

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

**WP6: From Conflict to Innovation: Ethnographic Case Studies**

<http://www.promise.manchester.ac.uk/en/home-page/>

### **Young Gender Activists Portugal**

**Raquel Matos, Alexandra Carneiro, Filipe Martins, Luísa Campos,  
Luísa Ribeiro, Mariana Negrão**

**Universidade Católica Portuguesa**

#### **Executive summary:**

This ethnographic case study report focuses on young gender activists in Portugal, and presents the main ideas related to this type of activism, as well as its evolution among Portuguese activists. In the study, 20 young gender activists aged between 17 and 32 years old have participated. Participants were recruited from two organisations that are related to gender activism and are part of the Portuguese Promise NPPN, as well as from initiatives related to gender equality and then through snowball sampling. Participants are from several geographic areas of Portugal. All participants were asked to answer to a semi-structured interview that was voice-recorded, transcribed, anonymised and then analysed with Nvivo. Main results highlighted several aspects that are important to better understand the group of gender activists and gender activism in Portugal. It was possible to understand that conflicts experienced by these youth are related to gender, sexuality and activism and that they are often stigmatised for it. Gender activism is a response to gender-based social conflicts that these youngsters perceive in society and they feel that they are somehow effective in promoting social change through their actions. Regarding their relations with older generations, the overall experience is that intergenerational relations have impact in causing, but also in overcoming conflicts. Finally, the gender activists feel that their experience can be transferred to others, namely to other young people, through media, and by avoiding radical views and positions.

*This report should be read in conjunction with the document "Individual case studies – introduction."*

## Contents

1. INTRODUCTION.....	3
2. METHODS .....	5
2.1. <i>The case study</i> .....	5
2.2. <i>Interview locations and characteristics of the sample</i> .....	6
2.3. <i>Interview</i> .....	7
2.4. <i>Ethics</i> .....	7
2.5. <i>Positionality</i> .....	7
2.6. <i>Data analysis</i> .....	7
3. KEY FINDINGS.....	8
3.1. <i>Conflicts around gender, sexuality and... activism</i> .....	8
3.2. <i>Experiencing stigma and fighting against it</i> .....	10
3.3. <i>‘Activisms’ as a response to social conflicts</i> .....	11
3.4. <i>Effectiveness in promoting social change</i> .....	13
3.5. <i>The role of intergenerational relations in causing and overcoming conflicts</i> .....	15
3.6. <i>Transferring experience to peers</i> .....	18
4. CONCLUSIONS .....	21
5. FUTURE ANALYSIS .....	24
References.....	25
Appendix 1: Table of respondents’ socio-demographic data .....	27

## 1. Introduction

In the scope of Work Package 6 of the PROMISE project, the Portuguese research team carried out an ethnographic case study on young people aged 17 to 32 who were engaged in formal or informal activities that aimed to promote gender equality. This particular group of young people is considered to contribute to the general aim of the PROMISE project as they actively question, confront and try to change social norms and social inequalities based on gender and/or sexuality. The research under this case study focuses particularly on young adults who identified themselves as gender activists aiming to promote social change, whether through involvement in formal organizations and/or actions, or through their daily practices and interactions.

In Portugal, the 20<sup>th</sup> century was deeply marked by the *Estado Novo* dictatorship period (1933 to 1974). While in many other countries remarkable political, social and cultural changes were occurring, Portugal remained a marginal and stagnated country. During the *Estado Novo* period, Portugal was characterised by a conservative, religious and family-oriented culture, with a protectionist economy mostly based on subsistence agriculture and incipient industry, and a majority of rural illiterate population (Barreto, 2002). By then, young people faced several difficulties, and in the last decades of this period, there was a massive emigration flow of youth to more affluent countries like France, Switzerland, Germany, Luxemburg, Brazil, Venezuela and the U.S.A. This youth mobility greatly affected the already impoverished Portuguese socioeconomic landscape. At the same time, the Independence Wars in many of the Portuguese African colonies at that time forced many young men to enlist in the military forces and, consequently, contributed to the enhancement of emigration movements and the social and economic depression of the country (Arroteia, 2001; Matos, 2016). The political repression and persecution, the absence of freedom of expression and the conservative values not only hindered participation in social life, but also prevented people from having a voice to claim their rights or even those that were aimed, especially at women. In this context, only a minority elite or upper middle-class youth could access prolonged school trajectories and get in touch with new experiences and ideas. Such students were particularly relevant in forging and supporting anti-fascist and anti-colonial structures and initiatives in the 1960s and early 1970s.

Besides all the adversities that young people faced, after the democratic revolution (April 25<sup>th</sup> 1974), major efforts were made to reduce poverty and social inequalities, enhance economic growth and raise the educational standards of the general population, which raised the population's general wellbeing and social mobility aspirations (Barreto, 2002). After 1974, university students were again pivotal in social change, engaging in political parties, community level initiatives, cultural collectives and alphabetisation campaigns. This was a period where pro-democratic political activism, alongside literature, architecture, visual arts and musical movements, were defining trends of a strongly involved young generation that would become a national symbolic reference in the decades to come in many social dimensions (Pappámikail, 2011).

Gender was one of such dimensions and, thus, there were improvements in the gender balance in education, in the labour market, in law and in family life. In fact, after the 1974 revolution, several efforts were made towards women's greater social, cultural and political participation in Portuguese society. For example, careers in public administration (e.g., diplomatic and judicial careers) opened to women's inclusion, several rights of men over women were abolished and women finally had the right to vote without any restriction. We can say that gender activism started to gain social relevance in



Portugal with the second and third feminist waves that occurred in the late 1960s, 1980s and 1990s and these changed the way Portuguese people understood women's rights. In this context, a new feminist trend emerged, characterised by economic and political struggles, while defending diverse identities in which subjectivity is an element of reference.

Over the last decades, most Portuguese youngsters became more aware of the social and global challenges faced by women. And, even though youth social engagement tends to assume less structured and more individualised forms, youth involvement in social and cultural initiatives and causes has grown (Pappámikail, 2011), namely in gender equality. In this arena, several social intervention projects and organisations are taking steps towards equality between genders and respect for all sexual orientations. Despite all the above-mentioned changes, at the present moment, significant gender inequalities in income, job opportunities and family responsibilities remain. The differentiated access of men and women to top positions, either in the private or public sector (Matos, 2011) can be presented as an example of persisting inequalities that indicate that despite the gradual changes in society, feminist activism is still needed. As Banyard (2010) argues, we are living in an era of *equality illusion*, given that the mainstream discourses incorporated gender in the agenda, conveying the message that feminist struggles are no longer necessary, but, in fact, they are still necessary as inequalities persist.

According to Tarrow (1994) and to Bagguley (2002), there are "cycles of protest", consisting of periods of more intense protest interleaved with periods of low activity. Concerning gender activism, it seems to be currently quite dynamic in various regions of the world (Redfern and Aune, 2013). Portugal is going through a period of greater intensity regarding public tendencies for gender equality and respect for the different sexual orientations. In fact, initiatives to gender equality are rising and gradually impacting more, increasing the social awareness of this issue among people of all ages. Regarding youth activism, though it is known that young people are developing more street and online activities in favour of gender equality, there aren't academic studies providing characteristics of youth involved in gender activism in the country (e.g., how many, who, when, why).

