PROMISE: Promoting Youth Involvement and Social Engagement: Opportunities and Challenges for 'Conflicted' Young People across Europe

WP6: From Conflict to Innovation: Ethnographic Case Studies

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

Cluster Analysis:
Economy/Leisure/Space

Benjamin Perasović and Marko Mustapić

Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar

Executive summary:

This report presents findings from six individual case studies completed by PROMISE Consortium partners in six countries: Spain, Italy, Croatia, Slovakia, Finland, and Estonia. These case studies make up the 'Economy/Leisure/Space' cluster and the data collected for them are analysed here using a meta-ethnographic synthesis method to analyse the collected data. The groups of young people were selected based on their stigmatisation in their societies and local communities resulting in continuous conflict with social norms and institutions. The cluster analysis responded to three research questions: 1. How do young people respond to the conflicts they experience and with what outcomes? 2. What enables and what inhibits the social involvement of young people? 3. What is the role of space in the different forms of social activism of young people? Responses to conflict were analysed through three main concepts: individual and group aspect of conflict, active and passive responses to conflict, from conflict to social innovation – and back. Regarding enablers and inhibitors of social involvement, five main concepts were derived: institutional space/centre as the great enabler, significant elders – the great enablers: the importance of intergenerational interaction, barriers/inhibitors as enablers of activism, structural barriers: (absent) state and neo-liberal values, passivity. The third research question, regarding the role of space, was analysed through four main concepts: market pressures and struggle for space, given space and appropriation, public space and (temporarily) appropriation, space and identity.

This report should be read in conjunction with the relevant 'General Introduction' document.

Contents

This report should be read in conjunction with the relevant 'General Introduction' document.

1. Introduction

This report presents findings from six individual case studies reports completed by PROMISE Consortium partners in six countries: Spain, Italy, Croatia, Slovakia, Finland, and Estonia. These case studies make up the 'Economy, Leisure, Space' cluster and the data collected for them are analysed here using a meta-ethnographic synthesis method (see Introduction to Deliverable 6.2). The selected ethnographic studies deal with groups of young people who are in conflict with institutions, authorities, and older generations (the mainstream culture), and were selected as relevant in the individual social contexts of the countries in which the research was conducted as part of the PROMISE project. The groups of young people were selected based on their stigmatisation in their societies and local communities resulting in continuous conflict with social norms and institutions. The aim of the researchers was to identify the group and individual responses of the stigmatised young people to this kind of social pressure, ranging from different forms of resistance and attempts to resolve the problems, to complete isolation. Forms of group behaviour aimed at inclusion in the society that imposed pressure on them, including different forms of innovative social activism, are of particular importance. For the purpose of this cluster, groups whose social activities were mediated through available economic resources and the way they spent their free time, as well as by various aspects of their use of space, were included in the analysis. The cluster meta-analysis included the following case studies: *Youth activities at leftist/ex-squat social centre* (Italy), *Intergenerational contests and spatial occupations in the media city* (Finland), *Returning young migrants* (Slovakia), *Young people involved in alternative building practices* (Spain), *Varteks and White Stones (football supporters' club)* (Croatia), and *Rural youth in Seto heritage region* (Estonia). The Estonian study is also included in the 'Culture/Politics' cluster analysis, in addition to this cluster.

2. Scope of the synthesised data

Approaches to conducting ethnographic research vary according to the target population and the social context in which the study is conducted. There are, broadly speaking, two kinds of ethnographic study included in this cluster analysis. The first group contains studies characterised by greater participation in terms of the everyday lives of respondents and their group activities, as well as the existence of a coherent group that is being studied. The second group involves studies characterised by a diffusion or heterogeneity in the sample, which is divided into several subgroups, or by the lack of a typical group of young people operating homogenously in terms of their everyday or occasional activities. These differences are also reflected in the amount of time researchers were able to spend 'in the field' with the young people.

