members. There was an obvious comradery, sense of familial togetherness about the work they were doing together.

At around 3pm I noticed that most of the MfJ marchers had returned to the event, and M approached me with a new person I hadn’t met, an older black man named A. M was ostensibly making the link because MfJ want to get their work into schools to encourage young people to
participate in activism and protest, so we had a conversation about that. I used the opportunity to ask A what he thought about the TFC event.

Like the other MfJ members I had spoken with earlier in the day, he was unkind. ‘We’re interfering,’ he said, repeating this a few times, ‘We need to come and tell them how to do things. What’s the point of talking about Brexit when we see what’s going on outside in Croydon right now?’ A (male), M and A (female) all said the same thing to me at different points during the day, that Corbyn and the Labour leadership and movement have let down people of colour and should be making the case that Brexit was a racist vote.

I asked them if they had approached the TBC organisers directly and voiced their complaints, and I was told that they had.

Overall I found this to be one of the more interesting aspects of the day, and put on vivid display the ideological splits within the Left movement in the UK. There seemed to be a rather obvious disconnect between the cerebral and often frustrating debates on race and Britishness within the TBC event, and between the actual protesting and activism happening just outside the event. These were two sides of the same progressive coin, albeit with very differing views on what effective activism could look like.


Tuesday 16 May 2017

I arrived at 10:30 and was assigned to work on My Nearest Marginal with Fiona, doing more populating of events from a google spreadsheet onto the admin back pages of the website. It was just me and Fiona and an older guy named Andrew working on the task. After a few minutes it was apparent that the internet wasn’t working reliably enough for me to do the task in a timely way, so Deborah, the office manager, took me up to the 4th floor and told me to try using the wifi up there.

Walking into the office, I saw Brenda, Jason (the Bernie Sanders campaigner doing the canvassing training sessions), and a few other people. I also met Dino, a mixed race young guy who initially thought I was there to do a study on ethnic diversity, telling Brenda “I’m mixed race!” in reference to being an interview subject before I had told him what the study was about. The office was quiet. Alan came in and said hello, and commented that I’ve come on a quiet day. I gave Dino a brief breakdown of our research project, and I could tell that the few other people were listening as well. Brenda asked me ‘who else are you following?’ I mentioned MLMS and Brenda gave me a sly look and said, “I know CEO,” and then started criticizing him for not being a good councilor, saying “he doesn’t do his job.” I responded by saying that I hadn’t actually observed him in his councilor role at all and had only done work with him through MLMS. I mentioned the APPG and that they were doing some interesting work trying to involve young people in the Brexit negotiations, and she gave me a kind of look that seemed to indicate she was interested/slightly impressed while at the same time still rather skeptical of him. This was particularly ironic as it mirrored CEO’s response when I asked his opinion about Momentum a few weeks back.

Brenda soon left to go to a meeting with a different Alan (not the one I knew) on how to write effective emails. Shortly after, Roberta walked in and said ‘where is everybody?’ Jason responded, ‘a bunch of them are downstairs at a meeting.’ Not much else was happening. Jason and two
staffers were having a casual conversation. A young Asian male with glasses walked in, said hello to the room and started working at a desk on his laptop. Brenda and Khloe then came back in from their downstairs meeting and sat next to me. I asked them what they were working on. Brenda said, ‘my job is to organise the trainings, so Khloe is helping me.’ The flow of staffers coming in and out continued this way as I worked on my data input volunteer work.

**Thoughts on today’s visit**

Today I started to get the sense that I had been seen around enough times by a couple of key staff members to start to be seen as someone who could be trusted. Interviewing Brenda at the TBC event on April 8th ended up being coincidentally useful, because at the time I had no idea how central of a member of the team she was, and since I had started visiting the TSSA office in May I had seen her every time I was in and had friendly conversations. Working upstairs today was also useful I felt because there is a definite sense that downstairs is the public-facing/volunteer hub, and the 4th floor office is where the core team is based. My presence there seemed to be totally accepted, although I got the sense that they wanted most of their volunteer work to be happening downstairs. Being upstairs enabled me to have a better perspective on the interactions of the different team members (rather than fellow volunteers) while they went through their tasks. Unsurprisingly, it wasn’t that different – most people focused intently on their laptops and jobs they were doing, with a few either work-related or casual conversations happening between people as different staff members came or went.