Globally, activists in gender issues tend to be young people who are more educated (Johnstone et al, 1994; Offe, 1985), more politically mobilised (McCarthy and Zald, 1987) and more concerned with belonging or being close to networks and collective identities that align with these types of activism (Melucci, 1989). The current movement of activism, in Portugal, is characterised by an alliance and "transversity" and not by a unique identity that women share and that intersects with class, race, age or nationality (Krolokke and Sorensen, 2006). The main goal of gender activism, at the moment, is to deconstruct categorical thinking, aiming at a position of multiple difference rather than a position of equivalence (Budgeon, 2001). This activism follows a politic of dialogue and cooperation recognising that women and other people have different identities but also come together over specific issues (Cockburn, 2007) such as their concern with intersectionality (Davis, 2008).

A few years ago, in Portugal, there was no deep theoretical discussion about gender arising from research (Grünell and Kas, 1995). More recently, gender studies have started to focus on new themes, that were until now barely visible, such as sexual work (Duarte, 2012; Oliveira, 2011); polyamory (Cardoso, 2010), transgender studies (Rocha, 2012; Saleiro, 2010); and queer theory (Coelho and Pena, 2009; Oliveira, 2009; Santos, 2013), and some changes occurred, enhancing the visibility of gender issues, namely in two domains: political – the introduction of "gender" in the discourses; and

public - several organisations, movements and initiatives developed and began to gain more visibility. However, the literature evidences that there is still an absence of major public discussion regarding gender, which is only starting to be more frequent in private contexts (Pereira and Santos, 2014).

In order to contribute to empirical studies on gender activism in Portugal, the present study aims to answer to the following research questions:

1. What are the sites, agents/agencies and forms of conflict encountered by young gender activists?
2. What are the consequences of and constraints on young gender activists resulting from stigmatisation as problematic or conflict-prone?
3. What forms do young gender activist's responses (individual and collective, online and offline) to conflict take? What meaning do young gender activists attach to them? Do young gender activists feel these responses can effect change? What is the innovative potential of these responses?
4. How effective are these responses are in mobilising and implementing young gender activists' drive for social change? In what cases do these responses constitute social innovation? How are they perceived as innovation by young people/older generations/authorities?
5. What role do intergenerational relations play in both causing and overcoming conflict and producing social innovation and change?
6. How might the experience of groups in finding creative responses and driving social change out of conflict be transferred to peers?

## 2. Methods

In order to address these research questions, data were collected over a period of 5 months (August to December 2017) using semi-structured, voice-recorded interviews as well as participant observation of gender activism events. Observational data were recorded in field notes and voice-recorded interviews were transcribed. Both sets of data were anonymised, coded (using Nvivo11) and analysed thematically.

### 2.1. The case study

The group of young gender activists was chosen for being a group of people who do not conform to societal norms regarding inequalities between genders. Youngsters who are engaged in this type of activism aim to have a society where all genders are considered as equal, with the same rights, duties and salary. Nowadays, not only the rights of women are defended but also gay, lesbian, transgender and queer, as well as some men's rights such as more time for parental leaving, leading more men to join this type of activism. In Portugal, the number of organisations that are concerned with gender equality increased, leading to more attention for this type of activism. More youngsters are now involved in actions, namely street demonstrations, meetings to talk about the problem, and activities where they demonstrate an active voice in the defence of those who need help. Therefore, this group of youngsters displays its conflicts both in private (e.g., the family) and public sites (e.g., the street),

frequently with adults (e.g., parents and other family members and peers) and institutions (e.g., services and organisations). These young activists do not conform to society and the way it passively accepts gender inequalities.

## ***2.2. Interview locations and characteristics of the sample***

Data were collected from people with any kind of involvement in gender activism. Because participants were not all from the same geographic area nor from the same organisation, interviews were carried out in several locations, in Porto and in Lisbon. The majority of the interviews were held in the University where the study is being conducted, or in a place that the participants requested (e.g., cafés, organisations).

Respondents were recruited, initially, through two organisations that are part of the Portuguese National Policy and Practice Network (NPPN) (some participants are members of these organisations), and through an event that one of these organisations prepared. Then, other participants were recruited through an event that was held in the facilities of another organisation that is also a member of the Portuguese NPPN, and after this initial stage, respondents were recruited through snowball sampling.

Overall, participants can be grouped, at the time of the selection to the interview, into three types of gender activists. The first group includes 11 participants who, at the time of the interview, were members of direction boards, other members or former members (but in contact) of gender activist's organisations. In the second group are included seven sympathisers/occasional participants in gender initiatives (e.g., feminist festivals, workshops, manifestations, gender meetings) that are not directly involved with any organisation or that were in the past but left because of disagreements regarding gender ideas. Finally, the third group includes two "independent activists" that have been close, in the past, to gender activist's organisations but left, and now are very active in an independent way (e.g., editors of gender zines, owners of feminist brand clothing).

In total, 20 youth (5 males) aged between 17 and 32 years old were interviewed. Of these, 3 were 20 years old or under, 8 were aged between 21 and 25 years old, 6 were aged between 26 and 30 years old, and 3 were aged between 31 and 32 years old<sup>1</sup>. The majority of respondents (11) have a bachelor's degree, three have a master's, three completed secondary education, one has a PhD, one completed 9<sup>th</sup> grade and one has completed a professional course. The majority of participants (9) were in full-time employment, seven were in full-time education (including all those that completed lower-higher education or upper-higher education), one was in part-time employment, one was in part-time education, one was in full-time employment but also in part-time education, and one was in part-time employment and in part-time education. Most participants (10) were living with the family (e.g., parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents), four were living with friends, and four were living with a boyfriend or girlfriend, one was living with his mother and girlfriend, and one was living alone. All the respondents lived in Portugal though two were not Portuguese citizens. A socio-demographic profile of each respondent is included in Appendix 1.

---

<sup>1</sup> Due to the recruitment procedures adopted in this case study, several gender activists who were willing to participate were over 29 years old. The research team considered this as a reflection of the demographic profile of gender activists, especially of those who have a stronger involvement in activism. Hence, the age limit was not considered a strict exclusion criterion and a few participants over 29 were included in the sample.

## **2.3. Interview**

The interview schedule was closely based on the common ‘skeleton interview scenario’ of the ethnography work package (WP6) adopted by the PROMISE partnership, in order to allow cross case comparisons and analysis. It was designed to stimulate a structured yet adaptable conversation with respondents. Divided in four sections, the interviews addressed different topics related to how gender activists are engaged with this type of activism: 1) background information about the respondent – why they are involved in the group or activity and what happened before that prompted their involvement; 2) information of any experience of stigma and conflict and location of the sources of stigma or conflict – identification of stigmas rather than assuming specific stigma, inclusion of intergenerational conflict; 3) respondent’s understanding of the activity they are engaged in (e.g., street art, youth club activities) – description on what participant’s do, with who and what advantages it has for them, as well as how others perceive the activity or organisation (e.g., peers, older generations, authority); and 4) indications about what the activity provides/could provide for other young people and how it can be shared. All interviews were voice recorded (with a minimum length of 45 minutes, a maximum length of 111 minutes and an average duration of 63 minutes, producing a total of 1,261 minutes) of interviews, and transcript (in a total of 730 pages).

## **2.4. Ethics**

All respondents were asked to sign an informed consent before the interview, and in the case of the youth that is under 18 years old, parental informed consent was also requested. All participants were given an information sheet outlining the research, providing contact details of the researchers, and assuring that they could withdraw from the research at any point. Confidentiality was ensured to all participants.

## **2.5. Positionality**

The positionality of the researchers was important in this case study. Half of the participants were participating in education, either at school or university, and nine of them have experience in higher education. The two researchers that conducted the interviews are university educated (PhD) and are middle class women, sharing education, gender and class with most participants. None of the researchers is involved in gender activism organisations, but one of them investigates in the area of gender, particularly in the fields of women in prison and gender and migrations control. The positioning of both the researchers and the prior experience of one of them in studying gender issues legitimated their presence and facilitated their participation in this research. In fact, the participants felt very comfortable throughout all stages of the field work, particularly during the interviews.

