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

Collection of short comparative country reports – RUSSIA

Summary: The full report presents a collection of standardised country reports from the ten partner countries involved in PROMISE. Using the most recent data available from macro-indicators and surveys, each country report provides a national baseline of the attitudes, activities and social involvement of young people. The macro-indicators used to describe the national context are used consistently throughout to allow comparison.

In particular, each country report provides an overview of the general ‘state of the country’s health’; the situation that young people face; how young people feel about their situation; and what, if anything, they are doing to change it.

We employ a concept of social and political engagement developed for PROMISE that includes four dimensions of engagement: civic activism, formal political participation, activism, and everyday engagement.

This report (Russia) should be read in conjunction with the Introduction and Appendices document. It was submitted to the EC as part of deliverable D9 (D4.3).

The research leading to these results has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme, under Grant Agreement no. 693221.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>144,342,396</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population aged 15-29 years old</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population aged 65 years old and above</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth Rate</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International migrant stock as a percentage of the total population</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Standards of living in Russia

The economic situation in the Russian Federation remains stable after a sharp decline of GNI in 2013. The crisis led to the fact that GNI in Russia in 2016 was close to that of 2009 and the lowest among the PROMISE countries. The rate of unemployment in 2017 was 5.3%, which is quite low compared with other countries. At the same time, economic crises in Russia are rarely accompanied by partial or full release of labour resources (due to the complexity of dismissal on the part of the employer and serious losses that employers must bear in connection with such dismissals under labour law). Therefore the unemployment rate in Russia can rarely be seen as a good indicator of the intensity of economic crises. Most often, other strategies of adaptation to various economic transformations are chosen: a reduction in wages or a reduction in working hours. In addition, it should be clarified that a large segment of the Russian economy is in the gray zone (33.72% for 2015), which in many ways makes it difficult to monitor the economic situation in the country (in the labour market in particular).

Russians, in comparison with the residents of other PROMISE countries, particularly strongly feel corruption, as well as most critically assess the effectiveness of the current government (Fig. 1.5). The average value of government effectiveness estimated for Russia during 2016 was, as usual, negative: -0.41 points (with a minimum of -0.73 points in 1998 and a maximum of -0.11 points in 2014).

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**Fig. 1.1 GNI per capita, PPP (current international $), 2016**

![Fig. 1.1 GNI per capita, PPP (current international $), 2016](image)

**Fig. 1.2 Ease of doing business index (1=most business-friendly regulations), 2017**

![Fig. 1.2 Ease of doing business index (1=most business-friendly regulations), 2017](image)

**Fig. 1.3 Unemployment, total (% of total labor force) (modeled ILO estimate), 2017**

![Fig. 1.3 Unemployment, total (% of total labor force) (modeled ILO estimate), 2017](image)

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1 Last available data. Sources: World Bank; Transparency International; Freedom House; Global Gender Gap Report (World Economic Forum); Eurostat; OECDStats
Fig. 1.4 Corruption Perception Index - Transparency International (1 to 100; 1= high corruption perceived), 2016

Fig. 1.5 Government Effectiveness: Estimate, 2016 (-2,5 to 2,5 -2,5=very low effectiveness perceived)

Fig. 1.6 Freedom of the press (0=best, 100=worst), 2017

Fig. 1.7 Global Gender Gap Index (0 to 1, 1= gender equality), 2017

Fig. 1.8 Percentage of people with tertiary education (25-64 years old), 2016

Fig. 1.9 Internet users (per 100 people), 2016
Russia is among the PROMISE countries with the lowest level of gender equality (Fig. 1.7). In the Global Gender Gap Report 2017 Russia occupies the 71st place in the overall ranking out of 144 countries.

Considering the issue of freedom of the press/media, as one of the basic characteristics of an open civil society, comparing with other PROMISE countries, the Russian Federation in 2017 has the worst position. (Fig. 1.6). However, Russian citizens are active users of the Internet, which can become an alternative source of information (Fig. 1.9). And Russia takes the first place with the amount of people with higher education (Fig. 1.8)

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Fig. 1.10 CO2 emissions (metric tons per capita), 2014

Russia, for example, has one of the highest CO2 emissions per capita.

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2. Being young in Russia

2.1 Demographic situation

According to the UN demographic classification for 2015, Russian society falls into the category of "ageing"; the share of people over 65 years was 13.5%. A serious decrease in the share of the young population in 1990 practically equalised the proportions of the young and elderly population of the country. So, the period from 2010 to 2015 was marked by serious changes in the age structure of Russian society, and as a result, in 2015 the percentage of the elderly population exceeded the number of young people by 2.9%.

