



promoting youth involvement and
social engagement

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

Report of national context in ten participating countries (level 1)

Summary: This report brings together reviews of academic literature, statistical data and discussions of policy and practice from the ten PROMISE partner countries. The report provides an overview of developments in the last 15 years with reference to key historical changes that have shaped the unique political, social and cultural climate in each country.

The individual contributions also provide context for the two or three case study groups that will be the sites of ethnographic fieldwork conducted as part of PROMISE.

This was submitted to the EC as deliverable 4 (D3.1).



Background and Aims of PROMISE

PROMISE explores the role of young people (aged 14 to 29 years) in shaping society; past, present and future. It addresses their engagement with social, environmental and political issues and the potential, across Europe, for youth involvement in positive social action and sustainable change.

Using both qualitative and quantitative methods, PROMISE focuses specifically on young people ‘in conflict’ with authority (and usually, therefore, in conflict with social norms), who are seen to be the most ‘problematic’ in terms of positive social engagement, often triggering negative and punitive responses from authority, in turn furthering marginalisation and stigmatisation. The negative effects of stigma and marginalisation reduce opportunities for young people to engage positively in social action, and as a result, much of the creativity, innovation and energy within these groups is directed away from positive social change. Such ‘conflicted youth’ present significant opportunities for change and should therefore be the prime focus of policy makers and practitioners. PROMISE will explore the opportunities and means for converting conflict into positive social achievement amongst conflicted youth across Europe. Our overall aim is to unlock the potential and ‘promise’ of Europe’s youth.

The aims of PROMISE are:

- To provide a picture of the nature and extent of the multiplicity of young people’s involvement in society, barriers and opportunities to participation and future potential for engaging in social change.
- To identify and analyse the particular conditions that encourage or prevent youth participation.
- To explain the nature of relationships that present barriers for socio-ecological transition in diverse groups of young people across Europe.
- To identify and analyse the unique context of conflicted youth that contributes to the creation of youth on the margins across Europe.
- To provide an analysis of normative responses to the conflicts young people face.
- To understand the role of gender in youth participation: specifically to understand the experiences of young women and girls and how this can be addressed.
- To understand the roles of generation, ethnicity, class and other areas of diversity in youth participation and how these can be addressed.

The objectives will be achieved through analysis of existing data, and through of new data collected in the ten participating countries.



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Introduction to this report

The following report brings together reviews of academic literature, statistical data and discussions of policy and practice from the ten PROMISE partner countries.

It is organised, by partner country, to provide an overview of developments in the last 15 years with reference to key historical changes that have shaped the current political, social and cultural climate. The reports focus on national and local youth experience, youth policy and practice, media representation and social control of young people (especially those in conflict with societal and parental norms and values).

Each country has a unique cultural, political and social landscape that has shaped the current experiences of young people and influenced various aspects of youth engagement and relationship with social change. These unique landscapes are reflected in the content of each report and represent the specific environmental, humanitarian, political, technological and social challenges facing young people in each country.

Each report considers the representation of young people, their relationship to social change (as agents, apathists and antagonists), and the effects of youth actions and mobilisation. A selection from the following substantive topics is considered, as appropriate:

- crime and victimisation;
- control, policing and security;
- political participation; apathy;
- cultural activities; youth cultures, youth styles; commercialisation
- sexuality and identity;
- family, dependencies, housing
- education and labour market;
- physical and mental health, drug use, sexual health

Finally, each report provides context for the two or three case study groups that will be the sites of ethnographic fieldwork conducted as part of PROMISE. Whilst diverse in context and content, the youth groups share common themes. Each face the questions and challenges of their generation, each has experienced forms of stigma, state control, surveillance or youth intervention and each exhibits a unique response to their experiences. The challenge for PROMISE is to consider the role young people can play in responding to stigma, to tap into their potential to empower themselves to promote innovation and positive social change.

List of key concepts: working definitions

Civic engagement/participation is about identifying and tackling issues of public concern through one's individual action or collectively with others. Civic engagement implies a sense of personal responsibility on the part of individuals and collectives to act as citizens concerned about the public good. Civic engagement or participation includes different forms of volunteerism in public and community bodies but also engagement with representative democracy. **Young People.** Legal definitions of 'young people' vary across nations and between international organisations, typically ranging from 10 (the age of criminal responsibility in the UK) up to 34 (as defined in the work of the World Health Organisation). The respondent group described as '**young people**' within PROMISE are aged **14-29** to include a wide breadth of development, stages of conformity, life-stage characteristics and levels of responsibility: from the creativity of early teenage years through levels of maturation to the more stable characteristics of late 20's.

Older generations is used here to refer to anyone aged 30 or over (i.e. older than a 'Young Person' as defined in PROMISE). Young people have been labelled a 'lost generation' facing bleak economic, social and environmental challenges, and, relatedly, that many of them are out of control. This stands in sharp contrast to the certainty of older generations.

Social change refers to alterations in the structure, order or beliefs of society such as changes in social institutions, behaviours or relations. PROMISE is interested in the dynamics that drive social change e.g. cultural, religious, economic, scientific or technological forces, as well as the agents of social change and the power structures that enable or constrain agency. N.B. These may not always be viewed positively from all perspectives.

Social innovation is a contested term in the literature. It has been described a novel solution to a social problem that is more effective, efficient, sustainable, or just than current solutions (Phills et al, 2008). Others define it as '*new ideas (products, services and models) that simultaneously meet social needs and create new relationships or collaborations. In other words, they are innovations that are both good for society and enhance society's capacity to act*' (Murray, Caulier-Grice, & Mulgan, 2010, p. 3). Most agree that the benefit of social innovation is primarily to society, or a group of people rather than to an individual. For the purposes of PROMISE, social innovation will be seen as activities and attitudes that seek to change the stigma, tensions or conflict experienced by individuals or groups. NB the innovation may not always be seen as positive by (legal) authorities, peers or older generations

Innovative potential is considered to be any activity or idea that could lead towards individual or social innovation and thus social change.

Socio-ecological transition is described as the transition of our economies and societies towards a condition of sustainability (i.e. that in which human wellbeing is preserved alongside the natural environment) (Laurent and Pochet, 2015). It is presented as an unreservedly positive goal – the holy grail of a successful European Union - and understanding how to achieve it is a primary concern of research funded under the European Commission. Recent research indicates that societal inequalities (such as those experienced by stigmatised youth) are barriers to socio-ecological transition. PROMISE is not concerned with the structure, features or processes of socio-ecological transition; rather, it is concerned with exploring, challenging and re-conceptualising the conditions of stigma faced by many young people with a view to understanding the opportunities and barriers to social change and therefore to socio-ecological transition.

'Conflicted' youth. PROMISE focuses specifically on young people 'in conflict' with authority (and usually, therefore, in conflict with social norms and older generations). We contend that these 'conflicted youth' are seen to be the most 'problematic' in terms of positive social engagement, often triggering negative and punitive responses from authority, in turn furthering marginalisation and stigmatisation, and reducing opportunities to engage positively in social action. The response to troubled 'conflicted' youth has often been to increase controls through informal, formal and legal structures (Fionda, 2005). However, studies

have revealed the damage that can be caused by these counter-productive responses, in particular the labelling and stigmatising effect of control measures that serve to reinforce the development of marginalised and conflicted (including deviant) identities (Hendrick, 2015).

(Social) Stigma is the focus of a large body of sociological and socio-psychological literature, stemming primarily from the work of Goffman (1963). Closely linked with labelling, stereotyping, status-loss and discrimination, stigmatisation occurs where power is exercised by one party over another. A stigmatised individual or group is typically excluded and isolated finding themselves in a persistent cycle of stigma ‘resulting in reduced life chances in such areas as earnings, housing, criminal involvement, health, and life itself’ (Link and Phelan, 2001)

Labelling theory sits within a more general criminological theory of sanctions and involves two main strands: status hypothesis, suggesting that the status of the labeler (eg authorities, older generations, wider society) and the labelled (eg young person) is paramount; secondary deviance hypothesis, arguing that deviant labels create additional problems for the labelled, that under certain conditions a negative label can increase involvement in deviant behaviour ‘the self-fulfilling prophesy’ (Lemert, 1951). ‘To put a complex argument in a few words: instead of the deviant motives leading to the deviant behavior, it is the other way around, the deviant behavior in time produces the deviant motivation’ (Becker, 1973)

Reintegrative Shaming (Braithwaite, 1989) proposes that sanctions that are reintegrative, that are directed toward the offender’s actions and not the offender, and that attempt to bring the offender back into the community are likely to reduce crime, while those that are stigmatising, that blame the offender as a type of person, and that are rejecting are likely to result in more crime.

Social capital is a notion which is central to the works of Putnam (2000), Coleman (1994), Bourdieu (1983) and others interested in the reclamation and reorganization of power in public life. It refers to the social connections cemented through trust, between individuals, in order to promote civic virtue, culture and social cohesion and thereby tackle and resolve collective problems more easily. Social capital can be seen as the “glue” of a cohesive society.

Cultural capital represents part of the conceptual expansion of the category “economic capital” as a means of explaining social inequalities and differences (Bourdieu 1993). Cultural capital includes knowledge, skills and other intangible advantages (e.g. socially constructed talents or linguistic sensitivity) gained through family background, education and social connections. Cultural capital cannot be understood in isolation from other related types of capital: economic (monetary and material wealth), social (connections and networks), symbolic (individual prestige, authority, charisma). Like economic, social and symbolic capital, it can be accumulated by individuals and passed on to descendants thus perpetuating divisions in society.

Social cohesion “is the capacity of a society to ensure the well-being of all its members, minimizing disparities and avoiding marginalization” (CoE 2011). Thus social cohesion is about a sense of belonging, the construction of strong social relationships and networks, the valuing of differences (of gender, class, ethnicity etc.) and the prevention of social exclusion across society as a whole - i.e. it is not limited to problems affecting particular communities.

Active citizenship (as opposed to legal citizenship status conferred by the state) can be defined as participation in civic life through the addressing and challenging of structures and relations of (social, economic and political) power in order to change them. This may be done in the pursuit of social inclusion, rights and social justice. Active citizenship includes the learning of civic literacy and engagement and also the promotion of social solidarity between different social groups in order to strengthen civil society.

Political participation/engagement is about taking part in politics whether conventional or unconventional in order to express one’s opinion, exert influence over political structures and processes and ultimately to defend or challenge the political, economic, social and cultural *status quo*.

1. UK (UNIMAN)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Young people across the UK encounter many new challenges alongside the familiar problems experienced by previous generations. They face new questions about their understanding of, and response to, environmental, humanitarian, political, technological and social issues, within the context of reduced services, budget cuts and increasing regulation. The challenge for PROMISE is to consider the role young people can play in answering these questions, to tap into their potential to promote positive social change, and to explore ways in which they can empower and mobilise themselves.

This short report provides a national historic context of youth experience in the UK in order to better understand and contextualise current youth experience. From the post-war development of the welfare state, through the emergence of youth sub-cultures, to increased levels of state control, high unemployment and reduced life opportunities, the experiences of young people have changed dramatically through the decades. Focusing specifically on areas of youth participation, engagement, and conflict with authorities this report provides the social context for the two case study areas:

1. Youth in Conflict with the Law: Welfare and punishment: The regulation of young people has been a pervading theme in modern history, gaining in significance after the Second World War as a response to the 'troubled' label attached to young people. Ensuring the proper control and management of young people, particularly those who are seen to be at risk of deviance, is a central concern of much targeted youth intervention and continues to dominate populist discourses about youth.
2. Youth Mobilisations of 'Suspect Communities'. The 'war on terror' and the subsequent counter-terrorism laws in the UK have contributed to a perception of Muslims as 'suspect communities' raising questions about their loyalty to British identity.

Both these groups, despite their differences, have experienced a variety of youth interventions, surveillance by the police and may display the damaging effects of authority controls. They can both be considered social actors (and perhaps innovators) who have responded to the stigma they face (as young offenders or as potential terror suspects) in individual ways or as part of a group.

UK NATIONAL CONTEXT: Snapshot of youth in the UK today

A history of significant social and political moments in the UK over the last 75 years provides the context for a snapshot of youth today. From the post-war development of the welfare state, through the emergence of youth sub-cultures, to increased levels of state control, high unemployment and reduced life opportunities, the experiences of young people have changed dramatically through the decades. The regulation of young people has been a pervading theme in modern history, gaining in significance after the Second World War as a response to the 'troubled' label attached to young people. Ensuring the proper control and management of young people, particularly those who are seen to be at risk of deviance, is a central concern of much targeted youth intervention and continues to dominate populist discourses about youth.

The youth population in the UK today has fallen by almost a million over the last 30 years to around 8.2 million while the population overall has increased. As a result, the UK is an ageing society, weighted

towards the baby-boom generation and experiencing the associated social problems of an older population.

The current mood in the UK amongst young people, whilst diverse, contains a general undertone of discord. Young people feel their generation has been hit hard by economic and environmental problems caused by previous generations including university tuition fees and student debt, unrealistic house prices, stretched local resources, tough welfare cuts, and imminent environmental challenges and, more recently, the prospects of leaving the European Union. Social and economic disadvantage continue to marginalise the poorest 25% of the population with the gap between rich and poor widening. The UK economy has struggled since Britain's vote, in 2016, to leave the European Union (Brexit) and the uncertainty surrounding Britain's future outside the EU is a cause for considerable concern amongst young people, most of whom would prefer to remain in the EU and many who feel let down by the decision of older generations.

The UK continues to face problems of inequality, racism and gender division. These are recurrent themes throughout history and have been highlighted in PROMISE as key points of stigma affecting young people.

Young people in the labour market and education

Patterns of education and employment changed considerably from the 20th century to the 21st century for young people. The post-war generation could count on relatively stable, long-term employment after leaving full-time education. Starting with the recession in mid 1970s, de-industrialisation, lower wages and unemployment the lives of many young people become more insecure. Reduced demand for unskilled labour and high levels of unemployment among the youth pushed more young people to stay longer in education, experience long periods of part-time, casual or short-term employment and be longer dependent on their parents. Young people also had to become more flexible to adapt to the rapidly changing 'knowledge economy' and be prepared for several employment changes over the course of a lifetime. Staying longer in education became more important than ever in order to increase their chances in the labour market.

In 1987 the proportion of young people in full-time education in England and Wales was (17%) at 1.4 million. This increased to 42% at the end of 2013 reaching over 3 million. This steep rise has happened against a backdrop of a falling youth population and the introduction of student tuition fees in 1998. Although, the introduction of student fees slowed down the increase of young people remaining in education after 1998 compared to the 1980s and 1990s, it increased steeply again in the last decade with the start of the economic downturn in the UK after 2008. Similar to the 1970 recession, lower employment opportunities might have played a role in young people staying in full-time education, despite the grim perspective of paying off huge amounts of student debts in later working life. The increase in the proportion of young people remaining in full-time education has happened to both 16 to 17 year olds and 18 to 24 year olds. Around 83% of 16 to 17 year olds were in full-time education at the end of 2013, up from 50% in 1984. For 18 to 24 year olds, 32% were in full-time education at the end of 2013, up from 8% in 1984 (ONS, 2014). In general young people, are better educated now than previously, with 43% of young people gaining a Higher Education degree. The number of women gaining a degree is slightly higher than that of men, but significant class differences remain.

The unemployment rate in 2013, measured as a proportion of the labour force rather than the total population, was 20%, four times larger for young people aged 16-24 than the rate for those aged 25 to 64 (5%). This is slightly lower than the EU average (23.5%) of the same year. Since the start of the 21st century, information and digital technologies have transformed young people's employment landscape,

opportunities and experiences providing additional opportunities outside of the 'typical' jobs considered by older generations.

Compared to their parent's generation, young people today stay longer in education and their transition to the labour market is much more prolonged, resulting in longer dependence on their parents and delaying independent adulthood.

Ethnicity within the UK

The UK is said to be a 'melting-pot' of different ethnicities, religions. The total population recorded in the 2011 England and Wales census was over 56 million. Young people aged 15-29 represent one fifth of the population (over 11 million). 18.8% of this age group are young people from ethnic minority groups. Asian/Asian British group represents the highest proportion among ethnic minorities (10.5%). Young people from the Indian ethnic group constitute the largest group among any ethnic minority with 3.2%, followed by the Pakistani ethnic group (2.6%).

In terms of religious affiliation, 47.2% of young people identify themselves as Christians, followed by 35.3% with no religion. With over 700,000 of young people identifying as Muslims (6.6%) they represent the second largest religious group. The remaining religions affiliations are much smaller: Hindus 1.89%, Sikhs 0.95%, Buddhists 0.53%, Jews 0.41% and other religions 0.41%.

Ethnic groupings of young people age 15-29, 2011 England and Wales

	Number	Percentage
All categories: Ethnic group	11,183,239	100.00
White: Total	9,081,001	81.20
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: Total	345,601	3.09
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Asian	93,127	0.83
Asian/Asian British: Total	1,169,856	10.46
Asian/Asian British: Indian	360,143	3.22
Asian/Asian British: Pakistani	307,664	2.75
Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi	129,565	1.16
Asian/Asian British: Chinese	162,400	1.45
Asian/Asian British: Other Asian	210,084	1.88
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Total	432,482	3.87
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: African	249,033	2.23
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean	118,355	1.06
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Other Black	65,094	0.58
Other ethnic group: Total	154,299	1.38

Youth, ethnicity and employment

There are great variations between ethnic groups in employment outcomes. It is well documented that young people from African-Caribbean and Asian backgrounds have suffered disproportionately by high levels of unemployment and that particularly African-Caribbean men have lower educational attainment compared to their white counterparts. The classical explanation for these disadvantages has been related to their relatively poor socio-economic background, their concentration in deprived intercity neighbourhoods and a general discrimination due to their race and ethnicity (Webster, 2009).

More recent studies however, have indicated that it is now particularly British Muslims and black Muslims who suffer disproportionately in the labour market, after taking into account levels of education. Khattab and Modood (2015) analysed the employment and unemployment patterns of people aged 16-65 from 2002-2013 in Great Britain using the Labour Force Survey (LFS). They identified that Muslims and blacks, with black Muslims faring worst, experience the highest rate of unemployment compared to other ethno-religious groups. Their study suggests that these groups are being sorted along the unemployment rate scale according to how dark they are (real or perceived darkness) and how compatible their culture is. Thus they argue that there are no “ethnic penalties” per se in the UK, but rather racial and Muslim penalties resulting from colour and cultural racism. Although their study does not look at young people per se, it can be inferred to young Muslims as well.

This reflects the negative stigmatisation of Muslims in Britain more generally. Muslim identities have become a staple feature of contemporary political discussion in Britain. Muslims are the minority group whose national loyalty and integration has been of greatest concern. This may partly be due to anxieties following the attacks of 9/11 in New York and 7/7 in London, though fear throughout the West concerning Muslims, and questions about their loyalty, predate the war on terror (Meer et al., 2015).

Young people and social change

In the UK over the last 75 years, youth involvement in social change, through organised and unorganised group and individual activities, has incorporated youth culture and subcultures, youth political engagement, and various forms of activism.

The emergence of youth subcultures from the post war period onwards, was perhaps the first indicator of youth expression and paved the way for the ‘generation gap’ (Musgrove, 1964). The higher standard of living and full employment enjoyed by many parents, along with the safety net of the newly-formed welfare state meant that parents no longer relied on older children to bring in a wage, and many encouraged their youthful aspirations. However, as an array of distinctive youth sub-cultures emerged from the 1950’s onwards (Teddy Boys in the 1950’s, Mods, Rockers, Skinheads in the 1960’s), forging youth identities and challenging the norms and values of older generations, the generation gap became visible and increasingly problematic. Youth consumption, leisure activities, sexuality, morality and values were all interpreted and judged through the adult lens resulting in a range of institutions and ideas designed to manage, contain and control young people and their transgressive behaviours (Tebbutt, 2016). The gap between middle class and working class youth opportunities widened throughout the 70’s and 80’s alongside the widening gap between rich and poor.

The UK has a history of public action in the form of riots significantly linked to disintegrating relations between the police and young black men. The riots of 1981, began in Brixton and spread to over 30 cities across the country, the direct action of disaffected black and white youth, protesting about heavy-handed police operations. A public enquiry, led by Lord Scarman and set up to investigate the causes of the riots, highlighted structural problems such as high levels of unemployment and poor housing conditions, as well as racial discrimination and heavy-handed policing experienced by black youth, and emphasised the role of

the media in the pervading press representation of black youth as criminal. However, the acknowledgement of racist elements within the police, evidenced by police targeting and brutal treatment of young black men, became the enduring legacy of the Scarman Report, paving the way for a new code of behaviour for police and the Police Complaints Authority. However, the culture of endemic institutional racism within the police remained and was highlighted more forcibly in the Macpherson Report of 1999 into police practice and conduct after the racist murder of Stephen Lawrence. The following year the Race Relations (Amendment) Act enshrined the implementation of racial equality as a duty of all public bodies.

The structural issues behind the riots of 1981, however, remained unresolved and in 1985 riots broke out again across 4 UK cities, this time encompassing more severe violence resulting in the highly publicised murder of a community police officer. Public sympathies at this time lay with the police and the media encouraged invasive perceptions of black youth as criminal, and pathologically violent. The resulting Public Order Act of 1986 signified a tightening of police control over young people.

Further riots across the UK in 2011, deemed to be from a similar root, and spreading rapidly from city to city, highlighted the continuing tension between short-term state interventions dealing with the variety of criminal and anti-social behaviours, and the longer term 'welfare-based' measures intended to address the economic and social causes of this behaviour. The debates that had raged through the 1980's and 1990's had resurfaced against the on-going backdrop of unemployment, disadvantaged communities and excluded youth groups.

Very recently, in the UK, young people have attempted to make themselves heard in party politics. Referendums, held in Scotland over independence, and in the UK over membership of the European Union brought young people to the ballot box, with those aged 16 and 17 able to vote in the Scottish referendum for the first time. The majority of young people voted for an independent Scotland and to remain in the EU, however, while their voices were heard they did not outnumber the voices of older generations voting for Scotland to remain part of the UK, and for the UK to exit Europe.

Representations of youth groups

The emergence of post-war youth subcultures has been well documented, with the mid-1950 to the mid-1970 described as the British teenager's 'heyday' of affluence, consumption and employment opportunities (Tebbutt, 2016). However, as unemployment, social protest and urban disturbances rose in the late 1970's and into the 1980's in response to economic recession, de-regulation of markets, de-industrialisation and an increasingly compromised welfare system, media representations of young people became more pervasively negative. Typically, since the 1980's youth in Britain, particularly working class youth, have been linked with crime, violence, anti-social behaviour, hedonistic drug use and immoral activities. It is within this wider representation of youth in Britain, presented and (re)presented through old and new media, that we situate our two case studies: young people in conflict with the law, and young people identified as 'suspect', discussed below.

Youth 'actions' and responses to control: political, social and cultural

Young people's responses to control and stigmatisation have taken many forms, from the expression of anger through, for example, the riots discussed above, to the constructive reactions of young people on a macro, and on an individual, level, including sub-cultural music, creative art and style, the creation of innovative entrepreneurial practices including new media, and the reclaiming of rights for various groups through demonstration and action.

Youth in the UK have long been at the forefront of innovative action through music, film, art and popular culture. Emerging from the capital city and throughout the regions young Brits have led the way in creating innovative, often subversive, art forms that challenge the status quo, reject accepted norms and cultivate new identities. From the swinging sixties of Carnaby Street, through 1990's Britpop to contemporary Garage and Grime, youth identities have incorporated music, visual arts and a clear ideology.

New media and the technical revolution of the last couple of decades have presented new music production opportunities and encouraged new business practices drawing on the skills of the younger generations and providing further outlets for youth creativity.

Youth political involvement in Britain

Since the post-war period, the nature of political activism has made significant and profound changes on underground political movements as well as more mainstream activism. Young generations have always been at forefront of these changes, influenced by wider political and socio-economic contexts, and have adapted to newer forms of political expression, mobilization and engagement. Prior to the 1950's the political behaviour of young people did not receive particular attention in the political sciences literature, and was widely understood to be rooted firmly in partisan and electoral politics. The citizens usually cast their vote in alignment with their social class mostly either for the Labour Party or the Conservative Party and politically active young people usually participated in the youth branches of these parties. This changed with the emergence of new movements and new forms of activism in the 1960s in Britain and advanced Western democratic societies more generally. This began a new phase of political behaviour often referred to as a phase of dealignment, which is based on social rather than class divide, thus acknowledging the complexity of political behaviour (Barnes et al. 1979). Underpinning the rise of these new movements was the argument that society has experienced an intergenerational shift towards a post materialist society in which young people increasingly developed different values, perspectives and political goals compared to their parent's generation (Inglehart 1977). The new generation of post-materialist young people entering the university in big numbers who were looking for fundamental social change contributed to the waves of protest and dissatisfaction with British politics and led to new forms of political identity and behaviour (Barnes and Kasse 1979).

A new radical and left leaning student movement emerged by the end of the 1960's starting from protesting the war in Vietnam, the apartheid in South Africa, to more widely supporting the anti-racist, feminist, environmental, anti-globalisation issues. The 1960's and 1970's witnessed the mushrooming of many new organisations and groups led predominantly by young people that would change the outlook of British politics considerably. In 1970 the first women's liberation conference was held, the Gay Liberation Front held its first meeting, and Friends of Earth (FOE) - a new radicalised, environmental movement was formed in 1971 in response to the first major road building programme of the post-war period. Greenpeace soon joined the FOE on the environmental scene. Towards the end of the 1970's a reinvigorated Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) resurfaced and by the mid-1980s' it reached 45,000 members whilst another 100,000 belonged to local peace groups. During this time a series of national mobilisations regularly attracted in excess of 100,000 demonstrators to the streets of London (Weinstein 2004).

What marked these new youth-led movements was their rejection of centralised, hierarchical and conventional forms of politics, and their adaptation of direct political action, often remaining intentionally outside of the framework of conventional politics, comprising of no, or loose, membership. Those organisations that became well-established by the mid-1980s such as Greenpeace and FOE tended to adopt increasingly conventional pressure group strategies and developed into professionalised environmental

organisations seeking greater engagement with national governments and multi-national cooperation's. While these and similar organisations, established with strong grass-root participation, developed into high-profile professional organisations relying predominantly on 'check-book' based membership (Maloney 1999), young cohorts continued to be active in many other initiatives and groups. These groups were often ad-hoc and centred on single issues such as the environment, nuclear disarmament etc. but they also forged broader coalitions and were able to bring about political and social change and inspire new generations for many decades. For example in the late 1980's and early 1990s new radical environmental groups were formed in response to various government plans to widen roads and build new runways in London but also other UK cities. These include the London-wide alliance Alarm which consisted of 150 local groups, the Dongas Tribe, and Earth First! (EF). Many of the groups that were involved in these actions have widened their scope and also campaigned against other forms of developments such as opencast mining, the building of shopping centres on greenbelt land, and the planting of genetically modified crops. New groups emerged out of these alliances such as Reclaim the Streets (RTS) who became instrumental in organising a series of street parties against the use of vehicles (Weinstein 2004).

While there has been an active radical left involvement of young people, they do not represent the general trend among young people. Studies published on political behaviour since the 1970s have observed that young people are less likely to vote in national and local elections, are less likely to be members of formal political groups and express less interest in politics. Age is a strong predictor of political participation as well as civic engagement, such as involvement in formal voluntary organisations. A great part of this is explained either by the life-cycle effects (Dalton, 2002) or generational/period effects (Putnam, 2000), or both (Parry et al., 1992). The life-cycle effect is attributed to variations in social integration. Young people are less socially integrated, more mobile and less interested in formal politics. They are at a different life stage than middle aged people who are socially better integrated (work, family, children) and thus have more incentives and resources to participate. The generational or period effect explains the shift of political behaviour by wider socio-economic changes arguing that the harsher economic crisis in the 1970s and in the 1980s led to an area of instability and insecurity compared to the early post-war generation in Britain. Furthermore, the fundamental changes in the economy have been compounded by an accompanying weakening of family and community relationships and the rapid development of technology in the 1990s. Furlong and Cartmel (1997) argue that such radical structural changes have impacted on the socialisation of young people to such an extent that young people's lives are increasingly characterised by a combination of risk and uncertainty in relation to a number of complex life choices, resulting in more problematic and individualised routes to adulthood. Consequently, young people's primary concern has become to insure their immediate future against a variety of perceived risks, whilst maintaining independence as a long-term goal, thus providing little incentives to participate in formal political and civic organisations (Henn et al. 2002).

The Crick Report (1998) commissioned by the Labour government under Tony Blair set out to examine declining political and civic participation among young people in the UK. It led to a number of initiatives and policies such as the introduction of citizenship education at school, and the UK Youth Parliament, The Children and Young People's Assembly for Wales and the Scottish Youth Parliament (Matthews, 2001). But given the continuing economic and social inequalities in British society, it remains questionable how the effects of poverty and disadvantage can be overcome by young people's sense of active citizenship (Griffin, 2005).

While the exclusion of young people in traditional forms of political participation persists, these observations are mainly based on large scale survey research which tend to capture a narrow concept of political and civic engagement. Young people's involvement since the 1970s has been characterised by a

different conceptualisation of what constitutes politics and displays a preference for participation in the extra-parliamentary realm, in non-hierarchical, informal networks and in a variety of sporadic campaigns that are not institutionalized (Dalton, 2002; Norris, 2002; Dalton, 2009). More recent studies argue that today's young people are more interested in participative, localised and immediate issues (Doherty et al. 2003), which is indicative of the 'distinctive civic taste of post-Boomer cohort' (Scholzman et al., 2010: p. 498). Ethnographic research on young people's involvement has demonstrated the complex, detailed and in-depth picture of young political and civic participation. Ample qualitative research on young people's involvement around issues of domestic violence, racism, animal rights, anti-war (Hug, 2008. Gillan et al. 2008), anti-globalisation (Rootes and Saunders, 2007), environmental protection, student protests against tuition fees (Rheingans and Hollands, 2013), political consumerism, (Acik, 2013; Nonomura, 2016), feminist/gender issues and many more (O'Tolle et al. 2003; Huq 2008; Pilkington and Pollock, 2015; Griffin, 2005) are indicative of young people demonstrating concern about matters that are fundamentally political in nature.

Youth in Conflict with the Law: Welfare and punishment (Case study 1)

Youth deviance has been a dominant theme in political and media discourses in the UK since the nineteenth century and continues to preoccupy current governments and capture the public's attention. The management of youthful transgressive and criminal behaviours has taken on a pendulum motion, swinging between the 'caring ethos of social services and the neo-liberalistic ethos of responsibility and punishment' (Muncie and Hughes 2002: 1). Throughout the latter half of the 20th century, youth justice policy has been largely dependent on political imperatives with regard to which approach is favoured resulting in policies shaped by the political rhetoric of punitiveness (Downes and Morgan 2012). Plotting the trajectory of youth justice policies over the last sixty years provides a useful indicator of the changing control exerted on young people as well as providing a context for reviewing their responses to that control.

Throughout the 1960s and into the 1970s welfarism was widely evident in youth justice policy and practice responses (See Blagg and Smith, 1989). The Children and Young Persons Act (1969) placed the welfare of the child as paramount as it sought to deal with youth crime through civil mechanisms under the supervision of social workers, as opposed to via the labelling processes of criminal justice. Such responses were criticised by those on the right of the political spectrum who argued that the system was 'too soft'. Conversely, throughout the 1970s, children were often exposed to excessive 'welfare' treatments based on perceived need. Critics amongst the academic community described such 'wide-ranging' approaches as unfair and discriminatory arguing that they often led to unintended consequences or in other words 'more harm than good' (Thorpe, at al., 1980). Indeed, it was felt that welfarism enabled legal safeguards to be abandoned and due process to be violated by 'leaving children to the discretionary, permissive powers of professionals while subjecting them to indeterminate measures without recourse to review or accountability' (Scruton and Haydon, 2002: 311).

A resulting pendulum swing away from 'welfare' and towards justice-based notions of 'just deserts' and 'anti-welfarism' became manifest in the 1990s. Such perspectives were evident, for example, following the 1991 violent disturbances across Oxford, Cardiff and Tyneside between police officers and children. The children involved in such disturbances were reported by the press as 'persistent young offenders', in so doing fuelling a 'moral panic' (Rogowski, 2013) and a 'populist punitive' response (Bottoms 1995). Further concern regarding children's offending occurred following the abduction, and subsequent murder, of two year old James Bulger by two ten year old children in 1993. This 'landmark case' generated immense fear amongst the public, in particular the feeling that youth crime (and children) was out of control. This fed into

'an already worried public' as the media reported heavily on car crime ('joy riders') and those seemingly offending with impunity ('bail bandits'). Here political parties were engaged in somewhat of an 'arms race' regarding who could be the more 'tough'. The Conservatives responded fiercely by introducing 'tough legislation' namely the Criminal Justice Act 1993 and the Public Order Act 1994 (Rogowski, 2013). Similarly a re-branded 'New' Labour government responded by setting out its 'no more excuses' agenda in the late 1990s, which heralded a 'new youth justice' (Goldson, 2000) of punitiveness, criminalisation, responsibilisation and interventionism with a focus on the offence and the offender (as opposed to the whole child).

In 1997, the Labour administration swept to power and in so doing moved away from longstanding debates between welfare and justice and towards risk-led managerialism as the driver of 'crime prevention' (Case and Haines, 2009). New Labour introduced criminalising modes of (risk) assessment and 'preventative' early intervention, each informed by the Risk Factor Prevention Paradigm and its central tenet that crime could be 'nipped in the bud' (Home Office, 1997) by the early and robust identification and targeting of 'risk factors' in childhood (Case and Haines, 2009). Further measures of surveillance and control were pursued in order to 'curb' involvement in criminal activity and anti-social behaviour at the 'earliest opportunity' (Kemshall, 2008). Here, what were promoted as value-free, scientifically objective, actuarial measurements of risk were promoted premised on the idea that predicting future offending is rational and unproblematic; overlooking the common-sense view that the behaviour of children is generally unpredictable (Case and Haines, 2009; Creaney 2013; O'Mahony, 2009). To complement this approach, the principles of so-called 'effective' practice (namely risk classification, criminogenic need, responsivity, community base, treatment modality and programme integrity) and offence and offender focused 'what works' interventions have been prioritised as the tools to prevent and reduce offending. Such mechanised, numbers-heavy, pseudo-scientific 'evidence' has offered the governments a form of certainty and tidiness to the unpredictable reality of 'youth offending' and a touchstone against which to manage and prescribe practice.

The New Labour government embraced the approach of risk-driven regulation, modification and control of behaviour pursuing a 'get tough' politics and arguing that responsibility lies with the individual: 'an alleged 'culture of excuse' was to be replaced by a culture of responsibility' (Smith, D 2006:79). The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 sought to criminalise 'all manner of behaviours' (Muncie, 2002: 142) as New Labour continued the 'tough on crime' rhetoric from the previous government. Consequently, through its obsession with managerialism, risk and intervention in the lives of helpless and hopeless, yet somehow dangerous and responsible children, New Labour created a YJS that was more 'controlling' than 'caring', 'stubbornly blind' when it concerned a child's welfare and less concerned with age appropriateness and child friendliness (see Fionda, 1998).

The Conservative-led Coalition Government (formed in 2010) and the subsequent Conservative government (formed in 2015) have continued this 'get tough' politics, independently of any attempt to tackle the social roots and context of youth crime or address the child at the centre of the debate (Smith, 2014). This approach serves to further stigmatise and control young people, colluding to produce a justice 'net widening' effect and posing barriers to social engagement (Deakin et al, 2016). Youth justice policies have continued to demonstrate a move away from a social democratic ideology/philosophy, towards a politics of blame and individualised responsibility, resulting in a climate of regulation, criminalisation, stigma and reduced life chances.

Despite contemporary moves towards a restricted range of undesirable, negative, mechanised practices with children, exploring the history of youth justice policy and practice reveals a field that is not afraid of change. The range of new orders and working practices introduced over the years is unparalleled in other

areas of criminal justice. From the 'Referral Order', introduced by New Labour in the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act (1999), which promised space for children to express their opinions and repair the harm caused by offending, to the recent developments in tackling anti-social behaviour in the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act of 2014 (see Hopkins Burke and Creaney, 2014 for a critique) to proposals for the building of future 'secure colleges' intended to incarcerate and educate, a common thread through much of this practice is the lack of opportunity for children to put forward their viewpoints in any meaningful, open and honest way (Haines and Case, 2015; Creaney, 2014).

The various levels of success and failure characteristic of youth justice policy and practice is indicative of a continuous cycle of reinvention. This is particularly apparent in the persistence of custody as a response to youth crime and the reinvention of custodial institutions (Bateman, 2014). The long-term relationship between youth justice and incarceration persists despite very little (if any) faith amongst academics and researchers that imprisonment is anything other than damaging (Goldson, 2002 a, b). Research has repeatedly highlighted the serious, harmful consequences of locking up children (Goldson and Kilkelly 2013; Lord Carlile, 2014) and yet this evidence has to an extent been ignored in national policy and legislation. The use of research findings is inevitably selective particularly in terms of whether it is compatible or not with political intentions and complies with 'pre-existing values' (Bateman and Pitts, 2005). This is one of many examples of the disconnect that is apparent between research evidence and current approaches to youth justice practice. The connections between the abundance of compelling research evidence and national youth justice policy are, at best, fragile and, at worst, hostile. There is little or no robust evidence base for the efficacy of risk-led prevention and (early) intervention approaches or for the increasingly punitive, controlling and restrictive treatment of children who come into conflict with the YJS – an alarming contradiction for practice across a purportedly 'evidence-based' field.

Despite some evidence of progressive practice, youth justice policy, reflecting policies for the management of adult offenders, continues to be punitive, coercive and offender focused, fixated by the idea of quick fix 'solutions' driven by neo-liberal correctionalism and responsabilisation. There continues to be too much emphasis on offence- and offender- focused approaches and an insufficient focus on promoting positive outcomes for children (Deakin et al, 2016). The voices of children and young people who offend continue to be marginalised and their participatory rights are largely invalid once they enter the Youth or Criminal Justice System (Deakin et al, 2016; Haines and Case 2015).

Youth Mobilisations of 'Suspect Communities' (Case Study 2)

The economic downturn of the 1970's led to intense political conflict over race and immigration and saw the revival of far-right political parties such as the National Front and British Movement as well as the emergence of antiracist mobilisation, which were successful in encouraging local authorities to introduce multicultural and anti-racist policies and education. In Britain antiracist campaigns have largely been practiced by young activists (Huq, 2008). In the late 1960s and 1970's the second generation of Black and Asian youth growing up in Britain started to form independent self-help organisations that mobilised at the grass roots and took to the streets determined to defend themselves against violent attacks and confront supporters of the National Front and other right wing groups under the slogan "Here to stay, here to fight!" (Ramamurthy, 2006). Many anti-racist black and ethnic minority initiatives emerged during this period, among them the Asian Youth Movement (AYM). Formed in the mid-1970s in Bradford and later in many local branches in other English cities and towns such as Southall, Birmingham, Sheffield and Manchester, they strived to tackle racial violence, police injustice, immigration controls and other forms of institutional racism and adopted a new militancy and self-reliance. Their anti-racist politics resonated with Black Power and Third World liberation movements. The AYM was a left-wing political youth movement embracing the

term 'black' to emphasise the common discrimination experienced by Asian and black communities and their shared history of colonisation and struggle against discrimination. It was a cross-community, secular movement that was able to offer a common ground for struggle to various South Asian ethnic minority communities. This unity-in-diversity also implied a struggle for the rights of religious observances to be recognised, and meant that members of the AYMs united to defend temples, mosques and gurdwaras. (Ramamurthy, 2006)

During the late 1980s the AYM's and many other black and Asian youth movements started to lose political influence and changed, adapting to and being influenced by new political national and international developments. Many key members of AYM grew out of grassroots youth politics and changed their central political commitments. Following the Bristol riots in 1981 Lord Scarman's report advocated the need to fund 'ethnically disadvantaged' communities. Ramamurthy (2006) argues that through ethnically targeted funding criteria, the local authorities and national government contributed to the split of the communities into Asian and black and the broad-based concept of a political black identity that had been embraced by the youth movements struggled to maintain influence. Yet, the organisation along ethnic, racial, and religious lines coincided also with the rise of identity politics in general. By 1989, the Rushdie affair was to drive activity along explicitly religious lines. Increasing Islamophobia has led Muslim youths seeking new forms of coalitions and political identities. The 'war on terror' and the subsequent counter-terrorism laws in the UK contributed to the perception of Muslims as 'suspect communities' (Pantazis and Pemberton, 2009) and questioned their loyalty to British identity (Meer et al., 2015).