## **2.6. Data analysis**

All interviews were anonymised and coded using Nvivo11 and all respondents were given pseudonyms. The interviews were coded into 26 level two nodes that were provided by the coordinating team of the PROMISE project and discussed within the whole consortium. Level two nodes were informed by theory in order to produce a number of main themes to which the researchers agreed and used in the key findings section. The level one nodes were developed by means of an interactive process of coding interviews, discussing in team and getting final agreement. Nodes reflect the contents of the interviews rather than just being predetermined by the structure of

the interview. One interview was first coded by all Portuguese team members and then coding was discussed. After that, though most interviews were coded by one single researcher, the one that did most of the interviews, the coding process was systematically discussed with other researchers.

### 3. Key Findings

In this section, the key findings will be organised by six main themes: conflicts around gender, sexuality and activism; experiencing stigma and fighting against it; ‘activisms’ as a response to social conflicts; effectiveness in promoting social change; the role of intergenerational relations in causing and overcoming conflict; and ways of transferring experience to peers.

The themes, which meet the research questions described earlier, emerged from the qualitative data analysis. Throughout the text, we will include quotes from the interviews, as well as indicate numbers of sources (and occasionally numbers of references) in order to illustrate the consistency and relevance of some results.

#### 3.1. Conflicts around gender, sexuality and... activism

When analysing data to understand what sites, agents and forms of conflict are encountered by young gender activists, four main themes emerged: critics of the dominant discourses on gender roles and sexual orientation; resistance to activism; sexual orientation as a conflict; and the conflicts within activist organisations.

##### 3.1.1. Critics of the dominant discourses on gender roles and sexual orientation

Criticism of the dominant social discourses, conservative in terms of gender roles as well as sexual orientation, is very much present in the discourses of these young activists. Though only 9 of them (15 references) criticise this explicitly, throughout all the interviews, it seems to be assumed as a relevant conflict that is at the basis of these young people’s work as activists. They describe gender inequalities and male dominance and their specific impact on women’s lives (e.g., less freedom of expression, feeling less secure). According to Francisca, ‘girls are educated to be fragile...to appear more fragile, so as not to express too much opinion’. The lack of security for women in public spaces is mentioned frequently as one of the major problems arising from male dominance. But the respondents also argue that making it an issue reinforces such dominance and weakens women’s position:

... The other day, I don’t remember who, but someone who is also a feminist, was saying that what made her become a feminist was that she realised the lack of security there is when you walk on the street or go out at night as a woman. And that messes with me a lot. Why is there such a danger? ... I’m not saying that I don’t worry and that if I have a daughter I will not worry either. But the fact that this is an issue bothers me a lot.  
(Rosário)

The respondents also describe a false sense of change and acceptance, as they consider that, although a discourse of equality and of changes at this level is more present, Portuguese society is not

ready to make fundamental changes. Take the words of Marília, for instance: ‘I think that our society is not ready to accept. With all the problems that I’ve heard, all the legislation ... I think it is not. I think there’s so much bureaucracy, so many difficulties to achieve something ...’.

### 3.1.2. Resistances to activism

When describing the main conflicts they experience, the participants mention resistance to activism itself. They point out that sometimes, there are conflicts in a more intimate sphere, for example, when their relatives, boyfriends or partners do not understand their less conservative ideals in terms of gender and sexual orientation nor their engagement in activism.

... it is not something that I feel like sharing with them [family] they will not even understand what feminism is. (Carmo)

Then, I had that boyfriend that told me “you will not be a feminist, because if you are feminist I will be sexist” and he created a lot of confusion that I, in some point in time, even before ending that relationship, stopped seeing him because I didn’t even want to be with him. (Francisca)

They also describe resistance in the contexts where their gender activism takes place. Schools are one such context, as teachers often resist rather than support their initiatives, especially when they present topics about sexual orientation.

There is also this LGBT component that is not very well addressed in schools yet. Schools started now to have a few cases pointed out as "Case A" of the school. Even the employees and the teachers are not prepared. (Marília)

### 3.1.3. Sexual orientation as a conflict

Sexual orientation is also described as a conflict by five respondents. According to them, having a sexual orientation other than what is socially expected is not only a reason for conflict within the scope of the family or globally in society, but is also a reason for inner conflicts. Likewise, there are reports of isolation and despair associated with the discovery of homosexuality:

... when I discovered that I was gay it was a shock to me because I thought that I was the only gay in Portugal. Very clever. [Laughs]. Then I felt isolation, despair, sadness, thinking that it was something that just happened with me, and I remember that I saw on TV that there were pride LGBT marches all over the country. (Lucas)

The possibility of various forms of conflict, such as physical or verbal aggression, occurring in public spaces is described by some respondents:

... for example, in the issue of LGBT, ... gender is a concern. If we are talking about a boy, he will suffer much more physically when compared to a girl. Although there are also cases of very specific violence, it is not just comments, and the person has the ability to deal with it. Violence itself. (Rosário)

### 3.1.4. Conflicts within activist organisations

Although it is only referred to by two participants, it is worth mentioning that the context of activism is pointed out as a site of conflict in itself.

While a young woman points out that there is not always a consensus as to the type of activities to be developed (for example, the marches), another young woman describes how it can be difficult not to have conflicts in activism, especially in an associative context. In the opinion of this young woman, there are often intrigues and some activists try to become the main protagonist, placing their ego above the cause for which the associations fight:

I think yes, all people, one of the great conflicts that there is in activism and even among young people ... and in groups and in associations, is this [egoism]. We have to realise that everyone is right and sees things in a way, and it's a pity that does not happen. (Manuela)

## 3.2. Experiencing stigma and fighting against it

We sought to understand the stigmatisation experienced by young activists and the consequences arising from these experiences. Two main themes emerged from the data analysis: discrimination because of gender and sexual orientation, and for being a gender activist; and constraints resulting from stigma.

### 3.2.1. Discrimination because of gender and sexual orientation and for being gender activists

Almost all young activists (16 sources/61 references) referred to having had experienced some kind of stigma. Among them, nine mentioned it happened because of their gender, as was the case of Marlene:

For example, if I commit, I am driving, if I make a mistake in driving "it is because I am a woman" "it is obvious that it is a woman", I don't know, if I do something wrong when parking my car, people will think "it is obvious that is a woman". (Marlene)

Twelve reported having been discriminated against for being a gender activist.

I have already been treated differently. I've felt discrimination for that, ok? For saying that I am a feminist because at some point, being a feminist in some academic circles, is considered bad ... bad ... cruel ... people do not accept ... people see it as an eccentricity. And to assume, in a congress, that you have a feminist perspective or that you are going to present work on a feminist perspective, I think you have to have courage because for a long time I almost said it very quietly. (Francisca)

Finally, six young gender activists say they have been stigmatised because of their sexual orientation. Take the words of Teresa, below:

I think the way they treat me differently is because knowing that I am involved in these things, they assume that I am also part of the LGBT community, that I am a lesbian or that I am bisexual or trans, that is, they assume this, and so they will treat me differently

because they assume that I am part of that minority as well, and so the issues of discrimination appear. (Teresa)

Still regarding stigma, according to the young gender activists, youth is, in general, seen negatively (9 sources) – ‘There is a major discrediting of young people’s thoughts; so the adults think that what they consider to be right is how things should be’ (Francisca). Thus, the discrimination these young people experience in relation to their gender activism may also intersect with discrimination because they are young.

Young activists also mention that there are other important dimensions that contribute to a major or minor discrimination, hence, intersectionality seems to be an important lens to analyse these stigmatisation experiences.