All six ethnographic studies were intensively carried out at the chosen locations. However, some lasted a short time (the shortest lasting a week) and others significantly longer (up to several months). Apart from participant observation, data collection also included the conducting of semi-structured interviews with members of the studied groups of young people (from 16 to 29 years old). Some respondents older than 29 years old were also included in interviews in individual cases. The reason for this is the specific social context within which the group is active, as well as the type of organisation and human relations in the functioning of the group itself. In total, 134 people were interviewed, of whom 61 were women, 70 men, two non-binary and one transgender. All interviews were recorded, transcribed and encoded for analysis in the NVivo program. Respondents were made familiar with the anonymisation procedures and gave their oral or written consent for the use of the

data from the interview. Transcripts were encoded at two levels, so that in total there were 846 level 1 nodes and 129 level 2 nodes in all transcripts. In all level 1 nodes, a total of 11,808 references were recorded.

In Italy, the ethnographic study was conducted in the suburbs of Naples, where the researcher spent a week and then conducted 20 interviews, of which 6 were with women and 14 with men. The research was performed in the period between May 2017 and May 2018. The researcher also points to the underrepresentation of women in the sample as a consequence of the early motherhood of women among the already marginalised young people in the neighbourhood. The stigmatised and marginalised groups of young people were socialised in the deprived neighbourhoods of Naples, and very frequently came from dysfunctional families, often having problems at school, and largely exposed to the influence of street gangs and criminal organisations. Young people in such an environment will often have experienced their family members or friends being killed in conflicts among criminal organisations and street gangs. The researcher established contact with a local youth centre, and its head was her key informant, taking care of establishing trust with the respondents. The main form of innovative activism, it is argued, is circus and theatre activities through which these poorly educated young people from disadvantaged areas seek to shape the local culture/community.

In Spain, ethnographic research was conducted at five locations and with five different groups concerned with constructing self-building alternative accommodation. Altogether, the researcher spent 20 days in the field at five locations in Spain in the period between February and October 2017, interviewing 23 people, of whom 14 were women and 9 men. The researcher considered the selected youth groups economically disadvantaged. He encountered strong discontent with the mainstream culture and its values, a feeling of uncertainty, a high unemployment rate, and leftist political attitudes. The researcher highlights an innovative social activism which through group rejection of public housing policies occupies public and private spaces and builds alternative accommodation.

In Slovakia, an ethnographic study was conducted with a heterogeneous group of young people who returned from their studies or work abroad. Returning young migrants are characterised in Slovakian public discourse and in their own narratives as bearers of social change and social development. The researchers selected this population of young people based on the double stigmatisation they experience as foreigners/outsiders both abroad and upon their return to their homeland. Some of their experiences and different types of capital are utilised for personal change. However, some of these improved forms of capital lead to activities which bring about change at the micro (family and friends) or mezzo social level (local community and society). The researchers first conducted 26 interviews with repats (of whom 17 were women and 9 men) in different parts of Slovakia by applying the snowball sample method. The main criterion in the selection of respondents was their having spent at least a year living abroad, and thus the sample included eight respondents aged 29-32. After this, they conducted an ethnographic study over 30 days between March 2017 and January 2018 with activists in a self-financing alternative cultural centre which is in conflict with the political establishment in a small provincial town.

In Finland, the ethnographic study was conducted with a stigmatised group of young people in Helsinki. The young people met at a cultural centre situated in an industrial zone that is oriented towards the alternative scene (punk, anti-fascists, hippy, etc.). The centre is financed by the Municipal Youth Department. The study was aimed at identifying the way young people coped with intergenerational conflict and stigma in Finnish society and how they utilised public space in

innovative social activism. The researcher conducted an ethnographic study of two groups of young people active in an urban circus and a rainbow café. The study was conducted intensively from February to May 2017, and after this semi-structured interviews were carried out with 20 respondents. This study is the only one in the cluster which, along with men and women, also included non-binary and transgender people. The key informant was the director of the centre, and in groups that were considered anarchist there was no open or formal hierarchy, but there were internal hierarchized relations. Young people in these groups had a distinct feeling of being stigmatised, and of uncertainty and distrust towards politics and society, and particularly towards older generations. At the same time, young people in the studied groups had a strong feeling of belonging to the group and attachment to the cultural centre and do-it-yourself activities.