One of the most notable effects of the demographic transition for Russia was the increase in the age of marriage (Fig. 2.3). According to the Russian Federal State Statistics Service, the average age of marriage for men in 1990 was 27.5 years - against 31.5 years in 2016, and for women 23.6 years in 1990 - against 27.6 years in 2016. Parallel to this, there is a high rate of young people living with their parents (and other relatives). The strategy of delayed maturation is typical not only for the modern youth of the Russian Federation. Similar trends can be seen among a number of other developed countries.

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4 The proportion of people over 65 years old exceeds the threshold of 7% of the total population of the country.
7 Public “Opinion Foundation” http://fom.ru/
2.2 Education & Labour market in Russia

Traditionally, the proportion of Russians achieving a tertiary education remains quite high (Fig. 1.8), and consistently women more often than men receive higher education. In 2016, the percentage of young women with a higher education exceeded the number of men of the same age group by 16.2%. Despite this fact, high gender inequality is still present in Russia (Fig. 1.7).

According to the World Economic Forum 10 (2016), over the past 10 years the Russian Federation has reduced its ranking by 26 positions in the Global Gender Gap Index. This situation affects the wage level. According to Russian Federal State Statistics Service data for 2015, the average women’s salary in all sectors of the economy is lower than that of men: the ratio of women’s wages to men’s is 72.6 in all sectors of the economy. Moreover, a higher education is not always associated with a high level of income and the position that a person will occupy after graduating from the university. The level of income will be determined rather by the sphere of the economy and the position held, rather than by the qualification level of the specialist.

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9 Data of the “Russian Monitoring of the Economic Situation and Health of the NRU HSE”

https://www.hse.ru/rims/reg

Almost a quarter of young people who are employed in Russia in 2016 have a higher education degree. In number they are almost equal to those in work holding a general secondary education (Fig. 2.6). This may be caused by the progressive increase in the proportion of University graduates since the 2000s, which is associated with the prestige of higher education in Russian society and the simultaneous stigmatisation of people with secondary education as insufficiently motivated to get an education of good quality. In this regard, there is an increase in the segment of highly qualified specialists in the labour market of the Russian Federation. At the same time, the proportion of working youth with an incomplete secondary education has remained practically unchanged for the last 20 years, and there is a shortage of workers in the labour market.
2.3 Health and well-being

In general, the majority of Russian youth rate their health as good or very good, but there are some differences in the assessments of young women and men (Fig. 2.10).

In 2016, males tend to be 6.4% more optimistic about their health than females and they are 4.2% less likely to experience depression (Fig. 2.12). However, young men are more likely to commit suicide (Fig. 2.11). Even considering the fact that the number of suicides among males is decreasing in comparison with the previous years, the difference between female and male mortality due to suicide remains significant and in 2016 composes 12.1%. For young women, the mortality rate per 100,000 people due to suicide remains stable.

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The level of life satisfaction among young people in Russia has increased by 35.3% over the past 20 years (Fig. 2.13), which may be due both to Russia's overcoming the long socio-economic crisis of the 1990s caused by the collapse of the USSR and institutional restructuring in the country, and to generational changes in Russian society.

### 2.4 Use of Substances and Crime

In 2016, more than half of young people in Russia consumed alcohol at least once per month. Among young women this indicator is slightly lower, but also remains quite high (Fig.2.14). In Russia, there are no official statistics on the rate of drug use. In the optics of medical statistics, assessing the proportion of people with drug addiction, you can see only a gradual reduction in the number of officially registered patients. However, this indicator cannot fully represent the existing picture of drug use in the country, at least for reasons of high mortality among drug users outside medical records.

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16 Data of the “Russian Monitoring of the Economic Situation and Health of the NRU-HSE” https://www.hse.ru/rlms/reg


3. What do young people in Russia think and feel?

3.1 Perception of opportunity and constraints

3.1.1 Russia and European situation

According to ESS data, 19.8% of Russian youth claim that the social climate in the country is negative (Fig. 3.1). Such perception is significantly more widespread among young people aged 25–29 (24.7%), as well as among those who, at the time of the survey, defined themselves as "unemployed". But the majority of respondents (69.9%) were not able to clearly describe the social climate in Russia and have selected the middle position (neither positive nor negative).

Regarding safety assessment in the Russian Federation, the majority of young people (aged 15-29) believe that they are safe (Fig. 3.5). But in the overall proportion of those who do not feel safe (17.6%), females prevail. They are significantly more likely to feel unprotected (22.1%) compared with males (13.7%) (Fig. 3.4).
More than 80% of young people are satisfied (‘to some extent’, and ‘rather/very much’) with the situation in the Russian Federation (Fig. 3.6). The majority of those who are not satisfied, are those aged 25–29 and who feel that their financial situation is ‘difficult’ (Fig. 3.7).