Despite a long history of anti-racist movement in Britain and the promotion of multi-culturalism in Britain the recent two decades saw an increase of anti-immigration political sentiments in the UK. Issues of community segregation dominated the political discourses. At the general level, it is suggested that immigration and changing migration patterns have raised concerns over the impact of increased ethno-cultural diversity on social cohesion because, in the short term, immigration and increased diversity have a negative effect on levels of social trust and social capital, and citizens who reside in more ethnically diverse communities are more distrusting of their neighbours and tend to withdraw from community life (Eatwell and Goodwin, 2010). This argument was particularly dominant in the aftermath of the violence ('race riots') in a number of northern British towns in Summer 2001, the causes of which were attributed to the fact that some communities had become highly segregated, with citizens leading parallel lives. This induced widespread critique of notions of multiculturalism and a government response focused on the promotion of 'social cohesion'. This sentiment was repeated in 2005 when the head of the Commission for Racial Equality, Trevor Phillips, warned of the dangers of 'sleepwalking to segregation', arguing that there was evidence of increasing ghettoization of Britain's cities and raising the spectres of 'race' riots and US cities (iCoCo 2007: 26).

Much public debate has focused on alleged high levels of alienation within the Muslim 'community' giving rise to a major 'home-grown' threat of recruitment to radical Islamic movements (Eatwell and Goodwin, 2010: 1). This debate has emphasised the vulnerability of young Muslims who, it is supposed, experience prejudice and discrimination more acutely than their parents' generation as they were born in the UK and reasonably expect equal treatment to people of white British origin. When these expectations are not met, it is suggested, they find release in religious identity and observance (Sobolewska, 2010). This has led to Muslim youths becoming the target of a number of government schemes promoting moderate Islamic thought and supporting mainstream Muslim leaders, and aimed at diverting potential extremists in the direction of a less radical path (Bleich, 2010). As Bleich notes (2010: 77), it is not surprising that these policies conform to a renewed emphasis on 'Britishness' and corresponding de-emphasis of 'multiculturalism' (on the grounds that it may undermine community cohesion) and are designed less to

reach out to Muslims on their own terms than to discourage discourse, activities and leaders judged to have failed the test of integration. In fact, however, Sobolewska's (2010) analysis of survey data suggests that the majority of Muslims appear to be very well integrated on most indicators, such as 'support for democracy' measures (trust and efficacy) and sense of belonging to Britain. But it also shows that British-born Muslims score higher on more indicators of alienation than their immigrant counterparts. However, according to Sobolewska (2010), this is 'almost entirely a result of the younger age structure of those Muslims; the comparison between young Muslims under the age of 35 and other (mostly white British) young people finds almost no difference in the level of political alienation between these two groups of young people' (Sobolewska, 2010: 43). Thus, we might conclude, it is 'youth' that is alienated as much as 'Muslim youth'.

Young people in Britain have become more tolerant towards other racial and ethnic groups than their parent's and grandparent's generation as multi-culturalism has become an important feature of British identity and politics. Yet, previous racist sentiments and discourse against Afro-Caribbean and Asian immigrants and their descendants has shifted towards a form of racism in which Muslim communities have become the others. The stigmatisation of Muslim communities and youth in particular represent new challenges for multi-culturalism in Britain today. In this context it is crucial to bring in the perspectives and experiences of young Muslims as agents of social change.

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2. ITALY (IPRS)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Immediately after WW2, in the Fifties and Sixties, demographic and economic growth in Italy brought social, cultural and educational change and hope for the future began to gradually increase. As the overall society was being reconstructed, young people were regarded as having a great role in the innovation process that was ahead. Additionally, the number of young people educated at university was increasing rapidly and this contributed to shaping a new role for the youth within Italian society – a role that was regarded positively and very promising for the overall society. It was the youth's newly found social subjectivity, and it increased their desire to claim their rightful place also on the political scene as well as accentuating the generational gap. Following the 1968 youth protests, with universities occupied all over the country and the growth of a new politicized generation, the Seventies marked a time of great social protest led by the youth. In those years, Italy also experienced the so-called “years of lead” when a wave of both left-wing and right-wing political terrorism had a high symbolical impact on the Nation. This partly explains the dynamics of the following two decades, with the new young generations distancing themselves from political activism. As a consequence of this attitude, particularly in the Nineties, youths were viewed as “the invisible generation”. Over the most recent two decades, Italy has become one of the European countries with the lowest fertility rate while also confronting with an unprecedented unemployment rate particularly amongst the youth, resulting from the economic crisis. As a result, young people mostly have to rely on the support of their own families. The role of the youth in Italian society has been completely reverted: along with economic independence, they seem to have lost emotional/psychological independence but also the will to actively participate in society and innovate it. However, while mainstream media and the overall public opinion regard young people as passive, lazy and incapable of innovating society, several examples are there to demonstrate that the opposite is true, too. Among the many “profiles” of Italian youth groups shortly presented in this report, there are also the two cases that will represent the core of Promise field research in Italy – two among many cases that do have some potential for innovation despite being depicted as opposing mainstream society.

NATIONAL CONTEXT

With the end of WW2 Italy experienced the transition from dictatorship to democracy and as a consequence the social change that came along with post-war reconstruction was more emphasized in Italy than in most other western European countries. In addition to material reconstruction, post-war years entailed in fact, reconstructing democratic culture not only within state institutions but also and firstly among the population. This meant dealing with the fact that the war to liberate Italy from Nazi occupation had also been a civil war against the Italians who fought side by side with the Germans right till the end. It also meant dealing with the Nation's fascist past and the nostalgia it still procured in a portion of the Italian population – a chapter not yet concluded as the subversive movements and coup attempts of the 60's and 70's proved as well as the neo-fascist youth movements present on the Italian political scene today.

Nonetheless, the end of WW2 brought a time of demographic and economic growth in Italy as in many other European countries. In the Fifties and Sixties, economic growth brought social, cultural and educational change and hope for the future began to gradually increase. As the overall society was being reconstructed, young people were regarded as having a great role in the innovation process that was

ahead. Two major dynamics characterized these years in Italy. On the one hand, economic migration from southern regions to the richer and more promising north of the country; on the other, an overall increase in numbers of educated people across the Nation.

For many individuals, the majority of which were young people, this domestic migration meant leaving behind their small towns and villages and their rural culture and adapting to a very different style of life. And not only did this cause a profound anthropological mutation (Pasolini 2008), but it also contributed in designing a map of social and economic inequality. It accentuated the difference between the north of the country, a richer area capable of guaranteeing work, and a less economically “developed” south, on the political margins of the Nation. The lack of work and prospects for growth in the south in fact, paved the way for criminal associations, such as the mafia, to consolidate their control and permeate the political and social life of these regions and subsequently the rest of Italy.

The spread of education and widespread access to higher education and universities contributed in enhancing awareness among young people of their role in society. This newly found social subjectivity however, increased their desire to claim their rightful place also on the political scene as well as accentuating the generational gap. Following the 1968 youth protests, with universities occupied all over the country and the growth of a new politicized generation, the Seventies marked a time of great social protest led by the youth. In those years, Italy also experienced the so-called “years of lead” when a wave of both left-wing and right-wing political terrorism had a high symbolical impact on the Nation.

This partly explains the dynamics of the following two decades, with the new young generations distancing themselves from political activism. As a consequence of this attitude, particularly in the Nineties, youths were viewed as “the invisible generation”. In the last two decades, Italy has become one of the European countries with the lowest fertility rate (1.37 in 2014; Eurostat 2016) so much so that the demographic pyramid has been inverted and young people are no longer the major component of society. Added to the demographic issue there is also the fact that for the past twenty years or so the Italian economy has been stagnant and the difficulty in gaining employment has mainly hit young people (statistic data shows an unprecedented unemployment rate: 37,9% in 2015 for youths aged 15-24; Istat 2016). With a large portion of young people still living at home with their parents well beyond their thirties (Censis 2015) and an economy incapable of attracting qualified foreign workers to fill the gap left behind by fleeing young researchers and high-skilled workers, Italy offers very little in the way of prospects and opportunities for young people. For these reasons it is quite understandable why young people in this country today have gone from being an element of social protest and disturbance to an almost “endangered” category, a category which must be safeguarded and a heritage to protect.

YOUNG PEOPLE AND SOCIAL CHANGE

From the end of the Second World War up to the student protests of 1968 young people in Italy were not identified in society as an entity. Being young was merely a period during a person’s life characterized by the progressive adoption of the standardized cultural behavioral models which would eventually lead to adulthood. Thus, being a “youth” was considered a period of transition before becoming an adult or, in a minority of cases, a moment in which anti conformist or even deviant behavior emerged. During these years most young people turned their backs on politics because they were more attracted by the new concepts, including that of consumerism, which were emerging from across the Atlantic. Between 1968 and 1980 however, the “youth” category asserted itself more prominently as a group in society identifying itself on one hand, as the bearer of political conflict and on the other as a bearer of generational and existential struggle. As in other parts of Europe, the workers disputes regarding authoritarianism and equal rights

merged with those of the students. Both groups in fact, were characterized by young people with no previous political or union based experience but who shared similar ideologies strongly influenced by Marxism and Leninism. During the 70's these two groups together with the women's rights groups, which sought to radically oppose the gender regime, became known as the extra-parliamentary opposition.

Towards the end of the 70's Italian youths embarked on other, darker paths yet when drugs and terrorism come onto the scene. The increase of drug abuse in fact, cast a negative light on youth culture during those years especially when young people were supposed to be "negatively" influenced and "compromised" by hippy, psychedelic and certain rock music subcultures. But more troubling still was the fact that by that time social protest had veered towards terrorism with political opposition becoming predominantly more individualistic.

If the seventies were characterized by an unbalanced but nonetheless determined struggle between youths and leading political powers, the eighties on the other hand, saw young people in a much more marginal position towards politics. They did however, use and reinterpret the previous generation's militant political past to develop and increase their power of speech where culture (and often counter-culture) was concerned (De Sario 2012).

These developments, mainly due to forms of activism or cultural resistance in answer to the historical-social transformations which were occurring throughout the country (see paragraph 1), have led the younger generation of today to react and/or behave in a certain way and thus, to establish itself in society. However, not all they do is influenced by their reaction to the society they are living in, they themselves produce new patterns of behavior and innovative social and linguistic models.

Alter-globalism activism

In the late Nineties, Italy witnessed a crisis of the welfare system as well as of political parties. This led young people to experience an overall apathy in regards to forms of political participation and for this reason a significant number of young people came across alternative ways of social and civic engagement mainly through adhering to various forms of pacifism and/or environmentalism (e.g. as members of NGOs and volunteer groups). Young people also expressed their need for political participation through "Alter-globalism" movements which operate on an International level. These social movements allowed youths to gain a broader prospective by crossing national boundaries and increasing their awareness by being in contact with different cultures. These aspects are of crucial importance in the development of networks and during the initial phases of a transnational movement. The most important issues at stake in fact, are the relationship models which young people develop with their peers, albeit from different backgrounds, and the identification process with the movement itself. For these reasons, the path of alter-globalism movements to some extent bring to completion two complimentary processes: on the one hand, they prove the need to effectively develop the transnational aspect of these new movements and on the other, they ascertain the importance of travelling as a means to gain experience, create networks and links beyond national boundaries.

In contrast to the above mentioned forms of personal awareness growth for youths however, there is another way in which young people are manifesting their opposition towards mainstream practices: an increasing number of them are in fact, turning (or returning) to agriculture as a way of life because they believe that working the land is the key to obtaining professional fulfillment. No doubt the National and EU policies promoting tax breaks, loans and subsidized interest rates for young people who decide to return to agricultural professions have been a great incentive helping to create a phenomenon which presents many positive aspects, not only on a social level. But above all, many young people have found that they could

implement new and interesting organizational and productive forms of alternative agriculture. By focusing on biodiversity and on the specific characteristics of the land they have also promoted more critical awareness in consumers (responsible consumption practices, fair trade, ethical purchasing groups). Nowadays in Italy organic farms are run by increasingly younger people (22% are managed by persons between 20 and 39 years of age, compared to 9,6% of total farms), they are more technological (15,6 % of Italian organic farms are computerized compared to 3,8% of conventional farms and 10,7% organic farms have a website compared to 1,8% of conventional farms), they are more innovative (5,2% use e-commerce compared to 0,7% of conventional farms; CREA 2016), they are very family oriented and strongly believe in the diversification of their activities (agritourism, social and recreational activities, teaching farm,...).

Right-wing youth movements

The crisis regarding the Italian political system and the post-ideological transition have posed a great deal of problems not only for the political parties but for the system as a whole. Thus, in answer to this problem political parties decided to create a new political culture with entirely new symbols, values, models and projects capable of substituting the previous forms of ideological communication and socialization. Within the Italian right-wing political parties the idea of substituting ideology with a new political culture has had some interesting results especially where creating public policies are concerned. In other cases however, we have witnessed the troubling return of antagonistic and fragmented political practices especially within right-wing youth movements (Antonucci 2011).

These extremist fringe groups do not limit themselves to the establishment of a political agenda but also try to dominate the normal behavior of youths overriding their natural propensity towards rebellion, anti conformism and the need to feel different. These movements find a place for themselves and are fueled by the areas of radical and anti-institutional dissent, movements which like to be defined as identitarian. It is no surprise that they also like to identify themselves with Italy's political-ideological, cultural, ethnic and religious past. In constant evolution and expansion these movements are deeply rooted throughout the Italian territory and are in some cases militarized and violent. They are also difficult to control because behind their apparently fragmented exterior, made up of a variety of acronyms and differently named organizations, lies a veritable network spread out across the Nation, even in areas which are not traditionally right-wing or political in any way. They are not difficult to identify though, from the ultra football supporters to the student movements and the xenophobic groups of social protest with nazirock music as a common denominator. There are several thousand youths who are openly affiliated with official political parties but who are also, not so openly, members of an extensive underground network of associations, social clubs and community centers, rallies and "Hobbit camps" (name given to right-wing 2-day rallies organized between 1977-81 and still sometimes used today). To the above mentioned groups we must also add the Skinheads, one of the most radical movements of all whose major congregation opportunities are in stadiums or at specific concerts.

These movements display a great variety of identities that are not easy to interpret. The one thing they do have in common though, is their fervent opposition towards the institutional right-wing parties along with anti-global, anti-American, anti-Zionist, anti-Semitic, often anti-western and openly racist, stances. A hidden, underground right-wing phenomenon which has chosen new channels of communication, organization and ways to target its propaganda.

The higher education crisis and the development of alternative forms of culture

One of the positive outcomes of the student protests of the late 60's was the establishment of free/affordable university education for everyone. In the last ten years however, we have witnessed the trend going in the opposite direction with fewer and fewer young Italians enrolling in university courses. The transition from secondary school to higher education courses has in fact, gradually been decreasing (72,6 matriculates 100 graduates in 2003/2004, 55,7% in 2012/2013; Istat 2014). It seems that higher education is no longer as necessary for social mobility as it once was, especially if we consider the informal recruitment channels now adopted in the ailing job market. What is now commonly referred to as the "death of universities" is a given fact with enrollment numbers falling each year (in 2013 there were 58.000 fewer matriculations than the previous decade). The number of students who exceed the stated number of years to obtain a degree is increasing as well as the number of students who drop out of university because they don't consider obtaining a degree necessary for securing a job. Furthermore, there has been a drop in the number of enrollments for entrance tests to faculties with a limited number of places. Finally, for the first time since 2003-04 the most significant fact regards the number of graduates which registered a total of 258.052 in 2014, 12,72% or 37.616 fewer than previous years (Istat 2014).

It is important to point out however, that among the reasons for the decline in young people opting to pursue further education there is the lack of funding allocated to universities on the part of the government. Compared to countries such as Spain, France, Germany and Sweden for example, Italian universities receive far lower economic resources (AlmaLaurea 2016).

Another question to ask is: which young people are more likely to forego a university education? Above all, they are students who have a diploma from technical secondary schools (i.e. Agriculture, Information technology, Chemistry, construction, etc) and come from families who are more exposed to the economic downturn due to their lower social and/or economic status. In contrast, the students who are more likely to continue to higher education and enroll in university courses come from more privileged backgrounds where the parents are more able to sustain the costs of their education. For these youths, a university degree continues to be the chosen path towards successful social mobility (AlmaLaurea 2016).

The disempowerment of the university as a place of excellence as for cultural production, has led many young people to the search for, and experimentation of, alternative cultural and social practices. This explains why many young people support "sharing-economy"-based practices and other forms of "collaborative consumption" that have grown also thanks to the economic downturn and digital innovation. Such "consumption practices" particularly attract young people as they offer the opportunity to access goods and services while at the same time expanding their social and relational networks.

Another example of alternative expression of culture which also relies on the sharing of skills, relationships, and resources, regards the music industry. The latter is regarded by young people as providing innovative cultural opportunities and therefore as having a great deal of potential to exploit nevertheless it is also hardly sustainable in economic terms due to the lack of institutional funding channels. There are an ever growing number of groups and individuals on the urban scene who are putting a great deal of energy into creative and cultural projects. These initiatives not only have a strong social impact, because they reflect upon current issues, but they also encourage networking between people with different interests and objectives (which in turn may lead to opportunities for young people to become entrepreneurs). It is also not uncommon for mainstream cultural initiatives to collaborate with the alternative scene. The results of the blend being a more fluid approach to boundaries, creative processes and market logic compared to the formal institutional cultural channels.

Young people and political representation

In Italy, as in other European countries, there has been a refusal on the part of the people to identify political parties as the sole means for political participation. The reasons for this detachment are to be found both in the lack of opportunities for public political involvement set aside by the parties and in the renewed identity and structure of the parties. The relationship between young people and political parties in Italy can also be included in the weakening link between citizens and political representatives, a situation exacerbated by the difficulty in accepting to be part of a specific political group affiliation (IPRS 2014). Since the end of the Second World War in fact, Italy has gone from having three major political parties¹ to an exorbitant number of parties (22 represented in Parliament 2013 and a further 24 excluded from Parliament but still operational), the majority of which were only formed seven or eight years ago.

Thus, in contrast with the linear path of Italian trade unions, which have had three centuries of uninterrupted history, the fragmentation of the Nation's political parties saw the end of the three major formations and the creation of the modern political alliances. The younger generation's demand for participation and recognition has gone somewhat unheeded and subsequently the youth have in recent years preferred to shift their attention towards alternative forms of active citizenship which youth finds more democratic and participative (such as volunteering and social service work). Schools should also be credited with having promoted awareness among young people, encouraging them to pursue interests with social value. In fact, we can observe that because of this there has been an increase in the number of youths involved in volunteer work in a variety of sectors whether social, religious, political or humanitarian, environmental and cultural.

Second generation immigrants

Since the mid 80's Italy has seen an exponential increase in foreign nationals enter the country and it was at that time that immigration first started to be perceived as a social phenomenon and a problem. While the state preferred not to make any substantial decisions regarding immigration (the first policy was put into effect in 1998), leaving local authorities and humanitarian groups to handle the ongoing "humanitarian emergency", the question of political rights and citizenship for the children born of immigrants have in recent years become central issues for debate. Issues which have come to the forefront also thanks to second generation youths who have set up associations to deal with the matter. Perhaps the most representative among these is Rete G2, a network of "citizens of the world" aged between 18-35, originating from Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America who work together to promote the presence of immigrant citizens in Italy. Today however, due to the emergency of how to deal with the increasing number of asylum seekers and refugees, issue which has become central to political debate, the question regarding the uncertain identity of second generation immigrants is still unanswered.

Young people and the use of Information technology

Television, mobile phones and internet are without a doubt the forms of media most appreciated by young people because all three use communication which is immediate, fluid, personal yet noncommittal and interactive (there is a veritable boom in the use of technology with 85,7% of under 30 year olds using smart phones and 36,6% using tablets). Young people account for 91,9% of internet users and the scope of web use goes from researching information and making purchases online to dealing with bureaucracy (digital disintermediation has taken off changing the value of traditional production and employments sectors).

¹ These were: *The Christian Democrats* - Democrazia Cristiana-DC, *The Socialist Party* - Partito Socialista-PSI and *The Communist Party* - Partito Comunista-PCI

The popularity of social networks is also continuously on the rise with 50,3% of the entire population a member of Facebook (77,4% of under 30 year olds) and 42% of users reached by YouTube – 72,5% of which are young people (Censis Report 2015).

However, if in Northern European countries almost all 16-24 year olds regularly surf the web, in Italy only 84% do so, ranking it among the last in Europe. Therefore, despite the digital prowess of young Italians, it is clear that they are also suffering the consequences of a lack of technological infrastructure necessary for an adequate IT development. In fact, if the 90's saw Italy as one of the heavier investors in ICT, more than Japan and as much as Germany, nowadays investments for technological innovation represent a mere 4,8% of the GDP compared to 6,8% of the EU, with broadband reaching only two in ten households (Dell'Olio; Grion 2015).

The legacy of occupied social centres

After the 1980's, a part of youth activism, not exactly in line with the political dynamics of the time but rather with some emerging transnational youth culture (punk, followed by reggae and subsequently hip-hop in the 90's) faced the complex process of translating into a modern day language the cultural heritage of the 70's. The "autonomia operaia" (a radical left-wing movement), the counter-culture of the "young proletarians", the "metropolitan Indians" of 1977 and feminism were all connected to occupied and self-managed social centres spread out across the country. These social centres were none other than squats, large abandoned edifices that were taken over (illegally) and converted into meeting places for young people. Somewhere they could cultivate and self-produce music, literature, art and divulge culture in general. The translation of the heritage of the 70's occurred in different ways according to each local context. In some places specific political, cultural or urban recourses were used while in others they preferred to form a direct relationship with similar youth movements in Europe, such as the autonomous groups in Germany, Holland and Switzerland.

Participation in the life and activities of the social centres was an experience half way between political activism and cultural resistance. The combination of cultural activities with traditional political practices was maintained as links strengthened from city to city. In fact, never before attempted collaborations arose between self-run social centres, festivals, independent bookstores, recording studios, clubs, clothes and music stores, street culture and the remaining militant groups to create an early version of a "network". The result was to bring young people from different backgrounds together, thus shaping an innovative network which today is somewhat widespread throughout the transnational social movements (De Sario 2012).

However, at the beginning of the 1990's, the urban situation had changed somewhat compared to the 70's and the young people involved in the social centre based activism had to deal with such phenomena as: urban restructuring, tertiarization, gentrification, the closure of industrial areas, the arrival of immigrants and the growing sense of insecurity and instability which affected even those from the middle classes. Due to these changes in fact, the people drawn to social centres were the same people directly hit by these changes such as the young unemployed or precarious workers or tertiary workers.

Thus, during the last years of that decade, social centres became public spaces frequented by an *elective community* in which forms of experimentation occurred, such as: the self-production of music and culture, the diffusion of social information, new media, audiovisual and performance art. All of which, partly due to the indifference of the institutions and the mainstream cultural channels, remained confined within the social centre scene.

The anti-mafia movement

Parallel to the social centres, young people were also developing other forms of social participation. After the assassination of General and Police prefect Dalla Chiesa (3rd September 1982), not only in Sicily where the crime was committed but all over Italy, “anti-mafia movements” were established. Many different initiatives were organized, such as: debates, petitions, rallies, torchlight processions, signboards as well as the establishment of centres, groups, committees and associations. These initiatives were led by various people (students, teachers, intellectuals, religious figures, state representatives and common citizens, etc.) both on a continuous and on an occasional basis.

REPRESENTATIONS OF YOUTH GROUPS

Between 1950 and 1967, social researchers were mainly focusing their attention on the cultural changes and tendencies present among young people rather than their rapidly evolving lifestyles. The term “young” in fact, was merely an adjective used when describing a phase of life determined by a set of cultural models of behavior which were rather standardized and *traditional*.

The historical evolution of the most recent social representations of youth groups can be summarized in the following three different phases².

The first phase, which went from 1968 to 1980, saw the full expression of young people as an autonomous entity. An autonomy so strongly felt and with such a strong oppositional force that it effectively challenged the entire social system of the time. This phase was characterized by the so called “*conflict paradigm*” in which young people were the bearers both of a political mode of conflict and confrontational, generational and existential modes of conflict (Cristofori 2002:108).

The second phase, from 1981 to 2000, was characterized by the transition of young people from “*social subject to object*”. It was a time of observation, analysis and interaction with other social entities, primarily the State (Cristofori 2002:108). On one hand, the young people of those years showed a willingness to accept certain ground rules while on the other, they maintained the necessity to distinguish themselves as an entity (without however going so far as to create a radical rift as in the previous years). Following the lifestyle, cultural and collective perception changes of those years, young people opted for a form of diversified or selective integration (which also saw a significant number of youths choosing a more radical and unconventional path). This phase was characterized by the *uneasiness paradigm* where youths were seen as displaying extreme/radical behavior, which was nonetheless viewed as manageable within mainstream society. In this way, the few instances of protest slowly dissipated and even the changes in lifestyle, culture and common perception were somewhat muted and uninspired. Politics was perceived with no particular interest, an activity like any other and many youths saw the possibility to express themselves in other areas (such as study, volunteering and family activities) more gratifying.

The third phase, from 2000 to present day, completes what was started in the preceding phase (periodical surveys carried out by the national media seem to confirm the scarce participation in society on the part of youths) and young people are essentially seen as being passive, egoists and generally uninterested in society and politics (Cristofori 2002). The national media depict today’s youth as the “big baby-generation”, with clear reference to the great number of young people staying in the parental home well beyond their

² It must be noted however, that in “phase zero” “the empirical research conducted does contribute to highlighting young people as an entity. Giving them an unprecedented form of social identity, it helped youths of that period see themselves for what they were, the young generation, which in turn led to new expressions of sub-culture, particularly innovative compared to that of previous generations. “In fact, thanks to those studies, as of 1968 the general Italian public was perfectly able to recognize youths as a new social and political subject” (Cristofori 2002:107).

thirties, a view shared by most politicians and the general public as well. Statistic data, however, shows an unprecedented unemployment rate (37,9% in 2015 for youth aged 15-24) (Istat 2015) affecting young people together with the alarming data on NEETs (Not engaged in Education, Employment or Training youth)³. The data differs greatly between the North and the South of the country, revealing a gap that is very significant to young people in terms of employment and cultural opportunities as well as future expectations. Being young in Italy nowadays is hard - but it can be much harder if you are young in Southern Italy.

Case study 1: NO-TAV youth

The NO TAV protest is about an environmental conflict that entails huge national economic interests and affects several villages of an alpine valley (Val di Susa) in the north-west of Italy. NO-TAV activists therefore include local people of different ages and generations as well as activists supporting the protest from all over Italy. The NO TAV protest has gained an increasing attention by the national media, which tends to depict the NO TAV movement as predominantly composed of radicalized youth of the extreme left political wings who use violence to counteract State authority. Additionally, NO TAV activists are presented by national media as opponents of development and innovation. As a consequence of this stigmatization, the NO TAV youth have gained a key role within this national conflict.

The young activists represent an important portion of the NO TAV population. Although these young activists oppose the proposed infrastructure (the TAV) as a symbol of a corrupted State that shows no respect for human rights and natural environment, they seem to have found their place within the movement and have good relationships with the older activists. NO TAV youth are innovative in that they are demonstrating that “a different world is possible”, with particular regards to politics - i.e., it is possible to do politics without being a politician and without using the traditional political structures, such as political parties. Such an innovative way of doing politics, however, is regarded as illegal and feeding the stigmatization led by the media and hampering the resolution of the conflict between these youths and the authorities.

Case study 2: Musical start-ups

Italy has seen a growing number of young rappers opposing conventional society while seeking to find their place in society through music. They become young entrepreneurs thanks to their IT skills – creating their own music labels and producing their own low budget CDs and videos, and with the support of friends and acquaintances, distribute their music through social media (such as YouTube). Most importantly however, is the fact that they sing in Italian, rather than English – which represents an additional innovation in the Italian scene of non-traditional music. Their main audience are their peers, amongst which they seem to have acquired a high symbolic status, simply because they mainly speak out against commonly accepted social norms. Some of them are very successful, in some case reaching over 7 million hits on YouTube – although most people from other the generations have probably never heard of them. Their new, alternative way of making a place for themselves in the music business entails not only technological skill but ability in networking. Most importantly, they are demonstrating that such a “new” business model can be very successful, although it means not going through the mainstream music industry.

³ NEETs rates are also extremely high in the country (around 2 million in 2011), which places Italy among the worst countries in Europe behind Greece. In Italy, NEETs group comprises different types of youth: 18 years old teens that have just concluded school and are now working in the black-market (particularly in the South); youth that have simply stopped searching for a job as they have never been able to find one over years; or even young educated people who may have found they had chosen the “wrong” course after completing their studies at University.

THE EFFECTS/OUTCOMES OF 'YOUTH ACTIONS' ON YOUNG PEOPLE

In the past young people were considered an important element for social innovation and development, not to mention that they were the bearer of hope for the future. Nowadays however, they play both a marginal and a central role within family life and society in general. They are considered to have a central role central because they are overly cared for by the adults in their life and are the preferred target of consumerist culture. On the other hand they are considered to have a marginal position because they become independent (from a financial and a housing point of view) increasingly later on in life. In fact, they seem to be afflicted by a *chronic delay syndrome* which affects every aspect of their existence, from the conclusion of their study courses to the separation from their parents and the start of their work life/career (Livi Bacci 2008). The reduction in number of young people and the consequent increase in older generations is having a significant effect on society characterized by a low degree of social innovation, scarce turnover where ruling classes are concerned and a marked increase in the feeling of personal insecurity.

A phenomenon of the new millennium, largely discussed by the media and by politicians which regards the young generation of Italians - is their inability to become independent from their parents especially from a housing point of view (Eurostat 2013)⁴. Widespread unemployment, low salaries and the general feeling of instability among young people are the main contributing factors for the so called *Bamboccione* or "big-baby" phenomenon, where statistics prove that 7 in 10 of 20-29 year olds still live at home with their parents (Pilia Drago 2015)⁵.

With national youth policies being almost non-existent, the family represents the core of the welfare system in Italy, as incessantly remarked by academics and the media. Family and youth policies are still reserved very limited economic resources thus, due to the scarce availability of jobs, young people mostly have to rely on the support of their own families.

Unlike in other European countries where one of the institutional tasks of the state is to deal with the youth issue, in Italy the opposite has occurred. Not only has it been left up to the local administrations to deal with this issue but the Government's political agenda only addresses the subject when particular emergencies are brought to light. Furthermore, at the end of the 80's a reshaping of political participation and representation took place which effectively left young people out of political participation. Again, the State did not deem it important to create new opportunities to be involved politically and so once more it was left up to local authorities and organizations to find and create these opportunities but only on a local level. Thanks to these local organizations, a new era conducive to the local development of youth policies

⁴ As a result, young people suffer of a lower independence both in housing and economic terms. Many young people stay in the family home well beyond the age of thirty, thus contributing to shaping the so-called "prolonged family", a typical cultural phenomenon of contemporary Italy, with grown-up children playing the role of "Big-babies". Unwilling to distance themselves from their parental environment on one hand, and their parents committed to diminishing the generation gap with their children on the other. The family plays an outstanding role also in shaping the children's chances for success, which in Italy is still very much linked to the parents' status and success rather the child's own skills and capabilities. Eurostat comparative figures on social mobility in the main western economies show that Italy shares with the UK and the US high social inequality and low social mobility. A trend which affirmed itself in Italy in the early Nineties, as the economy was slackening and new generations started to experience increasing difficulties to find better jobs than their parents'. Since then, this trend has constantly grown and only one in six young individuals has achieved a better status than their parents (Eurostat 2013).

⁵ However, there is also other data which can confirm that the inability to become financially independent is the prevailing factor, above those of cultural and psychological immaturity. There has been much focus in fact, on the "mama's-boy" image of this generation of youths but there has been little talk of their "nomadic" existence. As pointed out in a recent article in a major National newspaper, while officially residing with their parents, many young Italians are constantly on the move between their friend's homes, other cities or even other European countries, either for study reasons or in search of work (often undeclared work). So, they are not exactly or not only *Bamboccioni* "big-babies" seen as in the midst of the economic crisis that shows no sign of ending, staying at home allows them to pursue their choices and objectives while reducing their personal risks (Pilia Drago 2015).

could take place and this specific segment of the population was recognized the right to representation and expression of their needs.

As of the 1970's, in other European countries young people have been the beneficiaries of specific initiatives aimed at promoting and enhancing their contribution to society. Meanwhile, in Italy policies aimed at young people were specifically designed to socially integrate what were seen as "socially ill-adapted subjects". This was evidently due to the fact that political participation was no longer a viable channel of communication between the political parties and youths. However, as previously mentioned, it has been mainly thanks to the local administrations if young people are now offered the possibility to be involved from a political perspective⁶.

With the end of the period which saw the rise of political-social youth movements (the 1970's) and a "return to individualism" (the 1980's), a new phase of public intervention aimed at young people started. In this phase, local administrations actively promoted services aimed at youths, initiatives no longer based on political ideology⁷.

In more recent years however, the current government has been strongly trying to push young people to adopt a more active role in politics. It believes in fact, that their greater involvement would not only renew the political scene but also the social and economic ones of the Nation.

Up until now however, the call for young people to be more politically active appears to be more of a slogan on some political agenda rather than a concrete opportunity. The rise in youth unemployment, almost four times that of adults and with no visible signs of diminishing, is proof that not much is actually being done. It seems clear that apart from the objective economic difficulties Italy is going through, there is also a strong cultural reluctance at play; in particular, a reluctance to undermine power games and the role of gerontocracy in a country where young people are anagraphically a significant minority. The issue of generational turnover and the difficulty in obtaining leadership roles is one of the main obstacles preventing a greater participation of young people.

Another critical issue regards the lack of institutional policies. Aside from the rhetorical proposals to "develop the talent and creativity of youths", there are no real policies aimed at actually helping youths become autonomous and supporting their participation. If such policies did exist they would help young people develop the skills necessary to increase their employability, for example, or even initiate experiences of social entrepreneurship. An example of the inefficiency of the system is the Youth Guarantee Plan, set up all over Europe in 2014 in order to promote employment for under 30 year olds, the unemployed and the NEET. In Italy, where 865.000 people enrolled, the plan could only find employment

⁶ However, these initiatives aimed at young people only effectively came to fruition in some of the larger northern Italian cities (Turin, Bologna, Modena, the province of Milan, Forlì, Reggio Emilia, Padova) where there were fewer obstacles in their implementation and where they are generally more receptive to this kind of initiative. Elsewhere it was more problematic as there was a lack of organizational flexibility, integrated interventions and planning (Ranci 1992; Mesa 2006).

⁷ In the early 80's, amid a situation of scarce resources and little experience in this kind of projects, the first initiatives aimed at young people became operational: Project Youth and Youth Information Services. Among the initiatives for the young these two are probably the most successful and appreciated. They were the first organizations to plan local policies based on the principal of transversal action (Irer 2006). They represented the first to integrate the various interventions aimed at young people and create a relationship between youths and local administrations (Cuconato & Lenzi 1998). The initiatives undertaken by the Youth Information Services were mainly aimed at preventing the sense of unease felt by young people living in situations of social difficulty. In Project Youth however, the initiatives were mainly of a preventive nature, aimed for the most part on labor policies and free time, as a form of primary prevention.

for 3.7% of them (Martini 2016)⁸. The lack of opportunities for young people to make a change results in their feeling at a total loss, worthless and excluded. The impossibility of being able to play the role of active citizens, capable of transforming the society they live in, is due to the fact that all the political engagement of the 70's has not led to new opportunities of aggregation and sociality.

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3. GERMANY (CJD)



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Youth research and social science theories on youth have a tradition of over 100 years in Germany. The perspectives taken reach from idealizing, expectant and eager projections onto youth movements (such as the “Wandervogel”) before WW II, to critical perspectives led by cultural pessimism on post war youth cultures and youth’s risky behavior, right up to optimistic perspectives, which celebrate youth’s creative potential to change societal structures.

There is a diversification of behavioral patterns, cultural orientations or political attitudes of young people originating from different social and cultural backgrounds with different developmental needs and tasks. Correspondingly, theories and scientific analyses of adolescent phenomena and their social and societal implications are highly heterogeneous.

Periodic youth surveys (e.g. Youth Office of the German Shell) provide relatively exact information and data on recent political, ideological, religious and other attitudes of young people in Germany. They furthermore provide evidence of their use of different media, musical preferences, future orientations etc. and describe intergenerational relationships. Nevertheless, these representative surveys are not capable of painting the full picture of the constant diversification and transformations of juvenile life worlds and their social milieus.

Youth Generations – as groups of young people with relatively similar behavioral patterns and attitudes – can be identified rather distinctly up until approx. 1970/1980. However in the following years and decades, youth styles and youth orientations have diversified very strongly. This diversification goes hand in hand with macrosocial changes, such as – to name but a few – the expansion of the education moratorium and the formation of a consumer market targeting youth cultural styles. Youth (cultural) styles and attitudes are promoted by this development, but at the same time shape and determine corresponding changes in society as a whole.

No matter which youth cultural tendencies, styles or protest movements, these have always been stigmatized and stereotyped by the media, interest-led research and politics in past and present – this is a quasi-natural social scientific course. This can also be said for the case studies selected in this project: Identities of (fe)male Muslims and the Autonomists. Young people in these groups engage with the ascriptions attributed to them from the outside. This engagement takes place in the context of their individual identity constructions and biographical work and in collective discussions and ‘discourses’ in their peer groups.

NATIONAL CONTEXT: Historical moments since World War 2 in (West) Germany

A brief outline of historical events, albeit incomplete, helps us to describe the developments that have influenced the lives and courses of action of the present cohort of young people growing up in the Federal Republic of Germany today. Firstly, we can mention the Nazi era that the generation of parents has had to deal with, which can be said to have been a formative aspect of intergenerational relations over many generations. The so-called “economic miracle” that followed the reconstruction of the country’s infrastructure and industry and the need for manpower – solved by the influx of “guest workers” – were further historical developments which have helped to characterize subsequent generations and which were

accompanied by the beginnings of mass consumerism and the importation of items of youth and popular culture from the USA and Great Britain. The imported “pop culture” with its fashions, films, music and accessories continued to spread until the mid-1960s, when it assumed an equal footing with high culture and German popular culture. Later, it differentiated itself in many ways initially from the rock, pop and folk music of America, then of Great Britain – including (at first tentative) adaptations of German artists.

In post-Nazi Germany the rebuilding of the military forces, the associated upswing in the armaments industry and the introduction of military service were all central contentious issues or potential conflicts for young people. A post-war peace movement was formed, which still exists today with a proportion of its supporters spanning several generations.⁹ From 1968 the „second wave“ of the West German women’s movement began at universities, driven in particular by the efforts of young female students, giving new impetus to the gradual process of social equality and the self-determination of women (e.g. in working life, divorce law, reform of abortion laws, improved childcare). This resulted in broadening social spheres of influence for the generations of women growing up at the time.

In the early to mid 1980s there was a sharp increase in the level of youth unemployment. Sections of the young generations saw no, or very few, options for themselves in either the present or the future. At the same time, youth culture styles of British punks and skinheads were imported, which were relatively quickly identified by sections of German youth as appropriate ways for dealing with the local situations expressively or to revolt against them. In West and East Germany there was also a relatively rapid development of separate scenes or adoptions of British styles, which – firstly in Great Britain and then later in Germany – were different until approximately the mid 1980s. At this time, hip-hop was imported from the USA, which, in addition to the independent and substantial German techno scenes, then became the most widespread youth culture of the 1990s and 2000s. For almost the entire period of these expressive youth culture style years, Germany had a stable conservative government – with Helmut Kohl as the “Chancellor of the German-German Union”, which was a central aspect of critical rebellion for many young people together with their youth cultures.

Young people and social change: Youth Generations

For almost a century it has been a scientific tradition to attempt to order young people into youth generations. Mannheim (1928) developed an elaborate concept of generation, which by the same token understood the actions of youth as a “motor of development” in society. According to Mannheim, common age-specific experiences in a shared position within the social structure necessitate firstly adaptation to cultural assets handed down by (the) previous generation(s), then a conscious analysis of them and finally,

⁹ By the end of the 1960s the “student movement” began to bring many of the described conflicts to the attention of the public through protests. The protests, left-wing political attitudes and solution patterns to the conflicts, were very varied and differentiated. A common denominator of the protests can be said to have been intergenerational and social lines of conflict, which challenged conservative politics in Germany, the imperialistic foreign policy of the USA, NATO and the Nazi past of the parents’ generation. In 1970, when the protests of the student movement had ebbed and some of their leading figures had taken up professional positions in politics, the administration and the media, the extreme left-wing group Rote Armee-Fraktion (RAF) was formed. This was a terrorist group which used violence to attack capitalistic and imperialistic power structures, taking the lives of leading people in industry and innocent hostages or approving their deaths in order to push through their own interests. Due to their uncompromising and radical nature (and the retaliation generated in politics) this group also influenced young people in the way they protested and what they protested for or against. The 1970s also saw the re-emergence / re-establishment of the peace movement, which later became part of the anti-nuclear movement. The followers of both movements shared many common interests. Both were extremely attractive to young people, so much so that generally we can speak of the genesis of a great alternative movement, a multifaceted one which in part protested vehemently against the expansion of nuclear energy, the aggressive foreign policy of NATO allies, the armaments and war industry that profited from this, and much more.

as the case may be, a departure from them. In this way, cultural bodies disappear and are replaced by new ones. The younger generation find this easier than adults to keep pace with the speed of social change and to adapt themselves to new circumstances (cf. Mitterauer 1986). According to processes of socialisation and enculturation or different lifestyles and behaviour patterns of the various generations, the way the younger generation(s) deal(s) with the traditional values, standards or cultural assets of adults is always ascribed to the conflicts resting on the balance of power and authority (cf. Hillmann 2007). According to the understanding of the driving forces of social change described above, there is a potential for conflict in these contrasting generations, which are characterised in different ways in various sub-systems in society and in various historical eras, that can give impetus to this change. In relation to conflict theory, Rosenmayr (1970) first described this contrast between the generations or between youth and the internalised values of society as a motor of social change. For Rosenmayr, “youth is a factor of social change”.

