

Barriers and facilitators to reducing recidivism among young offenders: a story of an ethnography

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UNIVERSITY OF TARTU



promoting youth
involvement and
social
engagement

PROMISE

Promoting Youth Involvement and Social Engagement: Opportunities and challenges for conflicted young people across Europe.

European
funded Horizon
2020 project

Theme: 'Tackling
Societal
Challenges'

2.5m Euros over
3 years

12 partners from
10 countries



Research questions

- What are the consequences of and constraints on young people resulting from stigmatisation as young offenders?
- What are the sites, agents/agencies and forms of conflict and stigmatization encountered by young people?
- What forms do young people's responses to stigmatization and conflict take? What meaning do young people attach to them?
- What role do intergenerational relations play in both causing and overcoming conflict and producing social innovation and change?
- How might the experience of young offenders in finding creative responses and driving social change out of conflict be transferred to peers?



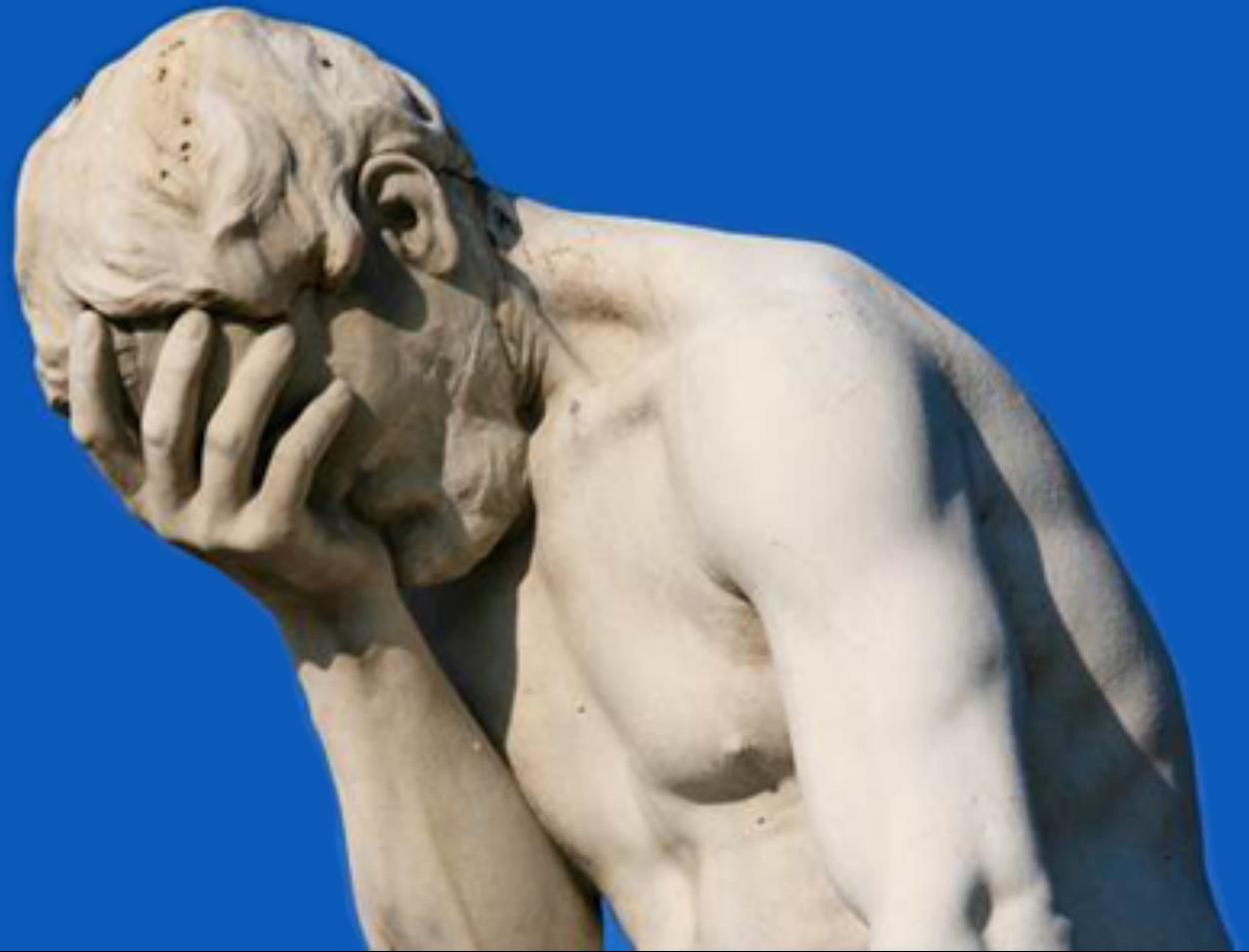
Case study:
young ex-
offenders

Ethnography: photo elicitation
and later peer-research approach

Fieldwork: August 2017 – March
2018

22 semi-structured interviews
with 24 ex-offenders

Data analysed using Nvivo
software



Difficulties we faced and lessons
that could be learned from them |



The research demonstrated that the majority of young ex-offenders are excluded from society. Stigmatisation and its effect of a young person play an important role here.