Almost half of young people from Russia are ‘to some extent’ satisfied with the work of democracy in the country, although 27.4% are completely satisfied and 20.4% completely unsatisfied. In general 79.2% of respondents, one way or another, support the democratic development of Russia (Fig. 3.8)

The majority of young respondents consider themselves happy people (Fig.3.7a). Among them, students feel themselves happy significantly more often than others (65.2%). About one third of unemployed people consider themselves unhappy (Fig.3.8a).
3.2 Relation with authority

3.2.1 General opinion on institutions

Fig. 3.9 Political system allows people to have a say in what government does

- Not at all
- Very little
- Some
- A lot
- A great deal

Fig. 3.10 Those who believe that political system allows people to have a say in what government does only very little or not at all (%)

15-19 years old
20-24 years old
25-29 years old

Fig. 3.11 Political system allows people to have influence on politics

- Not at all
- Very little
- Some
- A lot
- A great deal

Fig. 3.12 Those who believe that political system allows people to have influence on politics only very little or not at all (%)

big city
suburbs or small city
country village or countryside
3.2.2 Trust in institutions: Law&order; and political institutions (not civic society)

Only 10.9% of young people have trust in the country's political institutions. A few more express (21.4%) trust in the institutions of law and order. However there is a decrease in the level of trust with the increase in the age of the respondents for both indicators (Fig 3.14, Fig 3.16). This may be caused by the fact that at the age of 18 young people are formally included in the political life of the country, have the right to vote and to participate in elections, in protests and actions, to join parties, etc. The older respondents become, the higher level of legal awareness and personal socio-political experience is observed. In general, we can say that young Russians have only partial trust in state structures. These institutions function in Russia largely without the basic support of the population and without the active participation of young people in their activities. As the data demonstrate almost half of the respondents cannot form a clear attitude to these structures (trust only to some extent: 48.7% and 51.7%).

![Fig. 3.13 Trust in political institutions in Russia](image1)

![Fig. 3.14 A descriptive portrait of young people who show a low level of trust in the political institutions of the FR (%)(age, occupation, income)](image2)

![Fig. 3.15 Trust in Law&Order institutions](image3)

![Fig. 3.16 A descriptive portrait of young people who show a low level of trust to the institutions of the legal order of the FR (%)(age, occupation, income)](image4)
3.3 Sustainable values (opinions on social issues)

3.3.1 Environment

According to the results of the survey in Russia 81.6% of respondents to some extent feel climate change. Among the many factors relevant to the assessment of climate change the type of settlement in which informants live is significant. People living in villages (25%) feel more than others the change in climate, while more than a third (35.3%) of residents of large cities do not notice climate change at all. The larger the settlement is, the more often respondents mention such a factor of influence on the environment as "human activity"
3.3.2 Equality/Social inclusion

As mentioned above, contemporary Russia is the country with a high level of gender inequality (Fig 1.7). Thus, 32.5% of young respondents more or less agree with the statement that «Men should have more right to a job than women when jobs are scarce» (Fig. 3.21). Among those who, on the contrary, do not agree with this statement, there are significantly more women, 51.9% (Fig. 3.23). It is also important to note that a third of the respondents (33.1%) expressed their strong disagreement with the statement that «Gays and lesbians are free to live life as they wish», another 23.4% noted that LGBT people probably do not have this right. In general, this indicates a fairly high level of homophobia in Russia.

3.3.3 Migration

The migration experience, or its absence, as well as age, significantly affects young people's attitudes toward migrants.
Respondents in the 25–29 age-group, were significantly more likely than younger respondents to believe that migrants negatively affect the economic and cultural life of the country and the living conditions in general (Fig. 3.25). At the same time those with a migration experience tend to be more loyal to migrants. With the statement that “immigrants undermine a country's cultural life”, being significantly more expressed by young people without a migration experience (36.6%). Students (24.8%) significantly more often believe that “migration is generally good for our country's economy” (perhaps because they are more mobile than employed or unemployed informants), while the opposite view is held by unemployed young Russians (40.6%). Almost half of unemployed young people (46.9%) are also confident that ‘immigrants make the country a worse place to live’. 40% of the respondents with an experience of migration agree with the statement "Government should be generous judging applications for refugee status", and almost the same number (47.8%) of the respondents without the experience of migration expressed their disagreement with this statement. In turn, 60.6% of respondents with experience in migration supported the idea that "Granted refugees should be entitled to bring close family members", which is a significantly higher proportion than young people without such experience (39.7%).