In modernised societies it is difficult to distinguish generational units as they were once conceived. In addition, empirical studies (Jugendwerk der Deutschen Shell 2000, 2015) show that differences are becoming ever smaller, because parents now also accept their children as partners with equal rights. Youth and young adults create their own socialisation contexts with the aid of media, peers, music and politics etc, within which they develop their own values and cultural patterns. These may, but do not have to, touch on those of the older generations. Furthermore, youth socialisation/communitisation patterns are also subject to a social and therefore a cultural change, which has its origins in moments of change in society. At the same time, orientation patterns of young people have an effect on the social and cultural structure of society as a whole.

By the mid 1960s it was no longer possible to put “youth” into (relatively) unified generational contexts or forms, as classic youth sociologists such as Mannheim (1928) and Schelsky (1958) had clearly still been able to do. Present-day youth cohorts – those youth belonging to one or more closely successive birth cohorts – render a sharp or even chronological distinction impossible “by the existence of overlapping generational forms and at the same time on grounds of the rapid and social change” (Griese 2000: 219).

From the mid 1980s the differences in youth lifestyles lived rendered any reference to unity impossible. Not only styles of youth culture, but also youth milieus varied so greatly according to social situation, origin, gender and cultural and economical conditions (cf. Ferchhoff 2010), sections of the youth cohorts had de facto almost no chance finding a training course or employment, whereas others found options for social participation by means of education and a belief in their own individual achievement. In and around the mid 1990s talk was then of the “post-alternative youth generation” of those youths, who no longer expressed “radical self-referential” (Baacke 1999:119) and hedonistic communication of meaning via protest, but intensively by means of speed, lifestyle, outfits, fashion, symbols and habitus.

Parallel to this – and the differences between the generations are once more shown to be unclear – there was the “Generation X” imported from the USA, which as a desperate or lost generation once again dealt with unemployment and a lack of prospects internally rather than through protesting. At the turn of the millennium the contours of the youth cohorts became more unclear once again, on the one hand because young people again made self-referential use of the arsenal of the available styles and attitudes of youth culture together with their commercial markers, and modified and renewed them. On the other hand, the characteristics of young people become diversified once again and more sharply according to social situation, educational orientation and geographical origin (especially East or West Germany), ethnic and cultural origin, religious orientation and gender. In other words, a relatively unified youth cohort in Germany is a thing of the distant past. A large number of lifestyles, political, cultural and sexual etc.

orientations are borne by a heterogeneous group of young people who differ from each other according to the characteristics described above.

Young people and macrosocial developments

We can trace the following aspects of a fundamental change in social structure since the post-war era and up to the present day and the resulting changed circumstances in which young people have grown up, which create the basic conditions for shaping the lives of youth and which have become the requirements for the participation of youth in peer groups, and youth and protest cultures in the past few decades (cf. Ferchhoff 2010)

The spatial environment is subject to constant change, which is noticeable through the increased importance of the public area of activity and which since the 1950s has been utilised increasingly by young women and girls in particular (cf. Fend 1996). The public spaces have consequently become one of the main fields of activity of expressive youth group styles, which have been expanding since the 1950s. An innovative function has therefore also been bestowed on the youths at the level of “everyday culture” and the associated increase in importance of lifestyles and the search for lifestyle. The *structure of the family* and a continual *socio-demographic change in the structure of the population* ensure that with regard to the ageing population, there is a quantitative decrease in young people on the one hand, and the traditional family forms in which young people grow up increasingly become ones of single parentage, extra-marital partnerships, low numbers of children, a decline in family relationships etc., on the other (cf. Nave-Herz 2015).

The transition of the structure of the labour force is characterised not only by the sharp increase of employment in the service sector compared with the production sector, but also by a transition in the employment structure within families, the consequence of which is increasingly more unconventional work and time constellations which have to be reconciled with bringing up children. *Economic risk factors* such as unemployment, debt, divorce, illness etc. are the cause or growing danger that the number of the so-called “modernisation losers” will increase.

The longer period of time spent at school and other educational establishments means that higher qualifications are demanded by employers, politics, industry and parents etc. At the same time, this promotes the organisation of peer-centred leisure activities. In youth research, the transition from adult supervision to youth self-monitoring is characterised as the decisive aspect in youth phase transformation. The latter, however, are oriented towards commercial leisure organisations. Young people simultaneously have access to more room to manoeuvre with less social control and, moreover, with more financial means. Since approximately the beginning of the 1950s youth cultural scenes having been gaining in significance as institutions that convey identity. Together with the devaluation of more or less collectively experienced life plans, “scenes present themselves as successor institutions that replace the power and credibility of the local community, church, school, party or union which provide meaning for certain groups and people” (Zinnecker 1987: 321). For many young people, the lifestyles formed within the scenes, which can differ from each other in the most varied (style) elements and internal perspectives (cf. Eckert/Reis/Wetzstein 2000), assume to some extent the function of providing identity, which in many cases rest on gains in integration and distinction. Into the bargain, the formation of youth culture lifestyles and scenes with increasing mobility and extensive media coverage bridges international borders and enables virtual and parasocial forms of interaction of the members alongside classic face-to-face relationships.

With the general increase in wealth and the expansion of the youth-specific consumer market, buying power and the differentiated mass consumption of youths also increase and begin at an ever-younger age.

Together with the establishment of youth-cultural scenes, their principle accessibility through increasing mobility and their communication and marketing in the media, youths have become experts in a market tailored specifically to them. This market is constantly seeking to pick up on the latest trends and differentiations and market them suitably. This market promotes not only processes of individualisation but also of discreet control by advertising the individual as customer. In the most diverse of cases, every instance of control that occurs through marketing has also been occasion for youth cultures and protest movements, which are emancipatory or which seek to negate modernisation tendencies, to take a political stance against this marketing of their own culture, against the compulsion to buy, materialisation and its market mechanisms, and to offer alternatives.

In this interplay between market mechanisms and youth-culture protests there is a factor governing the change in the pattern of production and acquisition, which can also be described as an element of social change.

Changes in the media have brought about an enormously differentiated array of not only audio-visual, but also printed media, which are specialised in the youth and youth-cultural markets and which have successfully attached themselves to the target group.

Since the beginning of the 1950s, with the emergence of pop(ular) culture and music and leisure activities which centre on young people, the latter have assumed an independent existence socially, culturally and politically. With the expansion of the music and fashion industries in the mid 1950s the youth phase moved away from being a pedagogically perpetuated age category to a relatively hedonistic one which is also determined by a commercialised leisure culture.

Concomitant with emancipation in the cultural and social sector, the increase in youth freedom and the manifestation of individual tastes and lifestyles, i.e. an expanding individualisation of the youth phase, a fundamental politicisation of the youth moratorium has been in evidence since the 1960s at the latest.

A second aspect of this change is that interactions between young people are increasingly interpreted by youths and young adults as political and social action (cf. May/v.Prondczynsky 1991). Student movements and so-called “new social movements” defined the boundaries. In the same way that youth articulations and youth-cultural styles can be understood as “everyday politics”, everyday actions and decisions such as dealing with alternative energy sources, starting a family, bringing up children etc., are increasingly being allocated to this field. This intermediate area of “sub-politics” has been influenced by expanding citizens’ initiatives and social movements, which “enforce self-justification”, since the beginning of the 1980s at the latest. Politics that have been weakened by disenchantment with politics, scandals, and economic and other crises is faced with a growing “political sensibility” of society; a “preliminary result of political modernisation which has become reflexive” (ibidem: 176).

The range of products that influence style in youth culture, such as clothes, music, accessories, services etc., is growing just as the financial resources available to young people are. In this sector, too, young people have become experts and can flourish/socialise in relative freedom, as they do in the area of the media, from parental and/or pedagogical control. The last two decades of the 20th century are characterised by the increasing and continually differentiating specialisation of young people in expressive (group) styles. These individualistic choices for and against youth-cultural styles are witness to the most diverse patterns of reaction and interpretation of youth who find themselves having to come to terms with a macrosocial process of growing individualisation, differentiation and pluralisation of lifestyles and forms and are faced with these either individually or as a part of a group.

Brief outline of social-scientific perspectives on youth

In the post-war era, social-scientific youth research did not begin to come to the fore until the 1960s and still viewed youth – whether from the perspective of critical theory or of structural functionality – in relatively general terms. The 1970s saw the reception and further development of the labelling approach, which understands deviance in youth as dealing with labelling processes and a solution to problems. From about the early 1980s more emphasis was placed on the logic and dynamic inherent in the worlds of young people; young people were understood as acting stakeholders who developed their own practices and lifestyles (cf. Jugendwerk der Deutschen Shell 1981). The reception of the studies carried out by the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in Birmingham – which as part of youth culture analyses understood youth-cultural self-will and bricolage-tactics as answers to social change – ensured that the analysis of youth practices and articulations continued to receive much attention. From the second half of the 1980s analyses of youth behaviour and action have been embedded in modernisation theories (Beck 1986) and the connections of individualisation and pluralisation of life situations and lifestyles (cf. Helsper/Krüger/Sandring 2015): here tie in analyses that on the one hand highlight the positive aspects and options, which arise for youths on the grounds of individualisation processes. In this way, youths are conceived as self-socialising, proactive subjects who seek their own contexts in order to develop themselves socially, culturally, politically and economically, etc. (cf. Hurrelmann 1983; Silbereisen 1986; Müller 1999). The formation of youth-cultural articulations of the last few decades in Germany has been and continues to be discussed prominently in the context of individualisation theory.¹⁰

With the negative effects of individualisation – in the form of disorientation, destabilisation and newer forms of control – another line of research has asserted itself, which is critical of modernisation (Heitmeyer et al 1995), which emphasises that in particular youth from socially deprived backgrounds with few resources can either hardly take advantage of the increased variety of options or cannot at all. Finally, in the last few decades approaches have established themselves, which, especially with regard to unequally distributed educational opportunities, focus more and more on the reproduction of social inequality (cf. e.g. Kramer 2011). Furthermore, we should also mention the perspectives, which constitute the social and economical rationalisation lines that intersect the options arising out of individualisation tendencies (cf. Helsper 2012), so that the ambivalences of individualisation for young people become clearer.

REPRESENTATIONS OF YOUTH GROUPS

Case One: The Autonomists: The autonomists emerged from the tradition of some sections of left-wing „Non-parliamentary Opposition“ as part of the West German student movement of the late 1960s https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Au%C3%9Ferparlamentarische_Opposition. In the 1970s and 1980s, in which sections of the autonomists ready to resort to violence also sympathised with the radical left-wing group „RAF“, autonomous groups often took part in demonstrations and actions of the new social movements,

¹⁰The changes in social structure described above, such as the increase in income, free time available, educational expansion and other factors, are the reasons for an increase the responsibility of the individual, which at the same time places ever higher expectations with regard to people's own competence, flexibility and mobility by the liberalisation and globalisation of the labour market – accompanied by an ever-increasing pressure to compete (cf. Beck 1997). On the one hand, this kind of individualisation to an increased number of options and alternatives for action for those stakeholders who have the competence to take advantage of the complexity of social life as described. On the other, greater restrictions are also experienced, in particular among those people who do not possess these competences, be it on grounds of personal, social, health or economic situations (cf. Hitzler/Niederbacher 2010). In this context, youths and young adults feel confronted with a multitude of life-options, which entail an at least equal number of individual life-choices: in the process young people quickly lose the role models and normal biographies that help them find their own bearings in life.

e.g. the West German freedom movement or the anti-nuclear-power movement. The central element of the autonomists is a strong “left-wing” political orientation. Daily life and day-to-day action is regarded as politically relevant. It is assumed that the state resp. The “system” has completely pervaded the daily lives of the people and, for example, manipulates their consciousness by means of the media or offers of consumer goods. The formation of an autonomous identity therefore becomes very significant, one which is both emancipated from the influence of the “system” and aims to dismantle the rejected capitalistic system. Although complete ‘autonomy’ is not possible, as people move in a multitude of interrelations and dependencies, a minimum of heteronomy is the aim. Autonomous groups therefore want to create self-determined areas of freedom. These free areas are just as important as meeting points for the groups, for exchanging ideas and holding political discourse, as they are for the implementation of “alternative” ways of life. There are many crossovers to the squatter scene, which has been active in Germany since the 1980s, and to the Antifa scene, which, as the name suggests, is above all characterised by its anti-fascist ideology as well as its activities and demonstrations “against Nazis”. Autonomists consider themselves to be anti-fascist, anti-racist and anti-sexist; structurally they are anti-authoritarian, often unorthodox Marxist and/or anarchistic. The autonomous stance includes. For example, „politics of the first person“: political goals are not just to be proclaimed, they are to be lived and implemented in the daily lives of the activists. The organisational form is similar to a network, anti-constitutional, grassroots democratic, and collective (cf. Haunss 2004, 2013). Autonomists have no clear thematic focus; they have individual themes that are the focus of campaign mobilisations (Haunss 2013). In the most recent present, the autonomists’ central fields of action have been the occupation of empty or derelict buildings¹¹ and setting up non-commercial cultural and social free areas, anti-fascist actions against right-wing extremism and anti-racists actions (solidarity activities with refugees; “no-one is illegal”).

Autonomist image cultivation / how they present themselves:

The printed media play an important role in the now thirty-year history of the autonomists. In the 1980s many regional newspapers emerged and in the 1990s „Interim“, the newspaper of the autonomists in Berlin became the scene’s most important national newspaper. As the Internet expanded, Internet portals gained in significance, none more than the international alternative media network “indymedia” (with a German-speaking area). However, other important networking media are the event portals and newsletter portals such as “Bewegungsmelder” (literally = movement messenger) (Hamburg) and “Stressfaktor” (Berlin) (Haunss 2013). In addition to the propagation of alternative views on political events relevant to the autonomist movement and announcements relevant to the scene, involvement in discussions concerning the themes of the autonomous movement plays an important role.

Haunss (2013) sees the main reasons for the continuing potential for mobilisation of the autonomists in this recurring discussion about collective identity and autonomist themes against the background of changing political circumstances, as well as in the marriage of everyday life with political discourse. Furthermore, the scene is characterised by the radical and uncompromising questioning of the existing order and combative to militant self-staging. In the self-image of the autonomists, violence or militancy play a much less significant role than they do in public perception. Therefore, the fundamental preparedness to push through their aims using means that do not conform to the prevailing legal norms is a central self-concept

¹¹ Kollektives Zentrum (KoZe or Collective Centre) in Hamburg, Münzviertel – A former school for the blind that was condemned in 2016. In 2015 initially occupied by members of the neighbourhood and after it was cleared with official permission, was used by neighbourhood initiatives, then occupied by squatters. According to articles in the local press, (“Danger of another Rote Flora in Hamburg” - occupied remains of former theatre), Hamburger Abendblatt) there were waves of sympathy from the autonomist scene. KoZe website: <http://koze.in/> Media website: <http://www.zeit.de/2015/25/hausbesetzung-hamburg-rote-flora>

of the scene. In practice there are (in part ritualised) violent clashes, as a rule, however, on the fringes of demonstrations. Outside of these partly ritualised clashes and clashes with radical right-wingers, violence against persons is rejected. According to Haunss, militancy, usually in the form of damage to property, has a predominantly symbolic meaning for autonomists, for he believes it to be an important element of their movement's identity not to keep to the legal framework (ibidem: 36f).

Case Two: youth cultures of young Muslims in Germany

A strong ethnic dimension is to be found in most youth scenes in Germany. In many western, Anglo-Saxon youth scenes, such as the punk, metal, techno, skinhead, Gothic or autonomist scenes, migrant and/or Muslim youths are vastly underrepresented, many youth cultures are relatively homogenous as regards origin. A condition, which according to von Wensierski (2015), has thus far received too little attention in youth culture research. An exception is hip-hop, which since the 1980s has been revealing its "identity-giving potential as bricolage for ethnic group identities" (ibidem: 320).

In the last 15 years the interest of German migration and youth research in Muslims has risen. After 9/11 studies appeared that made an effort to provide a differentiated analysis of Muslim lives and concepts of religion and that pointed to the modernisation and pluralisation of Islamic orientation patterns and religiosity. Migration research brought to our attention the evidence of a variety of life situations in migrant milieus (cf. ibidem; Calmbach et al 2011). Studies of milieus, which investigated the population of migrant origin, showed that neither culturalistic questions about religiosity, nor the general suspicion of ever-present Islamic cells, reflected the social reality of Muslim cultures, but "the social inequality in the structures of a migration society that deprived its migrants of essential opportunities to participate in the education system and join their place on the labour market" (von Wensierski 2015: 311).

In adolescence young Muslims find themselves in the area of tension between the parental milieu of origin and the expectations of German society. Studies indicate that by and large religion is of greater importance for youths from a Muslim background than it is for Germans (von Wensierski 2015: 313). The religious-cultural context of the Muslim milieus of origin influences the structure of day-to-day life and the living environment, orientation patterns and biographical life plan of many youths from a Muslim background. It remains unclear, however, whether this influence on the structure is founded in „the traditions and the collective identity of the religious community, or alternatively, as a result of the social situation and segregation of Muslims in western societies" (von Wensierski 2015: 313/314).

With reference to his own research on youth biographies and youth-cultural scenes of young Muslims in Germany, von Wensierski (2007; 2015) ascertains with regard to the development of „federal German" adolescence, that in this context there are many parallels with the adolescence of youths from local Muslim migrant milieus, but also huge differences. The structural characteristics in the youth phase of Muslim and non-Muslim youths were similar especially in leisure behaviour, consumer behaviour, mediatization of the youth world, schooling, and the meaning of youth symbols. At the same time, there were significant differences within the Muslim migrant milieus, which result on the one hand from a multitude of socio-economic disadvantages, and on the other from ethno-cultural differences in the families of origin. According to von Wensierski (2015) however, there were also a number of distinct differences in Muslim youth milieus to the structural characteristics of the "federal German" youths as ascertained by social research, above all with regard to detachment from the family, sexual morals, gender-based relationship forms and lifestyles and the meaning of religious standards. The following characteristics are of particular structural importance for youths from Muslim milieus in their choice of youth scene: 1. social circumstances, 2. ethno-cultural identity, 3. religious socialisation and the specific Muslim habitus, and 4.

gender. In the present the Muslim habitus gives structure to a multitude of youth scenes – from the relatively new, globally active “pop Islam” to the anti-western and anti-modern groups of political Islamism (cf. ibidem). Gender has such a significant meaning as a structural characteristic for both belonging to a scene and for the entire period of adolescence that it is possible to divide “the Muslim youth phase into specific female and male variants” (von Wensierski 2015: 315).

Identity Politics of (Fe-)male Muslims: The “Neo-Muslima”

When it comes to placement in the structural characteristics of Muslim scenes described above, the group of the “neo Muslima” is primarily characterized by its religious Muslim habitus and its gender. Scenes of a religious nature are most likely to consist of self-sufficient groups of females (cf. von Wensierski 2015): „Neo-Muslima“ have often been referred to as young Muslim women who consciously and of their own volition “return” to an orthodox Muslim lifestyle, which they confidently express in their clothing. For them, an independent, education and career-oriented lifestyle does not conflict with leading an Islamic lifestyle, wearing a veil and the ideal Muslim marriage as described above with the corresponding ascetic sexual morality. Nökel (1996, 2002) described “Neo-Muslima” as the young female second-generation migrants of mostly Turkish origin whom she investigated, who after their own intellectual examination of Islam had in many cases committed themselves to it in their adolescence. In the process, they often distanced themselves from their non- or traditionally religious family of origin and in many cases rejected traditional patriarchal gender relations. They regard educational advancement and vocational orientation as not being in conflict with their religious beliefs (cf. Thon 2004; von Wensierski 2007). In their rational approach to religion, in which they understand themselves as sovereign interpreters, many young women referred to as „Neo Muslimas“ are regarded as suspicious by the Imam or Hoca as authoritative figure (Nökel 2002: 51). According to Nökel, discussions about female Islam are more likely to take place in women’s or girls’ groups (Nökel 2002). The Hijab has special importance. In private religious practices it is an expression of devout faith. In encounters with the non-Muslim environment, the Hijab, which is often worn together with consciously fashionable clothes, means confrontation and self-assertion. It signals opposition to the essentialist imputations of the majority society, symbolises the confident Muslim woman, and calls for the rehabilitation of Islam as compatible with German society. In the context of working life in particular, but also in everyday life, the wearers are confronted with resistance and labelling, in which they are regarded as passive, uneducated or suppressed victims of a patriarchal-Islamic authority. In a Muslim context, the Hijab is a symbol of Islam that brings the wearer respect and generates trust in her integrity and her competence (cf. Thon 2004; Nökel 2002).

The “Neo Muslima” practise their religion in an environment in which the experiences of the migrant milieus are very often accompanied by the subtle experiences of “being foreign” resp. use of the word “foreignness” by German society. For the “Neo Muslima” it is a matter of a “place for the second generation within the social hierarchy of macrosociety” (Thon 2004). In this respect, we shall have to see how assertive the position of the “neo Muslima” will be, both in Muslim society and in society as a whole (cf. ibidem).

THE EFFECTS/OUTCOMES: STIGMATISATIONS, REACTIONS, CONSTRUCTIONS

During certain events and protests such as 1 May, neo Nazi marches or the calls to action against globalisation, there is often violence among left-wing actionist movements, such as the Antifa and the Autonomists. These groups attract a lot of attention from society. Compared with society as a whole, these events have an above average attraction for young people. For this reason, the majority of active members of the left-wing autonomists are young people (cf. Pfahl-Traugher 2010).

What operates in the scenes of the autonomists resp. Antifa under the name of “political education” can be described as their central focus (cf. Hitzler/Niederbacher 2010). This political education is firstly aimed at the members of the scene, i.e. it is part of daily life, e.g. to discuss political theories and the concrete possibilities of implementing them. Due to the long-winded nature of the debate, there are often calls for concrete political action to be taken from within the scene. As a rule, political actions are directed towards “fascists”, and in general the enemies are “the state”, “the system” and their representatives. Militancy is regarded by at least some in the scene as an alternative type of action and some as their maxim¹². For autonomists and the Antifa scene political participation means two things: discourse and militancy (cf. Ibidem). Protest marches and demonstrations – often in reaction to neo Nazi marches taking place at the same time – often become militant, either as a reaction to real provocation by the political opponent or because of the heavy police presence, as is usually the case, and which is in turn interpreted as provocation, representation of the state and therefore as the enemy. Media reporting about these events is fundamentally viewed with mistrust, in their own Internet forums and blogs etc.; they publish their own point of view. Public reporting is dismissed as subjective and representing the interests of the state. The authorities responsible for domestic security – the Police, the intelligence service – categorise the autonomist Antifa scenes as violent, left-wing radicals and in some cases a terrorist threat. These classifications have long been published in inventories on the threat of terrorism and in intelligence service reports, which are then replicated in the media in order to create a long-standing public image of left-wing radical, violent autonomists and anti-fascists, and to ensure a process with its own momentum has been set in motion.

Constructivism and the stigmatisation of youth

As a rule, definitions and interpretations of „youth“ or „youth groups“ are strongly influenced by the logic of exploitation of in the media and also in scientific reporting about conspicuous fringe groups or marginal issues regarding youth behaviour. In other words: prejudices and stigmatisation that have been filtered many times and simple, problematic, since they are not objective, projection slides and generalisations define the viewpoints of politicians, media, youth welfare institutions, but also social scientists on “youth”. In discourse, the attribution of problems to youth is socially constructed and assumes its own momentum. In addition, it is conspicuous that “youth”, understood as a collective group with equal, definable characteristics is described in vicious circles as a social problem, and discussions are held about problematical behaviour (cf. Gronemeyer/Hoffmann 2013). This completely mistrustful perspective on “youth” feeds predominantly on adults’ fears of losing control through social change, which is determined to a large extent by young people’s behaviour. At the same time, it is feared that the behaviour and orientation of young people will not be able to support the development of the economy, technology and culture. The opposite perspective of what contribution young people can make to the development of society is rarely, if ever, aired in public. The same applies to the effect of stigmatisation and negative ascriptions on the behaviour of the young people themselves.

Stigmatisation and discrimination of youth with an immigration background

In particular youths and young adults of Muslim faith or Muslim orientation are stigmatised by the aforementioned authorities as groups that are inclined towards violence or disintegrative behaviour. In the

¹² Violence – not only in the left-wing scenes described above – also serves individual self-discovery and self-empowerment, as a test of one’s own limits or to satisfy the desire for adventure. Pertinent youth studies point out that politically motivated violence is only exercised by a very small minority of youths. In the majority of cases, violence is not the consequence of intentional action, but the result of interaction between demonstrators and the Police (cf. Kühnel 2015).

analysis of the public discussion on youths and young people belonging to Islam and symbolise it externally, it becomes particularly clear how causal relationships between religious practices, disintegrative behaviour and violence are formed. In the comparison between youths of German origin with a criminal record on the one hand, and similar youths of Muslim faith on the other, it quickly becomes transparent that explanatory models in the first group tend to be individually and biographically oriented, whereas analyses for the second group take a culturalisation-based stance (cf. Atabay 2012).

Research perspectives that discuss the everyday lives of so-called minority groups and that have recognised these lives are characterised in particular by marginalisation, discrimination and a lack of participation and socially relevant negotiation processes have only established themselves in the last few years (cf. Spindler 2006; Spies 2010). These experiences increasingly lead to frustration and aggression, but in the majority of cases are misinterpreted as a return to previously successful traditional strategies (cf. Auerheimer 2002). In this context, we should not ignore the fact that young people in particular lack the opportunities for participation at many levels, which once again leads to feelings of frustration and isolation.

Appropriate interpretations from social discourses and social interactions have an impact on the group being discussed resp. whose behaviour is being interpreted. These representations of groups can also be understood in their interactions with the “social constructions” (Berger/Luckmann 1969) and lend themselves neither to ethno-cultural explanation nor to individual justification. It is much more the social contexts in which the individuals interact within which constructions of realities first emerge. In this respect, it is the opinion-forming institutions that generate realities in these social contexts and are frequently responsible for negative attributions and discrimination (cf. Jacob 2004).

It can be said that the social constructions of youths with an immigration background – irrespective of their gender – are largely based on nation or national and cultural origin and that – whether in social science, expert debate or the media – the existing power and authority relations are also always reproduced. However, the processes of construction towards the “ethnically other one” also make subjective courses of action and forms of adaption possible for the youths affected (cf. Geisen/Riegel 2007).¹³ Inclusion and exclusion processes are part of experience and form the basis of the respective individual participation opportunities (cf. ibidem).

In everyday life young people with an immigration background are confronted with a multitude of imputations. Whereas the attributions in educational establishments and in the media tend to be ethnicising and in the context of gender the young people there are associated in particular with criminal acts (young men) resp. disintegrative behaviour (young women and young men) – irrespective of educational level – they experience with their peers and intercultural contacts primarily stereotypical imputations which relate to their gender. A field of projection has emerged in the available knowledge of the majority society that as a matter of course links the young people with attributes such as violence, crime, disintegrative behaviour, a lack of education etc. (cf. Haeger 2013). It is a fact that the youths and young adults “work” on these attributes, “adapt” themselves to them and also reinterpret them. Youths and young adults with an immigration background deny themselves a simple analysis and evade it by

¹³Politics, social scientific research on the topic of violence among youths with an immigration background, and the media stylise especially youths and young adults of the Muslim faith as perpetrators of violence. As already mentioned above, culturalising perspectives and explanatory patterns are particularly conspicuous in this context. Yazici (2011) and other authors (e.g. Haeger 2013; Spies 2010) point out that according to the labelling approach such attributions can have a direct influence on the violent behaviour of youths. External positioning, which is undertaken by third parties, can have a strong influence on the self-positioning of young people in particular – entirely in the sense of a self-fulfilling prophecy.

playing with presuppositions, accepting appropriate attributes and also rejecting them again – entirely in the sense of an identity construction that defines the life of young people.

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4. SPAIN (UAB)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In Spain, public concern with youth started, like in many other parts of Europe, around the beginning of the 20th century with the growth of industrialization and urbanization. It mainly took the form of legal initiatives to protect minors, worries about public order and politically charged hopes of regeneration.

In terms of contemporary Spanish public policies focusing on young people, the distribution of competences between the different administrations is still unclear, and the main challenge remains balancing sectorial policies with impacts on the total population and specific programs targeting youth. As to the political participation of young people in Spain, there is contradictory evidence: “unconventional” political behaviour among YP seems to have increased, while interest in traditional politics has decreased (EU 2016; Anduiza et al. 2014; Castillo 2008). Evidence on other forms of social involvement is also contradictory, with association membership falling to its lowest levels, but a growing involvement in voluntary activities (EU 2016).

In the present-day, any social participation of youth is framed within realities of unemployment, precarious jobs, late emancipation age and serious threats for autonomous lifestyles. This situation, though, can provide a misleading picture that overlooks precisely the experiences we are looking for in the case-studies. Given the growing number of young people whose main interests have little to do with formal employment, formal education or formal politics, they constitute a mix of different minorities with more or less visibility and are not that well-represented in the main official statistics. Non-formal and informal experiences (learning, working, politics) and social and communication skills that allow adaptation to different cultural and social contexts are gaining relevance. Thus, we need wider notions of human and social capital to include the social relations that favour resources to enable actors to pursue their interests (Coleman 1990). Still, it is difficult to know the quantitative relevance of social developments radically different from usual practices. Nor do we know much about the thresholds above which small quantitative dynamics become significant for substantial social change.

NATIONAL CONTEXT

Youth in Social Sciences, main theoretical debates in Spain.

Occasional local educational initiatives aside, the beginning of modern public concern with youth and children in Spain could be located at the end of the nineteenth century, with initiatives like the first Spanish law that banned child labor (of children under 10) approved in 1900. During the last decades of the 19th century, in line with legal changes in other European countries (mainly France, UK and Germany), debates on prison reforms to grant special protection to children, gained preeminence in Spain as well, and by 1918 special tribunals for children were created (Souto 2007). At the same time, as in the rest of Europe, when industrialization and urbanization increased the number of working class youngsters in the streets of big cities in the beginning of the 20th century, also the Spanish media and some political debates reflected - often in sensationalist manner - middle class’ worries and concerns about the growing number of working class young people hanging around in the streets. In some senses, they were antecedents of “conflictive” youth groups (Ealham 2005; Souto 2007).

The first Spanish academic studies on youth were highly influenced by the Spanish philosopher Ortega y Gasset, his idea of generations and his very optimistic view on the historical role of each new young generation. For him, youth replaced the proletariat as the emergent subject, and the succession of generations replaced the class struggle as the main force of social change. He later tried an explanation of history based generational transition, which – in his view - happens more or less every 15 years, and framed his view within elitist arguments on social mobilization, where some farsighted minorities lead the masses. Afterwards, during the Franco dictatorship (1939-1975), the emphasis on new generations and youth as forces of change, by authors like P. Laín Entralgo and Julián Marías, was both a way of incorporating international debates (Mannheim, Dilthey) and a disguise to face discussions on conflict in a heavy censored context. In the 1960s, J. L. López Aranguren, a former student of Ortega y Gasset, was among the first to back his theoretical arguments with empirical evidence from the first opinion polls, which led to the recognition of the heterogeneities within the concepts of generation and youth (Leccardi & Feixa 2014).

In contemporary Spanish social sciences, youth as a topic of research has received most attention from public opinion polling and attitudes surveys. During the last three decades there has been a growing standardization of research procedures, methodologies and periodicity, with successive Youth reports published by the *Instituto de la Juventud* (INJUVE, Spanish Youth Institute) (Comas 2015; Queirolo 2013; Urraco 2007). Since the 1980s, the Spanish Youth Institute, a Ministerial Agency, has funded numerous studies about youth in relation to a variety of topics (employment, social change, political participation, leisure, violence) and from different perspectives. As Queirolo (2013) points out, Spain is probably among the European countries with a higher number of youth studies promoted from public institutions. However, Queirolo (2013) follows Martín Criado's (1998) reading of Bourdieu (1984, 1988) to criticize the "instrumentalization" of the youth concept and to question the assumptions and effects of the theoretical and methodological frameworks behind many of these reports and youth studies. These institutional approaches may have favored the potential use of age categories to mask other conflicts, most notoriously class; and, by reinforcing epistemologically and administratively the distinction between young people and adults, may have contributed to convert age groups into objects for discourses of moral and control.

Given the wide span, at least two age-brackets appear just in terms of age: adolescent (teenage) youth (15-19) and adult youth (20-29), with this second group including as well other subdivisions: 20-25 year olds with a predominance of educational lifestyles, and 25-29 aged with a predominance of employment experiences. The problems of theoretical limits for defining youth in biological terms clearly appear in the context of criminal and civil liabilities of young people close to the age borders of 14, 16 and 18. Given that personal maturity differs greatly between persons of the same age, depending on individual and social factors, juvenile criminal law often advises getting experts' reports on individuals' maturity instead of considering only administrative age (Cisneros 2004).

Brunet and Pizzi (2013) also use Bordieus' (2000, 2008) and Maugers' (2008) criticisms against abusing the concept of youth as an objective category. They stress the problems of a functionalist view of youth as a homogeneous social group, which should instead be conceptualised as a social position constantly produced and reproduced in the conflicts around power distribution within different social fields. In this sense, social age does not necessarily match biological age, with serious disparities depending on how far different individuals are from power, decision-making and high-status positions; and on the more or less constrained access to these.

Young people are not a unity. In the case studies we will certainly specify which kind of young people we are talking about in terms of socioeconomic and national backgrounds. As said, sociologically, there is a

clear need of going beyond the youth notions coming from demography, biological or administrative uses. At the same time, when choosing the object of study, we subvert a certain *right to indifference* that we assume in common citizens; and, thus, we face risks of contributing to further stigmatization or segregation (Goffman 1963; Delgado 2007; Queirolo 2013). We need well-grounded reasons to break the condition of opacity that allows some citizens to be “not forced to explain or justify what they do or think” (Delgado 2007:192, quoted in Queirolo 2013:19). So, when considering atypical, “unsocial”, or conflictive behavior to look for traces of agency and assertiveness, extra precaution is required to avoid unintended *colour line* or other stigmatizing effects that differentiates the *normal us* from the more *vulnerable others* (Du Bois 2010; Queirolo 2013).

Parallel to the vast functionalist and quantitative main trend in Spanish social sciences’ studies of youth, and with little theoretical interaction, anthropologists such as Carles Feixa (2014) and Manuel Delgado look for a richer view with the help of several concepts (class, gender, different micro cultures, hegemonies, transgressions). Mass media, for their part, extended and generalized the reference to *urban tribes*, often in pseudo-scientific approaches that presented conflicts on the use of resources and the city as mere deviations of one kind or another (Queirolo 2013). In a review of Spanish youth studies, Feixa and Porzio (2004) provided an extensive collection of ethnographic and qualitative research between 1960 and 2003, and identified many of them as lacking in depth and critical analysis, with not enough attention to issues of public conflict or gender invisibility (Queirolo 2013).

Against this background, experts are urging for greater convergence of different historical, sociological and anthropological perspectives in the study of youth. What is at stake, these authors claim, is an understanding of youth in the context of specific historical processes of social change and institutional contexts (for more details: Comas 2015; Soler, Planas & Feixa 2014; Feixa & Porzio 2004; Souto 2007).

Youth Public Policies in Spain.

The contemporary shaping of Spanish public policies focusing on youth started in 1975 with the transition to democracy (Comas 2007; Martín 2007). In the 1970s and 1980s, several local governments started policies for young people, mainly focusing on leisure. During the 1980s youth policies became more ambitious to progressively include key aspects linked to the transition to adulthood: work, housing, education and health. Nevertheless, youth policies as such, have remained for a long time largely concerned with leisure programs and supporting youth associations with scarce implementation impact (Soler & Comas 2016; Soler; Planas & Feixa, 2014). In the first decade of the XXI century, there have been technical and academic debates about the differential logic youth policies had to apply, whether facilitating transition to adulthood or supporting this period of life in itself, putting the interests of young people at the center. Besides, more attention was given to the actual resources YP have access to in order to participate in society (income at their disposal; membership, positions and influence in political and social organizations).

Before these debates materialized in any substantial strategy, the 2007 economic crisis cut the public funds available for most social policies, including youth policies. Until then, funding of youth policies’, youth organizations and the number of social and youth workers had been increasing mainly in local governments in the first three decades of Spanish democracy. Many of the professionals and practitioners came from different backgrounds in social sciences (education, psychology, sociology, social service etc.) and there are still pending issues related to the standardization of professional profiles, methodologies and intervention tools. Youth programmes run by local administrations have been severely hit by the most recent economic crisis. Funding to youth organisations (such as Spanish Youth Council) has been significantly reduced since

2008 and the provision of services has suffered from staff reduction, privatization initiatives and closure of facilities (Planas-Lladó; Soler, Planas & Feixa 2014).

Besides the effect of the economic crisis on budget restrictions to youth policies, the distribution of competences of youth policies between different territorial administrations continues to be an issue today (Soler & Comas 2016). There is no specific legislation on youth at national level and most competences have been transferred to the Autonomous Communities (CCAAs), with 11 out of the 17 CCAAs having enacted youth regional laws.¹⁴ But if the CCAA hold the competences, the local governments are the ones that have kept increasing their role in implementing youth programs (Comas 2016; Alemán & Martín 2004).

The Youth Strategy 2020 approved by the Spanish Government in 2014 is a call for better national coordination, in tune with the EU 2020, and there are institutional mechanisms with cross-sectoral youth policies in mind, among them the two main coordinative institutions at the national level: the INJUVE (the Spanish Youth Institute) and the Interministerial Youth Committee (Comas 2016; Alemán & Martín 2004). As mentioned above, the INJUVE supports cooperation between the administration and the research community, with research programs that include major reports on Spanish youth every four years. The Interministerial Youth Committee meets several times a year,¹⁵ to propose policies, specific programs and coordinate them with the help of the Integral Plans for Youth.

Considering both targets of specific youth policies and public spending specifically devoted to youth, this is still quite a marginal terrain of public intervention today. Mainstream public policies in the areas of education, employment, social policies and housing have the strongest impact on youth's chances in life.¹⁶ Therefore, the competences for key policies affecting young people belong to different sectors and administrations. This reality of different actors, territorial levels and sectors involved in YP policies has also originated extra complexity, duplicities and overlapping between some programs and policies, most of them under severe funding cuts since the crisis (Soler & Comas 2016; Planas-Lladó et al. 2014; Alemán & Martín 2004).

Given this distribution of competences across different ministries and territorial administrations, it is also very difficult to estimate the total public expenditure in youth. This can be seen for instance in the huge disproportions on individual country expenditure in the EU Youth Report (EU 2016), which reveal the inclusion of different fields.

In this context, a main challenge for Spanish youth policies remains how to balance sectorial policies with impacts on the total population and specific youth policies (Comas 2016, 2011; Planas-Lladó et al. 2014; Feixa-Pàmpols 2014). Congruence and complementarity requirements will demand institutional capacities and coordination between a huge variety of actors from different regulatory areas and territorial levels, professionals, practitioners and youth organizations. These efforts are more demanding when one takes into account their usually diverging socioeconomic perspectives and the need to balance policies pertaining to different fields (employment, education, and social protection).

Political and social participation.

While the wide majority, roughly speaking, of young people in Spain support the present political democratic system, during the last ten years the number of people critical with the system as a whole has

¹⁴ For instance, Madrid: Youth Regional Law 8/2002 of 27 November, Catalunya: Youth policies Law 33/2010 of 1 October.

¹⁵ Under the presidency of the Minister of Health, Social Policy and Equality, the General Director of the Spanish Youth Institute (INJUVE) as the vice-President, and a representative of each Ministry with the status of General Director.

¹⁶ Education issues: deficits in grants' coverage or in upgrading vocational training tracks; labour market ones: entry barriers and segmentation, minimum wage; social policies and housing.

been increasing, reaching 15% in 2012. According to the INJUVE (2012) and CIS (2014) surveys, a main feeling in relation to politics is mistrust, followed by boredom and indifference. A majority of young people in Spain think that “the system” needs serious reforms, especially those elements more clearly linked to the organization and management of government institutions and political parties. The closer public institutions are to direct political power (government, parliament and political parties) the lower the appreciation they enjoy in the eyes of young people (EU 2016; INJUVE 2012).