It was difficult to access young ex-offenders

*The
research
team had
to gain
access to
this group
via
probation.*

Probation role balances between control and assistance.

In an ideal world, probation could be the bridge between young offenders and society, helping them to overcome difficulties and the effects of stigmatisation. A positive, respectful attitude of the probation officer could have a tremendous effect on how the young offender relates to the state.

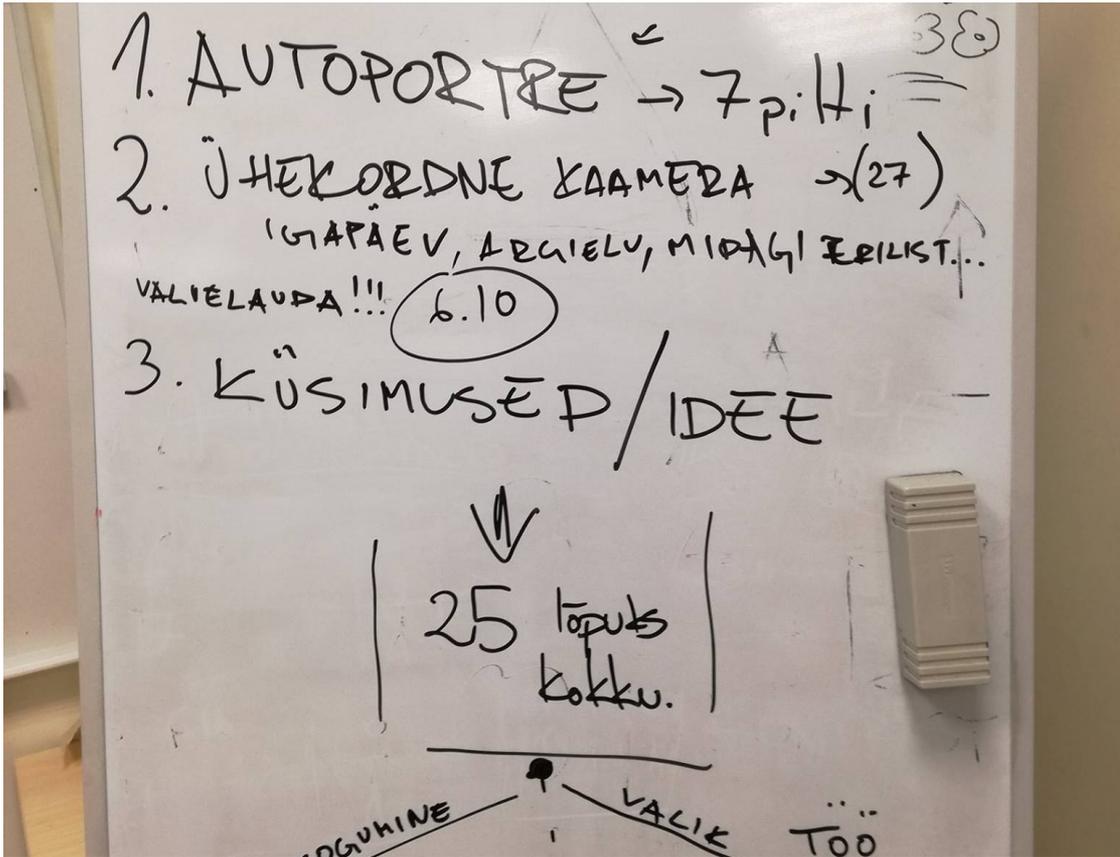
*Fewer youth
than we
expected
expressed
their interest
in the course
and even less
showed up
for the
sessions.*

Many young offenders become apathic, disengaged and lost interest in life. This is how low self-esteem, self-confidence and efficacy are expressed. These feelings are real barriers for social engagement and the participation of young offenders.



The research demonstrated that young people need support when they start something new – a new job, education, or new life after the release from prison. Lack of confidence and lack of skills need to be overcome.

To keep the course running, we had to make real efforts to keep young people engaged and ensure they would attend the course.



“One thing is that nobody wants to fail. This will affect many of the new things to try, etc. A lot of people see they're not worth anything. Second, you're afraid what [will happen] if you can't do it. I see a lot that people go the way that is already taken by many and looks safe” (SE, 25)

Participants of the course started to miss the session when they got a “big important final assignment”.