![Fig. 3.28 Immigrants make country worse or better place to live](image)

![Fig. 3.24 Attitudes towards migrants in Russia (%)](image)
Fig. 3.25 The ratio of young Russians to some migration effects: extreme values by age groups (%)

- Immigrants undermine country’s cultural life: 12.6% (15-19), 26.4% (20-24), 21.6% (25-29)
- Immigrants enrich country’s cultural life: 32.4% (15-19), 21.6% (20-24), 14.1% (25-29)
- Migration is generally bad for country’s economy: 9.2% (15-19), 21.8% (20-24), 25.2% (25-29)
- Migration is generally good for country’s economy: 24.5% (15-19), 37.2% (20-24), 19.1% (25-29)
- Immigrants make country worse place to live: 19.5% (15-19), 36.7% (20-24), 14.1% (25-29)
- Immigrants make country better place to live: 20.7% (15-19), 18% (20-24), 14.1% (25-29)

Fig. 3.29 Support of migrants’ rights by young Russians (%)

- Government should be generous judging applications for refugee status: 15.1% (15-19), 39.2% (20-24), 45.7% (25-29)
- Most refugee applicants not in real fear of persecution own countries: 41.4% (15-19), 31.7% (20-24), 26.9% (25-29)
- Granted refugees should be entitled to bring close family members: 41.4% (15-19), 31.7% (20-24), 26.9% (25-29)
4. Engagement and Social Change

In this section we provide information about young people’s social and political engagement in Russia. We adopt the concept of social and political engagement as defined in D4.1, including aspects of civic engagement, formal political participation, activism, and everyday engagement. In most of the cases, questions relate to the forms of participation that young people think are the most effective.

4.1 Civic engagement

The civic engagement analysed in this section is operationalised as subjective assessment of participation in different types of social activity and voluntary work.

![Fig. 4.1 Worked in another organisation or association last 12 months (%)](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.4</td>
<td></td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Fig. 4.2 - Compared to other people of your age, how often do you take part in social activities (%)](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>I take part in social activities less than my peers</th>
<th>the same</th>
<th>take part in social activities more than my peers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of young people (54.9%) believe that they have the same level of participation as their peers (Fig. 4.2). However, based on the formulation of the question, it is difficult to evaluate this level: is it high or low? Is this majority active or passive? 27.1% of respondents define themselves as more active participants in social activities comparing with others, however only 6.4% of young people actually volunteer in organisations (Fig. 4.1). Based on what we can conclude that "systemic“ civic engagement (as it is operationalised in this section) is not a common practice in Russian society. However, political actors try to involve young people in the voluntary movement in different ways. At the same time, the presence of a migration experience has a significant impact on civic engagement: migrants are less likely to be involved in various manifestations and are less willing to identify themselves with the majority.

![Fig. 4.3 Compared to other people of your age, how often would you say you take part in social activities by migration background (%)](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>I take part in social activities less than my peers</th>
<th>the same</th>
<th>take part in social activities more than my peers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no migration background</td>
<td>25,5</td>
<td>56,6</td>
<td>17,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with migration background</td>
<td>45,5</td>
<td>33,3</td>
<td>21,2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2 Formal political participation

When considering the participation of young people in "official/institutionalised" political life (political participation), it can be noted that among young people from 15 to 29 years 29.8% took part in the elections (if we exclude minors from the sample 20, who do not have the right to vote under the legislation of the Russian Federation, the number of active voters will increase to 38%) (Fig 4.4).

As shown in figure 4.5, the probability of participation in elections correlates with the employment status of respondents: young employees are almost twice as active as students or unemployed people, which indicates the interrelations of political and economic activities - young people begin to be more actively involved in the political processes at the time of entering the labour market and gaining their own source of income and independence.

In Russia, there are also several other opportunities for young people to participate in formal political life: become a member of youth divisions of political parties or participate in the projects of the Federal Agency for Youth Affairs (through youth councils and governments), supported by regional (local) authorities and designed to involve young people in political life. However, according to the ESS, only about 3% of young Russians interacted with official political structures: 3.5% worked in political parties, 3% interacted with politicians and authorities in working processes.

20 Adulthood in Russia comes at the age of 18
4.3 Activism

Activism in this report is defined as a participation in various kinds of political ‘informal’ actions: signing petitions, participation in demonstrations. Such actions are more attractive for young people compared with participation in institutionalised politics: almost twice as many young people participated in demonstrations as in the work of political parties. During 2016, petitions were signed by 11% of the total number of Russian youth, while 6.7% of young people participated in protests and demonstrations (Fig. 4.6). However, we cannot argue that political activism is widespread among Russian youth.