According to the INJUVE 2012 report, many young Spaniards place themselves in the centre-left of the traditional ideological scale (left-right) (23% centre; 21% centre-left; 9.3% left; 7.2% centre-right; 3.8% right), but the greatest group is the one of young people who not to see themselves on this classical scale at all. As for political participation, most young people limit themselves to voting (63% of them), less than a third have participated at least once in a strike or demonstration, and less than 10% have been involved in more active practices (debates, meetings, volunteering or collaborating in an organization etc.). When it comes to getting informed, there are high numbers of young people (30%) reading about politics via printed press, around 40% use the internet and more than 50% followed TV news according to the survey in 2012. Whatever the channel, though, the amount of time dedicated to getting informed is low, with less than 15% dedicating more than one hour per week to this (INJUVE 2012; Jowell, R coord 2011).

However, “unconventional” political participation among young people seems to have increased over the last two decades, at the same time as interest in traditional politics has been decreasing (EU 2016, Castillo 2008). Petitions, public demonstrations and boycotts are part of this more loose and informal participation in politics. This youth discontent reached a peak in the 2011 15M demonstration, the consolidation of the indignados movement and the occupy mobilizations in several big cities. 14% of Spanish youth (15-29), participated in one way or another and 60% sympathised with their efforts. Besides, despite the fact that the 15M events reached most young people via TV (86%), a third exchanged information about the events in social networks. According to Anduiza et al. (2014), the mobilizations which started in 15M defied main tenets of the collective action paradigm. Their use of digital media, especially online social networks, enabled small organizations with little resources to mobilize thousands and thousands of individuals different from those active in traditional political institutions (younger, more educated, with no militant trajectory). Yet, the links between ICT and political participation are relevant for a minority of YP. While more than 80% of young people in Spain think that the internet is a key source for getting political information, only 25% are active in that way (EU 2016, INJUVE 2012). The main difference in the use of social networks between different groups of young people results from their socioeconomic level: low-income youth is clearly behind the others in the use of internet for whatever aim. There are other smaller differences in the use of social networks across other variables (gender, age, national origin).

There is also contradictory evidence concerning wider citizenship issues of youth which are linked to the capacities, interests and the exercising of social rights to face collective problems and collective ways of approaching them as members of a community. Starting with the sense of belonging in an increasingly globalized era, it may come as a surprise that the strongest sense of belonging expressed by the majority of Spanish youngsters is linked to local ascriptions (town, province, region). Much smaller numbers attach their main sense of belonging to their nation-state or to international alternatives (Europe, the world) (INJUVE 2012). This trend has not changed much in the last 20 years.

As for other issues of social proximity, according to INJUVE and CIS surveys (2004, 2008, 2012, 2012a), the willingness to share ordinary spaces with different kinds of vulnerable minorities (former offenders, AIDS sufferers, sexual and religion minorities, migrants) has recently decreased significantly. There has actually been an expansion of social distance between a large percentage of young people and these minorities. In

general, more than 50% of young people think you cannot trust unknown persons, a percentage that has increased since 2007, although it is not clear how this issue relates to the crisis and/or to higher real/perceived levels of insecurity (CIS 2010; INJUVE 2012).

In relation to participation in different kinds of associations, memberships of young people has been declining in the last 20 years and reached around 22% in 2012. Most of these associations have a sports or leisure nature and a very small minority deal with political issues, with most young Spaniards getting their first political socialization mainly within the family context (INJUVE 2012).

This goes together with an evolution of values that point towards the personal, individualistic and materialist topics: issues such as individual autonomy, family, friends, income and work rank particularly high in the youth agenda, whereas areas linked to social participation and collective involvements do not. The dominant topics in the value systems among young people in Spain (health, family, friendship, work, education and leisure) are assessed through a stress on the individual and private perspectives, which have priority over more communitarian or collective ones. Besides, ideas linked to loyalty, equal opportunities or solidarity, are often argued within a strong accent on personal freedom (EU 2016, INJUVE 2012, 2014). This value system is not that different from the one expressed by the overall Spanish population. Still, together with those trends, young people in Spain have notably increased their involvement in voluntary activities, choosing projects and services aimed at bringing benefits to their local communities (EU 2016).

Nonetheless, as said in the first section, evidence based on aggregate statistics can provide a misleading picture that overshadows the experiences we are looking for in our case-studies. This is even more true given the growing number of young people whose main experiences have little to do with formal employment, formal education or formal politics. They constitute a mix of different minorities with more or less visibility and are not that well represented in main official registers (with controversies around the reliability of statistics on issues such as NEETS or direct political participation). In this situation, it is difficult to know the quantitative relevance of social developments of a different qualitative nature compared to usual practices. Nor do we know much about the thresholds above which small quantitative dynamics become significant for substantial social change. As with the case of the 2011 15M demonstration and related mobilizations, the use of online social networks might challenge the main tenets of the collective action paradigm, but it is not clear up to which point. The rise of the new political parties converging around *Podemos* in recent elections and its support among young people was completely unforeseen by political opinion polls two or three years ago. The links between these developments, the 15M mobilisations and their future impact in terms of opening politics to new forms of participation also remain unclear.

Emancipation, employment, economic conditions.

When asked, a majority of young people in Spain above 20 years of age have stated their preference for living on their own. This majority has been increasing since 1984 (Comas 2015; Cisneros 2004; López Blasco & Bendit 2001). However, the economic difficulties many young Spaniards experience are reflected in their late emancipatory age from the family household, among the highest in the EU. Most people in Spain aged 18-24 live with their parents, almost 50% of those aged 25-29, and more than a third of those aged 25-34. This is above EU average (under 25%) and well above the Scandinavian countries, where less than 5% of young men and women aged 25-34 live in their family homes (EU 2016). Looking at the different kinds of households young people in Spain live in (couple; with one child; single etc.), the difficulties of youngsters living in southern Europe to afford autonomy become evident. For instance, the very low percentages of young Spaniards living in a flat of their own - below 5% - is revealing in comparison with the high figures of

single-young-person households in countries like Sweden (around 30%) (EU-SILC database Eurostat; Moreno Minguez 2012).

Some authors have explained how the emancipation age of young people across Europe depends on welfare regimes and different levels of state funded support for personal autonomy (Blossfeld & Mills 2010; Walther 2006; Esping Andersen 2002). Mediterranean familistic welfare states, with families complementing or substituting for weak state support, would encourage late emancipation ages. Some authors, though, have also linked late emancipation age to excessive families' influence on young people, an interpretation of family dependency as a control mechanism instead of, or at least as much as, a last form of support (Comas 2009, 2015; Gaviria 2007). In fact, according to these authors, the usual explanations around high youth unemployment as the main reason behind late emancipation could contribute to mask these other factors. This view stresses the prevalence of conservative values against early emancipation of youth in traditional family models as a main reason behind late emancipation, following a similar kind of logic to Livi Bacci's claim that family values in Italy are so prescriptive that they could actually have a negative impact on birth-rates, given the clear-cut narrow expectations about what the ideal family should be (Livi Bacci 2001, 2006).

A long historical perspective on late emancipation age in Spain relativizes the weight of unemployment as an explanatory factor. This is consistent with emancipation age descending in the 2000-2010 decade despite high levels of youth unemployment. At the same time, late emancipation age could in the past have been related to conservative views that, as Livi Bacci (2001, 2006) points out, severely penalised atypical family formation and sexuality out of wedlock. Nowadays, though, normative sexual and family formation pressures have surely lost importance compared to other factors in the support/control mix families offer their children. There are factors like postponing the entry into the labour market to maximise alleged social mobility chances that come with extra formative years (e.g. masters studies, longer periods to access privileged public sector positions, second degrees, different apprenticeships). These postponement strategies, which imitate upper classes' traditional trajectories, might have made sense for a while at the individual level - maybe they still do; but, when extended to the majority of the population, their advantages decrease and may have contributed to extended precariousness and dependency for young people overall.

In any case, regardless of the actual weight of several explanatory causes, it seems reasonable to argue that the mix of supporting/controlling families at the individual level and the lack of collective/welfare-estate support for young people at the social level feed each other and result in a kind of vicious circle, whereby the assumed family support has for a long time been taken for granted and has allowed for policies that disregard young people. Among those policies is a succession of labour market reforms that has increased the precariousness of young workers and the absence of a comprehensive policy for 18+ students emancipation through grants or favourable loans in the past forty years of democracy. This vicious circle has increased family dependency of most young people in one way or another; but and besides it had a serious regressive impact on inequality, prejudicing young people with unstructured, less supportive or poorer families.

Several authors (EU 2016; Walther 2009; Bauman 2007; Blossfeld & Mills 2010; Blossfeld 2005) studied how the economic trends during the former three decades (globalization, labour market deregulation, welfare cuts) and the recent crisis have severely affected the empowerment and capacities for autonomy of young people across countries. Since the 1990s until 2004 there was a slow but constant increase in the percentage of young people being financially independent in Spain, reaching 24% in 2004. Then, the crisis brought down that figure to 20% in 2012.

One of the most visible and idiosyncratic impacts of the economic crisis in Spain starting in 2007, is how it has disproportionately affected young people, worsening their already initially disadvantaged economic circumstances. So, Spanish youth unemployment (aged <25) has doubled from around 20% in the 2000-2007 years to above 40% since 2008, clearly deviating from the EU-27 average (21%) (Eurostat 2013), and exceeding 50% in 2012, only behind Greece in Europe. This reality is especially grave for long-term young unemployed (almost 50% of them). For young adults aged 25-29, unemployment rates are lower, but still clearly above 30% in 2014 (Eurostat 2015).

All this together made the growth in the number of Spanish young (16-29) unemployed the clear majority of all those who lost their jobs in Spain during the hard years of the crisis, between 2008 and 2012 (Rocha 2012). This is strongly related to young Spanish employees being mainly in temporary contracts (in 2012, after 4 years of diminishing rates, since the crisis specially finished temporary contracts, numbers were still pretty high: 61.4% of those aged 19-24 and 40.9% of those 25-29). The mix of high unemployment rates, high percentage of temporary contracts, informality and weak formal supervision of the labour market also means that the growth of part-time jobs among young people (18-29) (from 15% in 1999 to 36,5% in 2012) has mainly become associated to precarious employment and involuntary part-time (EU 2016; INJUVE 2012). A telling evidence of how precarious the employment reality of young people in Spain is, is the very small percentage of young unemployed getting unemployment benefits; fewer than 3% of them.

The result of these economic and employment hardships is that the average monthly net income for employed young people had come down from 966€ in 2008 to 843€ in 2012 (INJUVE 2012). As in all other EU countries, the percentage of young people at risk of poverty or social exclusion (AROPE rate as defined by Europe 2020 strategy) is higher than that of the total population, but for the Spanish case the crisis meant that for the the age group 16-25 this rate went from 22.7% in 2005 to 32.7% in 2011. Beyond the average percentages, young people belonging to more vulnerable groups suffer much more from difficult scenarios, and the cuts in main welfare policies are badly affecting vulnerable young people in Spain. For example, young people in Spain are the age collective with the highest probabilities of living in households where no one has a job (EU 2016).

The situation is particularly difficult for those with low levels of education. As to early school leaving, with a third of young Spaniards dropping out of school before getting secondary qualifications, only 61.7% of youth in Spain aged 20-24 years had finished secondary education by 2011. This is an improvement from 52% in 1992 but still almost 20 points below the EU-27 average (EU 2016; INJUVE 2014). Besides, formal alternatives to secondary school for early-leavers, like initial qualification programs "*los programas de Cualificación Inicial*", are far from fulfilling their targets due to high levels of absenteeism and traineeship failure (Fernandez Enguita et al. 2010).

Among early-leavers, a significant number do not participate in formal employment. According to a straightforward reading of statistics, in 2011 21.7% of young people in Spain aged 15-24 were not in employment, education or training (Eurofound 2012). They were labelled NEETS ("Not in Education, Employment, or Training"). The media contributed to stereotype and stigmatize these young people as passive. However, subsequent research found a different situation when assessing this category and revising the statistics criteria, with actual NEETS being below 2%, depending on how they are defined (Navarrete 2011; Planas-Lladó et al. 2014).

For early leavers who do find their place neither in formal employment nor formal education, other less prescriptive trajectories might be part of the solution. This can be through access to different mixes of intermediate structures such as family, ethnic communities, young and local associations (Eseverri Mayer 2015). These alternatives involve a wide understanding of human and social capital, following authors like

Coleman (1990), where human capital includes skills and capacities acquired through education or experience, but is not limited to formal academic education. Non-formal and informal learning and social and communication skills gain relevance. They allow adaptation to different cultural and social contexts. Here, human and social capital also involve the social relations that favour resources to enable actors to pursue their interests (Coleman 1990; Eseverri Mayer 2015).

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5. PORTUGAL (UCP)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Portuguese 20th century was deeply influenced by a conservative dictatorial regime that lasted from 1933 to 1974, leading to a significant underdevelopment in economy, welfare, education, health and social equality, when compared to other European countries achievements, especially after WWII. During this period, it was not possible to identify youth as a widespread social category, as the life of most Portuguese youngsters was defined by very short educational paths, early work and, for many, emigration.

It was only after the 1974 democratic revolution that the country started to reach European socioeconomic standards. In the years that preceded and succeeded the revolution, a minority of upper class university students was pivotal in promoting political change in the country, thus remaining in the Portuguese social memory as an exemplary generation in terms of youth social and political engagement. From the 1980s onwards, however, the massive expansion of schooling access and duration, as well as a broader contact with international consumer goods, information and cultural tendencies, quickly favoured the emergence of specific youthful sociabilities and lifestyles within a wider and diverse group of Portuguese youngsters. Nevertheless, during these decades, the Portuguese economy and society maintained structural fragilities that led to the rapid aging of the population and made youth transitions to adulthood growingly difficult and de-standardized. This tendency was particularly enhanced after the 2011-2014 economic crisis and subsequent austerity policies, favouring the rise of youth unemployment and the re-enactment of youth emigration.

The emergence of Portuguese youth as a social category originated different public representations of youth, particularly since the 1990s, many of which tended to stress its negative or vulnerable features. On the one hand, youth was pictured as overly focused on the present, social apathetic and engaging in excessive, threatening or risky behaviours related to body image, sexuality, drug use or delinquency. On the other hand, youth became represented as a socially and economically vulnerable group with no future perspectives which, therefore, needed to develop new competences and become more active in order to succeed in the globalized knowledge economy.

Youth social action, however, has been present in Portugal from the end of the dictatorship up until the present. Intergenerational solidarity within families and emigration are examples of youth individual actions. Youth collective actions became more visible since the 1980s, both at community level, through arts, non-formal education or volunteering, and through engagement on national or international social causes or movements. More recently, technological entrepreneurship has also become a growing form of youth social engagement.

NATIONAL CONTEXT

The 20th century in Portugal was deeply marked by the *Estado Novo* period, a right wing dictatorial regime that lasted from 1933 to 1974. During a period of remarkable political, social and cultural changes all around Europe and most of the world, especially after WWII, Portugal remained a marginal and stagnated country, characterized by a conservative, religious and familiaristic culture, a protectionist economy mostly based on subsistence agriculture and incipient industry, and a majority of rural illiterate population (Barreto 2002). During the last decades of this period a massive emigration flux, mainly composed of young

people that left towards more affluent countries like France, Switzerland, Germany, Luxemburg, Brazil, Venezuela and U.S.A., greatly affected the already impoverished Portuguese socioeconomic landscape (in 1966 120239 people emigrated). From 1961 to 1974, the Independence Wars in many of the Portuguese African colonies at that time (Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau) forced many young men to enrol in the military forces and, consequently, contributed to enhance emigration movements and the social and economic depression of the country (Arroteia 2001; Matos 2016).

After the democratic *Carnation Revolution* of April 25th 1974, however, great efforts were made to reduce poverty and social inequalities, enhance economic growth and rise the educational standards of the general population. Welfare policies have been implemented since the 1970s, alongside universal public health and educational systems, dramatically raising the population's general wellbeing and social mobility aspirations (Barreto 2002). The population of the country has strongly increased during the whole 20th century (from 5423132 in 1900 to 10358076 in 2015) (INE 2016; FFMS 2016), but this growth was particularly evident during the 1970s (15% of increase) (INE 2016) because of the intense reduction of the infant mortality rate and the growth of life expectancy. However, birth rates rapidly decreased after the 1980s and the Portuguese population is increasingly aging since the 1990s (in 1961 there were 27.5 people over 65 for each 100 youngsters under 15; in 2015 this number was 143.9) (FFMS 2016).

These changes were accompanied by improvements in the gender balance in education, in 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 the Portuguese society. For example, the careers in the public administration (e.g., diplomatic and judicial careers) have opened up to women's inclusion, several rights of men over women were abolished and women had finally the right to vote without any restriction. Nevertheless, significant gender inequalities in income, job opportunities and family responsibilities still remain, as evidenced, for example, in the differentiated access of men and women to top positions either in the private or in the public sector (Matos 2011).

After joining the European Economic Community (now European Union) in 1986, Portugal sought to modernize its public administration system and its communication, transport and, to a lesser degree, agricultural and industrial infrastructures. It also invested in massive construction projects, attracting, over the 1990s and early 2000s, a significant number of immigrants from African Portuguese speaking countries, Brazil and Easter European countries. This tendency, alongside new opportunities for geographical mobility within the EU and other countries around the world, turned the Portuguese population more culturally diverse and more aligned with wide global trends (Barreto 2002).

Throughout the last decades, however, both industrial and agricultural sectors remained underdeveloped and hardly competitive in global terms. The recent increase in educational qualifications, socioeconomic wellbeing and personal aspirations led to an expansion of a tertiary sector labour market which, nonetheless, has a limited capacity of generating employment and sustained social mobility opportunities. Consequently, despite these rapid and dramatic changes, Portugal reached the beginning of the 2010s with educational, social and economic performances still behind UE and OECD average standards (OECD 2010). This socioeconomic fragility made the country particularly vulnerable to the effects of the 2007-2008 global financial crisis that prompted a deep national economic and social crisis since 2010. Consequently, between 2011 and 2014 Portugal was under an international aid programme headed by the EU, IMF and ECB which imposed drastic austerity measures such as a massive tax increase and ample cutbacks in workers' rights, welfare, education and health. During this period, unemployment raised to levels never registered during the democratic period (in 1990 it was of 4.6% and in 2013 it was of 16.2%) (FFMS 2016), consequently leading to a new increase of emigration of young people, but now much more qualified and cosmopolitan

that in the past (Ferreira & Grassi 2012). Since 2014, however, unemployment rates are slightly decreasing (12.4% in 2015) (FFMS 2016) and financial and economic performances are progressively stabilizing.

Young people and social change

During most of *Estado Novo* period, youth could not be established as a defined and distinct social group in the Portuguese society. Widespread poverty, lack of access to formal education and poor economic specialization never allowed most Portuguese youngsters to experience the prolonged formative and experimentalism period between childhood and adulthood (Pappámikail 2011; Vieira 2011). In Portugal, until the 1960s most youngsters rapidly moved from primary school (that could last two to four years) to work in agriculture, small manufactures and stores or, in the specific case of girls, as housemaids (Vieira 2011). Over this period young people were integrated into the adult worlds as soon as possible, taking care of work and household tasks at early ages due to the subsistence difficulties faced by most of the families. Because of these widespread harsh life conditions, the wish to leave the country in search of better life conditions and economic opportunities grew. The political repression and persecution, the absence of freedom of expression, the conservative values and the forced enrolment of young men in the colonial wars in Africa, were also determinant factors that propelled a Portuguese youth “exodus” between the 1950s and 1970s – first young men, latter followed by women and children – mainly towards more industrialized and culturally opened Central European countries (Baganha 1994; Arroiteia 2001).

We can say that these were the major social features that defined youth in Portugal until the democratic turn in 1974, though some state efforts were being made since the 1960s towards the rise of educational access, especially in the major urban settings where high schools and universities were located (Vieira 2011). In these contexts, 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. After 1974, university students were again pivotal in social change, engaging in political parties, community level initiatives, cultural collectives and alphabetization campaigns. This was a period where pro-democratic political activism, alongside engaged literature, architecture, visual arts and music, were defining trends of a strongly involved young generation that would become a national symbolic reference in the decades to come (Pappámikail 2011).

Education

From the 1970s onwards, the Portuguese state education system was greatly extended and the period of compulsory education was progressively elevated (from 9 school years in 1975 to 12 school years in 2009) (Murtin & Viarengo 2011), making longer schooling trajectories accessible to a growing number of youngsters from all social backgrounds and regions of the country (Vieira 2011). The massive growth of the schooling rate in secondary education (6.1% in lower secondary education and 1.3% in upper secondary education in 1961, and 86.5% and 74.6% in 2015 respectively) (FFMS 2016) is a clear expression of the central role school acquired in Portuguese young people’s lives, consolidating the correlation between being young and being a student (Vieira 2011).

Enrolment in higher education also started to grow since the 1960s, mainly due to the incorporation of the female population in universities, whose presence until then was not significant (Vieira 1995). After the 1980s there was an “explosive” annual growth of students in higher education, also related to the increase in the volume of students enrolled in private and cooperative education (Vieira 1995). Consequently, the percentage of people over 20 years old that reached the graduation level rose greatly in the country (1.5%

of men and 0.4% of women in 1960, and 12.4% of men and 16.9% of women in 2011) (FFMS 2016), and in 2015 31.9% of 30 to 34 year olds had attained a higher education degree (European Commission 2016).

Although all these educational advancements were indeed remarkable, both in extension and in pace, this massive expansion brought new problems to all education levels (Martins 2009) due to the increasing diversification of student population (Almeida, Soares, Guisande, & Paisana 2007; Ransdell 2001) and the inability of the educational system to respond effectively to it. Therefore, school failure and dropping out before concluding secondary education, or even earlier, became persistent throughout the last decades, although continually decreasing (56.2% of boys and 44.2% of girls in 1992; 16.4% and 11% respectively in 2015) (FFMS 2016). Persistent school leaving seems to be mainly motivated by financial issues, lack of support to families, fail to disclosure alternatives and lack of motivation to attend school (Rocha, Ferreira, Moreira, & Gomes 2014). This tendency led a significant number of young Portuguese to unemployment (14.1% of 14 to 24 year olds Not in Education, Employment or Training in 2014) (Rowland, Ferreira, Vieira, & Pappámikail, 2014) or to enter the labour market with very low qualifications, thus being more likely to face precarious labour conditions (Azevedo & Fonseca 2006).

Life style

Along with the massive schooling of Portuguese youngsters, youth life styles changed significantly during the second half of the 20th century due to the continued rising in family's economic conditions and to the country's gradual openness to international cultural trends (cf. Pappámikail 2011). As in many other countries all around the world, youth became a social category by the means of the consumer market, although in Portugal this process was completely established only from the 1980s onwards. It became frequent that young people choose new spaces (e.g., bars, coffees and clubs) where they could drink, dance and hang out with friends away of the eyes of older people. In 1999, almost half of the youngsters in Portugal stated they would rather be with friends when they wanted to have fun. The role of music was central to this process, as international music (mostly American and British rock & roll bands), and also Portuguese bands since the 1980s, became an essential element of youth identities and sociability (Pappámikail 2011).

At the same time, the increasing contact with international fashion trends stimulated the adoption of youthful dress codes (like jeans and leather jackets in the 1980s and 1990s and multiple dress styles onwards) that, when not an explicit image of rebellion, became at least a clear way of differentiating youth from both childhood and adulthood (Pappámikail 2011). The growing access to international films and the expansion of television broadcast at national scale (with national productions boosting since the 1990s) were similarly relevant to the ongoing process of building youth as a social category, as these media helped to explore reality from the point of view of young people and favour collective identification around shared "youthful" experiences. Furthermore, the growing access and use of information technologies and social media, particularly intense from the late 1990s onwards, contributed decisively to shape youth interactions and sociability in an increasingly different way from prior generations. Finally, the rising opportunities to travel that became available since the 1980s, both in the country and abroad, (via rail or plane travelling, international internships, student exchanges or volunteering) made geographical mobility another important feature of a youthful life style oriented towards novelty, pleasure and personal fulfilment (Pappámikail 2011).

Transitions to adulthood

All these trends featured new expressive forms of individualism (Pappámikail 2011) that could also be identified in young people's changing patterns regarding intimate and family relations. In Portugal marriage and parenthood remain important moments of transition towards adulthood, but during the last decades these key events were significantly postponed in young people's biographies (Aboim 2011). While in 1980 the average age of the first marriage was 25.4 for men and 23.3 for women, in 2015 those were 32.5 and 31.0 respectively (FFMS 2016). Similarly, the average age of Portuguese women at the birth of the first child was 23.6 in 1980 and 30.2 in 2015 (FFMS 2016). These tendencies reveal a changing pattern of intimate relationships, as formal marriage, although still relevant, is progressively being replaced by informal conjugal modalities and cohabitation, and parenthood is becoming detached from it (in 1980 only 9.8% of births occurred out of wedlock; in 2015 these were 50.7%, one of the highest rates in Europe) (FFMS 2016).

During this period, an increasing postponement of youth residential independence was also observed. In 2001 the proportion of young adults between 18 and 34 that lived in the parents' house was 45.7%; in 2011 it raised to 47.0% (Nunes 2014). Differently from Northern and Central European countries where young people tend to leave the parents' house in their early twenties, in Portugal this tends to happen, in average, almost at the age of 30 and frequently associated with some form of conjugality (Aboim 2011). This aspect reveals not only the persistence of a familiaristic normativity associated with adulthood (Ferreira & Nunes 2010), but most significantly, the growing dependency of Portuguese youth on their parents and older generations (Pappámikail 2011; Cairns 2010, 2011). In fact, in 2007 two thirds of the Portuguese young adults stated that the main reason for living with their parents was the lack of economic resources (Eurostat 2007). And this tendency became even more evident after 2010, in the context of a major economic crisis (Alves, Cantante, Baptista, & Carmo 2011; Nico 2014).

The remarkable rise of educational opportunities and the consequent growth of a highly qualified work force, together with the increase of the tertiary sector in national economy and its exposure to global markets' deregulation favoured increasingly unstructured, individualized and flexible modalities of work (e.g., short term or part time contracts, informal or illegal work, internships and scholarships) and the expressive rise of unemployment, all these with greater impacts among youth (Alves et al. 2011). In 2015, the Portuguese youth unemployment rate was 32.0%, but in 2013 it reached 38.1% (FFMS 2016). Consequently, in recent decades Portuguese young people's work life became generally defined by precarity, low salaries (FFMS 2016) and uncertainty, in contrast with the predictability and stability that characterized the work experiences and the life expectations of the previous generation (Alves et al. 2011; Nico 2014). This economic vulnerability became the greatest challenge most present Portuguese youths must face. Consequently, young people's autonomies were affected, thus making precarity a long-term way of life to most youngsters (Alves et al. 2011).

When comparing different "transition regimes" to adulthood between European countries, Portugal tends to be placed in the most disadvantaged cluster, the "sub-protective" regime, which is defined by non-selective schools, low standards and coverage in training, welfare mainly based on the family, and a closed and informal employment regime (Walther 2006). Though this classification was made before the 2010-2014 economic crisis, several authors consider it even more accurate nowadays, as labour market became increasingly unregulated, youth unemployment grew expressively and youth supporting public policies in education, housing and employment decrease during this period (Ferreira 2011a; Nico 2014).

The described transformations raised important intergenerational challenges to Portuguese society. In a context of generalised work instability and welfare withdraw, older generations became fundamental, at a family and household level, to youth material subsistence and to sustain possible transitions to adulthood, thus reinforcing intergenerational dependencies and solidarity that can also strengthen relationships based

on affection and mutual respect (Pappámikail 2011; Lima 2016). However, the relation between younger and older generations in Portugal is also characterized by tension or even conflict. The recent demographic turn towards an ageing society, alongside job shortage and low salaries pose serious challenges to national Welfare sustainability and bring intergenerational competition to the labour market and to debates about public spending. Nevertheless, in 2007 the Portuguese state spent 17 times more in old age pensions than in support to families, employment, housing and social assistance, which means that young people only benefit of a residual part of the national welfare expenses (Mendes 2012).

Mental health and risk

Until the middle of the 20th century, health assistance in Portugal was given only to indigents and sick people that asked for help to the Catholic Church. In the second half of the same century the assistance was spread to the general population throughout mutualistic associations though a more organized health assistance was achieved only in the last quarter of the 20th century (Rodrigues, Samagaio, Ferreira, Mendes & Januário 1999). Noteworthy is the rise of psychological intervention in the country in the 1970s, which contributed to an increment in the prevention of physical and mental health, including the prevention of alcohol and drug abuse and risky sexual behaviours (Gaspar de Matos 2008). However, during this long period the focus on young people at risk and their mental health problems and needs was never fully met.

In general, studies on mental health in young people in Portugal have revealed worrying conclusions. A study that aimed to survey mental health problems in 3235 youth from 13 to 15 years-old attending regular schools in Portugal, found high levels of emotional and behavioural problems. It also revealed that girls present more emotional problems and prosocial behaviours, while boys present more behaviour problems and problems in social relations (Gaspar de Matos et al., 2012).

Regarding the mental health of young people in the justice and the protection systems, some worrying data have been highlighted. According to a recent report, 21% of the 150 youths aged 14 to 20 years-old that were placed in the national educational centres of the youth justice system in the last trimester of 2015 were diagnosed with a mental disorder. Besides the diagnoses, many youths were referred to mental health services due to other problems; 62.67% were receiving psychological treatment, 29.33% were having psychiatric treatment, 25.33% were receiving both, and 32.67% were taking medication. Among children and youngsters in the protection system, especially those who are in alternative care, official numbers are also of concern. In fact, recent data showed that 48% of them presented behavioral problems, 15.7% suffered from mental weakness or disability, 3.1% had physical disability, 4.9% suffered from chronic physical illness and 2.5% were reported as having drug addiction. Moreover, around 58.5% had psychiatric or psychological intervention and 23.4% was taking medication (Mecanismo Nacional de Prevenção 2016).

There has been a recent effort to include specific recommendations on the mental health of at-risk youth in public health policies. However, some gaps remain in the response to this type of problems in young people who are under both the justice and the protection systems (cf. Mecanismo Nacional de Prevenção 2016).

In Portugal, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC; UN 1989) was ratified by the State in 1990. This led to a broader evaluation and deep critical reflection on the efficacy and limits of the children and youth justice welfare model, which was in force since 1911 with the publication of *The Childhood Protection Act* (Lei de Protecção à Infância, LPI, Decree-Law of 27th of May 1911). Children under the age of 16 years who have committed offences were removed from the scope of criminal law and become subject to a specialized jurisdiction. Since 1911, there has never been a juvenile criminal law in the country, which differentiates the Portuguese justice system from most of the other EU countries. The system did not undergo significant changes until the end of the 20th century. As a result of the process of reform,

significant changes were made and international standards have been integrated into the legal framework. Current children and youth protection and juvenile justice laws integrate the tools and procedures for exercising formal social control, framed by the definition of criteria and socially accepted norms consecrated by law, embodying the guarantee to protect human rights established, and the State can only intervene in indispensable cases (Carvalho 2014). The new laws approved in 1999 – *the Promotion and Protection Law for Children and Young in Danger* (LPCJP)¹⁷, and the *Youth Justice Act* (LTE)¹⁸, came into force on the 1st of January 2001, and both have undergone changes in 2015. The essential idea was to distinguish the situation of children and youth in danger, that legitimizes a State's intervention of protection (LPCJP), from the needs and situation of the children, between 12 and 16 years old, who commit an offence qualified by the penal law as crime and, as a result, justify another kind of intervention, an educational one (LTE). The set of educational measures established by the LTE, ranging from admonition to custody in an educational centre, aims at the offender's socialization and rehabilitation, "based on the core principle of education in the law" (Rodrigues & Fonseca 2010:1035).

These two laws represent a great change in the traditional justice practice in the country, and became the fundamental pillars of the Children and Youth Justice Reform. The terms 'child' and 'youth' arise in the two new approved legal diplomas representing a new approach in the field of Law. Previously, the term 'minor' was repeatedly used in the legislation and in the justice system, indiscriminately applicable to individuals aged up to 18 years.

Despite following the concept of child defined by the CRC considering the age of 18 years to reach civil majority in Portugal, youth who commit offences at the age of 16 fall under the general penal law and are regarded and judged as adult in common adult courts (Carvalho 2016). There is a Special Penal Regime for Young Adults (Portuguese Law 401/82 from 23 September) which foresees alternative measures and specific detention conditions for youths aged 16 to 20. There has been a controversial debate around the contradiction between the prevailing distinction between the civil majority and the penal majority and in 2010 the Permanent Observatory on Portuguese Justice recommended to move the age of penal responsibility from 16 to 18 years old, in order to meet international standards and avoid the stay of youths aged 16 and 17 in adult prisons. Nevertheless, this change seems far from being accomplished (Matos 2015).

Representations of youth

It was just from the 1960s onwards, and particularly after the 1980s, that a growing number of Portuguese boys and girls from all social backgrounds could enjoy exclusive times and spaces solely dedicated to learning, conviviality and leisure. However, formal or informal work continued to be an important part of many youngsters' lives, even during their student years or as they drop out of school (cf. Almeida & Vieira 2008). This historical process favoured the rapid constitution of a youthful identity focused both on preparing the future and on enjoying the present (Pais 2001; Pappámikail 2011). Furthermore, the consolidation of the social category of youth in Portugal was also the result of diverse national and international scientific developments in medicine, psychology and educational sciences that growingly stressed the specificity of childhood and adolescence experiences and development. In parallel, there were important national and international developments in policy and law that defined children and youths as subjects of rights, protection and participation.

¹⁷ Law N.º 142/2015 of 8th of September, which constitutes the second amendment to Law No. 147/99, 1st of September.

¹⁸ Law N.º 4/2015 of 15th of January, which constitutes the first amendment to Law n.º 166/99 of 14th September.

This rapid emergence and recognition of youth as a distinct social category naturally raised diverse social representations within the Portuguese society, which in turn led to multiple reactions and initiatives directed to young people. A relevant example at institutional level was the creation, in 1987, of the State Secretary for Youth (now Youth and Sports), responsible for the coordination of national youth policies. Since then these policies focused on two main levels: support in the transition from education to employment; and leisure, consumption and mobility opportunities (Pappámikail 2011).

At the level of public opinion, frequently enhanced by media and political discourses, the emergence of youth in Portugal gave rise to diverse and often contradictory representations wavering between hopes and fears about the future and concerns about the present. This was particularly manifest since the 1990s and became epitomized by the widespread duality between “Geração Rasca” and “Geração à Rasca”, a semantic play with similar words but with very different meanings (“vulgar generation” and “generation in distress”, respectively).

“Geração Rasca” – The vulgar generation

“Geração Rasca”, an expression that means coarse or vulgar generation, was first used by the editor of a national newspaper in 1994 referring to a series of nationwide and highly mediatized students’ demonstrations against changes in educational policy. In those public demonstrations, where the youngsters were contesting new evaluation procedures in upper secondary education and new restrictions to access higher education, some used offensive language and symbols directed to the minister of education. The expression “geração rasca” became widely used in the public discourse as an epitome for a new generation that was pictured as overprotected, ill-behaved, passive and ungrateful (Ribeiro, n.d.), detached from the ethical and citizenship ideals preconized by the previous generation, thus becoming a danger to the social and moral order (Pappámikail 2011).

It is interesting to notice that those negative representations were developed from the moral comparison between 1990s’ Portuguese youth generation and the memory of the politically engaged youth generation of the 1970s. Nevertheless, it is important to recall that the 1970s’ young “revolutionaries” were no more than a minority of privileged university students at that time, while the 1990s’ young generation was composed by a much wider and diverse group of young people living in a very different social, cultural and economic context (cf. Pappámikail 2011).

“Geração à Rasca” - Generation in distress

The expression “Geração à Rasca” (meaning generation in distress) was used in the media as an immediate response to the expression “Geração Rasca”, calling attention to the problems that many young people were experiencing in the access to education and to the labour market (unemployment and job precarity), even among the most qualified (Pappámikail 2011). The expression gained momentum again in the 2011-2013 crisis, representing a new young generation in distress. Several media, public demonstrations and cultural interventions used this expression precisely to stress the generalized precarity, lack of hope and uncertain futures of a highly qualified generation as the most dramatic consequences of the major social and economic crisis Portugal faced after the democratic revolution of 1974 (Nico 2014).

The two expressions used to describe the Portuguese youth since 1994 – “Geração Rasca” and “Geração à Rasca” – symbolize two different but complementary ways in which young people tend to be represented, whether in Portugal or elsewhere. On the one hand, a representation of a decadent youth overly focused on the present and whose behaviour is typically excessive, deviant and risky. On the other hand, the

discourse about a socially and economically vulnerable youth with no future perspectives which, therefore, needs to engage more in society.

Body image, sexuality, drugs' use and delinquency

One traditional focus of public concerns about youth is the way by which the “youthful” body is socially produced and used. In Portugal, as in many other countries, the cultural norms by which the youngsters conceive and construct their body image changed significantly and, over the last decades, the Portuguese youth developed a significant concern about the body image (Ferreira 2011b). In 2000 almost 20% of youths referred to be unsatisfied with their own body (Ferreira 2003), and in 2002 50% of youths older than 16 years stated that they would like to change something in their body image (Gaspar de Matos 2003).

At the same time, and in an intimate association with body image and use, Portuguese young people changed their customs and moral constraints regarding sexuality, specifically about the age of the first intercourse and the existence of multiple sexual partners, rising concerns about sexual transmitted diseases (Ferreira 2011b, 2011c). By the end of the 1980s a national survey revealed that youths attributed higher importance to body image and to sex, when compared to older generations (Conde 1989). One decade later, in a representative study on the Portuguese youth, similar results were reported, corroborating the idea of the overvaluation of the body (Ferreira 1998).

Globally, the growing concerns about the youthful body were also related to behaviours linked to the physical and social risks youths could incur (Ferreira 2011c). As in other countries, youths were associated with addiction and transgression of legal limits (Pappámikail 2011).

Similarly to what happened across Europe, drugs' use in Portugal has been changing throughout the years. In the 1980s there was a clear dichotomy between hard and mild drugs, the use of heroin increased and there was an association between youth, crime and urban insecurity. By the end of the 1990s the use of heroin started to decrease and many wondered if it was disappearing from the relegated urban areas. It has been later evidenced that even though heroin did not disappear in recent years young people started to make greater use of other types of drugs, such as cocaine and synthetic drugs, in different contexts (Carvalho 2007; Trigueiros & Carvalho 2010; Pappámikail 2011).

Nowadays, Portugal presents one of the lowest rates of drugs' use (1.2%) in Europe. However, it is important to highlight that this low prevalence might be the result of the adoption of a drug use decriminalization policy since the 1990s, thus becoming an international model in this domain. Despite this, in the last decades drugs' use has been associated with youngsters, because its public visibility occurred in the period of emergence of youth as a social category. Therefore, the “problem of drugs” was synonymous of “youth problem” for several years (Fernandes 2009). Moreover, despite the confirmation that not only youngsters use drugs, this became a social image associated to this developmental stage (Carvalho 2007).

In fact, the idea of rebellion and attraction for new experiences and risk is one of the most distinctive images of youth (Lerner et al. 2010), and many researches have studied the association between behaviour problems and drugs' use in youngsters. In Portugal, Fonseca (2013) found a prevalence of co-occurrence of 8% in adolescents aged 14 to 15 and 11% in those aged 17 to 18. Despite the social idea that drugs use is associated with deviant behaviours, the same study reported that drugs use is a weak predictor of deviant behaviour in youths aged 17 to 18. Accordingly, Trigueiros and Carvalho (2010) found that only very few young drug users present criminal behaviour, and when they do, it consists of minor offenses.

Along with the growing urbanization in Portugal over the last decades, since the 1990s the insecurity felt by those who live in the city increased significantly (Fernandes 2008). This phenomenon can be partly

explained by the expansion of social housing neighbourhoods and their association with drug trafficking, as well as with the growing visibility of social actors that prompted insecurity rumours (e.g., car ushers, prostitutes, junkies, beggars) (Carvalho 2013). Moreover, the growing of urban juvenile marginal and threatening subcultures also contributed to the association between youth and social disorder (cf. Fernandes & Pinto 2008). Despite the lack of evidence from the official numbers, which revealed variations in juvenile delinquency until 2008 and a decrease since then, in 2009, according to the European Social Survey 2008-2009, in a representative sample, 50% of the respondents in Portugal reported to be afraid of the crimes committed by young people (Marques 2011).

Uncertain features and the urge to individual agency

Particularly after the 2000s, the growing socioeconomic difficulties faced by the Portuguese young people in the transition to adulthood became widely recognized and discussed in the media, the social sciences and the political discourses. However, many political and institutional responses to such difficulties tended to focus less their socioeconomic structural causes and more the youths supposed apathy and lack of initiative (Alves 2007). This was closely linked to the idea that young people's educational and work difficulties or failures were greatly explained by personal (or familiar) inabilities or social disengagement, thus reinforcing a logic of "privatization" of social problems (Alves 2007).

Another related representation about the Portuguese youth has been the lack of concern about public life, namely on political and social issues. In fact, in the political domain, studies on Portuguese youths reveal that they tend to reject activities that they perceive as *political*, being this a domain that they don't understand and from which they tend to alienate (Ribeiro & Menezes 2002). Many other forms and contexts of youth civic participation have emerged over the last decades (cf. next section) (Ribeiro et al. 2015; Menezes 2012; Magalhães & Moral 2008). However, public, institutional and sometimes young people's discourses tend to de-politicize such practices in favour of a more individualized perspective that emphasises its potential for personal development, employability and social cohesion (Walther 2007).