Ok, this is why feminism also helps me in this, and this, the concept of intersectionality, is exactly that. Feminism itself is for all women, or in this case, for all people who are part of minorities and who are below patriarchy and ... and then within feminism there are also other issues that make certain people more affected by the rules of society and I think in this case the young people also have, there are also groups that are more ... fragile, more vulnerable than others. (Carmo)

### **3.2.2. Constraints resulting from stigma**

The young gender activists that shared having experienced stigma (for being a gender activist, because of gender or sexual orientation), mentioned some constraints in their lives, such as becoming more active in gender activism (10 sources) – ‘It is always demotivating, at least at an early stage, but I think that afterwards the person begins to realise that it is not worth it and, that the important thing is to keep fighting and continue to do their part and hope that it will be acknowledged.’ (Marília); or experiencing psychological distress (2 sources)

On a psychological level, it was very hard from a very young age, because I had to take the bus to get home, which means that I would go to a lot of public places from a very young age and, I was often approached by men and boys who were verbally and sometimes physically aggressive and that impacted me a lot. It really did. (Gabriela).

### **3.3. ‘Activisms’ as a response to social conflicts**

When analysing data to understand young gender activists’ responses to conflict, three main themes emerged: diversity in the level of involvement and formalisation of activism, and in the types of activities, rewards of gender activism, and difficulties of gender activism.

#### **3.3.1. Diversity in the types of actions, level of involvement and formalization of activism**

The young people in this case study are, by definition, involved in several actions towards society aiming to change the dominant discourses and expectations about gender and sexuality. However, the analysis revealed that their involvement in this type of activities may vary.

On the one hand, while 13 participants are involved in organisations, the remaining seven describe

developing gender activism without this formal involvement. Among the 13 members of associations, nine had or still have leading roles.

On the other hand, considering the types of activities they participate in or organise, the diversity is evident: Street activities, such as, for instance, “Marches” (6 sources) and “Street protests” (2 sources); Cultural and artistic activities, like theatre, cinema, music or art projects (7/20), or the edition of publications (“Zine”) (2 sources); Educative activities, including “Workshops”, “Conferences” and “Debates” (7 sources), developing “projects with children and youth” (mostly in schools) (4 sources), teaching about gender (2 sources), and ‘academic activism’, with the development of thesis in gender topics (2 sources).

It is interesting to note that 13 young people report that they have been, or are still currently, involved in other kinds of activism, besides the gender related one. The main causes that they fought for were human rights and animals’ rights along with political activism, thus displaying an overall engagement towards the promotion of better living conditions in society that connects gender related issues with wider social justice concerns. Seven respondents, however, mention that they have never been involved in activism besides gender.

### 3.3.2. Rewards of gender activism

We have also analysed the way these young activists experience the activities they are engaged in and found that most of them (16) cite it positively. As they describe, activism is globally a positive experience (“only had good things”) that makes them feel “proud” and that gives them “gratification” or “rewards”.

In order to explain the positive aspects of the activities they are engaged in, several participants describe the importance of the impact of activism on others (“makes other people feel good”; “Changes perspectives”) as well as on themselves (“Makes me feel good”; “Makes me feel useful”; “gives meaning to my life”; “I feel I am respected”).

The positive feelings linked to gender activism may also arise from the sense of belonging to a community or group, or may be related to the type of activities they do within activism, which they tend to like.

... I like to be part of it because I think our own meetings are in an atmosphere of dialogue, where we try to understand what would be most interesting to talk about. And even see the opinions within the group itself, the core itself. I like to take part, we also talk a lot, we talk. Each one gives their own opinion. (Guilhermina)

There are two references concerning the “passion” for the theme of gender. This passion is referred to by two respondents as one of the reasons why they experience gender activism so positively.

... the passion I have for this topic ... makes people want to hear, right? Then they hear me too, and many ... I've left many people completely stunned, right? With the things I say, like I do. I really like the subject, right? And that's why they listen to me, right? (Agostinho)

### 3.3.3. Difficulties of gender activism

The young people in this study also mention less positive aspects of their experience as gender activists. In fact, 11 of them cite difficulties linked to their engagement in activism.

First of all, they say that if it is not that difficult to participate in one event, as lots of young people do, it is much more difficult to be an activist on a daily basis. In this case, there is a constant effort, sometimes hard to manage. In the words of Rute, ‘... well it is not an easy task, it is a difficult and daily thing, is not it? It's a daily struggle, it's a bit difficult, it's difficult and it's especially hard on the little things, you know?’ Moreover, according to them, it is mandatory to know the field very well (i.e., the institutions, the politics, the activists, the public), and how it changes over time, in order to be successful in gender activism.

Reference is also made to the difficulty of working with political parties as well as of working with other activists, because political or individual interests may surpass the interest in defending the cause of gender equality.

Additionally, some young activists argue that when organising activities they tend to face several obstacles. For instance, the official institutions that should help (e.g., City Hall) may be very bureaucratic. Then, they face resistance because gender roles are deeply established making it very hard to change mentalities. For instance, according to Agostinho, “it is very difficult for a man to be a gender activist”.

When the activities take place, they may feel frustration because of the lack of interest or participation by others in the activities they organise. Or they may feel misunderstood as frequently others do not understand the message.

Finally, activism is described by nine respondents as something that occupies much of their time, more than their jobs or studies. But most of the time this is not described as something negative. With the exception of one reference of it being exhausting when they take on the leadership of activist organisations.

Yes, in the last year I was 100% active because I was part of the administrative board of the organisation and I'm in almost all the activities of the organisation, some very intense. I volunteer 100% in the organisation, but sometimes it takes up more of my time than my work does, which is 40 hours per week. (Lucas)

### 3.4. Effectiveness in promoting social change

Trying to understand if young gender activists consider having an impact on others, it was possible to observe that some of them think that their actions have an impact on other people and they are globally able to identify benefits to them and to others as a consequence of their actions. However, such impacts are recognised mainly in those who are closer to them.

#### 3.4.1. Do others recognise the importance of gender activism?

The majority of the young gender activists (14 sources) feel that society acknowledges their impact and potential of innovation. However, seven of them consider that those who in fact acknowledge the

impact of their actions are people who are close to them, such as family and peers.

Ah ... yes, I think the people that surround me, anyway, and also those who do not surround me personally, but know what I'm doing. Above all I think they give me a lot of motivation and they encourage me a lot. I do not know if this is a way of acknowledgement, I would say yes, in fact they encourage me a lot, give me a lot of support. Sometimes people say "wow this is you! That's really your scene! "Well, I think so, that this is also a form of recognition. (Susana)

In contrast, two activists are not confident that their actions have an impact on others or make a difference globally on society. One of them, Teresa, says:

The value of what I do... maybe not because, myself, if I am not working and I am organising the logistics and things like that, and not in contact with people, I do not see the value myself. Only when I get feedback and I see that there are real changes, I see, okay no ... this has value and all of this work makes sense. And, so, ah ... maybe if often I don't see value, they will much less because they don't see the feedback that exists. (Teresa)

There is one young activist who considers that others do not understand his activism, but instead admire it.

Humm..... I think people in general admire more than understand, I do not think so ... ah, "yes, that's good that you are doing this", but when I say that I'm working on an education project for human rights, I do not think that much relevance is given to it. Sometimes people ask, oh, those are minor things. But I think there is more of a feeling of admiration than proper understanding. (Renato)

Nevertheless, these considerations on what youth think about their impact on others/if others and society recognise their activism, they are able to identify benefits to them and to others as a consequence of gender activism.

### **3.4.2. Benefits to others**

Regarding the benefits that gender activists consider promoting on others (14 sources), the most frequently mentioned are changing ways of thinking and mentalities, and changes to everyday behaviours.