While upstairs I interviewed Jason, getting a sense of how Momentum engaged American campaigners, what the similarities and synergies are between the Sanders and Corbyn campaigns, the ‘response cycle’ approach to door knocking (NB: identifies the voter’s most important issue and focuses the conversation around how Labour/Corbyn will positively address it), and how their trainings for UK Momentum volunteer canvassers were particularly successful persuading young people at the doorstep. He also explained the strategies of distributed organising (getting volunteers to phone and text bank remotely).

One thing that struck me during the interview is that he believes that it is the actual person and their appeal that has brought more people into the political projects on the left, rather than the actual policies. He said: “Without Sanders or Corbyn a lot of these organisations would not exist.”

**Wednesday 17 May**

When I arrive, Sammy sets me up with Khloe and a young woman named Roberta, to do a new task, texting members of Momentum in different constituencies to invite them to door knocking training sessions using an online chat app called Relay. This is basically using online platform to text momentum members in different constituencies to invite them to training sessions. The task is enjoyable, because it’s reaching out to people who have identified as Momentum and will likely respond positively. So it’s the first task I’ve done since working there that, if requiring communication with people, doesn’t involve some level of deception about being from Momentum.

However, because of the loose and ad hoc nature of the volunteering, I am able to get set up on the platform but not in such a way that I can send texts using my name. I am cleaning up Khloe’s previously initiated mass text conversations and responding to incoming texts. The way whomever wrote the text has framed the opening message to end with ‘can you join us’ implies that the texter is actually going to the event. Which, because I am doing Southampton and Khloe
is in London, is not the case. So in many instances Khloe is having conversations with people who think she’ll be turning up and are saying things like ‘see you there’ – and of course I am now pretending to be Khloe.

Soon I realize that Khloe herself took over the Southampton texts from another volunteer, F, so I am actually pretending to be both of them. This makes me a sort of live ‘bot’ in that I am giving back generic pre-written responses but also able to respond with human specificity. It’s an interesting type of semi-fake, semi-authentic interaction.

I do this task for about an hour, and then spend half an hour waiting for Khloe to get me a new set of numbers to text. She never gets the data, so we agree that we’ll follow up on Thursday morning.

I then had a quick chat with Brenda. Asked her how she was, she said ‘stressful.’ She is conducting a training session tonight, and apparently the RSVP attendee cap was not working and they are oversubscribed with 300 people planning to attend. Amazing numbers! Brenda laments that they don’t have enough space or facilitators. So they are going to put some people in a couple of rooms downstairs.

Afterwards I return to catch up with Khloe for my next assignment on Relay texting, which I do until the end of my visit.

**Thursday 18 May**

Today I am initially back to working downstairs in the ground floor volunteer space with Khloe, and with Mary (young white female), Steven (young Asian male), and Rayna (unsure of age Asian female). When I arrive I’m told by Sammy to join the group of volunteers huddled around laptops in the center of room. They are all conducting relay chat sessions for different marginal constituencies to encourage Momentum members to encourage local Labour party members to attend. I join in the task, working on Southampton and Derby north texting.

After about an hour and a half, I head upstairs to work with Brenda after she came downstairs and asked Sammy (the volunteer coordinator) if she could have a volunteer to help her do bookings for facilitators to travel to upcoming Momentum trainings across the country. So in this role I’m basically an ad-hoc administrative assistant. I am tasked with booking travel tickets on the momentum business travel account on trainline. This is a short task but appears to be very helpful as there is no one on the trainings team who is available to do basic admin jobs at the moment. When I finish this, Brenda asks me to draft and send emails about upcoming training sessions in Derby, Sheffield and Liverpool.

The sense I have today is that there aren’t many regular floating volunteers like me, and because of my non-scheduled and almost drop-in style volunteering, I think I’m most useful in doing random jobs that need doing whenever I happen to be around. I had thought this might be a problem but they all seem to be happy with my contribution. It gives me the sense that Momentum is so unstructured and organic that it will give responsibility to anyone who steps up to take it. E.g. Khloe, who is a volunteer, is also a staff member and this is her ‘job’ so she is expected to (and does) turn up everyday. A more salient example of a volunteer with an organically-evolving kind of status is Fiona; when I first met her she was sort of helping to start making sense of My Nearest Marginal with Khloe, but this week it appears that she’s been placed fully in charge, and I also see from emails I receive from her to the My Nearest Marginal ‘team’ that she is coordinating it as well. Last week when we were working next to each other I had made small talk and asked her what her status in Momentum was. She told me that she had only
Grant Agreement N. 649538

started volunteering two days before we met. So this was interesting to me in that she had made herself available to work for Momentum, and they had given her direct responsibility.