All these tendencies, which followed international policy trends in economy, welfare and education, resulted on a moral and institutional emphasis on "youth agency" as the main way of solving youth problems (Nico 2014). Therefore, the notions of competence, employability and entrepreneurship became the quintessential traits Portuguese young people should strive to acquire if they want to succeed in the globalized knowledge economy (Azevedo & Fonseca 2006; Alves 2007; Fernandes 2012).

Paradoxically, the idea that Portugal had an excessive number of graduated people became widespread during the last decades, although national higher education completion rates have always remained lower than EU average (in 2015, 31.8% of young adults aged 30 to 34, comparing to 38.7% in the EU) (EC 2016). Nevertheless, taken together with the focus on youth agency, this representation made its way up to the political level and favoured several austerity policies after the 2010 crisis that affected youth particularly. Some examples are the cutbacks in education and scientific investigation public budgets, the reduction of labour rights and social benefits for independent, part-time or term contract workers, many of them youths; or the government's appeal to young unemployed emigration in order to find better job opportunities (Nico 2014).

Youth actions and innovation

Although the social image of the Portuguese youth since the 1980s tended to stress its apathy, hedonism and social detachment, the concrete actions that young people have undertaken during this period show a different perspective. At a personal level, the development of new intergenerational caring relationships

and material interdependencies within families (part-time jobs, caring for children or elderlies, carrying out housework) are immediate and concrete examples of youth (re)actions to the increasing vulnerability in education and work and to the progressive erosion of social rights and welfare benefits (Lima 2016).

In many cases, youth (re)action in face of vulnerability also took the form of emigration projects. Particularly in late 2000s and early 2010s, a significant number of young people (more than 6000 aged 15 to 24 by 2010), both boys and girls and with low and high qualifications, moved away from Portugal to find better job conditions and opportunities in other countries (Ferreira & Grassi 2012). In 2011 this tendency made of Portugal, among countries with more than 1 million inhabitants, the one with the 12th greater emigration rate in the world (20,8%), and the first in the EU (Pires 2015).

Regarding the collective social involvement of young people, their movements only started to gain ground and visibility after the end of *Estado Novo* (Hespanha et al. 2000). Although formal and conventional forms of political participation (e.g., discussing politics, voting in the elections, being a member of a political party), seem to be less important to the Portuguese adolescents, they show a clear interest in the social dimensions of citizenship, such as helping other people, being a good parent, or being a good worker (Ribeiro & Menezes 2002). Nevertheless, after the 2000s, some youth collective actions against precarity and austerity (e.g. <http://www.precarios.net/>) revealed the Portuguese youth potential for politically (though non-party) engagement, being the massive intergenerational public demonstrations against austerity, in 2011 and 2012, clear examples of this (Nico 2014; Soeiro 2014; see also <http://councilforeuropeanstudies.org/critcom/anti-austerity-protests-in-portugal/> or <http://www.greeneuropeanjournal.eu/portugal-the-crisis-and-new-actors-against-austerity/>).

Many public and private institutional initiatives have been developed since the 1980s focusing on social, economic, territorial, or educational vulnerable young people, mostly aiming to promote the development of skills that would allow youngsters to successfully integrate the labour market. From the expansion of vocational training opportunities in the 1980s and 1990s to more recent employability and entrepreneurial courses and support structures (e.g. <https://gulbenkian.pt/iniciativas/cidadania-ativa1/projetos-apoiados/projetos-dominio-atuacao-d/>), young people have been participating greatly in diverse training initiatives, although with variable and sometimes unclear results.

During the same period, other programmes have been developed with a general focus on youth empowerment and social inclusion. These “youth work” programmes (though in Portugal this has only been recognised as a specific field of work in 2015), typically developed at community level in urban settings, tended to adopt a more participatory methodology that values young people’s own skills and interests (e.g., music, sports, traveling, social issues) and reinforces the positive role they can have in the community (e.g., <http://www.programaescolhas.pt/>) (Martinho, Marcos, Parente, Cruz, & Amador 2014). Some of these initiatives highlighted and supported specific cultural expressions under development in Portuguese cities since the 1990s, like rap music, Brazilian funk, graffiti and hip-hop dance, thus favouring the construction of positive identities of often stigmatized and undervalued youth groups and territories (Fradique 2003; Raposo 2010).

During the last decades most Portuguese youngsters also became more aware of social and global challenges. Even if youth social engagement tended to assume less structured and more individualized forms, there has been evidence of growing youth involvement in social and cultural initiatives and causes (Pappámikail 2011), like gender equality (e.g. <http://redejovensigualdade.org.pt/blog/quem-somos/sobrenos/>), fight against discrimination (e.g. <http://www.odionao.com.pt/>), environmental campaigning (e.g. <http://jra.abae.pt/project/campanha-litter-less-2017/>) or fostering organic and local economy (<https://movingcause.org/>), as well as in global causes like poverty reduction, fair trade or education for all.

Volunteering has become a central way through which youths are taking a more active role in their community or even around the world, highlighting the initiative spirit and solidarity in local communities (e.g. <http://www.udip.porto.ucp.pt/pt/caso?msite=3>) or abroad (e.g. <http://gasafricaporto.page.tl/P%E1gina-Inicial.htm>). When volunteering is done in Portugal, youngsters show preference to dedicate time in firefighting corporations or in youth associations (Proact 2012). At international level, a growing number of youth organizations has likewise become engaged in intercultural, global citizenship and human rights training and volunteering programs, most of the times with the support of international agencies like the United Nations, the Council of Europe or the European Commission's Erasmus+ programme (formerly Youth in Action programme).

This growing engagement in social initiatives at both national and international levels led Portuguese youths to value such experiences not only for their expected impact on social change, but also as learning opportunities that could enhance the personal development of all participants. Consequently, many Portuguese youth organizations, like many European counterparts, have been pushing towards the recognition of Non-Formal Education as a rich and diverse learning field within youth social action, complementary to formal education (e.g., <http://www.cnj.pt/beta/index.php/o-que-fazemos/educacao-formal-e-nao-formal>). At the educational level, a parallel movement can be identified in the growing involvement of Portuguese young adults in the creation of alternative schooling initiatives, evidencing a desirable shift towards more free, active and cooperative learning experiences (<http://www.educacaolivres.pt/mel/>).

The recent developments in technology mediated communications and social networks have had a major impact in youth sociability and social participation (Simões & Campos 2016). If in 2000 6664951 mobile phones were being used in Portugal, in 2014 this number had raised to 18973597 (almost more 8 million than the national population). In 2002 53.4% of high school students had a computer with internet connection at home, and that rate increased to 87.8% in 2014 and nowadays almost 100% of young people use computer (FFMS 2016). On the other hand, technological innovation has also become an economically attractive field for youth entrepreneurial engagement. The number of technological start-up enterprises, led by Portuguese youths, has increased greatly in the last decade, as well as many public and private support programmes and expertise services directed to young technological entrepreneurs (e.g. <https://startups.ativarportugal.pt/>). A good example of this tendency was the recent worldwide event "Web Summit" (<https://websummit.net/>) that took place in Lisbon in November 2016. This summit attracted many young Portuguese participants that, despite the excessive cost of tickets, offered to volunteer in the event in search for an opportunity in the business world of technology.

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6. SLOVAKIA (UMB)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Slovakia was part of the Hungarian Monarchy for almost one thousand years. In 1918 it became part of the democratic Czechoslovak Republic, which lasted until 1938. As a result of the Yalta conference, Czechoslovakia fell under the influence of the Soviet Union and after the communist coup in 1948 it became part of the communist block. The Velvet Revolution of November 1989 brought independence to Czechoslovakia. Students, mainly those from universities, became the key promoters of social change, with the assistance of artists and representatives of civil movements and initiatives. The further turbulent developments resulted in the non-violent split of Czechoslovakia, based on political negotiations (not a referendum) in 1993. The break-up of Czechoslovakia and three terms of Vladimír Mečiar as Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic (1992-1998) brought difficult times for civil society and its organizations. Before parliamentary elections in 1998 more and more people were aware of the need to change the government, and therefore extensive pre-election campaigns were launched, with significant participation of young people. Therefore the 1998 parliamentary elections were marked by extremely high voter participation (the turnout was 84.24%) and the participation of young people and first-time voters was also exceptional. Young generation took these elections as a referendum on political future of the Slovak Republic. The 1998 elections created the image of progressive and pro-European young generation in Slovakia whose activity can push the whole society towards „Euroepan values“. More recently, as some extremist subjects started to apply sophisticated strategies and received enough votes for obtaining their position in the National Parliament, associations promoting human rights, defending democracy and fighting against intolerance and xenophobia started to originate and be involved in some activities. Therefore one of our case studies will focus on such an association, the civic platform Not In Our Town (NIOT) in Banská Bystrica which started to develop its educational and cultural activities in 2013 when Marián Kotleba, the leader of the ultra-right extremist People's Party – Our Slovakia became the Head of Banská Bystrica's Self-Governing Region.

Despite the existence of a large number of different youth organizations, there is a low interest of young people to join the organizations. Growth of individualism, the greater potential within the professional world, new lifestyles, more flexible notions of identity – all these factors lead towards new social forms and necessity for acceptance of uncertainties, conflicts, innovations and change. One of the possible answers of young people is a move towards cosmopolitan citizenship (very often manifested by leaving the country), another possible answer is an occurrence of countermovements directed against rapid change (a support for radicalism). There are generally two sources of problems that affect decision-making of young Slovaks when they think about leaving the country in order to study or work abroad. First, it is the situation on the labour market. According to recent Flash Eurobarometer survey of young Europeans, 28% of young Slovaks (in comparison with 16% of youth from EU28) is worried that they will have to move in order to find a job. These opinions reflect the actual situation with unemployment in the Slovak Republic. Youth unemployment is high, it reaches 30%, while the overall unemployment rate is less than half. According to the Ministry of Education, more than 70% of young people in Slovakia would prefer life in a foreign country. Second, young people view the education system in Slovakia as a problem. As the survey Structured dialogue 2016 says, young Slovaks are most disappointed with the state of education. Based on previous findings it will not be surprising that migration of young people is nowadays much more frequent phenomenon in Slovakia than it was in the past. Since the entry to the European Union in 2004 outflows of

migrants from Slovakia have been increasing. It is estimated that in 2013 150,000 Slovaks worked outside of Slovakia, that is 7.50% of all Slovak labour force. Almost half of them (47%) are young people aged 15-34 years. Besides labour migration a high proportion of the university students studying abroad is a very specific feature of recent Slovak history. An experience with short-term or long-term stay abroad is in some sectors even considered as a standard and increases chances of young people on the labour market. However, they are unwilling to come back because they do not believe that they can use their skills and knowledge at the Slovak labour market, they will be paid appropriately or they find a job at all. In this way Slovakia is losing its highly educated, skillful and experienced elite.

NATIONAL CONTEXT

Slovakia was part of the Hungarian Monarchy for almost one thousand years. In 1918 it became part of the democratic Czechoslovak Republic, which lasted until 1938. The independent „Slovak state“ of the WW2 period was replaced by the re-established Czechoslovakia (Czechoslovak Republic) in 1945. As a result of the Yalta conference, Czechoslovakia fell under the influence of the Soviet Union and after the communist coup in 1948 it became part of the communist block. The coup, called the February revolution or Victorious February 1948 by the Communist Party, started a period of the totalitarian communist regime. The change was not accepted by all. The students in Prague openly demonstrated against the communists and showed their support to president Beneš. Their resistance was suppressed and they were cruelly beaten up. The new regime liquidated all non-communist political parties, interest groups and free unions. Any opponents of the regime were imprisoned, taken to labour camps or became victims of show trials. The change was accompanied by confiscation and radical nationalisation of private productive properties. The communist regime in Czechoslovakia was characterised by the dictatorship of the proletariat, absence of free elections, restraint of the freedom of speech, travel abroad, religion, or any public assembly.

The 1960s brought a relaxation of the totalitarian regime and attempts within the communist party and its non-members to abolish the system or to reform it. This phase was known as „**socialism with human face**“ and it resulted in the Prague Spring in August 1968. Students were the key actors in the actions that preceded the Prague Spring: anti-communist demonstrations of students in autumn 1967 were severely suppressed (so called Strahov events). It was mainly university students and young graduates that contributed to democratisation of the communist regime in the 1960s, with Alexander Dubček as a leader of the pro-reforming communist movement. This democratisation process within the communist regime was violently disrupted by the military invasion of the Warsaw Pact armies (Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Hungary, East Germany and Poland) during the night of the 21 August 1968. It was again mainly young people and students who protested against the „Moscow“ invasion – mostly by massive demonstrations that included suicidal attempts and deaths.

During or soon after the military invasion by the Soviet Army and its allies, thousands of people (mainly highly qualified people) left the country (about 200,000 citizens) as political refugees. The years after the invasion 1968 (called „a botherly help“ by the Soviet Union) were characterised by a cruel „normalisation“ process: people involved in any dissent/ opposition were punished and removed from any public position. The ban on freedom of speech, assembly or movement was strictly enforced. The „normalisation period“, introduced by the communists, lasted for almost two decades and had a fatal impact on further political, economic and socio-cultural developments in Czechoslovakia.

The end of 41 years of communist dictatorship in Czechoslovakia was connected with the events in neighbouring countries, but it showed specific features. On the International Students' Day on the

November 17 in 1989, riot police violently suppressed a student demonstration in Prague. This event sparked a series of student strikes and mass demonstrations in Czech and Slovak cities from November 18 to late December. It was mainly students, artists and former dissidents who showed their courage to protest against the communist regime and achieved the resignation of the Presidium of the Communist Party in late November. On December 10, President Gustáv Husák appointed the first non-communist government in Czechoslovakia since 1948, and then resigned.

The Velvet Revolution of November 1989 (the name given to non-violent transition of power in Czechoslovakia) brought independence to Czechoslovakia. On December 28, 1989, Alexander Dubček (the key figure from the Prague Spring in 1968) was elected the Speaker of the Federal Parliament, and on December 29, 1989, Václav Havel was elected the President of Czechoslovakia. The first free parliamentary elections took place in June 1990. The further turbulent developments resulted in the non-violent split of Czechoslovakia, based on political negotiations (not a referendum) in 1993. Slovakia became the Member State of NATO and of the European Union in 2004.

Young people and social change

During the First Czechoslovak Republic (1918-1938) there existed many youth associations in various areas such as education, sport, culture, politics, religion etc., which were differentiated mostly on the basis of age, social position, etc. Most of them were abolished and forcibly dissolved during the existence of so-called First Slovak Republic (1939-45) which was, in fact, the puppet regime of Nazi Germany. Youth had to be compulsorily associated in the „Hlinka Youth“ organization which was a part of „Hlinka Guard“ (a paramilitary organization attached to the Hlinka's party and safeguarding internal security). They were officially allowed some religious and student organizations.

After World War II youth began to be organized in the Association of Slovak Youth. It was a single, nationwide and non-partisan organization, which united young people regardless of their political and religious beliefs and values. Immediately after the war young people were involved in the reconstruction and development of the devastated country. They worked on the construction of railways, dams, villages, etc. (in projects such as Track of Youth, Village of Youth, Track of Friendship, Dam of Youth). The future development of the youth movement was considerably influenced by the communist coup in February 1948. After these events strict decisions on how to organize young people were adopted. Youth organizations and associations, including those at the university level, gradually disappeared, or were dissolved. The interest of the new regime was to unite all young people into a single, national, centrally managed organization of youth and children which would be chaired by the Communist Party.

In 1949 the Czechoslovak Youth Union (Československý svaz mládeže - ČSM) was established according to the model of Soviet Komsomol. Its crucial goal was formulated by the Communist Party leaders as the education of the whole young generation in the socialist spirit. Such mission coincided mainly with interests of party politics and much less with specific interests of the younger generation. One of the main tasks of ČSM was a participation of its members in building and developing of big constructions – therefore members of ČSM got the epithet "the building generation". Commitment and activities of first ČSM members were sincere at the time and had its obvious reasons. Further development of the Youth Union should be seen in connection with the socio-political and economic situation of that era. Young people, especially university students were the first to publicly rebel against the practices of political power. Gentle release of the communist regime occurred in 1968 (during events known as Prague Spring), but attempts to establish more liberal regime, „communism with human face“, were destroyed by the occupation of Czechoslovakia by Soviet-led Warsaw Pact troops. In 1970 the Czechoslovak Youth Union was transformed

into the Socialist Youth Union (Socialistický zväz mládeže – SZM) which was controlled by the Communist Party. The main task of SZM was to dominate the environment of colleges and high schools students and to censor opinions and views of young people. The membership in SZM was considered as a precursor of membership in the Communist Party, and its purpose was the education of youth in the spirit of Marxism-Leninism. Young people in the period of socialism could not travel abroad, could not become members of non-communist organizations. Alternative views, culture and lifestyles were suppressed and their actors were persecuted.

A key social change, whose main actors were young people in Czechoslovakia, was the Velvet Revolution in November 1989. Students, mainly those from universities, became the key promoters of social change, with the assistance of artists and representatives of civil movements and initiatives (dissidents, representatives of the environmental movement, etc.). The Velvet Revolution began somewhat spontaneously on November 17, 1989, with a student march organized to mark the 50th anniversary of a protestor's death in a student demonstration against the Nazi occupation. However, it quickly turned into an anti-government protest, with students carrying banners and chanting anti-Communist slogans. Although the student protest was conducted in a peaceful manner, 167 student protestors were hospitalized after being beaten by police. The demonstration and its accompanying violence inspired workers' unions and other civic groups to organize for a free and democratic Czechoslovakia. With the formation of the Civic Forum less than 48 hours later, most university students, theatre employees and actors went on strike instantaneously. Following the student demonstration, mass protests were held in several cities across Czechoslovakia. Then, on November 27, a reported 75% of the Czechoslovak population participated in a two-hour general strike, showing the mass support that had gathered behind the Civic Forum. The strike, which bolstered the demands put forth by the opposition movement, ended the "popular" phase of the Velvet Revolution.

On December 10, Communist President Gustav Husak resigned, and on December 29, the Federal Parliament appointed Vaclav Havel to the presidency of a free Czechoslovakia. As the last president of Czechoslovakia Havel helped facilitate the state's historic transition to democracy, marked by free and fair elections in June 1990, the first since 1946. The new government liberalized Czechoslovak law with respect to human rights, politics, the economy, creating an open and free society. A space was created for establishing new associations and organizations, including those representing young people in various areas, including spheres of politics, religion, human rights, minorities, education, culture, environment, etc.

The break-up of Czechoslovakia and three terms of Vladimír Mečiar as Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic (1992-1998) brought difficult times for civil society and its organizations. It was a period of uneven privatization (state-owned companies were „given“ to certain people connected with Mečiar's political party), the rate of unemployment was rising up to 13-14 % and Slovak Republic deviated from democratic development. Before parliamentary elections in 1998 more and more people were aware of the need to change the government, and therefore extensive pre-election campaigns were launched, with significant participation of young people. The campaign was marked by the spirit of Rock elections. During the campaign, various cultural and educational events and concerts were organized in which organizers tried to explain why especially young people should use their right to vote. The 1998 elections had a record-breaking turnout (84.4% participation of eligible voters). Due to the massive mobilization of voters and cooperation of democratic political parties with young people, the party of Vladimír Mečiar did not get enough votes to form a government, and power was taken by the broad coalition of pro-democratic forces.

In last couple of years some new trends are visible: a disappointment of voters with standard political parties, rising distrust in the society, the hostile and fearful atmosphere fostered also by the campaign of

some standard parties, mainly the ruling Smer – Sociálna demokracia (Direction – Social Democracy) with its anti-migrant rhetoric, the racist anti-Roma (anti-Gypsy) rhetoric used by radical nationalists and extremists – all in all it contributes to people's support for more radical political solutions. These tendencies are quite strong among young Slovaks (first-time voters) who show more positive attitudes to radical political parties, and, at the same time, they tend to underestimate the danger of extremism. They are – more likely than older age groups – supporters of right-wing extremist groups. Besides frustration reflecting chronic economic and social insecurity and lack of perspectives, the reason behind such votes is also poor education system and its ability to teach young people about human ideals such as respecting every human being, solidarity or helping the weak.

As a result, in 2016 Slovak parliamentary elections the far-right Ľudová strana – Naše Slovensko (People's Party – Our Slovakia) led by Marián Kotleba (who is serving as regional governor in Banská Bystrica region) reached 8.04% of votes which was enough to get 14 seats in the Slovak Parliament. Kotleba gained the biggest support from first-time voters (22.70%). Available data shows that among voters of Kotleba's party are not only young radicals but also people who seek alternatives and who feel a need to protest against establishment. It might be a sign of chronic lack of integrating values in the Slovak society.

Representations of youth group

The gradual process of transformation of the political system in Slovakia is clearly and visibly reflected in the plurality of youth associations. Basic tendencies of pluralization of youth movement after November 1989 may be characterized quite well on the basis of registration of youth associations at the Ministry of Interior. Civil participation of young people at the central level is mainly carried out and coordinated through Youth Council of Slovakia (Rada mládeže Slovenska) which serves as an umbrella organization of civic associations of children and youth in the Slovak Republic.

The influence of youth associations in Slovakia after 1989 was very weak and in fact none of the political parties and coalitions consistently promoted the interests of young people. The situation changed after 1998 elections. The youth associations, capable of activating the citizens, played a significant role in fostering the political changes at last reflected in election results. As a consequence, The Youth Council of Slovakia (YCS) used its growing influence to participate in the formulation of a new governmental program. YCS accomplished a real institutional breakthrough by devising the foundation of The Council of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the Issues of Children and Youth. Thus the prerequisites for the participation of YCS representatives in governmental decision making processes were created (Macháček 2002). However, the next political development did not prove positive trends from the end of the 1990s. Still valid is the statement of D. Malova (2000) that youth and youth organizations are traditionally among those interest groups with the least leverage on state power, and the weakest influence on public resources. Their access to the legislative or decision-making process is complicated and limited.

A highly diverse range of children's and youth associations in the Slovak Republic generally includes:

1. Youth organizations, which were created before 1989 and continued its activity under new conditions, e.g. The Tree of Life (Strom života), Slovak Academic Association (Slovenský vysokoškolský spolok), etc.
2. Associations, that renewed interrupted traditions prior to 1948, e.g. Slovak Scouting (Slovenský skauting), YMCA, etc.
3. Associations established after splitting some previously existing organizations, e.g. Fenix, Tatra eagle (Tatranský orol), Student network (Študentská sieť), etc.

4. The newly established associations (youth political organizations, religious associations, interest groups).
5. Radical, extremist and nationalist associations.
6. Associations promoting human rights, democracy, fighting against extremism, e.g. Banská Bystrica's University group of Amnesty International, Not in Our Town (Banská Bystrica).

In Slovakia the most visible and active are youth political organizations (connected with actual political parties and movements), environmental organizations (some of them played an important role also during Velvet Revolution in November 1989 despite the fact that environmental education has not been firmly established in Slovak schools), Christian associations such as Youth Christian Communities Movement. More recently, as some extremist subjects (like ultra-right People's Party – Our Slovakia) started to apply sophisticated strategies and received enough votes for obtaining their position in the National Parliament, associations promoting human rights, defending democracy and fighting against intolerance and xenophobia started to originate and be involved in some activities. Therefore one of our case studies will focus on such associations, for example on civic platform Not In Our Town (NIOT) in Banská Bystrica which started to develop its educational and cultural activities in 2013 when Marián Kotleba, the leader of The People's Party – Our Slovakia became the Head of Banská Bystrica's Self-Governing Region.

Despite the existence of a large number of different youth organizations, there is a low interest of young people to join the organizations that does not exceed 12% of the total population of young people under 26 years of age. The reluctance of young people to join organized and more permanent structures is naturally associated with concerns about massification, uniformity and manipulability. Such reluctance was probably also a psychological response to the forced membership in the Socialist Youth Union in communist Czechoslovakia before 1989. However, current "crisis of membership" should not be viewed as an absolute refusal of youth to become full members of youth associations. Rather it could be seen as a sort of search in the system of opportunities that address young people nowadays.

Political scientist R. Štefančík recently outlined the question whether the youth political organizations play an important role in the process of political recruitment. The results of his research confirm that the occupation of high public office or party positions by young people are more the result of their self-motivation, personal qualities and active participation in the policy environment than the result of their membership in youth political organization. The membership in a youth organization is for young politicians a benefit in their successful political career, but it is not a rule. "The crossover-career" occurs more than "the toilsome climbing up the ladder" in the Slovak republic. Therefore, youth participation in associations is not the basic condition for obtaining a public or party office. Many previously successful youth leaders ended their political career by going into the private sector, third sector or have remained in the act of state or government without a connection to a political party. Although the importance of political youth organizations in the process of political recruitment has not been found, respectively this type of organizations has other strategic functions in the support of democracy stability. One of these functions is political socialization. In this context, youth associations are an important means of acquiring political skills. Through lectures and expert discussions with policymakers, media training, mobilization campaigns, young citizens acquire a deeper knowledge base on the political system functioning. At the same time, they create a relationship to the values of democracy and contribute to its anchoring into society. Among other features of political youth organizations the mobilization function pertains. Among the priorities of each political party is an effective mobilization of young voters in the election campaign. This requires a means of expression and technologies specific to the younger generation. Internet communication, mobilization activities through social networks (Facebook, MySpace) and viral campaign reach young people effectively (Štefančík 2010).

Leaders of youth political organizations view them as important intermediaries between a political party and young voters. Parties work with youth organizations during election campaigning because their members often work as volunteers without any pay. Young people may be helpful in commenting on draft laws, especially when adjusting youth and educational issues. Out of all functions of youth organizations, political socialization is the most important. Then voters mobilization function, political recruitment and the agenda-setting function follow. Finally, they take control over the articulation of the interests of the young generation at the level of national policy (Štefančík 2010) and they expect that they would have the Government's ear.

The effects/outcomes of 'youth actions' on young people.

The transformation of the totalitarian political system into the pluralistic democracy and planned economy into market economy represents a key social change for first post-communist generations of youth. It manifests itself in the new structure of transition to adulthood as young people enter the labour market and acquire civil rights. Unlike in the previous regime of the so-called real socialism where education was followed immediately by engagement in the sphere of employment – through which young people acquired the social status of adults, transformation and modernisation have brought insecurity to young people's life projects (Macháček 1998).

Growth of individualism, the greater potential within the professional world, the desire for higher incomes, focus on performance, the expansion of cultural production, new lifestyles, legitimisation of many subcultures, and more flexible notions of identity – all these factors lead towards new social forms and necessity for acceptance of uncertainties, conflicts, innovations and change. Technological changes are also one of key factors of specific position of youth in the contemporary society. New technologies have impact on the fact that the generation who lives with them very intensively, forms its personality at the intersection between real and virtual and, consequently, much faster moves off the generation of its parents than it used to be in the past. One of the possible answers of young people is a move towards cosmopolitan citizenship that leads to social change and re-definition of institutions in the society, another possible answer is an occurrence of counter-movements directed against rapid change and disintegration of traditional institutions. Another source determining actions of contemporary youth are the economic processes related both to the process of economic globalization (financial globalization, the flow of industrial enterprises) and a persisting model of consumer society. Part of the political and cultural activism of young people is directly affected by these processes.

1989 - 1998

Concerning activism of young people and their impact on shaping country's future, two significant political changes are important. The first was the collapse of the communist model of society and events of the Velvet Revolution in November 1989 with the crucial role of the university students. The first significant demonstrations and activities against the communist system took place in the university environment; it was activism of students and their dissatisfaction with the existing system that initiated mass demonstrations (see previous parts).

The second change was connected with the period of authoritarian governments of Vladimír Mečiar (1992-1998). During this period the regime tried to undermine civil society and reinstate state control. At the end of this period the country was devastated and politically isolated.

Reaction/Response/Innovation

The reaction of civil society was civic campaign OK '98 for free and fair elections. The campaign started to take shape in January 1998, was officially launched in March, and ended in December 1998, after the local elections. The activities of the many non-governmental organizations participating in the Civic Campaign OK '98 contributed to the high election turnout and to the strong electoral support for the democratic political forces. Non-governmental organizations thus became a decisive factor in the cultural change that has been taking shape in Slovakia. The country has witnessed increased civic participation, as well as a greater readiness and increased preparedness of citizens to take part in the running of public affairs. Without exaggeration, it can be argued that if it were not for dozens of NGOs as well as the participation of an unprecedented number of young people, the 1998 elections would have taken a different course and had a different outcome (Demeš 1999). Youth as a demographic group played the clearest, most dynamic and most organized role in the civic campaign to bring people out to vote (Demeš 1999; Malová 2000). Therefore the 1998 parliamentary elections were marked by extremely high voter participation (the turnout was 84.24%) and the participation of young people and first-time voters was also exceptional. Young generation took these elections as a referendum on political future of the Slovak Republic. The 1998 elections created the image of progressive and pro-European young generation in Slovakia whose activity can push the whole society towards „European values“.

Contemporary political conflict

Youth and particularly first-time voters exhibit a significant sensitivity to violations of ethical principles such as dishonesty and corruption in politics, the intention to manipulate and deceive, to abuse one's position, etc. The way how politicians are actually „doing“ politics often leads the young to a great mistrust in politicians and political parties connected with feelings of frustration and inability to change anything. In such atmosphere extremist subjects began to earn enough votes to exceed the quorum necessary for the entry into the national parliament. Particularly vulnerable in this environment seems to be the younger generation which does not have a personal experience with restrictions of freedom. Ignorance of the historical facts and contexts as well as the disappointment from the political elites have found a response in an alternative behaviour and protest attitudes of young people towards the society. That is why the young generation is among the priority target groups of extremists. As a result, in 2016 Slovak parliamentary elections the far-right Ľudová strana – Naše Slovensko (People's Party – Our Slovakia) led by Marián Kotleba was elected to Slovak Parliament with 14 seats (out of 150). The party gained the biggest support from first-time voters (22.70%). This trend of significant support of young for Kotleba was also confirmed in a simulated elections among high school students.

Reaction/Response/Innovation

Unlike political participation, which is closely linked with the institutionalized activities, civic participation relates to a broader range of diverse non-institutionalized activities connected with civic engagement in the society (various initiatives, campaigns, movements, projects, etc.). In Slovakia the research of extremism and activities against both right wing and left wing extremism are mostly domains of civic associations and NGO's (e.g. civic association People against racism, the forum Democracy in danger). Civil platform NIOT (Not In Our Town) in Banská Bystrica started to develop its educational and cultural activities in 2013 as the opposition forum against extremism following the election of Marián Kotleba, the leader of People's Party – Our Slovakia, for regional governor in the Banská Bystrica self-governing region. The NIOT campaign will involve students of secondary schools and universities.

Sources of problems expressed by young people and reasons for their options for migration

There are generally two sources of problems that affect decision-making of young Slovaks when they think about leaving the country in order to study or work abroad.

First, it is the situation on the labour market, which, in some ways, differs from the situation of other young Europeans. According to recent Flash Eurobarometer survey of young Europeans, 28% of young Slovaks (in comparison with 16% of youth from EU28) are worried that they will have to move in order to find a job. Young people in Slovakia also consider salaries to be insufficient (22% vs. 12% of EU28). Only 9% of young Slovaks do not have any concerns about getting a job, which is considerably less than other Europeans (see Table 1).

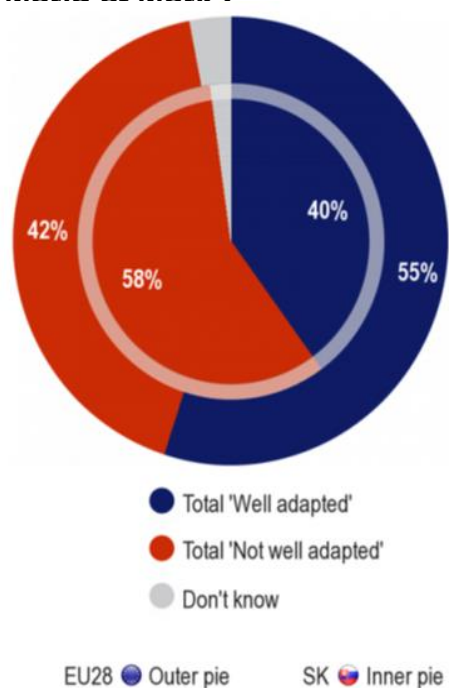
These opinions reflect the actual situation with unemployment in the Slovak Republic. Youth unemployment is high, it reaches 30%, while the overall unemployment rate is less than half. According to the Ministry of Education, more than 70% of young people in Slovakia would prefer life in a foreign country.

Table 1: What would be your concerns when you think about getting a job? Firstly (main reason)

	EU28	SK
Not finding a long term contract or a stable job	31	18
Having to move to find a job	16	28
Lacking the right knowledge or skills	13	15
The level of salary	12	22
Other	8	6
I don't have any concerns	19	9
Don't know	1	2

Source: Flash Eurobarometer, YOUTH 2015

Figure 1: Q2. Do you think that in (OUR COUNTRY), training, school and university education are well adapted or not to the current world of work?



Second, young people view the education system in Slovakia as a problem. As the survey Structured dialogue 2016 says, young Slovaks are most disappointed with the state of education. They feel that the methods and the functioning of the education system are obsolete and do not match the students' needs. Two key skills and abilities that most of them reported as missing in the Slovak education are critical thinking and more active approach to social environment. Methods of teaching are focused only on getting information and almost no time is not devoted to their linking, contextualizing and more complex processing. Therefore respondents resolutely maintain that school time is largely unproductive and does not prepare them for life in the 21st century.

Students also perceive their own passivity in a system that is not sufficiently open for innovation, rather it rewards thoughtless performance of assigned tasks. Students themselves perceive an active approach to the world and positive thinking as essential prerequisites for life success.

Critical views of young Slovaks regarding the adaptation of education to the current world of work in their country is evident also in comparison with opinions of young Europeans (EU28) (see Figure 1).

Source: Flash Eurobarometer, YOUTH 2015

Based on previous findings it will not be surprising that migration of young people is nowadays much more frequent phenomenon in Slovakia than it was in the past. Open borders, freedom of movement within the European Union, a wide range of possibilities to work and study abroad are commonplace for young people. This fact fundamentally determines their migration strategies today. An experience with short-term or long-term stay abroad is in some sectors even considered as a standard and increases chances of young people on the labour market.

Reaction/Response/Innovation

Young people migrate for the purpose of getting familiar with life in a different country, in order to study or work temporarily, but nowadays they decide to live abroad increasingly also due to the failure to find a job on the local labour market. They form a rather diverse group, and their migration experience and strategies are influenced by various characteristics, such as level of education, economic status, place of residence. Nevertheless, young people are the most mobile population group that is open to short-term and long-term stays, and is not rejecting even permanent living abroad.

Since the entry to the European Union in 2004 outflows of migrants from Slovakia have been increasing. It is estimated that in 2013 150,000 Slovaks worked outside of Slovakia, that is 7.50% of all Slovak labour force. Almost half of them (47 %) are young people aged 15-34 years (Labour force Survey of the Slovak Bureau of Statistics). Besides labour migration, a high proportion of the university students studying abroad is a very specific feature of recent Slovak history. According to EUROSTAT data in 2012 36,200 full-time students from Slovakia (almost 15% of the overall student population in Slovakia) studied abroad (Slovakia ranked as the third country in EU in this respect, following Luxembourg and Cyprus). It represents more than tenfold increase since 1998.

Study and work abroad of quite a large number of citizens should not be a problem for Slovakia. On the contrary, it is important when young people get better education, learn languages, gain different perspectives, new experiences, and contacts. It becomes a problem when majority of young people after their studies refuse to return back home because they do not see any reason to do it. They are unwilling to come back because they do not believe that they can use their skills and knowledge at the labour market, they will be paid appropriately or they find a job at all. In this way Slovakia is losing its highly educated, skilful and experienced elite. These people usually come to Slovakia only for a visit or holidays.

Returning back after long-term stay abroad does not have to be necessarily a simple process. Individuals can be exposed to re-entry shock as a consequence of newly-formed cultural conflict between new norms and values acquired in a foreign country and those prevailing in the home country which individuals have to face after they return back. The conflict may get two forms. It can have negative dimensions: feelings of alienation, frustration, lost identity; at this stage individuals meet with lack of understanding, disinterest, resistance and envy that could be a source of intrapersonal conflicts, but also conflicts in relation to family members, employers and the society as such. The result can be a gradual disembeddedness of actors from their own society, and, consequently, repeated departure from the country. The conflict may have also productive dimensions – in the case that leads to social change, brings social innovation, new ideas and contributes to new dynamics of societies and organizations.

If Slovakia wants to attract its young generation for home return, it must take care of improving the general conditions of life and work in the country as a priority. Less energy should be spent on inventing measures (such as one-off financial incentives) for targeting specific individuals. They can attract people who are planning to work in the state administration. Young people have other priorities. For them it would be

more important if Slovakia becomes a country which would function on the basis of merit and justice and which would be closer to the developed western economies.

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7. FINLAND (FYRN)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Finland is one of the Nordic welfare countries. Its history since the 1940s is characterized by the expansion (esp. the 1960s and 1970s), solidification (the 1980s) and slow unraveling (from the 1990s on) of the welfare state; comparatively late and rapid urbanization and, consequently, growing difference between the urban and the rural areas; meagre immigration; and the more recent era of intensified neoliberal thinking, growing diversity and polarization.

In terms of youth, Finland is a country with relatively good resources for advancing youth issues, such as fairly strong and well-established public youth services and NGO infrastructure. Many of the available indicators show positive long-term trends in young people's living conditions and habits, but also polarization between the majority of young people, who are faring well, and the minority, who are subject to increasing vulnerabilities. The latest economic downturn (since 2008) has hit Finland hard, and is reflected in the levels of youth unemployment, for instance. The urban-rural axis and the ongoing migration from rural to urban areas is one of the structural factors influencing young people's opportunities and experiences. Despite the relatively strong equality legislation, young people who belong to certain minority groups (ethnic minorities, young people with immigrant backgrounds, disabled young people, young people belonging to sexual and gender minorities) have been found to encounter serious and extensive discrimination.

In general, there is a long tradition of representing young people in problematic or risk-centred ways. However, young people in Finland are an extremely heterogeneous group, and their representations and self-representations are varied. The case study groups selected for PROMISE project are two very different groups, young mothers with diverse ethnic backgrounds and anti-fascist urban circus activists. Public discourses on young mothers tend to be connected with risks and concerns; and they contradict the ways how young mothers themselves have found to rationalize and give reasons for their life situation. Urban circus can be understood as a form of youth street culture that combines creative elements and urban, political activism. Young people's urban activism and their different means of occupying and transforming urban space are often regarded as unwanted activism in the public space. As with the young mothers, however, it is difficult to say whether the case study group of circus activists has a coherent group identity or self-representations.

THE NATIONAL CONTEXT: a short history

Finland gained its independence in 1917. During WWII Finland fought two wars against Russia (1939–1940 and 1941–1944), and hence the decades that ensued were a time of recovery and reconstruction, as was the case elsewhere in Europe. In the post-war era, state-run social policies expanded and diversified, marking the introduction of the welfare state, with the 1960s and 1970s being the decades of the most rapid expansion. The welfare state system in Finland can be seen as a national variation of the so-called Nordic Model: a societal model characterized by a tax-funded and inclusive welfare system, with an emphasis on gender egalitarian politics (Formark & Bränström Öhman 2013).

Finland remained largely agrarian for longer than most other Western European states. However, when urbanization started, it was accelerated by simultaneous processes related to the development of schools, the restructuring of the labour market, and expansion of the welfare state. The 1960s and especially the

1970s are conceptualized as the decades of “The Great Move”, referring to the rapid urbanization, which was coupled with the rise of new housing development areas in the bigger cities and, arguably, even a new lifestyle related to these areas (cf. Kortteinen 1982). While internal migration from rural to urban areas is often understood as a phenomenon of the 1960s and the 1970s in particular, it still continues at roughly similar levels (Kivijärvi & Peltola 2016).

The 1980s in Finland can be described as a “yuppie decade”, characterized by consumerism and technological optimism. In Finland, “the welfare project” could be regarded as having peaked in the 1980s. A social welfare reform was carried out, and the service system was supplemented. Homosexuality was finally removed from the official illness classification list in 1981; however, the spread of HIV and AIDS and the accompanying sensationalist media discussion caused intensifying homophobia from 1983 until the early 1990s (Stålström 2001). The media discussions on HIV and AIDS are a good example of how changes in attitudes have been (and still are) relatively slow in Finland. Needless to say, legislative reforms and changes in cultural discourses, opinions and attitudes rarely go hand in hand.

The late 1980s and the early 1990s also saw the rise of “new” global, environmental and anti-capitalist thinking, related to animal rights and environmental activism and eco-anarchism, for instance (Giroux 2004; Lundbom 2002). In Finland, these forms of grassroots civic participation and political activism were quickly labelled as youth movements and often severely stigmatized in the media (e.g. Lundbom 2002).