In other situations there is receptivity, openness and understanding, and it is often great and very rewarding to see changes in opinion, behaviour, towards a more respectful attitude and this is gratifying as a human being. (Lucas)

It is a small paradigm shift, in which more and more young men are identifying themselves as feminists and being more and more aware of how they act and how they react in their daily lives. (Susana)

### 3.4.3. Benefits to themselves

The respondents are also able to identify benefits of the activism on themselves: changing their thoughts and behaviours and growing as a person (14 sources); increasing their own self-esteem and perception of self-efficacy (9 sources); and improving their capacity to establish relations with others (3 sources).

It helped me to create my own identity, and from the moment we can identify ourselves with something that makes us feel good and that makes us feel comfortable with ourselves and that we do not have to be part of a standard, we don't have to follow norms to fit into a box. This makes our confidence and self-esteem much higher and I think that nowadays I can do certain things that I never dreamed of doing, such as doing this interview, and then I think that these kinds of ... of things have helped me immensely to improve my self-esteem and confidence in this case. (Carmo)

It was by making friends through the zines, through the theoretical production, also because I was able to find a group of people with whom I identified, so all these people give me encouragement and give me motivation to continue creating. (Rute)

## 3.5. The role of intergenerational relations in causing and overcoming conflicts

Intergenerational relations seem to play an important role in overcoming social conflicts. Data analysis evidenced that older generations contribute, at the same time, to cause and to solve young people's conflicts. It also evidenced that, according to these youngsters, gender differences have been slowly decreasing through generations despite remaining significant in school and in family contexts. Finally, participants reveal various perceptions of support to their activism, from older generations.

### 3.5.1. Are we overcoming gender inequalities through generations?

Almost all participants (15 sources) argue that gender inequalities and discrimination based on gender persist in current societies. According to them, gender inequalities are very much rooted in older generations and this is a barrier for social change towards equality:

We have an older generation that still has very assumed gender roles. It is very clear in the domestic sphere, in which women have a lot of tasks. This older generation might have some resistance and some difficulty in deconstructing all these ideas.... (Rute)

And, as referred to by one participant, 'there is still too much discrimination on the street, in schools, in family.' (Renato)

Nevertheless, as the same respondent argues 'somehow, people are becoming more conscious'. (Renato). In fact, according to the majority of respondents (13 sources), some modifications occurred regarding gender inequalities, though slowly and gradually.

Socially, I think it has evolved, albeit very slowly. At this level, for example, I think we are exactly, not exactly the same because there are more and more people thinking differently, but I think we are evolving very slowly on a social level. At a professional level

I think we are, there has been evolution, even in areas that were traditionally dominated by men, women are increasingly appearing, which also has to do with the change in the education of children, ok? But I think it's a very slow evolution. Faster than it was, but still slow. (Marlene)

As a result of the already accomplished changes, nowadays people tend to fight less for rights and more for equality:

Formerly maybe they felt that, the situation of the housewife, and that would have ... now the feeling that women can do more things, but they still do not realise that is equal, they will not fight for their rights, women have rights, and equality for both ... some men begin to think, getting worried that they will be discriminated against, but I think the goal is to fight for equality, never be superior to anyone. (Marília)

### **3.5.2. Family as a context that reproduces inequalities but encourages activism against it**

Family tends to be seen by the respondents as a paradoxical context in terms of gender. Youth feel that they are not sensitised for gender equality by their family and that their education is biased by gender expectations (5 sources) – ‘Even my parents were always careful with me, and I knew perfectly well that it would not be the same had I had a brother.’ (Francisca). However, other youngsters see family as a context where they were exposed to gender activism (7 sources) - 'Even at the level of... my parents always had a fairly open mind, a very open mind and so they always made me think about these issues and with them I think I've never felt any kind of difference.' (Marlene)

Moreover, sometimes family simply inspires young people for equality (3 sources):

'One of my aunts, she married a black man, in the 60's, also in [island name in Portugal] and she's very faired skin with blue eyes and he's black from [country name in Africa] and she's one of my biggest inspirations, because at the time they were also not well seen by everybody and they were mistreated by family members and everything and they continued together and so I do not think even my aunt realises any of this ...' (Carmo)

And family is also mentioned as supportive in their activism (15 sources/25) – ‘My family usually say, “Dude, what you do is an amazing thing” So, they are very proud and all this kind of thing, right? Above all, my mother.’ (Agostinho); I have a wonderful relationship with my brothers and they understand very well and ... they like it and ask for an opinion, and when they know of an issue, or an article they send it to me ...' (Luciano)

### **3.5.3. School biases in terms of gender and sexual orientation**

Like family, school is, at the same time, a context where youth feel that they face bias by authorities regarding gender and non-acceptance of other sexual orientations (8 sources) and a context where they can be more informed and be aware of gender inequalities (7 sources).

I think that in school and in teaching, I have always had the idea that girls are seen as those who strive, those who have to strive to get somewhere. Boys are much more ... if they do not strive and get good grades; or the case of the boys, the girls study humanities and the boys study other areas of exact sciences. (Gabriela)

I remember at school, there was an English teacher, with who we talked about the suffragettes in England. And so there, ah ... maybe it was. As I recall anyway. It's more remarkable to talk about issues. She would ask questions and if, I remember well, I think that was it, I think it was at that time that there were women who burned their bras. I remember her perfectly asking me if anyone here was also burning and I think at the time I said yes (laughs) ah ... and so there we talked a little bit. (Rosário)

### 3.5.4. The role of older generations in supporting gender activism

A few respondents (5 sources) report feeling supported by older generations in their gender activism, while six report they don't feel this support. In the case of the latter, they believe that this lack of support is linked to the fact that they are young, and young people usually are not taken seriously

They support when they need support for anything, some of them, obviously there is always that black sheep that will say no, but I think they also want to give continuity, especially those who, when they were that age already did, they want to help for there to be continuity. (Marília)

That's what I was telling you, I think that older people think that if young people are active it's because it's a matter of rebellion. (Francisca)

Yes, I suppose they think the values are a little changed. That the concerns are as well... but for example, if it is an elderly person who does not understand the issues of inequality they do not give it value, and probably will find that young people have a normal attitude and that there is not much to do. I do not know, I also think it is a relative issue. (Micaela)

Half of the participants felt that older generations could have an important role in motivating young people to this type of activism, namely through sharing their stories with younger generations (10 sources).

... adults have these interesting experiences that we want to know about but they end up not telling us because they think we have no interest, right? And to see someone older who knows what you are talking about, I think it would be interesting ... also parents, at home, try to reinforce this behaviour, or that perspective. It would help a lot, of course. (Guilhermina)

... I think we have to work on an intergenerational logic, that does not make sense ... I see a lot of this in LGBT activism. There was a gap among older activists, who were present in the 1980s and 1990s when HIV was on the table, and these younger generations ... suddenly there was no passage of witness between these two generations and today we are maybe living things about HIV, in particular, that we would not be living if there had been a more direct contact with who was in the forefront 20 years ago. (Renato)

### 3.6. Transferring experience to peers

When analysing data to understand what are the strategies that could be used to transfer experience to peers, gender activists firstly consider that they aim to reach those who are close to them or need more support. In addition they discussed their ideas of how to get more youth involved in activism, which will be explored in the next sections.

#### 3.6.1. Being heard by others

In this case study, the respondents assume to be in conflict with the social norms related to gender, thus, being activists in this area as a way to promote social change to overcome this conflict. Many youngsters (14 sources) feel that their discourses are heard by other people, namely by people that are close to them and know they are gender activists or at least that they have a different standpoint about gender and/or sexual orientation.