In Croatia, the ethnographic study was conducted with a stigmatised group of young people in Varaždin. Young people in Croatia are politically marginalised, and subcultures are stigmatised. This is true in particular of the ultras subculture. In Varaždin, football fans themselves founded FC Varteks, and the club functions on the principle of 'one member one vote' and a do-it-yourself culture. The researchers chose this case because it is the first so-called 'Against Modern Football' (AMF) club in Croatia. Namely, the respondents share a feeling of belonging to the ultras subculture and the international AMF movement. The ethnographic study was conducted through more than 1,500 hours of fieldwork with group members from September 2016 to January 2018. At the end of the study, 25 semi-structured interviews were conducted, of which only two were with women and seven with respondents older than 29 years of age. This was the case because of the specific characteristics of the ultras subculture. The key informant, a former student of both researchers, and at the same time a member of the White Stones and FC Varteks, played an important role in the realisation of the study. The above is very significant because both researchers were perceived primarily as Hajduk fans and members of a rival ultras group, and only after this as sociologists. With time, as confidence was established, this perception of the group almost disappeared. Furthermore, in the second part of the fieldwork, a younger ultra played an important role, becoming a kind of integrative point for a good part of the younger generation, and with whom the researchers established a significant friendship. Without this friendship, it would have been much harder to establish confidence between the researchers and the youngest generation of fans, owing to the large age gap between the researchers and the youngest ultras, who are still at high school. The members of the White Stones and Varteks are in conflict with the local establishment (primarily owing to their inability to use the municipal stadium) and part of the local community, particularly the football federation and the police.

In Estonia, the ethnographic study was conducted with a stigmatised group of young people from the rural region of Seto. In the first phase, the researcher conducted participant observations in the Seto region, seeking, through conversations and experiences with older individuals, to gain a deeper insight into the context in which the young people were socialised. In addition, she also made use of social networks. The researcher spent 90 days in the field from March to July 2017. She was with the young people in July, August and October 2017, and also in January 2018. Twenty people aged from 14 to 29 years old were interviewed, of whom 12 were women and 8 men. In determining the sample of respondents of this heterogeneous group of young people, the head of the cultural centre at the Karitsa municipality played a key role. The researcher highlights that some of the respondents were not ready for a longer conversation. As a result, the interviews, carried out in Tallinn, Tartu, and the village of Atsi lasted from 15 to 90 minutes, and one interview was carried out over Skype instead of in person.

3. Key findings

3.1. How do young people respond to the conflicts they experience and with what outcomes?

Various contexts and various cases also contain various conflict types. We divided most of the responses and outcomes according to three main concepts derived from the analysis.

3.1.1. Individual and group dimensions of conflict

While in some cases the conflicts were associated with the group, group experience, group participation and accentuated group identity, in other cases (such as the Slovakian, and partly also the Estonian and Spanish cases) individual experience preceded group experience, or was at least equal in the process of interaction between the individual and the group. This means that on the one hand there is conflict in which young people are protagonists with a group identity, but on the other hand there is conflict that they enter into in the first place as individuals, and after which they gain a group identity through the conflict or conflict awareness.