After several decades of economic upturn, which peaked in the 1980s, Finland suffered a harsh economic recession at the beginning of the 1990s (1990–1994). The recession acted as a catalyst for a change of direction in planning and implementing welfare policies (Julkunen 2001): the slow process of unravelling the welfare state has been ongoing ever since, marked by welfare cuts and an emphasis on the importance of the third sector in producing welfare services. The recession of the 1990s was a time of high unemployment among all working age people, but the younger cohorts were hit particularly hard. In 1995, Finland became a member of the European Union, which prompted several significant economic changes, such as a strengthening of international markets and re-organization of agriculture. The end of the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s saw a new upturn and a period of technological optimism and international investment, inspired by the “Nokia phenomenon”. Intensified by the economic expansion, the turn of the millennium marked a shift towards a more neoliberal social and economic order with intensifying privatization and increasing polarization.

Economic discrepancies, which decreased from the 1960s to the 1980s, and then remained stable during the recession, increased rapidly after the recession towards the end of the 1990s (OSF 2016a). During the 2000s, the discrepancies have again remained rather stable (OSF 2016a)

Gender issues and changing ideals of equality:

Gender equality ideals were intertwined with the welfare project from its early days, which is why the process of advancing gender equality at the level of social policies in Finland has sometimes been referred to as “state feminism”. Policies designed to enhance gender equality – such as childcare services to enable women’s employment opportunities – were introduced in a relatively early phase, although gender equality has never achieved such a strong foothold among the political goals as it has in Sweden. Thus, the societal model known internationally as the “Nordic Model” entails substantial national variation.

The “female-friendly” welfare policies are also reflected in the comparatively high employment rates of women. However, while gender equality has been among the political goals, in more recent discussions the need for gender equality is sometimes questioned and challenged, based on equality having allegedly been “achieved”. At the same time, in the lived realities of men and women in Finland, gender-based differences

and inequalities prevail (e.g. Julkunen 2010). One example of the harmful effects of gender inequality in Finland concerns the rates of gender-based violence in intimate relationships, which are high in a European comparison.

Finland has always been relatively multicultural, having had the indigenous Sami and the “traditional” ethnic/religious minorities of Roma, Tatars, Russians and Jews living within its borders for centuries (e.g. Martikainen, Sintonen & Pitkänen 2006). However, the World Wars largely halted immigration to Finland, and the country remained characterized by emigration rather than immigration until the turn of the 1980s and the 1990s. Immigration on a larger scale started at the beginning of the 1990s, and has served to intensify discussions concerning multiculturalism and/or ethnic and cultural diversity ever since. Discussions on racism and anti-racism seem to be especially hard to reconcile with the “ethos of equality”, which has been traditionally grounded in the “same for all” principle in Finland (e.g. Keskinen 2012).

During the past decade, Finland has witnessed a surge in xenophobic and social-conservative party politics, as well as the rise of a radical right-wing movement. This development has happened concurrently with a backlash against feminism, with claims that gender equality has already been achieved or even gone too far. Further, within the discourses of the radical right, gender equality has also been used highly problematically as a racialized Nordic characteristic that needs to be protected against any “outside influences”, such as multiculturalism and immigration (Formark & Bränström Öhman 2013; Rosenberg 2014).

Demographics:

Finland is an aging country. The so-called baby boomers were born between 1945 and 1949, after which birth rates have shown a steady downward trend. The younger age cohorts are thus significantly smaller than adult cohorts, which gives rise to worries over the declining dependency ratio, but has other kinds of repercussions as well. Accelerated immigration has levelled the situation somewhat – the population in Finland has continued to grow, not diminish – but it is unlikely to “solve” the problem in the future.

The proportion of the population with foreign backgrounds remains comparatively low, standing at 6.2% (including “the second generation”) in 2015 (OSF 2016b). Geographic variation is rather extensive, however; the bigger cities in southern Finland attract greater numbers of people with foreign backgrounds. As those migrating to Finland tend to be young adults, the percentage of the population with a foreign background is greater among the younger age cohorts (40 and less) than among the older cohorts; the proportion is greatest among working-age adults in the 30 to 40 age range. Among the population under 30, 4.8% are foreign-born; approximately one-tenth are 25- to 29-year-olds, but only 1.6% are children under seven. The so-called second generation is young in Finland: among children under seven years, approximately 6% were Finnish-born with foreign-born parents, while among 25- to 29-year-olds the proportion of the second generation is less than 2% (OSF 2016b). The statistics do not differentiate young people of mixed heritage, but children and young people with one Finnish-born and one foreign-born parent are categorized as Finnish, which undermines the existing cultural diversity in Finnish families. Finnish legislation does not permit the collection of statistical data on ethnic or “racial” belonging, only concerning the (parental) country of birth, native language and citizenship. Thus the percentage of ethnic minorities is hard to estimate.

Finland has two official languages, Finnish and Swedish, and one national minority language, Sami. Finnish is spoken by 88.7%, Swedish by 5.3% and foreign languages by 6.0% of the population. The relations between the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Finnish state bear many of the hallmarks of a state

church; approximately 73% of the population were members of the church in 2015 (Ev. Lut. Church of Finland 2016).

Main stigma faced by young people:

In Finland, (full) citizenship has traditionally been understood through labour market participation, and the role of an independent taxpayer-citizen is the central ideal/norm expected from each individual claiming the position of “an adult” (e.g. Suurpää 2002). Youth as a life phase is typically understood as a period for acquiring education and other relevant resources for achieving this position. It is thus hardly surprising that the concept of social exclusion – which is most often understood as exclusion from the education and/or labour market, or more rarely as exclusion from relevant leisure-time resources or social relationships – lies at the core of many stigmatizing concerns related to young people. Young people failing to achieve the milestones of normative educational trajectories within a certain timeframe are typically not only seen as an “at risk” group, but are also subjected to heightened scrutiny and different interventions (e.g. Aaltonen 2012). Such stigmatizing differences often have socioeconomic or class-based connotations as well. More generally, the non-normative life trajectories of young people, such as early parenthood – which are regarded as a threat when it comes to acquiring the educational and work-related standards of “adulthood” – tend to be stigmatizing and set them apart as a target for special scrutiny.

Heteronormativity and white ethnic Finnishness also act as central norms guiding belonging, conceptions of “ordinariness” and social positions available for young people (again, among all other age groups). Racialized markers (such as skin colour) and characteristics understood as signs of ethnic, religious or linguistic otherness more broadly (such as accent, or name) have been and still are among the central stigmatizing factors. During the last couple of decades, the gendered figure of “a Muslim” in particular has become an important signifier of otherness (e.g. Keskinen 2012); however, Finland’s largest ethnic minority – the Russians – also continue to face negative stereotyping (e.g. Saarinen 2007).

Young people who challenge gender and sexuality norms are subjected to discrimination in various forms. According to the results of the Wellbeing of LGBTIQ Youth research project (2012–2014), wellbeing among young people who belong to sexual and gender minorities is lower on average than that of heterosexual and cisgender youth. LGBTIQ young people face discrimination and stigmatization at school, as well as during their work and leisure activities, for example (Taavetti, Alanko & Heikkinen 2015; Taavetti 2015).

YOUNG PEOPLE AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Key historical moments:

After the war years, the majority of young people in the 1940s and 1950s lived in rural areas, received modest schooling and started working at a relatively early age, typically within agriculture (Haapala 2003). However, education beyond elementary school (*oppikoulu*) became more common (Koski 2003), the urban youth consumed popular culture, and youth groups (*sakit*) were a phenomenon among young urban males in the 1950s (Puuronen 2003). During the 1960s and 1970s the education system continued to develop. Young people’s increased levels of education were also intertwined with the process of rapid urbanization. As a result, they became less inclined than the previous generation to follow in their parents’ footsteps occupation-wise, and were more likely to move to bigger cities – or abroad – to find employment (Haapala 2003).

The 1960s and 1970s were decades marked by heightened consumption of popular culture, but also by a noticeable expansion of political activity and activism among young people. The baby boomers lived out their youth in the 1960s. Wealth and possibilities for consumption increased, and graduating from upper

secondary school (*oppikoulu*) practically guaranteed that one would climb the social ladder (Hoikkala & Paju 2002). Youth activism was mainly the prerogative of well-educated university students, and in the 1960s it centered around organizations such as *Yhdistys 9* (*Association 9*, a feminist/gender equality organization), *Marraskuun liike* (*the November movement*), which sought to help the deprived, and *Sadankomitea* (the Committee of 100), a peace organisation. The youth activism of the 1970s became more closely connected with party politics, especially leftist parties. A well-known faction of leftist student activists (*taistolaiset*) harboured communist and pro-Soviet ideas. At the same time, many young people remained in the rural areas and had little to do with the political activities of the time (Hoikkala & Paju 2002). Following the tradition of a strong third sector in Finland, much of this activism was thus rapidly channeled into newly formed NGOs, and subsequently, at least part of the goals were also adopted by the political parties.

The consumerism and urbanization of the 1980s raised new concerns related to children and young people in the public discussion. Children's rights and violations thereof, problems related to poverty, substance abuse among young people, and violence, were all discussed. Legislative steps were taken to tackle these issues; social welfare reform was conducted, the Child Welfare Act was established in 1983 and corporal punishment of children criminalized in 1984. Municipal youth work has its roots in the youth policies of the 1960s (Silvennoinen & Nieminen 2002), but it consolidated its position among the welfare services in the 1980s, and "youth houses" or youth community centers – easily accessible, local facilities for young people's un- and semi-structured leisure time – were established, partly as a wished-for solution to the "youth problem" of the newly urbanized areas (Salasuo & Suurpää 2014). From early on, youth work in Finland had a dual purpose of empowering young people on the one hand, and directing and controlling their use of leisure time on the other (Horelli, Haikkola & Sotkasiira 2007). In terms of (sub)cultural trends, punk emerged onto the scene, while other groupings such as Mods, Skinheads and Teddy Boys still prevailed as a part of youth culture (Jokinen & Saaristo 2002).

The economic recession and its consequences overshadowed the 1990s. Parental unemployment and heightened youth unemployment, coupled with cuts in social benefits and welfare services had long-lasting consequences for many (e.g. Kortteinen & Elovainio 2012). According to Harrikari (2008), a change in governance concerning children and young people has taken place since the economic recession of the 1990s: interest towards these groups has increased, but it is distinctly characterized by concerns, fears and social control in the form of "early intervention". In the 1990s, "new" forms of sub-cultural and politically active youth groups emerged, including environmental activism, anti-capitalist and anti-globalization activism and eco-anarchism. These political youth groups are examples of the global and mediated nature of new protest movements. During the past 15 years, youth subcultural trends and political movements have become increasingly heterogeneous and diverse (Salasuo & Poikolainen 2012).

The current situation:

This is characterized by an ever-growing diversity of youth cultures and young people's life situations, identifications, belongings and groupings. In general, Finland may be described as a country with fairly strong and well-established public youth services and NGO infrastructure, strong legislation, a long history and relatively good resources for advancing youth issues, despite the economic challenges of the last decades. The key services, including the comprehensive, secondary and tertiary education systems, are publicly produced and, following the Nordic universalist welfare model, free of charge for students. The long tradition of a strong third sector supports the availability of free (or low-cost) leisure services and targeted services.

The ideal of (individual) independence is highly valued in Finland, and is reflected in the expectations placed on young people and young adults. In a European comparison, young people leave home early, at the age of 20 (women) or 21 (men) on average. Independent living does not, however, necessarily imply economic independence: according to the Youth Barometer, even among young adults aged 25 to 29, roughly half continue to receive economic support from their parents (Peltola 2016).

Many of the available indicators show positive long-term trends in young people's living conditions and habits. The proportion of children and young people with violent victimization experiences – either at home, at school or in public places – has decreased significantly (Fagerlund et al. 2014), as has the percentage of young offenders (Kivivuori et al. 2014). According to the large School Health Surveys (National Institute of Health and Welfare 2016), the consumption of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs is decreasing among young people, and the percentage of those who report that they “like going to school” is increasing. However, the indicators also show that there is polarization between the majority of young people, who are faring well, and the minority, who are subject to increasing vulnerabilities: different welfare problems, such as a low education level, mental problems, and a low income have a cumulative effect (e.g. Gissler et al. 2014). This polarization is likely to reflect the economic inequalities that are reported to have been increasing since the end of the economic recession of the 1990s (1994). The latest economic downturn, which started in 2008, has hit Finland hard, and is reflected in the levels of youth unemployment, for instance. According to the OECD (2016), the percentage of NEET (“not in education, employment or training”, see e.g. Furlong 2006) young people in Finland, 14.3 per cent, is considerably higher than in other Nordic countries, and does not show signs of abating.

The urban-rural axis and the ongoing migration from rural to urban areas is one of the structural factors influencing young people's opportunities and experiences. Those migrating are, typically, educated young people, young adults and families with children, which is why the young generations in the rural areas and small towns are diminishing. Consequently, educational and leisure-time opportunities in those areas suffering from migration loss have become scarcer. Centralizing the schooling network has accelerated this tendency (e.g. Armila, Halonen & Käyhkö 2016; Kytö & Kral-Leszczynska 2013). Many young people are thus “forced” to move to bigger cities, even in cases where they have strong emotional ties to rural areas and wish to remain (Penttinen 2016).

In terms of political activity, a recurrent concern is the young generation's lack of interest towards (party) politics and societal activities. Between the 1960s and the 2000s, political activity among young age groups, if measured in terms of voting activity and interest towards political parties, has decreased significantly (Hellsten & Martikainen 2002). It is, however, unclear as to the extent to which this trend is explained by “disinterest”, or by the experience of not being heard and a possible shift towards non-conventional modes of participation (Hellsten & Martikainen 2002). According to the Youth Barometers (e.g. Myllyniemi 2014), the low levels of political participation do not necessarily reflect young people's disinterest in society and political matters in a broad sense, but rather the difficulties in finding ways to channel these interests. The same discrepancy can be detected among younger children and at the local level as well: children and young people would be interested in participating in planning and developing their school environments, leisure-time settings or other services; however, they often have the experience of not being heard or not having a say (Peltola & Moisio forthcoming).

Despite the relatively strong equality legislation, young people who belong to certain minority groups have been found to encounter serious and extensive discrimination. Young people with immigrant backgrounds, and a Somali background in particular, and young people of ethnic minorities, the Roma in particular, encounter discrimination in working life, at school, and in public places. Young Sami people feel culturally

discriminated against. Disabled young people face structural discrimination, as well as harassment. Young people belonging to sexual and gender minorities also report alarmingly negative attitudes and discrimination. In general, young people consider that awareness, and the willingness and means to redress the situation are largely lacking (Lepola 2015).

The increased ethnic and cultural diversity is slowly starting to be discussed in the mass media, social media and popular culture, where the representations and voices are also increasingly diverse and pluralistic. However, everyday racism has been a problem in Finnish society for decades (Rastas 2007), while more recently the rise of right-wing populism and anti-immigration and neo-nationalist rhetoric, coupled with the availability of the (social) media as a tool, has intensified discussion around multiculturalism and made the societal atmosphere harder to bear for those young people belonging to racialized minorities (e.g. Keskinen 2016). Even more recently, the crises in the Middle East and Central Asia, which have had numerous repercussions throughout Europe in 2015 and 2016, have also been reflected in Finland, for instance in the public discussion on the allegedly threatening influence of young refugee men on society.

REPRESENTATIONS OF YOUTH GROUPS

Representations of youth groups in general

Overall, there is a long tradition of representing young people in general in problematic or risk-centred ways (e.g. Aapola, Gonick & Harris 2005). Young people's appearance, lifestyles, habits, language, and so forth, have raised concerns throughout history, as adult generations have fretted over whether the next generation will grow up to be responsible adults. In addition to media representations, different professional and research discourses on "young people" or "adolescents" construct different images of young people as a group, thereby representing them in certain ways. For instance, in discourses grounded in developmental psychology, young people, youth and/or adolescence is represented as a challenging period, characterized by fluctuating and tempestuous moods and a conflict orientation towards parents and other authorities (e.g. Aapola 1999); while in discourses related to citizenship, youth is often seen as a period for acquiring the resources for full citizenship. What links such different discourses is that youth is not seen as having an intrinsic value as a life phase, but is regarded, first and foremost, as a period of becoming an adult, which acquires value if the criteria for "adulthood" are fulfilled.

According to Harrikari (2008), in public discourses concerning children and young people – whether in the media, in politics or in the professional field – concerns and fears have increased since the economic recession of the 1990s. Harrikari analyses, among other data, parliamentary records, press and other media reports on youth violence, crime prevention programs and programs for young people's "curfews", and concludes that the intensifying concern- and risk-centredness has been coupled with growing individualization of the problems, decreased tolerance of deviance, and increased "early interventions".

Youth in general are an extremely heterogeneous category in Finland (and elsewhere), and in attempting to describe how specific youth groups represent themselves, one is bound to encounter challenges related to how to define "a youth group" and which groups to select as "exemplars". Young people rarely get the opportunity to produce their own content for the traditional media, although some examples exist. Blogs and videoblogs, for instance, have broadened these opportunities significantly, and young people's interest, knowledge and skills in producing content have grown accordingly. Nevertheless, only a small minority of young people produces media content independently (Rahja 2013). It is also questionable whether such content can be regarded as "representations of youth groups"; at least such an interpretation is likely to be at odds with most young bloggers' or vloggers' own interpretations.

Youth groups that do have a self-identity as a group do, however, represent themselves through different spatial and digital actions. Examples of these kinds of youth groups can be found in various forms of street culture, for instance. Given the vast number of different youth groups and subcultures in contemporary Finland, we have chosen to address street culture here since it resonates with one of our case study groups, urban circus activists. Salasuo and Poikolainen (2012) define youth street culture in Finland in the 2010s as a highly heterogeneous and diverse field of different youth styles as well as cultural and political activities. Importantly, contemporary street cultures are linked by the strong presence of information technology, which ties them to global youth cultures and the transnational exchange of ideas, styles and activities. Today, different forms of social media exert a significant influence on the exchange of subcultures between different countries – and also between rural and urban areas (Salasuo & Poikolainen 2012; Georgiou 2013).

Examples of self-representations by youth groups can be found in different kinds of spatial activities, such as demonstrations, flashmobs and cultural productions such as dance, music, circus or graffiti. Importantly, most street cultures are situational and spatial and are formed in concrete actions at a certain time and in a certain space. Thus, self-representations of street cultures are equally diverse, ranging from organizing a flashmob or painting graffiti on a local train to posting pictures about the activities on social media using a common hashtag. Graffiti artists are an example of a youth cultural group that has been severely stigmatized by the mainstream media and youth policy in Finland at least since the 1990s. At the end of the 1990s, a zero tolerance policy against graffiti, including monitoring, surveillance and high penalties was established in Helsinki (Fransberg 2014). Graffiti artwork in different urban spaces as well as visual images of graffiti circulated on social media platforms represent painters' own self-representation of their cultural activism, as well as their political and societal criticism. However, it is important to underline the heterogeneous nature of graffiti culture and painters: the subculture includes various aesthetic ideals, cultural influences and political motives (Piispa 2014).

Further, youth street cultures consist of different, often easily recognizable styles that are simultaneously local and global. For example, during the past fifteen years, Japanese popular culture, including manga and anime, has become an influential and diverse youth phenomenon in Finland. Valaskivi (2012) has argued that for many active young people, Japanese popular culture is a lifestyle that is actualized in clothing and make-up styles, artistic activities such as drawing and creating comic strips, following and consuming animations, comic strips, literature and music, as well as participating in material and digital group events. Thus, participating in Japanese popular culture as street culture is simultaneously actualized in local youth groups and through international, digital networks.

The aforementioned street cultures were introduced here to exemplify the material, spatial and digital dimensions of youth groups and street cultures in contemporary Finland. Importantly, self-representations of contemporary youth street cultures are highly diverse and rarely attract attention in the mainstream media. Youth street cultures are most often picked up by the mainstream media with a control/risk perspective – a good example of this tendency is a recent newspaper article on graffiti paintings in local trains in Helsinki (Pajuriutta 2016). Through our case study groups, we wish to investigate the self-representations these different groups – young mothers and urban circus activists – and to critically analyze whether these young people can be understood as groups with a coherent self-identity or self-representations at all.

Representations of the case study groups

Young mothers. Young mothers do share a life situation, but they typically do not form a uniform “group” that could be characterized by the members' self-identity as a part of such a group. Young mothers live in

heterogeneous circumstances, have heterogeneous resources, and their life situation is not likely to encourage them to engage in (political) activities and/or to represent themselves publicly as a group. Even their self-identity as *young* mothers cannot be taken for granted. However, insofar as they participate in services targeted at young mothers in particular (such as group training sessions and peer support groups), or have other networks with young women sharing their life situation, or feel excluded and/or discriminated against because of their age and life situation, they may develop a more conscious self-identity as a part of a group of “young mothers”, and thus may have a motivation to (re)represent the group in some ways. However, this is purely speculative; there is little available research on this group and its self-representations in the Finnish context. According to Niemelä’s (2005) study on young motherhood, young mothers define their decisions concerning parenthood in “their own way”, and rationalize and give reasons for their life situation that defy the expected life trajectories, thereby distancing themselves from the problem-oriented public representations. However, these accounts, as related in research interviews, can hardly be seen as collective (self-)representations.

In terms of public representations, deviating from the age-related norms of life trajectories, and parenthood as a part thereof, raises doubts and risk-centred discourses. In Finland, mothers’ mean age by first birth was 28.8 in 2015 (OSF 2016c). Among 15- to 19-year-old women, the birth rate has been around 9/1000, and among 20- to 24-year-old women around 60/1000 (Halonen & Apter 2010). Early pregnancies and young parenthood – especially among teenagers – are typically discussed as problems related to young people’s sexual health and knowledge. Improving sexual health has been among the welfare goals, and Halonen and Apter (2010), for instance, note that the number of teenage pregnancies, despite the decline in recent years, has not yet reached the positive (low) levels that preceded the economic recession of the 1990s. While unwanted pregnancies due to lack of knowledge or availability of contraception do constitute a social problem, the discourses and concerns related to young parenthood are also grounded in the normative assumptions of life trajectories. Parenthood is not an expected, or desired, part of youth (Kuortti 2012). Public discourses on young mothers tend to be connected with risks and concerns: increased economic challenges, disrupted trajectories through education and employment, and a potential lack of the necessary (moral) parenting competences (e.g. Kelh   2009). Representations of young mothers with ethnic minority backgrounds tend to be even more emphatically problem-oriented. Besides the other concerns, young mothers with ethnic minority backgrounds are often seen through a cultural lens, potentially suffering from cultural constraints, or even coercion within their families or other close communities (e.g. Keskinen 2009). Such racialized representations often ignore the existing gendered and sexualized social control of ethnic Finnish young women.

The national public service broadcasting company YLE has produced a reality TV show called *Teen moms*, which has been following the lives of teenage mothers with their babies – and subsequently toddlers – for three seasons. The blurb promises “*Violence, bad relationships, changing boy- and girlfriends, crying, failures, but nevertheless, also successes and joy*” (YLE 2016), which repeats, despite the show’s generally empathetic attitude towards the young mothers, many of the negative, problem-centred stereotypes of young motherhood (see also Alanko 2014). Apart from this show, popular media representations of young mothers, or young parents, are few and far between in the Finnish media.

Urban circus activists. Urban circus can be understood as a form of youth street culture that combines creative elements and urban, political activism. What brings the activists from different backgrounds together is their involvement and interest in, firstly, circus as a creative activity and, secondly, their engagement in occupying and transforming the urban space through embodied, material and digital actions. Further, many circus activists participating in this case study are politically active in anti-racist and anti-fascist movements.

Young people's urban activism and their different means of occupying and transforming urban space through, for example, graffiti, skateboarding, squatting in buildings, urban dance or circus are often regarded as unwanted activism in the public space. Youth street cultures and youth groups that actively occupy and transform the urban space through different means are often under intense surveillance and control through different material (police, private security guards) and virtual (CCTV cameras) means.

Further, young people's creative and/or political urban activism is often easily stigmatized in the public debate (e.g. Lundbom 2002). For example, at the end of the 1990s, the City of Helsinki launched an anti-graffiti campaign that imposed increased surveillance, monitoring and high penalties for graffiti artists (Komonen 2012). This campaign, which was part of a wider Nordic anti-graffiti initiative, lasted for a decade and created a wave of sensationalist media discussions. The campaign is a good example of how representations of youth street cultures are often problematized in the mainstream media and of how young people's own viewpoints are seldom heard in media discussions.

However, it is difficult to say whether the case study group of young circus activists has a coherent group identity or self-representations. While they are brought together by the same creative activity and urban political commitment, they differ in terms of age, background and life situation. Thus, their self-representations should be addressed more as dynamic and situational events, created at different spatial and virtual moments, such as rehearsals, performances, demonstrations, and through posting images and videos about these events on social media platforms.

THE EFFECTS/OUTCOMES OF 'YOUTH ACTIONS' ON YOUNG PEOPLE

The life trajectories of young people come under scrutiny and control, especially when they do not follow the normative trajectory and/or engage in activities that are regarded as deviant or questionable. Young people in general are, and have been, the targets of many kinds of measures and policies aimed at simultaneously supporting and controlling them (e.g. Harrikari 2008; Aaltonen 2012). For instance, youth work in its many forms has its historical roots in public concerns about the "youth problem". Over the decades, the ideals of youth work have developed in a direction whereby young people themselves are considered (at least potential) actors in planning and implementing the actions. While the practices are varied and there is room for improvement, youth work has established its place among the basic welfare services that are considered to support young people's well-being in both preventive and reactive ways.

In Finland, the public administration of youth work and youth community centers dates back to the 1940s. The relationship between youth work and youth policy has been a close one since its inception in Finland. The temporary increase in the birth rate after WWII, "the baby boom", became a major catalyst for Finnish youth work in the 1950s and 1960s. Added to this, rapid urbanization, strengthening gender equality policies, and the support provided by the welfare state from the 1960s onwards contributed to the expansion and professionalization of the youth work field. From the early decades onwards, youth employment, youth housing and health issues, along with agency, participation and creative, self-motivated youth culture have been among the key issues on the youth work agenda (Nieminen 2016).

With regard to the more recently introduced youth actions, many of them have revolved around concerns about "exclusion" or "the risk of exclusion". According to Aaltonen et al. (2015), during the economic recession of the 1990s, attention turned more explicitly than before to those young people who were outside of working life and education. The discussion subsequently waned, but was revived at the end of the 2000s and at the beginning of the 2010s. The need to locate and quantify the so-called "excluded youth" gained momentum, and one of the responses was a well-known report by Pekka Myrskylä (2012), *Lost – who are the excluded youth?*, in which the number of excluded youth aged 15 to 29 was estimated at

51,300, approximately 5 per cent of the age group. The political concern about excluded youth materialized in the launch of the so-called *youth guarantee*, whose main pledge was to offer everyone under the age of 25, as well as recent graduates under the age of 30, either a job, a study place, or an opportunity for on-the-job training or rehabilitation within three months of becoming unemployed (Ministry of Education and Culture 2012). The *youth guarantee* was greeted with high hopes, but within a couple of years of its launch, it also attracted criticism about its ineffectiveness and contradictory implications (Paakkunainen 2014). While some of the services, such as outreach youth work and workshops (*työpajatoiminta*) were functioning well, rehabilitation services in particular were considered to be inadequate. Young people interviewed by Ervamaa (2014) generally favoured the idea and content of the *youth guarantee*, but saw the employment services as being in need of improvement. In its original form, the *youth guarantee* was short-lived, however, as the new government, elected in 2015, cut its funding and started to develop in the direction of a “community guarantee”, where the role of the third sector is emphasized more than before.

Young mothers. Some specialized services targeted at young mothers exist, such as family training groups provided locally in certain cities or municipalities, as a part of the public maternity or child welfare services, with peer support groups and individual counselling provided by the third sector, especially “Girls’ Houses”. The latter work on a similar basis to youth community centres in general – offering easily accessible spaces for young people’s unstructured and semi-structured leisure time – but target their activities at girls and young women, with a strong emphasis on gender and cultural sensitivity (Tyttöjen Talo Helsinki 2016). The Girls’ Houses have developed activities targeted at young mothers in the long-term, based on feedback from their young-mother clients (Innokylä 2016). Academic research on the effects of, and response to, the activities is scarce, but according to one thesis (Kainlauri & Karppinen 2003), the young mothers in the groups did not see them as a form of support, but nevertheless appreciated them, especially the peer network they provided.

On a more general level, sex education and especially its emphasis on preventing (early) pregnancies (e.g. Aho 2012) can be considered one of the actions targeted at young people with the aim of reducing the number of young mothers (and fathers) – although sex education naturally has other aims as well. If the number of teenage pregnancies is used as a measure, the educational and preventive actions can be regarded as rather effective, as the percentage of mothers under the age of 20 has continued to decline and was less than two per cent of all mothers giving birth in 2015 (THL 2016). However, sex education is criticized by young people themselves, who consider it to be too biological, and too risk-oriented in its preoccupation with intercourse, STDs and birth control (Aho 2012).

Urban circus activists. Urban circus is a creative, cultural form of youth street culture that is practised in various professional and grassroots contexts. The group of circus activists participating in this study gathers and practises at the Oranssi youth cultural centre in the Kalasatama area in Helsinki. Oranssi was established in the 1990s, which makes it one of Finland’s longest-standing urban social movements. With its roots in counter-cultural urban grassroots activism, such as squatting in empty buildings, Oranssi offers inexpensive, collective housing for young people as well as cultural centre activities. The centre encourages its participants to engage in different forms of spontaneous and collective creative activities by providing facilities, equipment and guidance when needed. Youth groups and street cultures present at the centre include punk bands, circus activists, Girls Rock! Feminist girl camps, yoga groups and LGBTIQ young people.

Oranssi’s services for young people can be understood as a combination of grassroots cultural and political activism, urban DIY culture and NGO-based youth work. Today, the centre is largely funded by the City of Helsinki Youth Department, which ties its activities and goals to municipal youth work traditions and structures to some extent (e.g. Nieminen 2016). However, the tradition of urban DIY culture as well as an

outspoken emphasis on anti-racist and anti-fascist politics is clearly visible in all activities at the center, which links Oranssi to a larger, international tradition of squatting, urban DIY culture, as well as collective civic actions at the grassroots level (Peipinen 2012).

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8. ESTONIA (UTARTU)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the 20th century Estonia has experienced important historical events and transformations: independence in 1918, Soviet and Nazi occupations in 1990, nearly 50 years of soviet rule and, recently, re-gaining independence in 1991 and the subsequent economic and societal transition.

Historical events have notably influenced migration processes to and from Estonia. As a result of stable migration, the non-Estonian- born share of the population has increased to 25 per cent in 1959, and 39 per cent in 1989. As immigration can be linked with industrialisation, 90 per cent of non-Estonians settled in urban areas. The spatial concentration of immigrants was and remains uneven with the majority living in Harju and Ida-Viru County. In Ida-Viru county non-Estonians constitute over 80 per cent of population.

Additionally internal migration is common, where people, especially the young, move to urban areas. The reasons for this include the limited possibilities for career, education, business and leisure time outside big cities.

As of 1st January 2016, there were 283,350 young people between 7 to 26 years of age in Estonia, representing 21.5% of the Estonian population. There were 109,616 young people in the age group 7-14 and 173,734 young persons in the age group 15-26. As in many other European countries, the proportion of young people in the population is decreasing. Also alarming is a high proportion of young people emigrating from Estonia.

Youth policy in Estonia is defined by several legal documents: The Youth Work Act and the Youth Field Development Plan for 2014-2020 are among the most important. According to the Youth Work Act a young person is a natural person between 7 and 26 years of age. Youth work is defined as a “creation of conditions to promote the diverse development of young persons which enable them to be active outside their families, formal education acquired within the adult education system, and work on the basis of their free will”.

Only a small proportion of young people in Estonia are interested in politics. Usually, young people do not participate in the elections. However, the proportion of 15-26 olds who voted in the last national election has increased in recent years. One of the reasons for the growing participation in the elections is the possibility to vote electronically, without going to the polling station. However, there is a gap in political participation between Estonian and Russian speaking youth.

The level of unemployment among young people is higher compared to the general population but is among the lowest in the EU at the moment. Research confirms that youth with different levels of education face different levels of unemployment risk. It is easier for young people with higher education to find work, while those with a lower level of education, especially basic education, have a significantly smaller chance of success in the labour market. Youth with criminal offence backgrounds have high a probability of remaining unemployed.

The proportion of young offenders is decreasing. Similarly the numbers of young people in prisons or on probation is decreasing. The decrease concerns nearly all type of offences except assault. Level of violence among young people remains high. When punishing young offenders, prison is the last resort. Although prison is meant to re-socialise young people, in Estonia research is clear that it does not work: 40% of young people released from prison are reconvicted within one year from their release.

THE NATIONAL CONTEXT: Estonia

Estonia became an independent state in February 1918. Half a year later an armed conflict between Soviet Russia and the Republic of Estonia began that lasted until 1920 and is known as the Estonian War of Independence. For the first time in history, the Estonians had their own state. Estonia was a parliamentary democratic republic with a remarkably liberal constitution.¹⁹ In 1921 Estonia became a full member of the League of Nations.

Developing Estonian-language national culture was one of the essential tasks of the newly established country. For the first time it was possible to acquire education in Estonian, from primary school to university, and the University of Tartu became the national university. At the same time, national minorities were able to acquire secondary education in their mother tongue and enjoy cultural autonomy (ibid).

The worldwide economic crisis of the 1930s had a large impact on Estonian Economy. During the years of the crisis, the total value of production diminished by 45% in agriculture and by 20% in industry (ibid). A bad economic situation brought dissatisfaction with politicians and government among the population, people longed for the “strong hand”. Political instability resulted in a new position in the Estonian political landscape – the introduction of a President into the constitution. The parliamentary governmentality was replaced by the sole power of the President and created an opportunity for the authoritarian regime that lasted for 1934-1939.

As a result of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939 between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany, Estonia became the sphere of interest of Soviet Union. In 1940, Estonia became occupied by the Soviet Union. In 1941-1944 Estonia was occupied by German troops and starting from 1944 Estonia was again under the Soviet rule, becoming one of the 15 republics of the Soviet Union. In World War II Estonia lost a total of 200,000 people: executed, killed in action, imprisoned, deported, mobilised, forcefully evacuated and those who fled the country (Ibid).

The post-war history is a shared history of the Soviet Union: Stalin political repressions in the 1940s and 1950s, followed by Khrushchev’s thaw (mid 1950s - mid 1960s), and Breznev’s stagnation (mid-1960s – mid 1980s) and The Cold War. In the second half of the 1980s the Gorbachev’s *perestroika* and *glasnost* gave hope for changes. The mass movement for restoration of independence begun and peaked in the restoration of the Estonian statehood in 1991.

Overall demographic situation

WW2 and the Soviet regime caused dramatic changes to the ethnic composition of the Estonian population. In pre-WW2 period, 12 per cent of the population were of non-Estonian background. After the war, immigration became the decisive factor to shape the population. The immigrants were needed to rebuild destroyed industrial plants and infrastructure. It also fulfilled the task of Russification of the Baltics. Because of stable migration, the non-Estonian share of the population increased to 25 per cent in 1959, and 39 per cent in 1989. (Tammaru & Kulu, 2003)

As Immigration was related to industrialisation, 90 per cent of non-Estonians settled in urban areas. The spatial concentration of immigrants was and remains uneven. The majority live in Harju and Ida-Viru County. In Ida-Viru county non-Estonians constituted 82 per cent of population in 1989. (ibid).

¹⁹ Estonian Institute. *Estonica: Encyclopedia about Estonia*. Available: <http://www.estonica.org/en/>

Table 1. Population change and profile of emigrants from Estonia²⁰

	1989-2000	2000-2011
Population at start of period	1 565 000	1 370 000
Population at end of period	1 370 000	1 294 000
Change in population	-195 000	-76 000
Differential in birth and death rate	-40 000	-33 500
Net migration*	-155 000	-42 500
Immigration	14 500	28 000
Emigration*	165 500	70 500

	Permanent residents 2000	Emigrants 2000-2011
GENDER		
Male	45	39
Female	55	61
AGE		
0-19	31	57
20-29	15	24
30-39	15	12
40-49	15	6
50+	24	1
SIZE OF HOUSEHOLD		
1	9	5
2	22	15
3+	69	80
MARITAL STATUS		
Married	49	23
Other	51	77
EDUCATION		
Higher education	14	7
Secondary education	51	43
Basic education	35	50
EMPLOYMENT STATUS		
Managers	11	8
Senior specialists	12	8
Specialists	13	12
Clerical workers	5	6
Service and sales workers	11	18
Skilled agricultural workers	2	1
Skilled and manual workers	14	12
Machine operators	10	8
Manual workers	9	7
Unemployed	13	19
MOTHER TONGUE		
Estonian	69	65
Other	31	35

* also includes the differences in population censuses related to under-reporting.

Source: Statistics Estonia.

Source: Census 2011.

The current emigration that started after re-gaining independence in 1991 is characteristic by several sub-processes. First, the majority of emigrants from Estonia left for the East, which means people who immigrated to Estonia during the Soviet era returned to their home country. The second direction of emigration was Finland. New emigration from Estonia increased after Estonia joined the EU and further on because of the global economic crisis in 2008. Finland remained the main direction of emigration: while the number of Estonians living in Finland before Estonia joined the EU was approximately 20,000 people, the number doubled by 2013. (Tammaru&Eamets, 2015)

Apart from people's return to their homeland, the main causes of emigration from Estonia are demographic composition and difference in living standards compared with Western Europe. Demographic composition means that the large generations born in the 1980s (so called children of the singing revolution) are now at prime migration rate (their 20s-30s). At the same time the population in Western Europe is ageing and considerable numbers of people are leaving the labour market. The difference in living standards between Eastern European countries brings people from less wealthy countries to countries with higher income and living standards. (ibid, p.111)

²⁰ Tiit Tammaru, Raul Eamets (2015). Nüüdisaegne väljaränne: ulatus, põhjused ja mõjud Eesti arengule. Raivo Vetik (Toim.). Eesti Inimarengu Aruanne 2014/2015 (109–117). SA Eesti Koostöö Kogu.

While a high proportion of young people in the age category 20-29 is expected among the emigrants, the researchers note that a high proportion of young people in the age category 15-19 is surprising and alarming as the general rule of thumb is that the younger people are when they leave the less likely they are to come back to their home country. Also alarming is the large percentage of children among emigrants. These children will be educated abroad; they will form their networks there that makes their return to the home country less probable. (ibid, p.112)

Demographic data on youth

As of 1st January 2016, there were 283,350 young people between 7 to 26 year of age in Estonia, representing 21.5% of the Estonian population. There were 109,616 young persons in the age group 7-14 and 173,734 young persons in the age group 15-26. As in many other European countries, the proportion of young people in the population is decreasing. According to the forecasts of Statistics Estonia, this decrease will continue until 2022, when the proportion will gradually start to increase again. This growth period will last until 2039, after which the proportion will decrease again. (Estonian Youth Field Development Plan, p.8)

Youth Policy

In 1999, the Youth Work Act was adopted by the Parliament. In 2001, the Estonian Youth Work Plan Concept and the Estonian Youth Work Development Plan for 2001-2004 were prepared. According to the Youth Work Act a young person is a natural person between 7 and 26 years of age. Youth work is defined as a “creation of conditions to promote the diverse development of young persons which enable them to be active outside their families, formal education acquired within the adult education system, and work on the basis of their free will” (Youth Work Act §4(1)). The Act also states the main principles of the organisation of youth work § 4 (2):

- 1) youth work is performed for the benefit of, and together with, young people by involving them in the decision making process;
- 2) upon creating the conditions for the acquisition of knowledge and skills the needs and interests of young people shall be proceeded from;
- 3) youth work is based on the participation and free will of young people;
- 4) youth work supports the initiative of young people;
- 5) youth work proceeds from the principle of equal treatment, tolerance and partnership.

The main content, principles and aims of youth policy, however, have been not specified until 2006, when Youth Work Strategy 2006-2013 was adopted. The grounding principles of integrated youth policy in Estonia are:

- starting point is the young person, his actual state, interests, needs;
- youth participation;
- cooperation between different areas. (Estonian Youth Work Strategy 2006-2013, p. 16)

At the end of 2013, the Government of the Republic approved the Youth Field Development Plan for 2014-2020. The Plan took into consideration the state of young people and the goals the Estonian Government has set out. It also defined the focus in the youth field for the period 2014-2020:

- increasing opportunities for the creativity development, initiative, and collective actions of young people;

- reducing the effects of unequal circumstances on the development opportunities of young people, and preventing exclusion;
- supporting the active involvement of young people in community life and decision-making processes;
- ensuring labour market success for young people; and
- developing high-quality youth policy and youth work (Development Plan, p.7).