But a very small group of people and only those who are already interested [in gender activism]. Who already have knowledge of what I'm talking about. Those people who are outsiders and do not know what I'm talking about, they still do not want to know. But I have a small group of people that want to listen. (Guilhermina)

In contrast, six young people feel that they are not heard at all or that they are not heard by others in general regarding their activism.

It depends a lot on the other person. There are people that a person feels no, not worth it and that's it. And I honestly do not know what to do in these cases, because if it's not worth it, it's sad but we have to wait, it's not that the person is a minority ... but generally yes, I always try to have conversations. Sometimes it depends on the cases. (Rosário)

#### 3.6.2. Impact of gender activism on others

Besides some young people's experiences of not being heard, the majority of them (13 sources) indicate that they perceive their activism has an impact on others on a micro level, such as friends, and that, gradually, a chain effect occurs.

In other situations there is receptivity, openness and understanding, and, often, it is great and very rewarding to see changes in opinion and behaviour, towards a more respectful attitude and this is gratifying as a human being. (Lucas)

It's a small impact but it's as I say. When I talk to a friend and this friend talks to another friend of his who talks to another. How is that phrase? Acting locally... "Acting locally, thinking globally" because if each one, in passing, has an impact on one person, it will have an impact on another person. I think it's all a chain of help and solidarity. (Guilhermina)

In line with the argument of their activism having micro impacts, the influence that participants perceive they have on others is mainly related to the change of behaviours and attitudes towards gender and sexual orientation differences.

Yes, and then they start questioning. I already hear my colleague talking about cases that happen, she might not have been attentive before, but after our discussions, after our friends ah ... they had that influence on us. Before, it probably did not even exist and now she begins to question, saying this is not right, she already identifies these inequalities. (Cristiana)

### 3.6.3. Strategies for transferring experience to other youth

Regarding approaches that these young people use for transferring their experience, the most referred are: discuss the theme of gender equality with children in order to sensitise them to these issues (3 sources); encourage activism through social networks (2 sources); be open about their own sexual orientation (2 sources); and talk/discuss the theme with relatives, friends and others (2 sources).

They defend the importance of discussing these ideas with children in order to produce social change, given that they will be the youth of the next generations. In parallel, children are in many contexts and in interaction with several adults contributing to claim their attention to many social problems.

To my students because I feel it is ... there is a group so different that goes to such different places, family, home, friends, I feel that this is a kind of nucleus from which a change of perspective may come. And they share everything that happens daily, and then the younger ones are ... come home and "Look the teacher spoke of this". If it is a continuous work, it will reach their uncles and then friends and ... if things are taken in an appropriate way to their age they may even think like this and in the future, one of two cases, see that something is wrong or want to do something about it. I think that's the main thing. (Florabela)

Social networks, as expected, are seen as crucial to disseminate ideas and promote social change because through them it is possible to get to many people, namely youth.

Yes, for example, I have a friend who is very active on twitter, it's a way, I think, because it reaches a lot of people, and it gets a lot of viewings. I do not know how it works; I do not even have twitter. (Elisabete)

Finally, being proud of their own sexual orientation and sharing it with others is something young people also consider that can make a difference. Discussing other relevant themes about gender and sexual orientation with relatives and friends is also pointed out by the respondents as a good strategy to promote social change in regard to gender.

At a nuclear level, I think we make a difference by saying that we're gay, especially because when we ask people, who do not accept LGBT people, if they know any LGBT people, they tell us they do not. And why don't you know? Because maybe they never expressed openness and people, for sure they know someone who is LGBT. However that person will never say that they are LGBT if they realise that the person will not accept it. (Lucas)

I think so, taking the example of the Angolan that we were talking about, when I told him, or that person, about this kind of thing, he already had a different vision, so when another person comes to him to talk about the same thing, he's already talking to someone else, generating a difference of opinion, right? As I have already said in lectures, I already have all the people with whom I have interacted, it is a small change, and I can't say that what I do is shocking, right? But it's a minimal difference, right? At least it's changing people's thinking. (Agostinho)

### **3.6.4. Strategies to involve more youth in gender activism**

Some participants present ideas on to how to promote the involvement of other youth, specifically, in gender activism. One of the most referred to ideas is the use of media to disseminate gender activism ideas, to reach young people through media (11 sources) – ‘Yes, probably yes, ah... they could stay, if they see it they would get curious. It's the same with publicity, isn't it?’ (Micaela)

Another idea is that it is relevant to bring gender activism close to every youth (9 sources) by demystifying what feminism is - this concept may not be clear to youth that are not engaged in this type of activism. It is also important to use simpler language when talking to other youth, as well as to pass on the message of gender activism more effectively and the activities that take place and where youth can get involved to better know this reality.

...what could motivate more ... Sincerely, I do not know. I think that, often, people get stuck, especially women, girls. Like the friend who said, "Ah, I'm not a feminist, I believe in gender equality" and often do not want to go to these organisations because they already know they're going to talk about feminists and now feminism is such a bad term, "I do not want to be associated with it." I think we demystify these taboos and actually speak correctly. I think they might have more ... less shame to take those positions and they do too. (Guilhermina)

Another strategy that can be used to involve youth is to use school as a context where gender issues are discussed and gender equality is promoted (4 sources), namely by having teachers that are aware and well informed of this theme or by promoting debates about gender equality and sexual orientation.

I think young people have to be educated to these issues from an early age. This work is being done, but very slowly. We do not yet have programmes in schools that are focused on such issues so intensively and during the course of education. We also have projects that are developing very specific actions of awareness, and that is not... that is done from an already considerable age group. We are already talking about young people from 13, 14 around there. I think it is necessary to invest in the education of these issues, such as equality issues, but also respect for other people, from a very early age because I think that only in this way can we change something, but I think that this role will and is being made, but they are also issues that should be addressed by politics. And there is not much ... no matter how much a person wants to do, it is already very limited. But I think that the role of education is fundamental for us to change them and for young people to take

another stance and I think they have an increasingly different stance and that is to be welcomed. (Norberto)

Attracting young people to gender activism would be facilitated by not having a radical position or by showing that the ideas of others are understood (3 sources).

I think it's in the language. I think language is highly important. In humility too, knowing how to listen to people, knowing how to listen to them, I think it's highly important, I've never arrived with my flags, and it's not, so to speak, without listening to the other person. And stop talking to someone else. And try to figure out why the other person thinks in such a way. (Manuela)

Finally, participants mentioned that social media are extremely important to disseminate gender activism ideas (3 sources).

But I think that despite of this, the dissemination of these opportunities is not very well achieved, even if it is publicised on Facebook, I often see pages of youth associations, associations of ... organisations... whatever they publish, even publish two or three times and have one or two views, three likes or something like that. I do not know what is missing, I think maybe what is missing is, it is always contexts where too much is disclosed, and maybe young people, X, Y and Z do not care about those 10 activities or to what will happen that month. And then what happens? They are not attentive and they do not follow the page, I am speaking of this in a very online sense because I think it is the easiest way, at this moment, to reach young people and I think it is inescapable to speak of this. (Elisabete)

## 4. Conclusions

The key findings presented in the previous sections allow us to draw some conclusions that contribute not only to characterise (youth) gender activism in Portugal, but also to meet the overall aims of the PROMISE project. Namely, we expect to contribute to understanding young people's experiences of conflict and stigma around gender, sexuality and activism, as well as the role of 'activisms' as a response to it and as a way to promote social change. The paradoxical role of intergenerational relations both in causing and in overcoming conflicts will also be highlighted as a conclusion of this case study.