In the Finnish and Croatian – and partly also the Spanish – cases, young people experienced conflict as group members, as anti-racists/anti-fascists, hippies, football fans (ultras), environmentalists, vegetarians, LGBT activists, people pursuing an alternative lifestyle, and squatters. In the Italian case, young people from the suburb of Naples were not part of a group of their choice but rather representatives of a socio-economic class of the deprived who experienced conflict in their daily lives and became aware that they belonged to a group (i.e. social class, neighbourhood) through being stigmatised and through the tangible consequences of deprivation. The young Slovaks, in an undefined potential conflict with their social environment, primarily individually, decided to migrate and seek a better life and different social surroundings, and only after their repatriation and wish to become involved based on different patterns of behaviour and adopted knowledge, entered a new – this time more aware and clearer – conflict with the society they live in. In the Estonian case, young people living on the territory of the newly-established hegemony of the Seto culture also developed a perception of injustice and their own conflict with the prevailing patterns of behaviour primarily on an individual level, and eventually shared their experiences with like-minded individuals, but without establishing a group and experiencing possible group empowerment.

In most of the analysed cases in this cluster, there is group empowerment, which is particularly evident in the case of alternative housing forms in Spain. The Spanish case is a good example of mixing individual and group aspects of a conflict. Thus, the Finnish and Croatian case studies, along with a part of the Spanish study, present a conflict in which, from the beginning, young people participate as members of a group, while the conflict in the cases described in Italy, Slovakia and Estonia suggest individuals who may (as is the case in Naples or Slovakia), or may not (as is the case in Estonia), establish a group as their answer to the conflict.

3.1.2. Active and passive responses

In most cases, actually in five out of the six analysed in this cluster, young people reacted actively to conflict situations which were frequently followed by stigmatisation. In Croatia, young football fans labelled as hooligans, anti-state elements, vandals and drug-addicts were in conflict with the police and exposed to controls and repressive measures, but were even more bothered by match-fixing, the bankrupting of the club, and changing the club's name, which for them represented a sort of stab

in the back that hurt more than any police baton. The conflict with the club's management (behind which stood part of the town's economic and political elites) and with the football establishment in a context broader than that of the town, forced them into a specific activity – the establishment of a new football club. This group of supporters is marginalised because of their age, stigmatised and frequently labelled in the media as hooligans and in conflict with the local political establishment and local/national football establishment. However, they did not remain isolated in hedonistic places (parks, pubs etc.) but emerged as a social actor, building their football club on a democratic basis (one member one vote) and fighting for their values despite the hostile social/political environment. In the process of their active response to conflict they had to do many unexpected things and they learned a lot:

> We had no idea of the problems we were going to come up against; it was all so complex. We were looking for a pitch, and we got one, but now none of us actually knew how bad a shape it was in, and we didn't have a clue how to maintain a pitch. But then you have no choice: you need this, you need that. It was a property owned by the city but we got the toilet running, we set up a safety fence, we bought goal nets, we chased off the moles, we planted grass. I learned to do things I never thought I would do in my life. In the first season, when they chased off the moles, there were people who came at five in the morning with spades and waited for the moles. People with wives and children. So what does that tell you? (Kapelnik, VS, HR)

There are many similar examples of active approach to conflict (and to society in general) across five analysed cases, with the sixth, Estonian case being the only exception. In Spain, young people became activists regarding social problems like housing, environmental issues and communal living, learning many things during the process:

> Oh yes, I have learned a lot of things at a technical level, from fixing a window that is destroyed, starting from scratch … how to compost food and … how to run a vegetable garden, well, I have improved my techniques for different tasks, right? Ah, also to work as a member of a big group and … fix my bicycle! (HQ2, AAS, ES)

Activism in Spanish case, like in many other cases, brings certain hope for the rise and development of activism, going beyond individual examples of one's own active approach:

> We have created a community project from scratch. Since it is linked to the urban vegetable garden, we can see it growing, right? And maybe one day there will be twenty of us planting vegetables that someone brought, sharing hummus and sharing recipes. (HQ2, AAS,ES)

But, according to the complex relation of individual and group aspects of activism, (mentioned above), some respondents emphasised individual sentiment for activism, like in Slovak case:

