



promoting youth involvement and  
social engagement

# PROMISE

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Horizon 2020

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# PROMISE



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- Promoting youth involvement and social engagement: Opportunities and challenges for ‘conflicted’ young people across Europe.
- Horizon 2020
  - “biggest EU Research and Innovation programme ever with nearly €80 billion of funding available over 7 years (2014 to 2020). It promises more breakthroughs, discoveries and world-firsts”.
- Theme: ‘Tackling Societal Challenges’
- 2.5m Euros, 3 year research project
- 12 partners from 10 countries:
- Spain, UK, Italy, Germany, Portugal, Slovakia, Finland, Estonia, Croatia, Russia

# Responding to a complex call

- **YOUNG-4-2015: The young as a driver of social change**
- Norms, values and attitudes of young people in Europe
- Youth attitudes towards a more sustainable socio-economic model in order to assess the potential and readiness of young people to be a **driver of change** and their propensity to **creative solutions and practices**.
- **Opportunities and obstacles** that young people see as catalysts and inhibitors of the socio-ecological transition and how they could be addressed by policy.
- How change in **cultural values** could contribute to achieving an inclusive and sustainable society.

# Our concept



- YP face tough choices: structural, political, moral
- Wide variations in opportunities and challenges but young people today face tough choices in negotiating this moral maze.
- Many respond negatively > conflict with older generations, authorities and social norms
- Leads to heavy-handed controls and further conflict
- The PROMISE project will investigate how young people's responses to these problems create conflict, and how, instead, their responses can provide opportunities for positive social engagement.

# Key themes: work-in-progress

1. Construction of young people as problematic
2. Regulation of young people
3. Young people as agents of social change.
4. (Re)engaging in society: opportunities and barriers
5. Young people as catalysts and inhibitors to socio-ecological transition

# 4 key elements

- An analysis of social relationships:
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- A context-rich focus:
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- An historical and intergenerational lens:
  -
- A participatory ‘youth first’ approach:

# Method

four discrete but complementary elements of the methodology

- **Contextual reports:** each country and Europe
- cross-European analysis of **existing data sets** concerning the challenges faced by young people on an international level
- quantitative data - **survey** of young people in the 10 partner countries: addressing young people's attitudes to change
- qualitative ethnographic research in each country will produce an array of **case-studies** (2 from each country) to represent in-depth views into a diverse range of young people aged 14-29 in conflict with social norms and experiencing social life and social change in unique ways.

# Quantitative data

- **Secondary analysis of existing data sets**
- To what extent do young people across Europe hold values and attitudes that differ from older generations in relation to social engagement and social change?
- To what extent can young people's values and attitudes be described as innovative?
- In what ways do innovative or progressive attitudes give rise to actual engagement?
- To what extent is 'actual engagement' related to normative conflict?
- To what extent are today's young people interested in making a difference (motivation), how do their actions support this view (agency) and do they think change is achievable (efficacy)?
- What degree of investment in participatory action can be expected from mainstream youth groups?
  
- **Primary data generation:**
- To widen the age bracket to include the very young (up from 14 years) that are not usually included in standard surveys.
- To obtain more representative data on the aspects of conflict and control behaviours and attitudes identified in the case study parts of the project.
- To allow continuation and updating of trends from existing data

# Qualitative: ethnographic case studies

- Variety of research methods based on a sustained involvement in the lives of others
- to make a meaningful intervention in young people's lives
- to open channels through which young people feel sufficiently secure and valued to participate actively in the research.
  - Interviews
  - Peer research and engagement techniques
  - Photo elicitation techniques, video workshops, music making
  - Participant observation
  - Computer-mediated discourse analysis
  - Diagram and mapping activities



# Selection of cases: inductive

- sites (public, virtual, private) and agents (adults, institutions, peers) of conflict and stigmatisation of young people;
- and how, negative emotions and experiences (conflict, anger, anxiety, fear) can be transformed into innovation, creativity activity, civic engagement or political activism.
- Cluster 1 (formal and informal networks)
- Cluster 2 (culture and politics)
- Cluster 3 (entrepreneurship)

# Dissemination and Impact: the role of Y.E.S.

- Approach: Ensure maximum effect: not only scientific impact but wider economic and societal impact.
  - Website, blogs and social media
  - <http://www.promise.manchester.ac.uk/en/home-page/>
  - 'short guides' on key issues for practice
  - Policy fora and workshops
  - Policy briefs
  - Youth participation
  - Training for peer researchers and other 'legacies'
  - Academic publications and conference papers
  - Stakeholders' conference
  - A Youth Database