To begin with, the youngsters in this case study are involved in several actions towards society aiming to change the dominant discourses and expectations about gender and sexuality. The findings revealed that their participation in activism is diverse in terms of types of actions, level of involvement and formalisation. They also revealed that most young activists tend to be engaged in different activism domains besides gender and sexuality, such as human rights, animals' rights and political activism, thus pointing to the possibility of different activism experiences reinforcing each other and fostering wider social engagement (Louis, Amiot, Thomas, and Blackwood, 2016).



As expected, the critics of the dominant social discourses in terms of gender roles and sexual orientation are very much present in the narratives of the young activists. These are the conflicts that mobilise them for social participation in order to promote change for greater equality of opportunities between genders and greater tolerance and acceptance of difference, particularly in terms of sexual and gender identities which, in their narratives, are clearly articulated. The call for attention to these issues, however, is seen by the youth of our case study as something that may reinforce male dominance and weaken women's position, thus they consider they need to be very careful in their actions.

Gender inequalities and lack of tolerance towards diversity and difference are, then, the social conflicts experienced by young people in Portugal that most concern and mobilise the participants. They suggest that some positive changes have already occurred at this level, though slowly and insufficiently, and believe that many rights have been achieved in some decades of activism. However, as these rights are not fully respected, current activism tends to be more focused on fighting against inequalities.

In fact, the young activists argued that gender inequalities are still very much rooted in older generations, which is a barrier for social change towards equality, and that there is still too much discrimination on the 'street, in schools and in family'. Family tends to be seen by the respondents as a paradoxical context in terms of gender as they feel that children and youth are not sensitised for gender equality by their families and that education in this context is biased by conservative gender expectations; however, they also see family as a context where they were exposed to gender activism and that supports it. Like family, school is seen as both a context full of gender inequalities and non-acceptance of other sexual orientations and a context where young people can be more informed and be aware of gender inequalities.

Globally, we can say that for the respondents there is a false sense of change and acceptance, as they believe that, although a discourse of equality and changes at this level is more present, Portuguese society is not ready to make fundamental changes due to the persistent reproduction of unequal gender roles through intergenerational relations in major socializing institutions like the family and the school.

Intergenerational relations, however, also seem to play an important role in overcoming social conflicts. The findings evidenced that older generations contribute, at the same time, to cause and to solve young people's conflicts. For instance, participants perceive support from older people to their activism, but at the same time, describe much resistance to activism by older generations despite the growing number of people engaged in and committed to this cause. They pointed out that sometimes, resistance occurs in a more intimate sphere, when their families and partners do not understand their less conservative ideals in terms of gender and sexual identity; they also described some lack of support by teachers when they develop actions in schools, especially in actions about the latter topic.

Data analysis also revealed that activism can be a site of conflict in itself, not only because it creates resistance from society, but also because conflicts may arise within activist associations or between activists. For instance, older activists, who tend to be seen as key actors for young people's involvement in activism, are also seen as competitors for more visibility and for preserving the work



they have done. Consequently, this makes it difficult for young people to have their space within activism to try to continue the work of older activists. Once again, we go back to the importance of intergenerational relations as cause and / or response to youth conflict.

A very relevant topic in this study refers to experiences of stigmatisation. At this level, almost all the respondents reported having experienced some kind of stigma either because of their gender or sexual orientation, or for being gender activists. However, according to them, as youth is, in general, seen negatively, it is difficult to identify one single reason for the discrimination they experienced: was it because they are activists on gender issues, because they are young, or because of both conditions? Moreover, other important dimensions may contribute to a major or minor discrimination (e.g., class, ethnicity). Hence, an intersectional lens should be adopted to understand the discrimination and stigma experienced by the young activists. Indeed, this concept, which is a key feature in some feminist discourses (Brah and Phoenix, 2004), was mentioned by some respondents in the interviews: first, when they argued that the discrimination they experience for being involved in gender activism intersects with discrimination for being young; also when they referred to the concept of intersectionality as crucial in their activity because “feminist activism is not just about women but also about minorities and other people affected by the rules of society”. Thus, the way young people are involved in gender activism seems to value the intersection between gender, class, ethnicity, age or nationality (Cockburn, 2007; Krolokke and Sorensen, 2006). In general, we can say that the participants’ discourses reinforce the argument of Phoenix and Pattynama (2006) that it is necessary to continue developing intersectionality theory when addressing gender.

In relation to being exposed to stigma, the young gender activists mention two main results: they may find in stigma the motivation to continue and work harder as activists or, on the contrary, the stigmatising experience may have a major psychological impact that interferes with self-esteem and self-efficacy. So we conclude that activism presents itself alongside a series of obstacles and difficulties, sometimes being a source of suffering. However, it seems to prevail as an activity experienced positively by young people, who describe feelings of reward, gratification and motivation to continue.

The findings evidenced that the positive experiencing of gender activism relies first of all on the impacts of their actions on themselves (e.g., growing as a person, increasing their own self-esteem) and on others (e.g., changing mentalities and behaviours). The latter are recognised mainly in those who are closer to them, as a first step to reach a wider audience. The positive feelings linked to gender activism may also arise from the sense of belonging to a community or group (which seem to surpass the conflicts that occasionally occur in this site), or may be related to types of activist activities they engage with, which they tend to enjoy.

Finally, data analysis revealed some strategies that the young people of this case study consider to be most effective in the involvement of more youth in gender activism. The main strategies pointed out were: to use media to publicise this type of activism, particularly social media and networks to disseminate ideas and events, to discuss gender issues with children from an early age, to be open about ‘different’ sexual orientations, and to talk systematically with those who are closer to them.

In Portugal, studies focusing on young gender activists are scarce. Therefore, we believe that, besides its importance for the cross-case and transnational analysis, the key findings of this case study are an important contribution to the Portuguese state of the art on the topic.

## 5. Future analysis

Regarding the future cross-case cluster analysis, given that in our case study gender was very much intertwined with sexual identity and the LGBTI issues, it will be interesting to develop a comparative study about the experiences of conflict, involvement, stigma and innovation, with young people with similar paths, but located in different countries and cultures (e.g., feminist and LGBTQ scene of St. Petersburg - Russia; Zagreb Pride - LGBTIQ NGO - Croatia).

Below, we list specific questions that could be answered within the cross-case comparative analysis:

- Is activism in itself a site of conflict across the case studies?
- Can we identify different paths in activism and different ‘profiles’ of gender activists in each case and across similar cases? Are those paths and profiles linked to different sets of social and personal factors?
- Are there different experiences of stigma and their internal and external, positive and negative constraints, across the case studies?
- Are there different actions and levels of involvement and formalisation of activism across the case-studies? And do the young activists experience activism differently across the cases? Do they recognise different impacts of their actions?
- Is the role of intergenerational relations in causing and in overcoming conflict similar in the different case-studies?

We also believe that the comparison of cases could be a good context to discuss the theme of social innovation, which was difficult to analyse with the data of a single case.

Finally, the data gathered in this case study could also be further explored if analysed in triangulation with data from WP4 and WP5 of the PROMISE project.

Considering WP4, we could explore experiences of stigma and types of constraints, levels of involvement and formalisation of activism, and types of impact resulting from their activism. For WP5 data, we suggest exploring sociodemographic data (specifically gender differences), civic engagement, formal political participation, and everyday engagement.