MINU LUGU
13.10-26.10
Noorte fotonäitus
Kullo Lastegalerii, Kuninga 6, Tallinn



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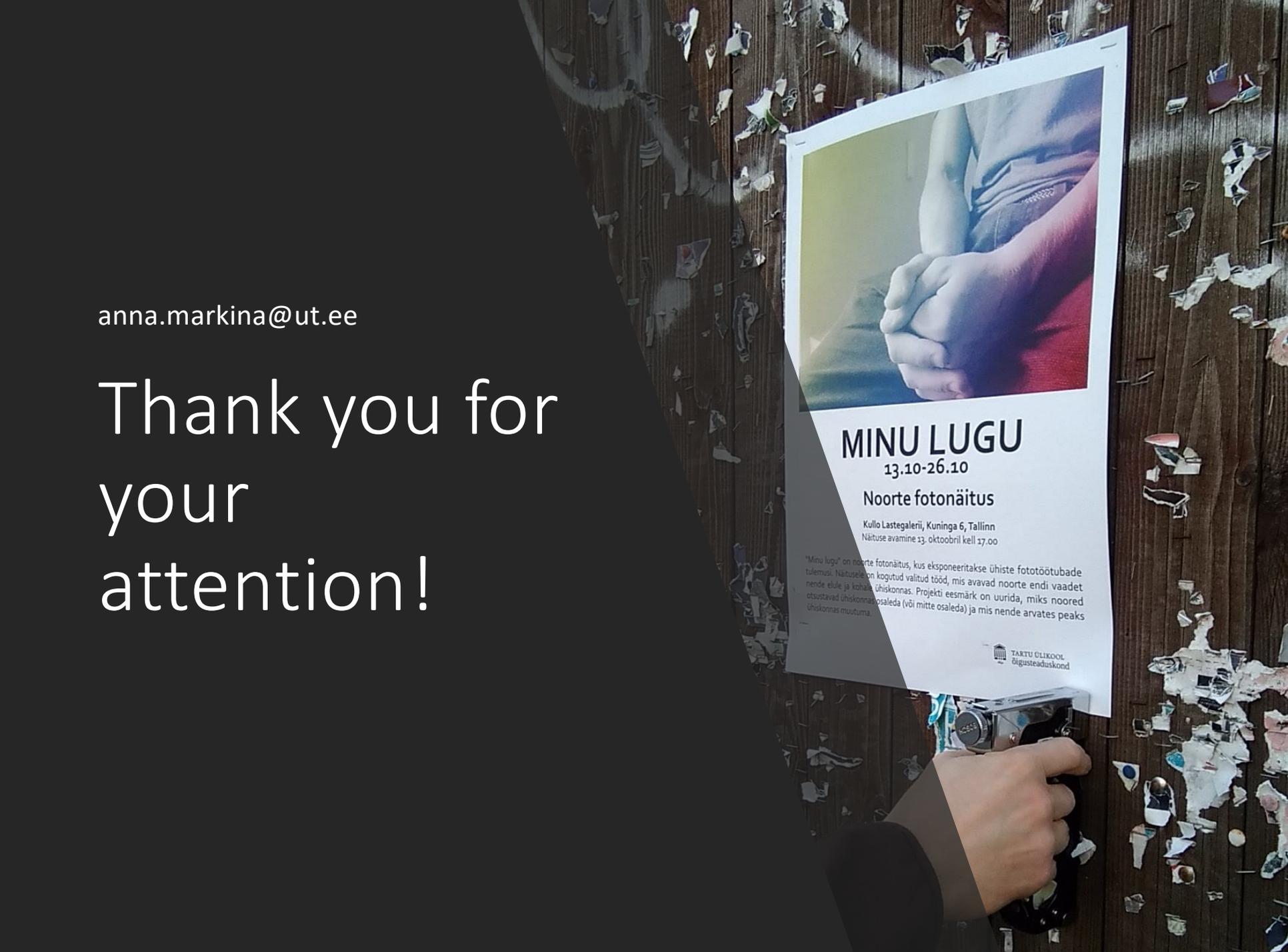
A photo elicitation approach was a good one but only worked for some respondents. A peer researcher helped to save the situation and complete the fieldwork.

The issue of **trust** is of tremendous importance not only from the methodological point of view but as a conclusion of the whole analysis:

- Trust towards other people in the community encourages to make new contacts and through contacts be more involved in social life.
- Trust towards state make young people to contribute, to pay back to society.
- Trust towards criminal justice system makes decisions and laws legitimate and encourages law abiding behaviour not because of the fear of punishment but because it is morally right

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Thank you for
your
attention!



MINU LUGU
13.10-26.10
Noorte fotonäitus

Kullo Lastegalerii, Kuninga 6, Tallinn
Näituse avamine 13. oktoobril kell 17.00

"Minu lugu" on noorte fotonäitus, kus eksponeeritakse ühiste fototöötubade tulemusi. Näitusele on kogitud valitud tööd, mis avavad noorte endi vaadet nende elule ja kohale ühiskonnas. Projekti eesmärk on uurida, miks noored otsustavad ühiskonnas osaleda (või mitte osaleda) ja mis nende arvates peaks ühiskonnas muutuma.

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