To monitor the realisation of the Development Plan and to ensure that the youth policy is knowledge-based, the youth monitoring system was introduced in Estonia. It consists of various inter-related components:

- Indicators which reflect the more significant aspects of the lives of young people, and which are consistently collected and updated;
- Research and analyses related to the lives of young people, including Yearbook of youth monitoring, quarterly policy reviews and original studies based on questionnaires;
- A database of studies, which are related to the lives of young people and carried out in Estonia;
- Development studies of youth policy.²¹

Political and civic participation

Participation in arranging your own life and the life of the surrounding community largely determines people's sense of belonging and perception of being involved, which helps prevent them from falling into social apathy and from seeking to express themselves in a radical way or leave the country. The so-called traditional forms of youth participations are youth councils and associations. The umbrella organisation for the national youth organisations is the Estonian National Youth Council (ENL). ENL was established in 2002 and, since 2016, unites 43 youth organisations, 15 county youth councils and 70 local youth councils throughout Estonia.²² ENL promotes cooperation between youth associations and active participation of young people in society. As increasing political participation of youth is one of the aims of the Youth Field Development Plan for 2014-2020, the annual budgetary support for youth associations and councils is explicitly stated in the Plan.

In 2012, 2% of young people aged 15-26 said they are very interested in politics, 22% were quite interested, 51% were hardly interested and 25% not at all interested in politics. However, the proportion of 15-26 year olds who voted in the last national election has increased from 23% in 2006 to 40% in 2012.²³ One of the reasons for the growing participation in the elections is the possibility to vote electronically, without going to the pool station. The research shows that age is a strong predictor of whether a person e-votes, young people being more active in the process (Vassil et al, 2016).

The other form of participation is participation in youth democracy projects in the course of the Youth Democracy Project of European Youth in Action Programme. The Youth Democracy Project is sub action 1.3 of the European Youth in Action programme (2007-2013). It gives young people the opportunity to be directly involved in society by planning and carrying out a project, which is an important non-formal learning experience. It encourages young people to consider their contribution and involvement in a local, national and European context. Participation is open to young people aged between 13 and 30 and legally

²¹ Youth Monitor. <http://www.noorteseire.ee/en/about-youth-monitor/structure-of-youth-monitoring>

²² Estonian National Youth Council. <http://www.enl.ee/en>

²³ Youth Monitor: Indicators. <http://www.noorteseire.ee/en/indicators/258#>

resident in a programme country.²⁴ The participation of youth in the Youth Democracy Project has been increasing from year to year. The most active group participating in the programme are young people between 18 and 25 years of age.

Table 2. Number of Participants in the Democracy Projects in Estonia by age group and year

Age group \ year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
13-14	40	4	0	5	24	66
15-17	79	32	93	138	132	712
18-25	82	64	127	183	337	501
26-30	4	15	49	72	18	109
Total	205	115	269	398	1372	1428

Source: Estonian National Agency for Youth in Action programme

Youth involvement in work for voluntary or charitable organisations is another form of active participation in the life of society. According to research by the Estonian think tank, Praxis, Estonian youth aged 15-24 are more active in volunteering than the general population: the proportion of youth participating in voluntary activities in their age group is 42%, while the proportion of volunteering people in the general population is 31%.

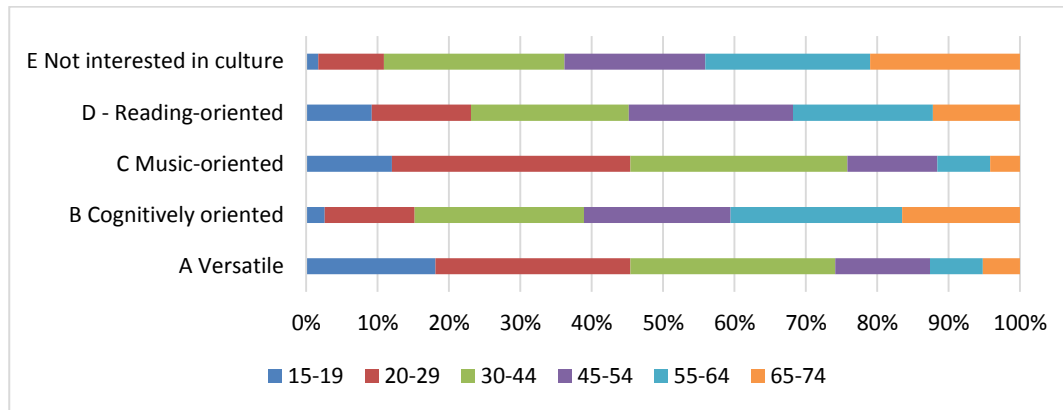
While Estonia leads other post-communist countries with respect to voter turnout and social capital, it is characterized by having a large ethnic participation gap. Based on the analysis of “The Integration of the European Second Generation” survey, Schulze (2014) finds that there is a significant political and civic participation gap between second-generation Russian youth and Estonian youth, with higher levels of participation among Estonians. The author also finds that levels of political and civic participation for second-generation Russian youth are lower than national and non-Estonian averages. The passivity of second generation Russians implies that they will remain underrepresented in state structures. Schulze also notes that the ethnic participation gap is not fully explained by structural inequalities or demographic factors but rather differences in attitudes, including trust in political institutions, generalized trust and satisfaction with democracy. (ibid, p.47)

Cultural activities

To help identify and compare levels of engagement in cultural activities among EU citizens the Eurobarometer uses the Index of cultural practice. The index has been built based on frequency of participation and access to the different cultural activities measured by the survey. The cultural practice index reveal that the level of cultural engagement in Estonia (30%) is similar to other northern European countries and stands out as rather high compared with a European average of 18%. (European Commission, 2013)

Based on the Eurobarometer data Lauristin & Lõhmus (2010, p.127) suggested a typology of distinctive features and compositions of culture consumption. The types described are: (a) the versatile and active hedonistic participant in culture; (b) a traditional cultural consumer with cognitive interests, orientated towards broadening his/her horizons; (c) an entertainment lover who is interested in music, sports and technology; (d) a reader, traditional relatively passive book lover; (e) the type that is orientated primary towards material values and is far from culture.

²⁴ European Commission. Youth Democracy: Building a Vibrant Society. Youth in Action Programme. Available: <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/youth/tools/documents/youth-democracy-nc3211910enc.pdf>

Figure 1. Age composition of the types of cultural consumers 2008, %

Source: Lauristin & Lõhmus, 2010

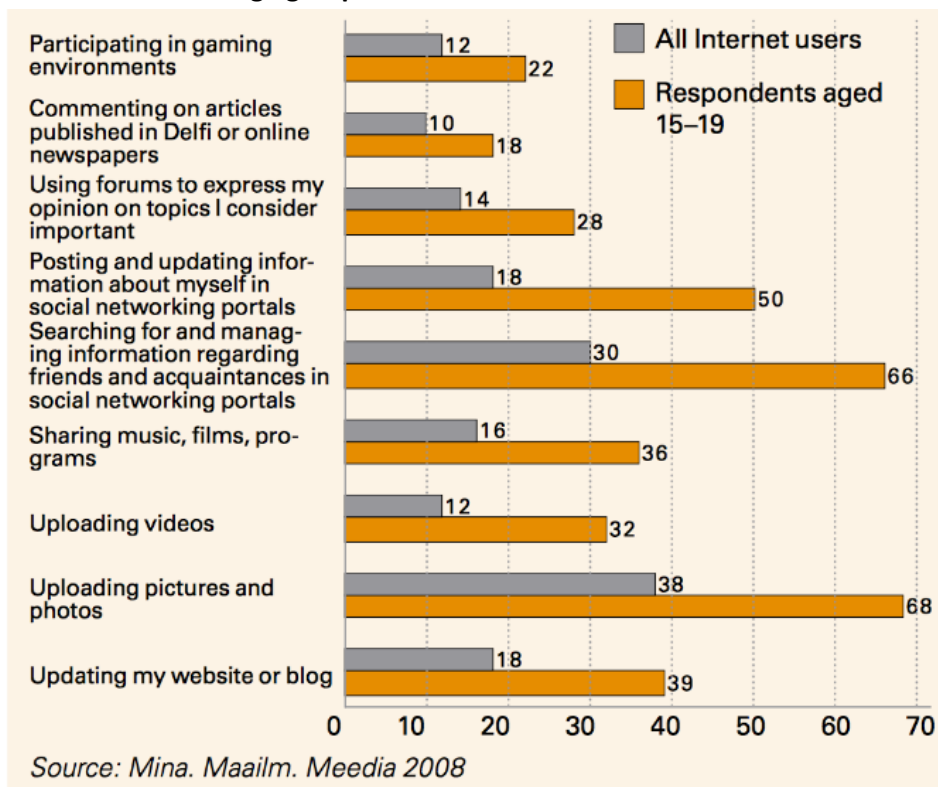
Among people classified as belonging to the versatile and active hedonistic participation in culture there is a high proportion of young people, especially in the age category 15-19. According to Lauristin & Lõhmus (2010) in addition to frequent contacts with books, music and art, these people are characterized by very active communication with friends, participation in societies and clubs, and a greater than average participation in sport activities.

Another type of cultural consumption characteristic of young people is orientation toward music and sports. People from this category are active music lovers and technology and sports fans. They have social lifestyle, and their communication pattern is Internet-based.

It is not a surprise that music and sports play an important role in young people's life. According to data of the 2008 '*Mina. Maailm. Meedia*' ('*Myself. World. Media*') population survey, 60% of people aged 15–19 consider sports and hobbies to be important aspects in shaping their lifestyles, while only 37% of people aged 45–54 attribute equal importance to this field. Among people aged 15–19, 52% considered the Internet to be a significant influence in their life. Estonian children and youth are among leaders in the world when it comes to the use of the Internet. According to the Flash Eurobarometer 248 survey conducted among parents living in EU member states in October 2008, 93% of all Estonian children aged 6–17 use the Internet. In terms of this indicator, Estonia shares the 2nd – 4th place among 27 EU countries with the Netherlands and Denmark, being outpaced by Finland by only one percentage point. (Kalmus et al, 2009)

The population survey '*Mina. Maailm. Meedia*', revealed that among respondents aged 15–19, 13% rate their skills as very good, 38% as good, and 24% as satisfactory. In terms of these indicators, their self-assessed level of skill falls below that of the 20–29 age group but surpasses all others. Young people are active users of social networks: the most popular activities are searching and managing information regarding friends and acquaintances, posting information about themselves, and uploading pictures and photos in social network portals.

Figure 2. Percentage of people who often engage in online content creation activities among all Internet users and the 15-19 age group

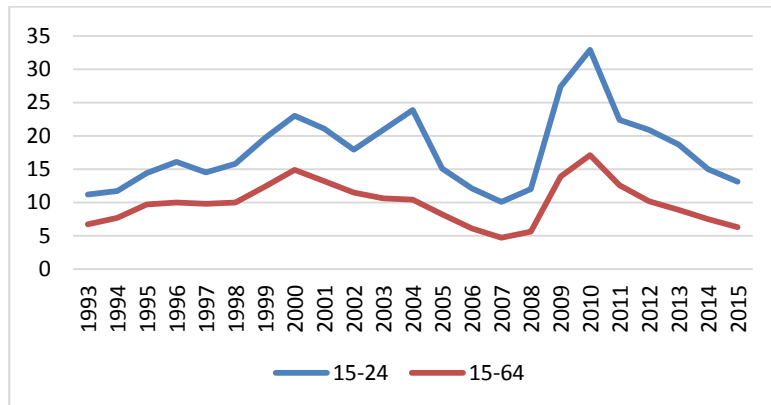


Source: Kalmus et al, 2009

An ISRD study conducted among 7-9 grade pupils in Estonia demonstrated considerable changes in the way children spend their free time. In 2014, 15% of children said they spend the most part of their leisure time alone, while in 2006 this proportion was 9%. In 2006, 27% of children said they went out every evening, while in 2014 this proportion dropped to 8% while the proportion of children who never go out in the evening increased from 9% in 2006 to 23% in 2014. There were big differences between Estonian and Russian-speaking youth in this respect: 17% of Estonian children and nearly 40% of Russian children said they never go out in the evening (Markina & Zarkovski, 2014). This data confirms the existence of ethnic gap in all kind of youth participating activities.

Youth participation in the labour market

The current level of youth unemployment around 13% is among the lowest for the last 20 years, coming close to the pre-crisis level in 2006-2008. The sudden rise in the unemployment rate of young people aged 15-24, started during the second quarter of 2008 and was amplified in 2009 and 2010, followed by the sharp drop since then. While Estonia had a lower youth unemployment rate than the average 20% for the EU-28 countries in the 2015, the gap between adults and young people remains.

Figure 3. Unemployment rate for age group 15-24 compared to the total population.

Source: Statistical Office of Estonia

The research confirms that youth with different levels of education face different levels of unemployment risk. It is easier for young people with higher education to find work, while those with a lower level of education, especially basic education, have a significantly smaller chance of success in the labour market. (Unt & Saar, 2007: 95)

Unt and Saar (2007) note some peculiarities in the economic behaviour of the 15 -24 age group. In 1990 – 1995 the economic activity of the population decreased primarily due to older employees leaving the labour force. During the turn of the century, the level of employment decreased in the case of young people, primarily due to the growth in the percentage of students. This increase in the relative importance of students has been connected both to the expansion of education, and to the claim that continuing education is a possibility for young people to avoid unemployment. (Unt & Saar, 2007)

The data collected by the Association of Estonian Open Youth Centres show that the main factors associated with youth staying out of employment or education are unfinished education, belonging to ethnic minority groups and living in the rural area where opportunities for employment or education are lacking. To help such young people, the Estonian government initiated The Youth Prop Up programme. The program is aimed to identify such youth through mobile youth work, empowering the participants through the possibilities of youth work, in order to assist in developing their practical knowledge and skills, and facilitating their entry into the labour market.²⁵

Youth with delinquency backgrounds face even more problems to integrate into the labour market. In order to facilitate re-socialisation of youth with risk behaviour and previous conviction background another program called STEP was started in 2015.²⁶

Delinquency and crime

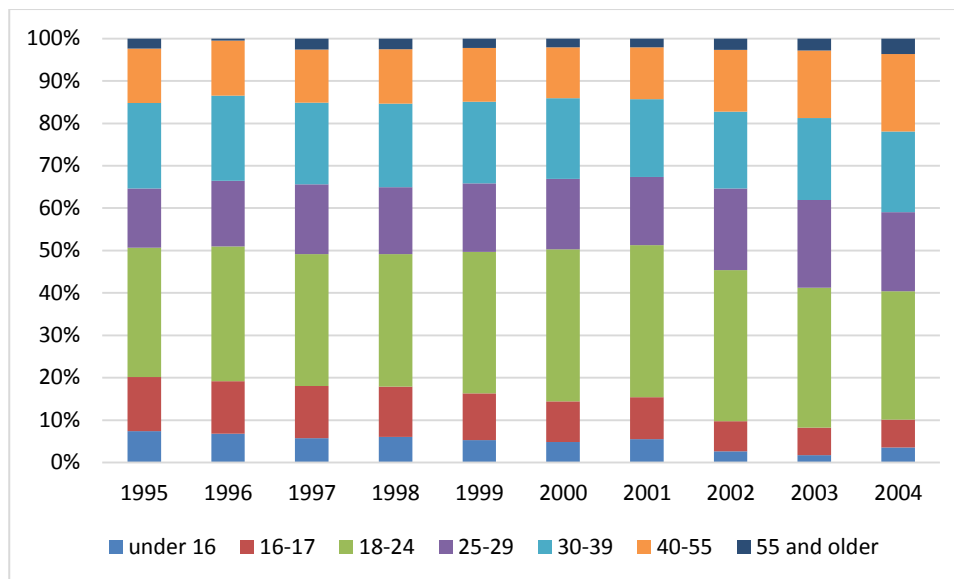
In 2015, 651 children were registered by the police for committing a crime; 624 were aged 14-17 and 27 younger than 14. The number of children suspected for committing crime is decreasing; this number has decreased three times during the last 10 years. In 2015 the number of registered crimes committed by juveniles was 1428, more than twice lower than in 2005, when the number was 3768. (Kuritegevus Eestis 2016). Although declining, property crime remains the most “popular” among juveniles. The number of assaults, however, remains stable or even shows some increase. The International Self-Reported Delinquency Study 3 confirms that the prevalence rate of offences among children (13-16 years old) in 2014 has declined compared to 2006. The study shows that the most prevalent offence committed by children is

²⁵ Support Programme „Youth Prop Up“. <https://tugila.ee/support-program-youth-prop/>

²⁶ STEP programm. <http://step.ee>

shoplifting. Russian children commit offences more frequently than Estonian children (Markina & Zharkovski, 2014)

Figure 4. Persons accused for committing crime by age and year



Source: Statistical Office of Estonia

Unfortunately, no data on the age of the persons accused of committing crime is available since 2005. However, looking at the data from years 1995-2004 it is possible to note the drop in proportion of persons younger than 25 from 50% in 2001 to 40% in 2004.

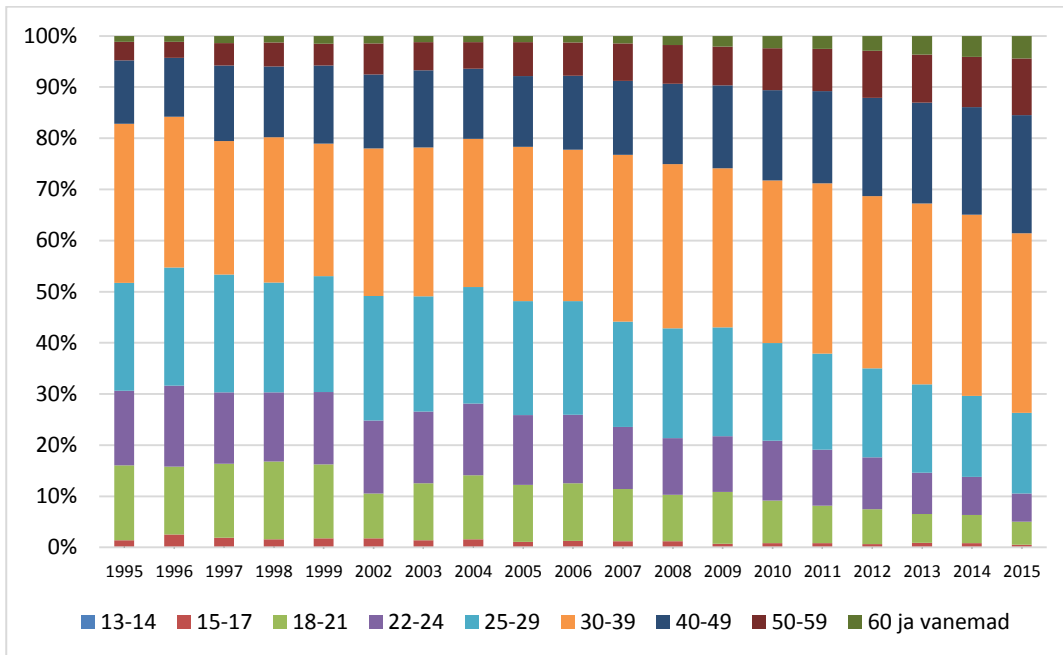
There are probably several reasons behind these changes, including stabilisation of the economy, development of the social welfare system and changes in the criminal justice system responses. In 1998, for example, the institute of Probation was introduced in Estonia. Also in 1998 the Juvenile Sanctions Act came into force. The act created a system of sanctions for juvenile offenders and an alternative to the Penal Law. The main goal of the Juvenile Sanction Act is to re-socialise juveniles and to use all kinds of alternative sanctions where deprivation of freedom may be used as the last resort.

Crime control

The prison population rate in Estonia is among the highest in the EU. In 2015, the rate was 222 prisoners per 100,000 inhabitants²⁷. The number of prisoners as well as the imprisonment rate are in decline but remains high. As for December 2016, there were 2860 prisoners in Estonia, of whom 2296 are convicted and 564 on remand. The number of juveniles in prison was 25. The number of persons on probation/parole was 4207.

The prison population in Estonia is ageing. While at the turn of the century the proportion of prisoners younger than 29 was around 50%, it has dropped below 30% in 2015. The increasing proportion of older prisoners and the growing number of prisoners who have been to prison four or more times shows that prison does not work but rather creates a certain category of people who will remain in this vicious circle. The research shows that 40% of people released from prison in Estonia are interrogated as suspects in committing another offence within one year after release (Ahven et al, 2010).

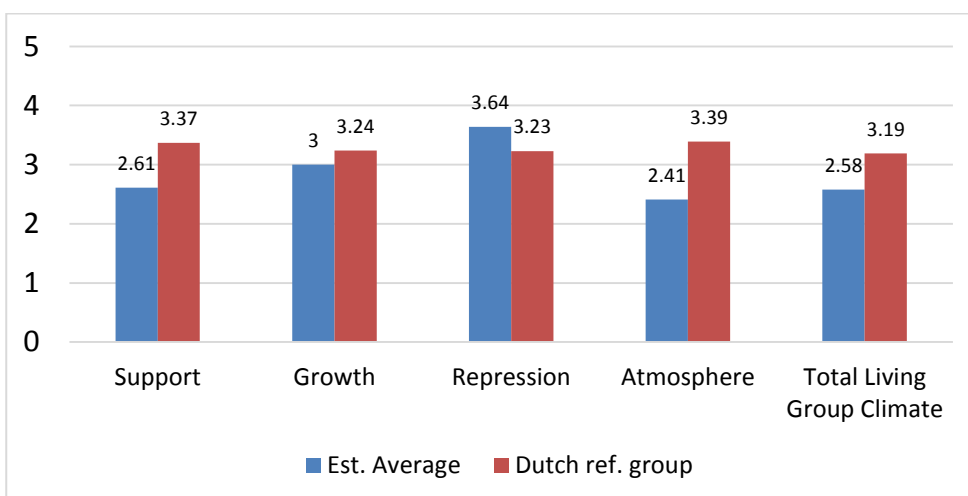
²⁷ Council of Europe Annual Penal Statistics.

Figure 5. Imprisoned persons by age group and year

Source: Statistical Office of Estonia

There is no juvenile crime law, no special court for juveniles in Estonia. The age of criminal responsibility is 14. It is possible to apply special measures in the case of juvenile offenders. Juvenile delinquents are subjects to the Juvenile Sanctions Act.

There is no separate prison for juveniles and young offenders in Estonia but a separate department at Viru prison. Juveniles (remand and convicted) and young adults (up to 21 years) are placed in the youth department of Viru prison. There is also a separate division of probation services for young people. Although people younger than 21 receive special treatment by the correctional system, the notion of “young adult” is not included in penal law. The primary re-integrative focus in prison is on discipline, school, learning the Estonian language for non-Estonian prisoners and less on social-emotional and personality development.

Figure 6. Evaluation of group climate in Estonian prisons for youth

Source: Salla & Solodov, 2016

A study of group climate research in closed institutions for young people was conducted in 2015 by a Dutch researcher Peer van der Helm and his team. They found prisons performed badly. Compared to the Dutch institutions, Estonian prisons for youth are characterised by low levels of support from staff, a bad atmosphere and high levels of repression. Riots, violence towards staff, floods, fights etc., lack of staff, lack of communication are characteristic for the prison youth department. A bad climate in prisons makes people more impulsive, less able to control behavior, less susceptible to positive rehabilitation and contributes to re-offending.

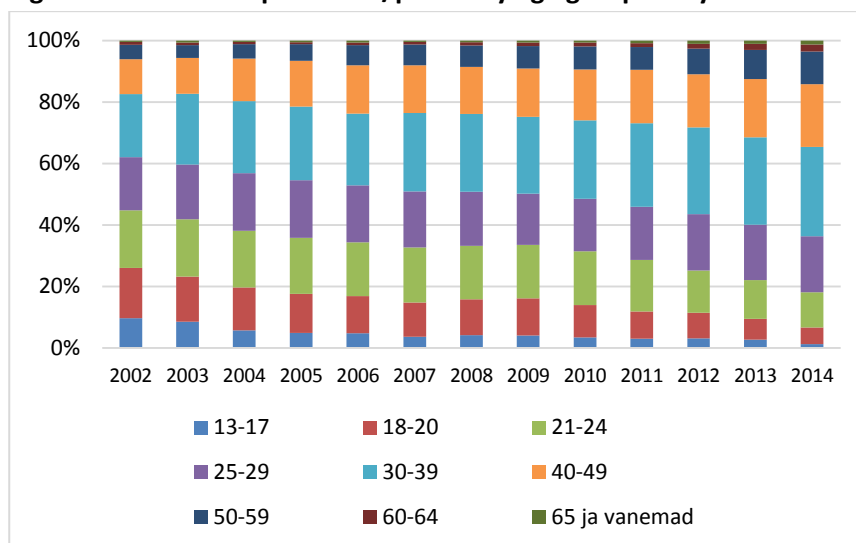
Table 3. One-year recidivism rate by age groups

	Released from prison	Convicted offenders	Proceeding terminated
Under 18	59%	36%	20%
18–26	45%	29%	21%
27–35	39%	25%	17%
36–44	35%	21%	15%
45–53	26%	14%	13%
54 or more	17%	13%	5%

Source: Ahven et al, 2010

According to the poll conducted among prosecutors and judges, factors influencing the recidivism risk are the gender and age of the offender. Prosecutors and judges considered the risk of recidivism to be the highest for 20-30-year-olds. The analysis of actual data for the year 2007 procedural decisions and releases from prisons showed that the recidivism of young people up to 26 years old exceeded many times the recidivism of people over 54 years. In case of termination of procedure, the recidivism rate of young people was 20%-21% depending on age, while the recidivism rate of people over 54 years old was 5%. More than one third (36%) of convicted young people were interrogated again as a suspect of committing an offence within one year, while in the case of people over 54 years old it remained on the level of 13%. Unlike men, the recidivism rate for women is the highest in the age group 27–35 years. The recidivism rate of Russian offenders was higher than that of Estonians. (Ahven et al, 2010)

Figure 7. Persons on probation/parole by age group and year



Source: Statistical Office of Estonia

Similarly to the prison population figure, the proportion of young people among offenders on probation and parole is decreasing. While there were around 45% of people younger than 25 on probation/parole in 2002, the proportion has declined to less than 20% in 2014.

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9. RUSSIA (HSE)

Authors: Elena Omelchenko, Guzel Sabirova, Yana Krupets and Anastasia Sablina

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Several generations of Soviet youth were raised and socialized in the ideology of state socialism. The main activity of the youth has been fully institutionalized, formalized and controlled within the state youth organization (Pioneers, Komsomol). Non-governmental youth movements were small in number, marginalized and kept underground. In the 90s in connection with large-scale social, political and economic reforms youth escaped from rigid state control, the variety of Western-style subcultures appeared; young people entered the market as independent agents and actively began to participate in the organization of private businesses and new subcultural markets. However, at the level of youth policy the youth was seen mainly as a risk group, the main focus was done on the "problematic" young people (using drugs, participating in criminal activities, the unemployed and others). Media supported the political rhetoric and also produced moral panics around youth.

Since the beginning of 2000s state begins to develop significantly youth policy, mainly to mobilize the youth loyal to the state and to expand the patriotic education. Today, the majority of young people support more and more the idea of patriotism, pride of their country and its history. At the same time the level of xenophobia and everyday nationalism are also increasing. A serious and significant example of state mobilization of young people was the project of the youth movement "Nashi", which later was transformed into a variety of pro-government civic initiatives, quite radical in their activities. Also, over the past 15 years there have been crucial changes in the informal and subcultural youth scene in Russia: many subcultures faded, many have disappeared, and a lot of active young people were affected by politicization. As a result, by the middle of 2000s youth included in the cultural scene was divided into different camps, the opposition between them was related to the attitude toward national politics and the State, which took the form of symbolic and real subcultural wars, and in 2012 this opposition transformed in the open and the hard conflict of the pro-Kremlin youth and middle class youth during the mass protests after the elections to the State Duma and Putin's inauguration in Moscow. The polarization of society in general and young people in particular intensifies after the annexation of Crimea and the imposition of economic sanctions. At the same time, the majority of mainstream youth try to distance themselves from participation in traditional politics, because they do not believe in the effectiveness of such participation. Their activity is manifested in other fields: culture, consumption, work. Today the main space of youth self-presentation is the Internet and social networks. At the level of the old media and youth policy youth is still represented as the object of education and formation of the "right" citizen: a patriot, loyal to the state.

NATIONAL CONTEXT: short history

Key historical moments and periods:

First period: Soviet (mid. 50s-80s). Among the key historical moments, there is a Khrushchev Thaw (*khrushchovskaya оттепель*) with its partial liberalization of civil routines. A particular landmark for this period is the emergence of «*styliagas*» as alternative youth, struggling against unification and strict control of the society and the party. However, «*styliagas*» face stigmatization, disapproval, and aggression from the majority of population. Youth is raised in the united ideology of socialism. Next period of «stagnation» with stiffening of control above ideological dissent and strengthening of formalism leads to the

development of doublethink, dissident movement and samizdat. Generally, this is a period of rising quality of life for the general population of active promotion of the idea of USSR as a «superpower», an idea, which is actively speculated upon in modern Russia.

Second period: perestroika and 90s. The notable historical episodes of this time include massive political and economic reforms, the *putch of 1991*, producing massive demonstrations in Moscow to protect the House of Soviets (White House) and the government, and the forthcoming demise of the Soviet Union. Arising transformations are at first going along with social euphoria, the development of civil rights as well as *iron curtain* descending, and the turn to the West. For the youth environment, it is the time of the rapid growth of different youth subcultures. At the same time, the reforms destabilize economic situation, lead to deep economic and social crisis. As a result of a 1998 crisis, many Russians lose their savings, the quality of life falls, and population starts to dream about stability. The research findings of MYPLACE project show that in general contemporary youth labels this period as “bad” and “difficult”.

Third period: 2000s (the zeros), the beginning of V. Putin's presidency. This period is characterized by general economic growth, successful exit of the country from the 1998's crisis, social stability. However, the reinforcement of governmental control appears almost in all spheres (in economy, media, social sphere, culture, local governance, civil and political activism). Orange revolution in Ukraine becomes one of the key moments. It is represented in power rhetoric as one of the key dangers to Russia's welfare and a number of «protective measures» is enacted. One of such measures becomes the intensification of work with youth and creation of youth movement «Nashi» (one of its aims is the prevention of «orange revolutions»).

Fourth period: 2010s, third presidential term of V. Putin. Key moments of this period are multiple mass protests of opposition in 2011-2013 («Bolotnaya»), characterized by active participation of youth. The other notable events include Winter Olympic Games in Sochi (2014), Annexation of Crimea to Russian Federation (2014) as well as sanctions against Russia that followed and Russia's response sanctions, financial crisis. All these events became a serious basis for the polarization of Russian society, which particularly affected the youth.

Young people and social change

Key moments

During 70 years of soviet regime, there were very few sub/cultural youth groups, and they entered the public space only for short historical moments (Pilkington 1994). They were hanging out in cellars, garages, half-closed cafes. Being extraordinary was not welcome and was prosecuted as a display of nonconformity. Mass media moral panics around first styliagas (60s) or first punks and hippies (70s) were supplemented by political programmes of «struggle with «West's pernicious influence». Among the “strugglers”, there were Komsomol bodyguards and party raids were used as a method of “struggling”, based on the legal regulations (for example, for struggling with “social parasitism, incompatible with soviet pattern of life”). Several generations of soviet youth were raised and socialized in the country of state socialism. Main youth activity was produced «from above», and was totally institutionalized, formalized and controlled in the frame of state youth organizations (pioneers and Komsomol).

The end of socialist regime, collapse of the USSR and Soviet breakup had critical consequences not only for the youth, but also for the peculiarities of its group identities construction during post-soviet processes. By the end of 80-s, informal youth movement actively develops in former USSR and in all post-soviet space (Omelchenko 2000; Semenova 1988; Topalov 1988), pro-capitalist economic practices start to emerge, youth starts to enter in market relations. The opening up of market economy goes rather painful, and few groups of youth can enjoy the facilities of the consumer society. The first post-soviet (perestroika) decade

was marked by a real boom of informal youth activity. Particularly, in capitals and big Russian cities, clubbing infrastructure is being actively developed, new sub/cultural scenes are generated, cities become visually youthful (Pilkington and others 2002, Omelchenko 2004). Russian youth starts to engage in global cultural scenes, reclaiming classic subcultural images and styles, adjusted to local specificity, on the one hand, and on the other hand, mixing cultural practices. From the beginning of 2000s, government starts to actively develop youth policy (see below), to mobilize youth loyal to government and to extend patriotic education. Nowadays the ideas of patriotism, pride for the country, its history, and achievements, supplemented by the context of growing xenophobia and routine nationalism, become more popular among young people.

The project of youth movement «Nashi» became serious and substantial element of program for patriotic and state-loyal youth education. It was created «from above» in the beginning of 2000s and took its final form in 2005. Financially and materially supported by government and big Russian business, active youth party building and mobilization projects stimulate the emergence of grassroots youth projects, in which «self-organization» becomes heavily tied to governmental political projects. As a result, there appear some citizen-targeted initiatives, for instance «VseDoma», or different training programmes of youth business activity and innovations, which are organized near many big Russian cities using the «Seliger» scheme. Research suggests that among the leaders of these local initiatives there are often former «Nashi's» commissioners. Another part of the most radical followers of these initiatives is united into movement «Stal'», which presents itself as an open and aggressively-loyal protectors of existing order, morality and power. Its participants openly take part in «Russian marches», they are struggling against «Russian enemies», openly demonstrating their readiness to violently and aggressively deal with any display of ideological dissent (Krivonos 2015).

Such «voluntary» initiatives as «StopKham», «Schit», «Narkostop», «Lev protiv» appear and become relatively popular. These initiatives proclaiming themselves as fighters against different social problems will be studied in more detail in one of the cases in WP6. Violence and sometimes open aggression to those who are considered 'improper' and 'guilty' is a defining feature of the majority of these initiatives. All their raids are accompanied by video recordings with subsequent distribution in Internet. Visualization and public disclosure of «Russian cities purification» actions helps to develop popularity and to recruit new participants. In general, pro-citizen activism radicalization is significant for different new city sport practices, as for example «Russian run» or «Russian jogging» with its open promotion of Russia and imperialism, aggressive nationalist-orientated promotion of «real Russian» healthy living (claim to total abstinence from alcohol, smoking, drugs) and explicit anti-west orientation (Omelchenko 2015, Omelchenko, Zelnina 2015).

Moreover, during last 15 years unformal, alternative and subcultural youth scene in Russia experienced serious transformations. First, subcultural scene was touched by politicization. In the beginning of 2000s popularity of skinhead movement grows (Pilkington, Omel'chenko and Garifzianova 2010). As an answer to nationalistic, antimigration aggression of skinheads-boneheads there appear politicized punks, street antifascists and anarchists. As a result, in the mid-2000s youth involved in cultural scenes was divided into two different camps by different attitude to nationality and government, which took the form of symbolic and real subcultural wars. In 2012 it manifested itself explicitly as a clash of pro-Kremlin youth and middle-class youth (hipsters) during mass riots after Duma elections and Putin inauguration in Moscow. Secondly, in late 2010s a groundbreaking cutback of (sub)cultural scenes is observed. After 2007 emo subculture expires, and even before this ravers and goths, who were popular recently, leave the scene. Specialized bars, clubs and shops are closing. With tusovka's cutback, the remained participants of once mass subcultures gradually stop symbolic struggle for authenticity and names. The same antifa and skinheads

start to go into the shadows. «Pure» subcultures become reservations, giving place to post-subcultures for a short time and then fluently dissolving in them.

With the come of 2010s, bringing about political elections, mass protests and loud political criminal cases, mega-events and geopolitical decisions, the main points of tension/conflict on youth cultural scenes were brightly highlighted. Vectors, along which the youth solidarities start to form, are the now following: differently understood ideas and symbols of national, ethnicity, migration, gender relations, West and East, religion, loyalty to governmental and different forms of radicalism.

The attitude to gender question starts to play one of the most important roles in the intensification of opposition between alternative (progressive) city youth scene and mainstream (particularly its extreme wing – gopniks (chavs)). Solidarities and conflicts with respect to gender role compliance are aggressively and roughly formed at the youth scene, and are severely manifested in the attitude to homosexuality (particularly masculine). Moreover, the politicization of similar oppositions and conflicts becomes very noticeable in youth cultural scenes with special gender regime as for example feminist solidarities and LGBT projects. Young activists of feminist and LGBT communities in Saint Petersburg (case WP6) represent today decentralized, unformal, low structured scene. These grassroots groups struggle against gender and sexual discrimination by organizing and taking part in protest campaigns, educational projects, festivals, etc.

The researches show that alongside with such an active youth with high degree of involvement in political activism, especially in its innovative and sometimes radical forms of practice (Andreeva, Kosterina 2006), there are also other young people who do not aspire to be involved in politics, but try to create a maximal distance with it. They are defined as passive youth, sometimes “antipolitical” and “uncivil” (Dlugosz 2012). However, from our point of view, it is not completely right, as, firstly, this apolitical youth in some cases (for example, mass protests) can be quickly politicized and mobilized (Avdeeva, Omelchenko, Atyasova 2015), and secondly its activity can manifest beyond formal politics sphere (for example, in work, consumption, volunteering etc.)

Youth policy and young people:

From the beginning of 1990-s in Russia there is an actively ongoing work on the development of youth policy agenda, which more or less create conditions for social engagement, civil participation and mobilization of Russian youth. During the last 25 years, there appeared a wide range of regulating programs, strategies, conceptions and acts. Currently a basic document regulating youth policy is «Foundations of state youth policy in Russian Federation for period till 2025», approved by Russian Federation Government from 29.11.2014. During the last period, focuses and priorities of youth policy were seriously changed.

In the beginning of 1990s, youth policy and youth oriented institutions were mostly orientated towards prevention of deviant behavior. The work with youth itself appeared as reaction to moral panics constantly emerging in transitional society and dealing with the situation of its next shift (Omelchenko 2004). However, experts consider that even this approach, despite the evident problems was a considerable breakthrough (Il'inskij 2001). Quite a long time official decisions considering organization of work with youth in post soviet Russia were suspended (Ukaz presidenta RF No 1075 1992). In the middle of 1992 youth organizations of those years even created an action “We want to be heard”. It was supported by regional committees of youth affairs (Tartsan 2010). At that time, the youth was defined as everybody aged between 14 and 30 years.

With time (at the mid-2000s) a new discourse emerged, considering not only struggle with these negative displays, but also creation of conditions for acquisition of social competence and “skills of independent

living abilities" by youth (Rasporyazhenie pravitelstva RF No 1760 2006). Particularly, for the first time there appeared the ability to resist to political manipulations and extremist appeals. The term of socialization, still familiar during Soviet period, was replaced with "involvement in social practice". Difficult teenagers, together with disabled people and migrants, became "young people who have problems with integration into society".

The focus of the last youth policy program changes again. Now the emphasis is placed upon patriotic education of youth, forming of civil identity and creation of conditions for self-realization of youth and its civil activation (according to the state priorities) (Foundations of state youth policy... 2014).

In twenty-five years not only strategic aims of work with youth, but also its forms have been changed. For instance, 1990s were the time of various interdepartmental committee creation, for example, on counteraction to abuse of drugs, crime prevention, employment assistance, ensuring leisure. Work with youth wasn't seen without active involvement of law enforcement agencies. Territorial teenage and youth clubs were their chief assistants. First of these clubs were created in the 1960s within the house managements as centers of additional school children education at the place of residence. Children could be engaged in various clubs and sports sections there. In the 1990s they were considered as the main way of controlling the leisure time of teenagers and youth, and also influencing those who caused problems to teachers and parents.

The beginning and the mid-2000s became the period of mass youth movements revival that we already mentioned above: "Going together", "Nashi", "Young Guard", - the largest pro-governmental projects of those years, together with oppositional "Oborona", "Youth Yabloko" and some others. Such mobilization of youth through its politicization and inclusion in the political organizations and movements becomes one of the key forms of work with youth for that period. The today youth work direction has changed to some extent: first of all, now it's aimed at the development of civil participation and innovative potential of "correct" (patriotic, socially responsible and loyal state policy) youth.

Representations of youth groups

Youth groups: own presentations and articulations of their group

In Russia among young people exists a fairly strong trend of distancing themselves from formal politics and political (Zhelnina 2013). The majority of young people feel the inability to be represented and to be heard in the policy sphere (even in youth policy), to participate in the political processes as a full-fledged actor. Accordingly, it is quite difficult to talk about self-representation of young people in the areas that are regulated and controlled by the state, including civil, political and social activism. These spheres, though may include participation in different NGOs or civil movements, but often these organizations and initiatives do not have sufficient resources to influence politics in the conditions of an authoritarian regime, inattentive to the needs of civil society and using punitive measures against its initiatives. Also, these organizations are often led and managed by older participants (adults), that complicates the representation of young people even in such movements and can lead to the same rhetoric of "the use of the youth" (youth as a resource), which is widely used by the state (Chyrun 2014). Therefore, young people go to other spaces in order to solve challenges relevant to them and to be actually self-represented. These areas include the everyday/casual participation - creating groups and topics for discussion of the social and political problems in the social networks and recruiting through them, the creation and signing of petitions, one-time participation in the actions, and art, which includes a performative art, zines, music creation, and other DIY practices.