## 6. References

- Arroteia, J. (2001). 'Aspetos da emigração portuguesa', *Revista Eletrónica de Geografia Y Ciencias Sociales*, 94. In <http://www.ub.edu/geocrit/sn-94-30.htm>, accessed at November 19, 2016
- Bagguley, P. (2002). 'Contemporary British Feminism: a social movement in abeyance', *Social Movements Studies*, 1(2), pp. 169-85.
- Banyard, K. (2010). *The Gender illusion: The Truth about Women and Men*. London: Faber and Faber.
- Barreto, A. (2002). *Tempo de Incerteza*, Lisboa: Relógio d'Água.
- Brah, A. and Phoenix, A. (2004). Ain't I A Woman? Revisiting Intersectionality, *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 5, pp. 75-86.
- Budgeon, S. (2011). *Third wave feminism and the politics of gender in late modernity*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Cardoso, D. (2010). *Amando Vári@s – Individualização, Redes, Ética e Poliamor*. Master dissertation. Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas da Universidade Nova de Lisboa.
- Cerqueira, C., Cabecinhas, R. and Magalhães, S. I. (2016). Gender and media: where do we stand today? in Cerqueira, C., Cabecinhas, R. and Magalhães, S. I. (eds.) *Gender in focus: (new) trends in media*. Braga: CECS, pp. 5-11.
- Cockburn, C. (2007). *From where we stand: war, women's activism and feminist analyses*. London: Zed Books.
- Coelho, S. and Pena, C. (2009). 'Da INTERvenção à INTRAVenção: Pistas para um Activismo Lésbico-Feminista', *LES Online*, 1, pp. 3-1.
- Davis, K. (2008). 'Intersectionality as buzzword: a sociology of science perspective on what makes a feminist theory successful', *Feminist Theory*, 9(1), pp. 67-85.
- Duarte, M. (2012). 'Prostitution and trafficking in Portugal: legislation, policy, and claims', *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, 9, pp. 258-68.
- Grünell, M. and Kas, E. (1995). 'Modernization and emancipation from above: women's studies in Portugal', *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 2, pp. 535-45.
- Johnstone, H., Larana, E. and Gusfield, J. (1994). Identities, grievances and new social movements, in Larana, E., Johnstone, H. and Gusfield, J. (eds.) *New social movements: from ideology to identity*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, pp. 3-35.
- Krolokke, C. and Sorensen, A. S. (2006). *Gender communication theories and analyses: from silence to performance*. London: Sage.
- Louis, W.R., Amiot, C.E., Thomas, E. F. and Blackhood, L. (2016). 'The "Activist Identity" and Activism across Domains: A Multiple Identities Analysis', *Journal of Social Issues*, 72(2): 242—263.



- Matos, R. (2011). Mulheres em cumprimento de pena. Contributos para reflexão, in Jolluskin, G. and Sacau, A. (coords.) *A Justiça em análise. Aspectos jurídicos, sociais e psicológicos do cumprimento das penas*. Porto: Edições Universidade Fernando Pessoa, pp. 57-62.
- Matos, R. (2016). 'Trajectories and identities of foreign national women: Rethinking prison through the lens of gender and citizenship', *Criminology and Criminal Justice*, 16(3).
- McCarthy, J. and Zald, M. (1987). Resource mobilization and social movements: a partial theory, in Zald, M. and McCarthy, J. (eds.) *Social movements in an organizational society*. New Brunswick: Transaction Books, pp. 15-41.
- Melucci, A. (1989). *Nomads of the present: social movements and individual needs in contemporary society*. London: Hutchinson Radius.
- Offe, C. (1985). 'New social movements: challenging the boundaries of institutional politics', *Social Research*, 52(4), pp. 817-68.
- Oliveira, A. (2011). *Andar na vida: prostituição de Rua e Reacção Social*. Coimbra: Almedina.
- Oliveira, J. (2009). *Uma escolha que seja sua: uma abordagem feminista ao debate sobre a interrupção voluntária da gravidez em Portugal*. Doctoral dissertation. ISCTE.
- Pappámikail, L. (2011). Juventude: entre a fase da vida e o tempo de viver, in Almeida, A. (coord.), *História da vida privada em Portugal. Os nossos dias*. Lisboa: Círculo de Leitores, pp. 208-241.
- Pereira, M. and Santos, A. (2014) 'Introdução. Epistemologias e metodologias feministas em Portugal: contributos para velhos e novos debates', *Ex aequo*, 29, pp. 9-21.
- Phoenix, A. and Pattynama P. (2006). Intersectionality, *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 13, pp. 187-192.
- Redfern, C. and Aune, K. (2013). *Reclaiming the F word: the new feminist movement today*. London: Zed Books.
- Rocha, A. (2012). *Outro género de corpos: o materialismo tecnológico fiscalista de Beatriz Preciado*. Master dissertation. Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas da Universidade Nova de Lisboa.
- Saleiro, S. (2010). Transexualidade e transgénero em Portugal: dois "vazios" em debate», in Silva, M et al. (orgs.) *Actas do X Congresso Luso-Afro Brasileiro de Ciências Sociais: sociedades desiguais e paradigmas em confronto. Vol. IV – Família, género e sexualidades*. Braga, Universidade do Minho, pp. 84-90.
- Santos, A. (2013). *Social movements and sexual citizenship in Southern Europe*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Tarrow, S. (1994). *Power in movement: social movements, collective action and politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

## Appendix 1: Table of respondents' socio-demographic data

	Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Education	Employment Status	Residential Status	Family Status	Participant's type of involvement in activism at the time of selection to participate
1	Agostinho	27	Male	Bachelor	In full-time education	Lives with friends	Single, no children	Sympathiser Occasional participant
2	Carmo	29	Female	Bachelor	In full-time employment	Lives with friends	Single, no children	Editor of a zine
3	Cristiana	22	Female	Bachelor	In full-time education	Lives with parents and one brother	Single, no children	Sympathiser Occasional participant
4	Elisabete	19	Female	Upper-higher education	In full-time education	Lives with grandparents and one aunt	Single, no children	Member of an organization
5	Florbela	22	Female	Bachelor	In full-time education	Lives with parents	Single, no children	Sympathiser Occasional participant
6	Francisca	25	Female	Master	In full-time employment/in part-time education	Lives with parents	Single, no children	Member of the direction board of an organisation Responsible for a branch of one organisation
7	Gabriela	23	Female	Bachelor	In part-time employment/in part-time education	Lives with mother and one brother	Single, no children	Sympathiser Occasional participant
8	Guilhermina	23	Female	Bachelor	In part-time education	Lives with mother and one brother	Single, no children	Member of an organisation
9	Lucas	31	Male	Bachelor	In full-time employment	Lives with boyfriend	Single, no children	Member of the direction board of an organisation

10	Luciano	29	Male	Bachelor	In full-time employment	Lives with a friend	Single, no children	Member of the direction board of an organisation
11	Manuela	31	Female	Professional course	In full-time employment	Lives alone	Single, no children	Founder of an association
12	Marília	17	Female	Lower-higher education	In full-time education	Lives with parents	Single, no children	Member of an organisation
13	Marlene	25	Female	PhD	In full-time employment	Lives with boyfriend	Single, no children	Sympathiser Occasional participant
14	Micaela	20	Female	Upper-higher education	In full-time education	Lives with parents and one brother	Single, no children	Sympathiser Occasional participant
15	Norberto	29	Male	Master	In full-time employment	Lives with parents	Single, no children	Responsible for a branch of the organisation
16	Renato	29	Male	Master	In part-time employment	Lives with friends	Single, no children	Former member of the direction board of an organisation
17	Rosário	24	Female	Bachelor	In full-time employment	Lives with girlfriend and mother	Single, no children	Sympathiser Occasional participant
18	Rute	30	Female	Bachelor	In full-time employment	Lives with girlfriend	Single, no children	Editor of a zine Owns a feminist clothing brand
19	Susana	32	Female	Bachelor	In full-time employment	Lives with boyfriend	Single, no children	Member of an organisation
20	Teresa	22	Female	Upper-higher education	In full-time education	Lives with parents	Single, no children	Member of the direction board of an organisation