At the same time, as it follows from Figure 4.7, young women tend to demonstrate their position more actively than young men. In addition, people with a migrant experience and representatives of different discriminated minorities participate in such actions more often. As noted in section 4.1, migrants feel less involved in civic processes.

4.4 Everyday Engagement

Everyday engagement, operationalised through an interest in politics, consumer participation and environmental worries, is more common in Russian society than direct (formal and informal) participation in political events. Thus, 38.1% of young people are interested in politics. Among them people with a migrant experience and members of discriminated groups are more interested in politics compared with other young people (Fig. 4.8).
Only 14.6% of respondents are very worried about climate change, however almost half of young people are ready to change their behaviour for more responsible and conscious actions (Fig.4.9): 31.3% feel personal responsibility for minimising harmful emissions into the atmosphere, 32.5% are constantly taking measures to reduce energy consumption, and 48% are ready to buy more energy-efficient electrical appliances, 28.4% are sure that they could consume less energy than they do at the moment. The most active in this activity are again the people with the experience of migration (Fig.4.13)
Fig.4.13 - Caring about the environment by social features (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>No migration background</th>
<th>With migration background</th>
<th>Not member of a group discriminated against in this country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confident</td>
<td>44,7</td>
<td>44,3</td>
<td>26,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not confident</td>
<td>26,3</td>
<td>28,9</td>
<td>28,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often/very often/always do things to reduce energy use</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>33,3</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes do things to reduce energy use</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>7,7</td>
<td>34,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never/hardly never do things to reduce energy use</td>
<td>42,3</td>
<td>44,7</td>
<td>7,7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

About 10% of young people posted information on political topics online (Fig 4.10). Migrants and members of discriminated communities were again the most active in consumer participation (Fig. 4.12).

One third of young people (31.6%) spend 10-30 minutes per day studying the political news agenda, while another 22.7% consume news for less than 10 minutes a day. A further half of young people (45.7%) spend more than 30 minutes a day consuming the news. Social characteristics that significantly affect the interest in daily reading of the political news have not been identified.
### Project Identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Project Name</strong></th>
<th>Promoting Youth Involvement and Social Engagement (PROMISE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Coordinator** | Jo Deakin, University of Manchester, UK.  
  [Jo.deakin@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Jo.deakin@manchester.ac.uk) |
| **Consortium** | Raffaele Bracalenti, *Istituto Psicoanalitico per le Ricerche Sociali*, Italy.  
  [r.bracalenti@iprs.it](mailto:r.bracalenti@iprs.it)  
  Eckart Müller-Bachmann, *Christliches Jugenddorfwerk Deutschlands e.V.*, Germany.  
  [eckart.mueller-bachmann@cjd-nord.de](mailto:eckart.mueller-bachmann@cjd-nord.de)  
  [zyab.ibanez@eui.eu](mailto:zyab.ibanez@eui.eu)  
  [rmatos@porto.ucp.pt](mailto:rmatos@porto.ucp.pt)  
  [Ivan.Chorvat@umb.sk](mailto:Ivan.Chorvat@umb.sk)  
  [Kaisa.Vehkalahti@oulu.fi](mailto:Kaisa.Vehkalahti@oulu.fi)  
  Annett Wiedermann, *YES Forum (Youth and European Social Work)*, Germany.  
  [annett.wiedermann@yes-forum.eu](mailto:annett.wiedermann@yes-forum.eu)  
  Anna Markina, *University of Tartu*, Estonia.  
  [Anna.Markina@ut.ee](mailto:Anna.Markina@ut.ee)  
  Markus Quandt, *GESIS - Leibniz Institut Fur Sozialwissenschaften E.V.*, Germany.  
  [Markus.quandt@gesis.org](mailto:Markus.quandt@gesis.org)  
  Elena Omelchenko, *National Research University*, Russia.  
  [omelchenkoe@mail.ru](mailto:omelchenkoe@mail.ru)  
  [ben.perasovic@gmail.com](mailto:ben.perasovic@gmail.com) |
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| **Budget** | EU contribution: 2 500 000 €. |
| **Website** | [http://www.promise.manchester.ac.uk/en/home-page/](http://www.promise.manchester.ac.uk/en/home-page/) |
| **For More Information** | Contact: Markus Quandt ([Markus.quandt@gesis.org](mailto:Markus.quandt@gesis.org))  
  or Jo Deakin ([Jo.deakin@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Jo.deakin@manchester.ac.uk)) |