Tuesday 30 May

Today I came in unannounced for a few hours to help with online platforms. Ended up doing mostly Relay text follow-ups. Today I met Emily for the first time, who was one of the American Bernie Sanders campaigners helping out, and appeared to be the main Sanders representative and leader of the other US campaigners. She was friendly and we chatted initially for a bit about respective homes in the US, she is from Boston so we talked a little about East coast life. It turns out that she currently lives and works in Paris and came over to the UK specifically to assist with the election. She had found Jason and Greg (the two other Sanders campaigners) via Facebook in the US through their shared Bernie Sanders networks, and hired them to come volunteer (I learned in my interview with Jeremy that he wasn’t paid, and Momentum only paid for his plane ticket and nothing else). I told her a bit about the project and about my own trajectory to living in the UK, and that I had been helping out with Relay. When I told her I was on Relay and asked her if there was anything I could do, she eagerly said yes and then proceeded to connect me to Base Camp (the Momentum online workspace for volunteers, very similar to Slack) and also given me administrative privileges so that I could work on Relay more in-depth by not just completing assignments given to me, but by editing text content and supporting other volunteers working on the platform.

Getting invited to join Base Camp was illuminating. Momentum had succeeded in getting dozens of volunteers to participate in the campaign remotely, by getting assignments on Base Camp that they would then implement via Relay. This is a particularly interesting means of 21st century campaigning, granting volunteers access to a shared canvassing platform and letting them get on with it in their marginals (or anywhere really). And using the everyday social activity of texting to engage potential voters. But it was also clear to me during the past few weeks of volunteering that there were a lot of little glitches that could make this kind of working arrangement potentially problematic – for example, texts sometimes had bad information so supporters were being given the wrong or incomplete details for canvassing and training events. And mid-task, I watched Momentum staffers discuss how best to ensure that volunteers on Relay chats not only performed the first part of their task – blasting out the same introductory text to between 500-1000 people – but made sure to go online and check for responses frequently throughout the day so as to be able to actually engage with and respond to the people who were talking back to them. It was important to also use the embedded analytics system to provide statistics (through a series of multiple choice options, e.g. ‘will attend’ or ‘wants to volunteer in the future’) that would build Momentum’s activism database for future use. This part was the most crucial for quality control of remote participation, and was addressed in Base Camp. After a few days it was also interesting to see pings from different volunteers who wanted but were not getting assignments, which could be viewed in a couple of ways. Looking at it positively, it was a clear sign that there were too many volunteers; looking at it negatively, perhaps the volunteer coordinators weren’t as responsive as they might have been!

6pm Training Session with Jason, Greg and Brenda

I walk down from the 4th floor at around 5:50 to the ground floor where the session is being held, and the lobby is a chaotic mob scene, buzzing with swarms of activists. It’s a really excellent and positive energy that you can feel. Brenda and another Momentum volunteer stand
at the door controlling the flow of people in and out; there is a queue that stretches out the door and just down the block of Melton Street. I walk through into the main room (it’s being held in the volunteer and phone bank big room on the ground floor) and take some pictures. According to Brenda they capped attendance at 200 due to last week’s overspill of 400 people (meaning that they had to operate separate simultaneous sessions). But they still expect more than 200 people to show up. The numbers are close to that by a quick head count as the training session starts. I am videotaping in the back of the room.

The session’s approach is focused on sharing your personal story of how you came to politics with people at the doorstep, as a way of making authentic connections and getting closer to the issue or issues that got you interested in politics. The Sanders ‘response cycle’ is explained by Jason and Greg – both are young white American males, very at ease as each make a few light cultural jokes about US and UK politics. They alternate with each other talking about the approach, and also divide the room into small groups, first to share the story of how they got interested in politics with others, and then to practice the response cycle with each other.

There is considerable input from the audience attendees throughout the session, asking questions that are trying to make sense of how a US campaign approach can work in a UK context. You feel that everyone in this room wants to be here, and wants to make a difference.

The demographic is very cross-generational, and doesn’t seem particularly young or old. There are mostly white people here, but there is some diversity, and a pretty good gender balance.