Analysis of the protests in 2011-2013 in Russia (mostly, in Moscow and Saint-Petersburg) showed that the basic tool of recruitment and consolidation was the Internet, namely, social networks, but the process of real inclusion and participation in the protests requires more efforts. With the help of social networks the so-called «virtual opposition» or «network opposition» (Ushkin 2012, 2013) appeared in Russia, and it involved much younger participants comparing with the participants of the 'real' street protests and demonstrations in the winter of 2011-2012, less than a third of participants were young people (Mtiulishvili 2011). Social networks at the same time gave young people a sense of involvement in the protests practices, but did not always require real participation on the street. Another form of youth participation and articulation of their interests is the petitions. Petitions can act as a direct appeal to the government institutions through the creation of a "public space of social reflection" (Fedorov 2014, p. 91). This practice has also 'virtual' character – they are doing it mainly through internet. Thanks to the petitions new forms of civic participation and new tools to control state institutions appear through representation of interests and short-term solidarity among members of virtual petition community. Young people also increasingly demonstrate innovative actionist practices – flashmobs, performances, happenings that attributes them to the sphere of art activism and actionism. It is important that art is also the space for conflict among different youth. For instance, the most active part of the oppositional youth creates some actions (for example, political action "Alas-patriotism" presented by oppositional art-group Rodina), but these activities can be "blocked" by similar actions of pro-government organizations (<http://www.tv2.tomsk.ru/real/depressiya>). At the same time these art actions of different artists' groups (for example, «Pussy Riot», «War», «Rodina»), as well as actions of single performative artists, are rarely seen as a political statement by the society. They can be rather accused in symbolic or real vandalism, offenses (public order disturbance and insult of religious feelings in most of cases) and even crimes.

Further we will focus on other discursive representations of young people created by adults. Major national representations of young people in Russia are academic and state (official) discourses, which are often translated by different media (mostly official media and «old media») and public discourse.

Youth representations in academic literature

Soviet research in the field of sociology of youth began in the 60s of the last century (I.M. Il'inskij, A.I. Kovaleva, I.S. Kon, V.T. Lisowski, V.A. Lukov, V.A. Rodionov, B.A. Ruchkin, V.I. Chuprov). Attention in youth research was primarily paid to value-ideological issues: the spiritual world of young people as the basis of the transformation of the material world, the hierarchy of values, the structure of personality, the attitude to work and education, assessment of the political and ideological «maturity». Young people were mainly performed as an ideological construct not as the real people. In the 1990s the focus of the researchers transformed and was made on the subcultural manifestations of youth group identities, which were often attributed to marginal and deviant character (Gromov 2009, Kozlov 2000, Kostyushev 1999). Young people were represented (as in the public discourse) as a group of risk, and new transformation processes in the youth environment were interpreted in the context of «functional deformation, alienation, marginalization of young people, which turns into a factor of the risk reproduction in the country» (Chuprov, Zubok, Williams 2001, pp. 79-80). Since the mid-90s a new wave of youth studies began to develop, associated with the assimilation and re-interpretation of Western experience and focusing on the youth identities and agency (Yurchak 1999, Islamshina et al. 1997, Levikova 2002, Salagaev 1997, Omelchenko 2000, 2004, 2005b). But it didn't become the mainstream for the Russian academic debate. This debate for a long time was dominated by an approach in which young people were objectified, presented as a resource (demographic, labor, military), marginalized. Within the framework of this approach were widely used such concepts as socialization, protection and control, while state and its institutions, youth policy, academic

and other adults were performed as main actors and subjects. From 2000s this objectifying approach was problematized, more studies defined youth as the subject, giving the opportunity to determine and represent themselves as a group. In the framework of this approach were used such concepts as activity and activism, behavior and practices, protest and innovation. Today these two approaches co-exist in Russian literature, however «objectifying» approach continues to be quite popular not only in academic, but also in political, public and media discourses.

Political representations of young people (youth policy)

«Socialist» youth was constructed in the framework of the party-state discourses like the «builders of communism», «the Messiah» and «the hope of all progressive mankind», whose life goal was the liberation of the working people all over the world from capitalist exploitation. In conditions of dominance of one-party system and socialist realism in the culture, any manifestation of pluralism was considered as social deviation, some subcultural and countercultural formations were few in number, were persecuted and could only exist in the underground (Lukov 2002, Omelchenko 2005a).

The political agenda of the «youth question» in the post-Soviet period (in 90s) contained a number of issues, which were directed to the systematic objectification, victimization and problematization of youth. The following discourses dominated in state rhetoric: (1) young people as a threat, as that category of the population, which is more prone to alcohol abuse, drug addiction, and criminalization. In the early 2000s it has been supplemented by additional threats – joining the subcultures and extremist organizations; (2) youth as a victim, deprived of the social benefits that were guaranteed by the Soviet state (housing, education, leisure, etc.). A bit later there appeared a new topic - the youth as a victim of Western influence; (3) youth as the hope - the discourse that represents youth, first of all, as a guarantor of literal and political reproduction of the nation, through projects, calling for the implementation of reproductive functions and the maintenance of patriotic spirit.

The modern political history of Russia, most likely, starts from the beginning of the second decade of 2000s. The general nature of the discourses about youth in this period not only kept its previous rhetoric, but radicalized it even more. At the level of the official programs the youth is now considered as «the carrier of innovative potential», and as «the most receptive and mobile part of society», supporting and implementing governmental reforms (Fundamentals of youth policy... 2014, p. 3). On the one hand, such an approach can be characterized as more “subjectifying” - youth is represented as an active agent of social change and responsible citizen in comparison to previous programs. On the other hand, it is important to understand that the innovativeness of youth and citizenship are conceived primarily as a nation-state project for production of a citizen-patriot with a «strong moral core» (Fundamentals of youth policy... 2014, p. 4).

This discourse involves «labeling» of youth through the adoption of a fairly narrow image of a «correct» citizen and patriot, based on neotraditional concepts such as patriotism, militarism, demonstration of loyalty to the current government, radicalism, etc. That state discourse provides a strong social control, which is carried out through the «repressive» practices of control and discipline from public institutions, thus youth policy has mainly restrictive, disciplining and punitive character.

Youth representations in media

In Russia most of the old media (TV, newspapers, and magazines) are controlled by the state – some media sources are governmental; some are partly sponsored or controlled by the state, but strict requirements of external and internal censorship are offered for all of them. And young people are usually represented there in the frame of political discourse and get the evaluations: «right»/«wrong» behavior, “right/wrong” values, loyalty, etc.

The main informational motives for the representation of youth in the media are usually «deviant» consumption (psychoactive drugs), violent practices (murders, fights, and suicides), «low morale», reproductive health and values, education, youth unemployment, relationships (family, romantic, sexual) (Litvina 2013). Youth is represented as socially incompetent, inexperienced, and unable to resist the influence of violence in media and peer environment. So, young person must be taught and controlled also in such areas as politics, consumption, sexual and reproductive strategies. Accordingly, young people who do not fit into the normative standards are marginalized and stigmatized – LGBT, feminists, people living with HIV, and others.

Recently in the media appears information about youth radicalism and growth of radical ideas and values among young people, what is particularly relevant in connection with the terrorist attacks in Europe and the Islamic State. Some studies of «aggressive behavior» of young people (Drozдов 2003) define aggression as one of the psychological and physiological traits of youth and media extrapolate this rhetoric on all young people, identifying youth as more prone to maximalism, radicalism, and extremism. However, movements are recognized as radical or extremist situationally – part of the pro-government movements, voicing the radical guideline, are not avowed as radical and are not banned, like non-government organizations (Chirun 2014), their activity is also hardly covered by the media (for instance, xenophobic action «Russian March»).

As it was noted above, the old media translates state and sometimes academic rhetoric almost unchanged. The only group of young people who could be represented in old media without alarmist and negative connotations is an active and innovative youth who express loyalty to the state authorities and follow current neotraditional political course. In order to be represented young people must also represent «adult» official rhetoric and discourse. Summing up, the old media is the space of adults and «correct» discourse.

Representations of case study groups:

(i) People living with HIV and HIV-activists in St. Petersburg and Kazan (Republic of Tatarstan)

Nowadays in Russia the problem of HIV epidemic development (according to official data of 31.12.2015, in the Russian Federation there are 1,006,388 people living with HIV) is ignored, and people living with HIV are stigmatized and marginalized. As the official structures are not able to cope with the situation, there are various NGOs, that are working in this field. In these NGOs young people are involved as peer educators, outreachers, volunteers. Currently in St. Petersburg there are around 10 NGOs that organize projects aimed at the prevention and control of HIV. For example, there are the Foundation "Humanitarian Action", "Russia, Make A Test," project "Caring E.V.A. - Equal peer "organization" E.V.A. "or information-educational project "Positive trust" organized by the "Positive dialogue". In Kazan there is Svetlana Izambayeva's Foundation providing psychological support to people living with HIV. HIV-activists redefine and represent themselves as active, helping responsible, "positive" and independent. Following John Kitsuse we refer to this "rejection of the negative identity and the transformation of that identity into a positive and viable self-conception" as the politics of "the new deviants".

(ii) Civil activism of young St. Petersburg citizens for the "public morality and order"

Young civil and political activists in St. Petersburg are divided today into two opposing 'camps': the pro-government initiatives that have been organized with the support of 'Rosmolodezh' (Federal Agency for Youth Affairs) and more grass-roots initiatives that claim to have anti-government orientation. At the same time, members of the movement from both camps often represent the same values and goals - patriotism, respect and love for the country, the value of the rights and freedoms. All of them are active and visible participants in public life, defending their right to the city (). Their practices may be quite aggressive and they even can use violence against the "wrong" citizens. They attach particular importance to the visual representations of their actions, which are videotaped and later broadcasted through social networks (especially in youtube).

(iii) Feminist and LGBT activist scene in St. Petersburg

Feminist and LGBT activist initiatives are presented in offline as well as online space, they are self-represented as educational, creative, DIY, autonomous, self-organized, non-governmental, non-discriminatory associations.

LGBT activists gradually move into the online space, where they form "their own" informational spaces, safe areas for discussion, because the organizations and the initiatives in the offline world are closing now for various reasons, for example, in connection with the law on the work of NGOs. Despite the existence of discursive conflict between these activists with the conservative majority, there are also several value-ideological vectors dividing or unifying participants (for instance, contradictory attitude to sex-work and to male- and transgender-inclusivity in different feminist communities).

The effects/outcomes of 'youth actions' on young people.

Effects of youth actions: general trends

As mentioned above, in modern Russia there is the group of highly politicized and politically active youth, but most young people probably can be characterized as apolitical and passive in this sense. We want to stress that such a political apathy is connected primarily with the low evaluation of the effectiveness of youth actions in the conditions of the existing political system in Russia. Studies (Zhelnina 2016) show that young people have quite negative expectations about the possibility of real influence on policy decisions, especially in the organizations and movements that do not belong to the pro-governmental.

Such a critical perception of the real opportunities for youth to influence the politics can be considered as widespread attitude in everyday consciousness. In this context it is especially important to investigate active and involved youth and their vision of the effects of political and civic participation, as well as the effects that active youth actions produce on the rest of the mainstream. For instance, some research demonstrated that participation in youth political associations can provide access to the political and civil resources that are difficult to access other ways, and at the same time it may also have an "educational" and socializing functions (Vlasenko 2014). Thousands of young people passed through the movement "Nashi", summer camps "Seliger" and other actions of this movement. Research shows that with the exception of commissioners (core activist of the movement), "ordinary" members participated in the movement not only because of the desire to support and to implement 'ideological' principles. Their objectives were quite pragmatic: to build a career, to travel around the county, to accumulate the cultural and social capital, etc. These objectives have been successfully achieved (Krivonos 2016). Nevertheless, a certain social effect was also obtained. Patriotic slogans from "Nashi" manifesto, implicated in the national (domestic and Russian) superiority, today are supported by the majority of mainstream youth, and also by some young people from "advanced" (culturally and civilly active) group.

Another tangible effect of massive patriotic education is the strengthening of political opposition between pro-government and anti-government youth.

Part of Russia's young people (mostly opposition) resists the pressure of discursive policy of the state, is not included in the ranks of loyal and patriotic cheers mass constructing alternative identities, values and space. At the same time, our research about anarchists and animal rights activists, agents of new creative urban spaces show the trends of public protests transformation and political confrontations in individualized everyday practices of protest. Its effect is difficult to measure, but the subjective importance of this activity for activists themselves and communities is very high.

Part of Russian young people (mostly oppositional) tries to resist the discursive pressure of the state policies. These youth is not included in the ranks of loyal and patriotic mass, they construct alternative identities, values and spaces. Our research of anarchists, animal defenders, agents of new creative urban spaces show the trends of transformation of public protests and political confrontations into individualized everyday practices of protest, whose effect is difficult to measure, but the subjective importance of this activity for activists themselves and for their communities is very high.

An interesting aspect of the youth activism is the use of unconventional practices in informal and non-institutionalized form (flashmobs, performances, happenings, etc). Creative and artistic activism can be presented in graffiti protest, expressed in the inscriptions and images with a social or political relevance, rap and rock music events, poetry performances and space, performative speech and actions (Akunin, Kashapova 2012). However such youth activities are not always perceived as political protests or civic action, especially in its radical forms (Iarskaia, Lovtsova 2010). These protests can be defined as a form of bullying or crime by authorities or other citizens, as they often are associated with elements of vandalism or physical destruction of symbolically important administrative and government buildings (Efanova 2011). The results of the study of more "radical" youth movements and organizations have shown that the government and government institutions are carrying out "selective stigmatization of certain youth movements and leaders as radicals and extremists" (Chirun 2014, p. 128).

In general a relatively small number of researchers drawn to the theme of innovation and the innovation potential of the youth (Lebedev 2008, Abramov, Zudina 2010, Fedotova 2016). Authors involved in the study of the topic, noted that the features of innovative activity in Russia are quite different from the Western, partly due to less favorable innovative climate, more complex legal procedures (Volobueva 2010, Fedotova 2016), and more strong ideological connotation of the term "innovative" (as the concept of the new national patriotism rhetoric).

Case study groups:

(i) People living with HIV and HIV-activists in St. Petersburg and Kazan (Republic of Tatarstan)

Many social initiatives of HIV activists today have difficulties with their implementation because of the new laws regulating NGO activities, foreign agents, propaganda among minors, and so on. At the same time there is a silencing of the problems of HIV/AIDS at a public level, and there is a high degree of marginalization and stigmatization of people living with HIV / AIDS. HIV-activism can be considered as a mean of neutralizing stigmatization connected with HIV. It allows to resist to deviant identity supposed by dominant stereotypes. The activists see it as the main desired effect of their activity.

(ii) Civil activism of young St. Petersburg citizens for the "public morality and order"

Pro-government youth movement, defending the values of patriotism, orthodoxy, rule of law, fight for a moral order with people in their everyday settings and can be quite rude and aggressive, which lead to the

open public conflicts. Young activists at the same time feel their ideological legitimacy and protection from the police and other authorities who are trying not to intervene or to help these young people. The oppositional youth can aspire to similar goals (to get the right to maintain the order in the city), however, the methods of struggle for this right and the supportive agents can be quite different. Pro-government movement are well funded by the states (through grant system, and direct financial support), anti-government movement have to mobilize the resources of their imagination to keep their actions at the same level as the pro-government movements do. It is worth noting that the activists do not usually stop at one event and carried out a series of actions, and they often have a theatrical character. And the success of a particular action depends on the degree of aggressiveness, which was used for the campaign.

(iii) Feminist and LGBT activist scene in St. Petersburg

Today in Russia there is the revival of conservative ideology which is defined by some researchers as neo-patriarchy. It implies the strict regulation of gender and sexuality, prescribing and legitimizing the concrete models of living, in particular orienting women only to childbirth, housework and dependence from men. At the same time, the democratic values (including value of tolerance and equality) are seen as Western and defined as opposite to 'traditional Russian values' and as threats to Russian youth. This ideology is also reproduced at the level of Russian laws. The recent severe legal regulation of NGOs (the getting of the status of foreign agent according with Federal Law of July 20, 2012 N 121-FZ "On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation in terms of regulating the activities of non-profit organizations that perform functions of a foreign agent") and the lack of possibilities for them to get the funding from foreign foundations decrease significantly their activity for developing equality and protect the rights. However, young activists continue to develop informally their community and their cultural and civil activity.

On the one hand, the result of LGBT and feminist groups' variety of activities include the creation of a safe space where young LGBT and feminists feel themselves physically and psychologically protected. For example, during feminist festival "LaDIY Fest" in Saint Petersburg, a special group of volunteers worked in "Awareness Team", aimed at creating a safe space and the protection of participants' personal boundaries during the event. On the other hand, public events (protest demonstrations, screenings and discussions, theater performances, concerts and such festivals as "Side by Side", "Queer Fest") are spreading information not only inside the community, but also to a wider audience of sympathizers and friendly people.

Acknowledgement: This report includes information, about their case studies, from colleagues: Nadya Nartova, Iskender Yasaveyev, Anastasia Shilova, Elena Onegina, Olga Senkova, Alena Kravtsova, and Svetlana Knyazeva.

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10. CROATIA (IPI)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report on Croatian national and historic context starts with a short introduction providing basic information on complex historic and political conditions of the past in order to understand present-days conditions of youth (dis)engagement. Among other aspects, the very high youth unemployment rate should be mentioned (this is the third in Europe, after Greece and Spain), also the fact that young people in Croatia are more likely than in other countries to live with their parents – 70% of young Croats live with their parents, more than any other country in the EU. Researchers also found high level of political marginalisation (Ilišin; 1999, 2003, 2006), and very low level of participation in society (Franc et al. 2013).

Focusing on those parts of social context and social processes which would provide a better understanding of the selected case studies (youth social actors like 'The White Stones' or 'Zagreb Pride'), this report gives a brief explanation of 'subculturalisation process' and 'new forms of social engagement' in Croatia, emphasising two selected case studies/youth social actors.

Varteks FC went bankrupt in 2011 under the weight of numerous corruption affairs of the local establishment that managed it. Varteks supporters, led by the White Stones ultras group, founded Varteks FC the same year. Since then, young people in this small urban area have been fighting with unfriendly surroundings, and the club is surviving despite obstructions from its surroundings. Members of the White Stones and other activists surrounding Varteks have been labelled and stigmatised, especially in contact with the police and the local political establishment. Considering their fight against corruption and the Croatian Football Federation, they are fairly isolated from the majority of other sports and social actors. They represent a Croatian example of broader processes in which supporters found their own clubs (such as FCUM, Austria Salzburg, AFC Wimbledon, and others), which falls under one of the strategies of the wider social movement known as AMF (Against Modern Football).

Although football supporters frequently became typical objects of moral panic, sometimes reaching levels of mass hysteria or 'lynch atmosphere', the issue regarding homosexuality and the LGBT community provoked serious conflicts and various types of activism (pro & contra) in Croatian society. LGBT rights activists, with police assistance, succeeded in holding the first 'gay pride' parade in Zagreb, (2002.) in spite of violence (32 individuals were injured) and tear gas being thrown at the parade. Public support in Croatia was not significant at the time, and participants in the first gay pride parade were met by numerous counter-protestors. Gay pride has been held yearly ever since. The first years of gay pride saw frequent physical attacks on participants; however, there was later a considerable improvement in public response to both the parade and to LGBTIQ rights issues in Croatia. Varteks supporters, who we chose for our case study, succeeded in creating a football club with its old name, surviving for five years in difficult conditions, advancing in league rankings, and creating a strong example of advancement despite stigmatisation. They are a symbol of opposition to the powerful Croatian football and political establishment. 'Zagreb Pride' activists succeeded in stepping out of the sphere of private life, gathering people, and winning over the part of the general public that respects human rights, despite having brought upon themselves the rage of some of the conservative public and conservative social actors. Both groups, regardless of the great differences between them, can be considered youth social actors that have, in their response to control and stigmatisation, succeeded in creating something new – an association, a football club, continued public

presence, their own space – which bears witness to constructive solutions for the group and for the individuals who work within the group.

The report ends with a chapter on crime and victimisation, giving various data regarding perpetrators, crime victims, control, policing, and security in Croatian society; partly because it presents other important aspects of context shared by two selected case studies/youth social actors (for example new law framework for football supporters) and partly because of the 'reserve' case study in the Croatian case – 'young ex-offenders'.

NATIONAL CONTEXT: short history

In the 20th century, Croatia was part of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy (until 1918), the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes / Kingdom of Yugoslavia (until 1941), part of the fascist Kingdom of Italy (until 1943), the fascist Independent State of Croatia (until 1945), and the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (until 1991). The first parliamentary elections with general voting rights were held in 1990, Croatia became an internationally recognised state in 1992, and it became a member of the EU in 2013. Three wars and political and economic instability marked Croatia's history throughout the 20th century, and these events still exercise a strong influence on its current state. The transition process from socialism to capitalism and from totalitarianism into democracy has lasted for more than 25 years. Rogić (2000, 2009) stated that Croatia's transition process has been idiosyncratic, and the foundational difference between these processes in other post-socialist countries and the key moments of its progress are tied to the Croatian War of Independence (1991-1995). Every transition process is traumatic, however the traumatic experiences of Croatia's transition placed even greater stress on young people, who underwent the process of personal maturation and undertook social roles during a time marked by the expansion and domination of the values of political capitalism and consumer culture (Županov 1995). Croatian society is burdened with various forms of nepotism, corruption, and criminality in the political system. Demographic indicators concerning young people in Croatia are negative, as are trends relating to the general population. Paradoxically, the unemployment rate among young people in Croatia has risen steadily. According to Eurostat statistics, the unemployment rate among young people was 25% in 2009, 36.1% in 2011, and 49.7% in 2013. Eurostat statistics for 2016 show that young people in Croatia are record holders for years spent living with their parents – 70% of young Croats live with their parents, more than any other country in the EU. In addition to this, young people in Croatia are politically marginalised (Ilišin 1999, 2003, 2006). Undeniably, the existing social and political processes have a strong influence on the political alienation of young people, and despite their interest in cooperating in the life of the community, they are drawn more and more into the private sphere and are more and more apolitical.

Finally, differences in educational opportunities among young people in Croatia must be noted, not only for post-secondary school but for secondary school as well. Educational opportunities in Croatia are strongly defined by the educational level of one's parents – there is a strong tendency for individuals to obtain the same educational level as their parents (Matković 2009, 2010). Because of the facts mentioned here, it is unsurprising that research has shown that a significant majority of young people in Croatia consider the existing social relations to be unjust (Ljubotina, 2004).

The process of 'subculturalization'

After World War II, within the framework of socialist society, the first non-official mass action of young people began with student protests in the late 1960s. Student demands for the democratisation of society included everything from demands to quicken the socialist transformation of society and reduce social

differences to calls for increased autonomy for Croatia and the transformation of the Yugoslav federation. Aside from various student movements (1968, 1971), through the 1970s, the initial domestic reception of the hippie movement and early rock culture developed into a wide urban scene of various subcultural styles. As elsewhere, young people created their own lifestyles and identities through the use of musical genres or attachment to a particular football team as the key elements by which to mediate individual and group identity, combined with clothing, slang, attitude, hairstyles, rituals, and drugs. Moral panic is a constant, regardless of changes in society from socialism to capitalism; during socialism, moral panic surrounding the punk movement marked the first half of the 1980s, while moral panic surrounding the dark wave/gothic subcultural style marked the late 1980s. Football supporters were the subject of moral panic in both systems – the most intense moral panic surrounding football supporters, resulting in a media and political lynch, happened recently during the 2016 UEFA European Championship (Croatia-Czech Republic, 2:2, St. Etienne) when young Croatian supporters, as a part of their fight against the corrupt football federation, attempted to interrupt the patch by throwing flares onto the field. The dominant media and political interpretation of this act made use of concepts comparable to that of the description of a terrorist attack. In the last fifteen years, young people have been actors in various social movements and mass protests, such as protests against the construction of a shopping centre in Zagreb for which the city government gave public space and part of a pedestrian zone in Varšavska Street to a private investor (2006-2011). The student movement in 2009 was also massive in scale – founded on resistance to the commercialisation of education, it carried out the longest and most successful student strike to date, however today it is present at a smaller number of schools. Young people were also the main actors in the ‘Facebook protests’ against the government in 2011, referred to as such because the first gatherings were organised via a Facebook group.

LGBT Community: ‘Respect Human Rights’

LGBT rights activists, with police assistance, succeeded in holding the first ‘gay pride’ parade in Zagreb, in spite of violence (32 individuals were injured) and tear gas being thrown at the parade. Public support in Croatia was not significant at the time, and participants in the first gay pride parade were met by numerous counter-protestors. Gay pride has been held yearly ever since. The first years of gay pride saw frequent physical attacks on participants; however there was later a considerable improvement in public response to both the parade and to LGBTIQ rights issues in Croatia. In 2008, the organisational council of Zagreb Pride officially founded the Zagreb Pride association, which, in addition to organising the gay pride parade, began to organise other activities to promote and protect the rights of LGBTIQ individuals. Although the relationship towards the Zagreb Pride association and the gay pride parade is changing, considering the current political situation and the activities of particular interest groups and initiatives, the gay pride parade itself aided in the greater visibility and better acceptance of the LGBTIQ community in Croatia, for which cause over 15,000 participants took part in individual gay pride parades.

New forms of social engagement

In some areas, young people managed to win the fight for control of some spaces (through squatting which later grew into an agreement with city government) in which they have autonomy, often sharing spaces with various associations (examples such as the former ‘Karlo Rojc’ barracks in Pula or the former Medika pharmaceutical factory in Zagreb). Some young people active in the aforementioned protests (‘Facebook’ protests, Varšavska protests) founded a political party, and some of their members are members of the newly-elected parliament (at elections in 2016, four members of the Human Wall party (Cro. *Živi zid*) were elected who were also active in these cases). Mustapić and Hrستیć (2016) note that Human Wall, as an

electoral surprise and a completely new party in parliament, are a typical populist party in the ideological sense.

As concerns the representation of youth in society in general, one key organisation is the Croatian Youth Network (Cro. *Mreža mladih Hrvatske*, MMH/CYN). CYN is a non-governmental and non-profit association founded in 2002. It advocates and promotes the interests and positions of young people according to the principles of tolerance and understanding. It brings together national and local non-governmental youth organisations in Croatia that have voluntarily joined the Network. It is an alliance of 66 non-governmental youth organisations acting as the National Youth Council in Croatia. However, regardless of the existence of various associations and formal bodies (such as the Youth Council in every municipality), the participation of young people in society is fairly low. Research consistently shows that the express majority of young people are not active within the existing system, including both church and sports activities (Franc et al. 2013).

Football supporters are often the subject of moral panic in society, and there are situations in which their representation is hindered by an atmosphere of labelling. However, every large football supporter group also functions as an NGO, and in many situations of conflict, representatives of supporter associations have made public statements. Varteks FC went bankrupt in 2011 under the weight of numerous corruption affairs of the local establishment that managed it. Varteks supporters, led by the White Stones ultras group, founded Varteks FC the same year. Since then, young people in this small urban area have been fighting with unfriendly surroundings, and the club is surviving despite obstructions from its surroundings. Members of White Stones and other activists surrounding Varteks have been labelled and stigmatised, especially in contact with the police and the local political establishment. Considering their fight against corruption and the Croatian Football Federation, they are fairly isolated from the majority of other sports and social actors. They present themselves and articulate their positions in various ways – through the work of the club and advancing in football competition rankings, through its official website, through numerous meetings, and through formal and non-formal forms of socialising. They represent a Croatian example of broader processes in which supporters found their own clubs (such as FCUM, Austria Salzburg, AFC Wimbledon, and others), which falls under one of the strategies of the wider social movement known as AMF (Against Modern Football). There is another example of supporter action that completely steps out of the boundaries of stereotype – a small group of Zagreb FC supporters called ‘White Angels’ who have defined themselves as an antifascist actor, the only supporter group that has explicitly expressed their support for the LGBT community by regularly bringing rainbow flags to matches. After a complete break with Zagreb FC, the group founded the ‘Zagreb 041’ football club, which currently competes in the lowest competitive category. In addition to football matches, they also take part in different forms of action, such as the fight for human rights, aid to immigrants, asylum seekers, etc (Hodges 2016).

Youth, social engagement and media

The position and social role of youth during the socialist period was defined by the work of the ‘Socialist Youth League of Yugoslavia’ (Cro. *Savez socijalističke omladine Jugoslavije*), which was, like all other organisations, under the control of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. The work of young people in this context involved everything from communist indoctrination to the self-organisation of young people surrounding particular subjects and interests that were more or less socially acceptable. Communist party supervision over the autonomous work of young people weakened with time, especially in the 1970s and 1980s. During the 1990s, football supporters, especially the Bad Blue Boys (supporters of Dinamo Zagreb), were labelled as a violent and ‘anti-state element’ by the political establishment and most of the media, which was then almost entirely owned by the state (Vrcan 2003). The appearance of the rave subculture

suffered a similar fate in the media, especially as concerning the use of synthetic drugs (Perasović 2001). After the year 2000, print and electronic media was privatised and internet communication developed, especially social networks. The political activity of young people was displayed through mass protests, especially those of students opposed to the neoliberal commodification of higher education. Hromadžić (2014) points to the fact that the publishings of the Europe Press Holding media corporation (among whose holdings is *Jutarnji list*, Croatia's most influential daily newspaper) have established themselves in recent years as an effective tool in promoting neoliberal capitalism through the practices of labelling and denouncing social subjects who do not support or cannot accept these tendencies ('overpaid' university professors and 'lazy' students, suspicious civil-social activists, etc). In other words, activists in the fight for the general social good are stigmatised, especially students, student protest activities, and the blockade of colleges in Croatia in 2009. In recent years, a similar campaign in the majority of the media has apparently been aimed at labelling and defaming football supporters/ultras as violent hooligans as a result of their fight and demands aimed at opposing criminal activity and corruption in Croatian football (Mustapić 2015). As a youth subculture, football supporters are mostly approached in a sensationalistic manner, through the use of the concept of moral panic (Perasović 2015). The LGBT community is one of the most marginalised minorities. The relationship of part of the (conservative) media and Catholic press towards the gay rights movement is especially negative. Poštić and Milković (2013:18) emphasise that Croatia, as compared to other members of the EU, is the country with the highest percentage of LGBT individuals who have experienced discrimination or violence because of their sexual orientation within the 'last 12 months' (60%). Lori (2004), after research into the relationship of print media towards LGTB themes, concludes that it is dominantly sensationalistic, superficial, full of prejudice and stereotypes, and discriminating.

Discussions about the effect and social consequences of youth actions have been long present in sociology – was the 1968 student movement, together with the demands of the new left and counterculture, actually defeated? While some claim that it was unquestionably defeated, others contend that a fair amount of revolutionary ideas survived in the sphere of culture and everyday life. In Croatia in the late 1980s, a well-known author from the 'Praxis' group published a book entitled 'The Restrained Utopia' (Kuvačić 1986), while an anthology with the title 'The Renewal of Utopian Energies' (Pavlović 1987) was released at the same time. If we observe the most significant action of young people in Croatia in the last 15 years, they again seem to be unsuccessful and full of defeat – the shopping centre was built despite lengthy protests, the student movement perhaps slowed the trend towards the commercialisation of education, but it did not realise the goal of free education for all. Movements that intended to change the political system did not change it, but they did create new actors on the political scene, changing their biographies from those of street protestors to those of members of parliament. Varteks supporters, who we chose for our case study, succeeded in creating a football club with its old name, surviving for five years in difficult conditions, advancing in league rankings, and creating a strong example of advancement despite stigmatisation. They are a symbol of opposition to the powerful Croatian football and political establishment. 'Zagreb Pride' activists succeeded in stepping out of the sphere of private life, gathering people, and winning over the part of the general public that respects human rights, despite having brought upon themselves the rage of some of the conservative public and conservative social actors. Both groups, regardless of the great differences between them, can be considered youth social actors that have, in their response to control and stigmatisation, succeeded in creating something new – an association, a football club, continued public presence, their own space – which bears witness to constructive solutions for the group and for the individuals who work within the group.

Crime and victimization

Although youth in Croatia is usually defined in the age range from 15 to 29 (e.g. as by the National Youth Programme from 2003 to 2008), based on the level of legal responsibility and types of sentencing, Croatian legislation distinguishes (see Statistical Reports, 2016) between juveniles (14-18 years old) and adults (over 18 years of age). There is also a distinction between *younger juveniles* (individuals over 14 but not yet 16 at the time of their having committed a criminal offence, who cannot be sentenced to juvenile imprisonment but may only be given educational measures) and *older juveniles* (individuals over 16 but not yet 18 at the time of their having committed a criminal offence, who may be given educational measures but may also be sentenced to juvenile imprisonment if the Criminal Code foresees such conditions). A distinction is also made between *younger adults* (individuals who, at the time of their having committed a criminal offence, are over 18 but under 21, whom the court may sentence to educational measures consisting of special obligations, increased supervision, juvenile imprisonment, and – if the perpetrator is under 21 – whom the court may assign to a centre for disciplinary development or correctional institution) and *adults*. Thus, police and official national statistics usually use these categories in their reports, and the data that will be presented do not necessarily refer to individuals between the ages of 16 and 29. Additionally, data for certain years are not available, and thus cannot be presented.

Perpetrators

There is a downward trend in crime rates among both adults and juveniles in Croatia. In the period from 2000 to 2015, between 51136 (in 2014) and 76409 (in 2005) adults were reported for criminal offences, of whom approximately 13.5% were women (33776 accused in 2009, 15198 in 2015; 25368 convicted in 2009, 12552 in 2015) (Statistical Reports, 2016). From 2000 to 2015, between 1739 (in 2015) and 3419 (in 2008) juveniles were reported for criminal offences, of whom approximately 7.5% were girls (1306 accused in 2004, 6492 accused in 2015; 994 convicted in 2002, 420 in 2015) (Statistical Reports, 2016). The majority of juvenile perpetrators were recorded for vandalism and property offences, and the majority of pronounced criminal penalties or other measures for juveniles were educational measures (more than 85%). Among older juveniles, the most frequent sentence was warning measures and increased supervision (Statistical Reports, 2016). Up to 65% of juvenile perpetrators come from intact families, while 22% live with a mother only (Statistical report, 2015). The number of juveniles accused of misdemeanour crimes is also decreasing. In 2005, 11323 juveniles were accused of misdemeanours, while almost three times fewer (n=3959) were accused in 2015. The majority of misdemeanours committed by juvenile perpetrators were disturbances of the peace, followed by misdemeanours involving road traffic and public safety.

Also, the proportion of young persons (aged 16 to 29) among the overall number of criminal offenders has fallen in the last few years. From 2008 to 2012, this proportion ranged from 40-43%, however it has dropped to below 36% since 2013 and is still falling (Ministry of Internal Affairs, 2016).

Crime victims

Statistics on victimization in Croatia are truly scarce. The police have reported data on victims based on the number of people who reported crimes to police only in the past five years. The proportion of young people in the total number of victims of offences in the last five years ranged from 41% (in 2015) to 48% (in 2010 and 2011). According to data on self-reported victimization (Pillar's barometer of Croatian society 2003, 2005, 2007, 2014, 2016), between 18% (2003) and 33% (2016) of adults in Croatia reported being the victim of at least one violent and/or non-violent crime during their lifetime. There is a fluctuation in the reported level of victimization over the years, but an increase has been noted since 2007. The rate of non-violent victimisation is higher than that of violent victimization among Croatian citizens, while younger people were more often subjects to violent victimization than older people.

Control, policing, and security

Substantial police reform in Croatia began in 2001 with the passing of the new Police Act. At the end of this process, the number of people employed in the police force was substantially reduced (Koprić 2016). By the end of 2002, the 'Community police' project began, and the process of harmonising the Croatian police system to EU *acquis* also began parallel with the process of Croatian accession to the European Union (Koprić, 2014). At the end of 2015, there were a total of 25,672 police officers employed, of whom 29.7% were women. As part of the *Organising crime prevention in the local community* project, 225 Crime Prevention Councils were established in Croatia, of which 114 were formed at the city or county level and 111 were formed at the municipality or neighbourhood level (Buchheit & Karlović 2015). As far as minors are concerned, with the enactment of the Juvenile Courts Act in 1997, the Juvenile Delinquency and Crimes Against Youth and Family department was established within the police force (Cro. *Odjel maloljetničke delinkvencije i kriminaliteta na štetu mladeži i obitelji*). Today, special police officers are included in all cases involving minors. Also, in major Croatian cities, there are 15 specially-equipped rooms for interviewing crime victims who are children or minors. The Croatian police force is highly focused on activities related to the education of youth, the prevention of juvenile delinquency, violence, and substance abuse, as well as on reporting and sanctioning the risky behaviours of young people, such as fining vendors for selling tobacco and alcohol to minors, sanctioning minor gambling, preventing drug abuse, sanctioning driving under the influence and risky driving, and sanctioning children under the age of 16 for being out after 11PM alone without a parent or guardian. In 2007, the Subdivision for the Prevention of Violence at Sporting Events was founded (Cro. *Odsjek za sprečavanje nereda na športskim natjecanjima*).

Data from surveys conducted in 2014, 2015, and 2016 on a nationally representative random samples of adults in Croatia (1,000 in 2014 and 2015 and 750 in 2016) showed that, when asked how much they trust each of eight institutions (the army, the president, the police, the UN, European parliament, the legal system, Croatian parliament, the government, political parties), citizens displayed a relatively stable level of trust in the police over time, only trusting the army and the president more than they trust the police (Pilar's barometer of Croatian society, 2014, 2015, 2016). However, since the level of Croatian citizen's trust in institutions is generally relatively low, they actually neither trust nor mistrust the police (Pilar's barometer of Croatian society, 2014, 2015, 2016). The same ambiguous level of trust in police was also observed in previous surveys on nationally representative random samples of adults in Croatia (1,248 in 2003, 1,129 in 2007, and 1,610 in 2010), however Croatian citizens had a higher level of trust in political parties, the judiciary, and Croatian parliament at the time (Pilar's barometer of Croatian society, 2003, 2007, 2010).

Data collected from 4500 adults in Croatia in 2009 (Cajner Mraović 2009) showed that one third of citizens had contact with the police in the year preceding the survey. Most of them described their experiences as positive. While 45% of citizens stated that they wanted more frequent contact with police officers, 48% do not want to have any contact with police officers. Of nine criminal acts, Croatian citizens were most often the victims of fraud, followed by physical assault and car/bicycle theft. Citizens most often report car theft to the police, and rape least often. The most common reason why Croatian citizens do not report a crime to the police is the belief that the police force is helpless to solve their problem.

As concerns the representation of crime in the media, analysis of the front pages of all national newspapers showed that one fifth of the stories on cover pages were related to crime in 2001 (Matić 2002), while in 2011 (Elezović 2012) an analysis of 6 (of 14) national newspapers' front pages over a period of 6 months

showed that approximately 21.3% of headlines on front pages were related to the legal system, the judiciary, and crime.

According to data on perceived problems in Croatia, during the 1990s, the most pronounced perceived problems were unemployment, the low standard of living, or poverty, while in the 2000s, corruption and crime were added to this list (Franc, Ivičić & Šakić, 2007; Čular 2005; Ilišin 2005; Rimac 2004; IDEA 2002). In surveys on nationally representative samples, crime was perceived as one of the top three most pronounced problems in Croatia, usually by 33-50% of citizens (Standard Eurobarometer, 2006). Among specific types of crime and violence, the majority of participants mentioned alcohol and drug abuse as the most serious problems on the local level and crime in general as the most serious problem on the national level, behind the problem of corruption (Franc, Ivičić, & Šakić 2007). Ilišin (2005) analysed how social problems were perceived by young people. Out of 17 problems, young people considered unemployment, economic problems, and crime in the transition process (corruption and bribery) the three largest problems in Croatian society. In a survey on a nationally representative sample in 2014, Croatian citizens considered political corruption, unemployment, the collapse of the economy, and the low standard of living the most serious problems (open measure, Pilar's Barometer, 2014).

As concerning safety, between 2003 and 2016, various surveys on nationally representative samples of Croatian citizens measured how safe Croats feel in particular situations and how worried they are about falling victim to a particular crime (Pilar's barometer of Croatian society, 2003- 2016). The results showed that between 6% (2011) and 16% (2016) of Croatian citizens do not generally feel safe in life; between 13.4% (2014) and 27.8% (2008) do not feel safe walking alone at night; between 7.9% (2007) and 14.4% (2016) do not feel safe in their home at night; and between 20.2% (2016) and 30.1% (2008) do not feel safe on public transit at night (answers 'very unsafe' and 'unsafe' collapsed). Croatian citizens are most worried about becoming victim of burglary (between 11.1% in 2011 and 39.2% in 2003), followed by theft (between 6.7% in 2011 and 44.6% in 2005) and violence (between 9% in 2011 and 30.2% in 2005). In the last two years surveyed (2014 and 2016), between 14% and 25% of citizens expressed their worry about becoming victim of burglary, theft, and/or violence.

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Report of national context in 10 participating countries (level 1)

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Funding

PROMISE has received funding from the *European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme* under grant agreement No. 693221.

Duration

01 May 2016 – 30 April 2019 (3 years)

For more information

Please see the website: www.promise.manchester.ac.uk/en/home-page/
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