> I have been trying to explain a bit to people in my surroundings the reason why I am so engaged. I mean it's not so much really, but I am very active online, not only do I tell off people there, but I also try to explain, you shouldn't be saying this. Don't tell a woman that she should be in the kitchen, because you wouldn't say it to your mother, or think about what you're saying because it's out of order for you to say these things online....... people ask me, 'why are you wasting your energy? It's pointless, you won't change anything', which I guess is true, but I cannot stay quiet when I see injustice. (I 04 RH, SRM, SK)

Activism is also a response to conflict in the Finnish case; most of young people in both of the researched groups (Rainbow Café and Circus group) see themselves as activists but they are engaged in various forms of environmental, LGBT, anti-fascists and other actions, mainly on local and grass-roots levels. Some of respondents expressed their perception of activism as a key part of their own identity:

> If someone asks me: 'what issues are you promoting?' I usually say that I'm basically an activist. I don't list the animal rights, the environmental, the feminist actions anymore […] I just say that I'm an activist and I am looking out for… those who need it… (Charlotta, HSO, FI)

While the Croatian, Spanish, Slovak and Finnish cases can be seen to follow similar divisions between responses to conflict (active and passive ones), the Italian case is very specific. The young people in the Italian case (where respondents are deprived young people from the suburbs of Napoli and young youth workers helping them) are certainly active but in a quite distinct way. Young people from that case study had been engaged in street life revolving around criminal activities and often early pregnancy. So, in their case, the active response to conflict with society was involvement in circus, theatre and sport activities organised by the cooperative, led by charismatic leaders like respondents such as Gianluca, Giovanni and other enthusiasts.

> It was hard in the first years, when I used to think of this cooperative Giovanni and his ex-students had built, I couldn't help thinking: 'ok, they will never get anywhere!' All of us made this mistake! I'm talking about underestimating ourselves… Whereas, instead, when you have great minds and strong arms at work, you can literally move mountains. You find your way for it. In our case it was both things: Giovanni's brilliant mind and our strong arms willing to work hard and never stopping! We eventually also brought the institutions around the table with us! (Michelle, NSA, IT)

The only exception is the case from Estonia, where the young people who did not recognise themselves in the new forms of cultural-economic prosperity based on the Seto culture, expressed their rejection of new patterns and rules through passiveness, disappointment and, eventually, through their own emigration from the environment they lived in. Apart from one occasion, which the author of the report had experienced earlier with one of the respondents (when they were younger), there is not a single event which would contain any tension or possibilities of open conflict. This occasion related to an experience of the respondent (and the author of the report, who at that time studied the Seto culture, and not its opponents) who had participated in a symbolic protest against traditional Seto entertainment and typical Leelo singing by playing pop music with a friend, and was simply drowned out by the Seto culture activists who were present. In his words: 'After they "sang us off", I just went around and wanted to kick someone so badly. Had anyone come near me, I would have. Yeah, I was drunk, too. Not something I do anymore, but boy I wanted to that day." (Indrek, SETO, EE). This is the maximum example of tension, and it is related to the past. In a study of the current state among young people who are disappointed by the establishment of a cultural and social Seto-culture-based hegemony in that part of Estonia, apathy and hopelessness prevail, which manifests itself in several ways but mostly as an impossibility of changing anything and a lack of any indicators that it might get better in the future. Refusing to talk about the Seto culture, refusing the new elites, and refusing new norms and rules when it comes to project financing, in the Estonian case manifests itself as passiveness and withdrawal, which for many eventually resulted in leaving the region: 'All those my age have left. The majority have moved away' (Riina, SETO, EE); 'Those who have no anchor here, they have left.' (Marko, SETO, EE).

3.1.3. From conflict to social innovation – and back

Young people in five analysed cases responded to conflict actively; their responses created whole spectrum of outcomes, being significant in their social environment, in their everyday life, sometimes reaching certain impact in broader society. In many cases, response to conflict created certain social innovation. Sometimes that innovation is recognizable on larger scale, in whole society (Croatia, Spain) and sometimes it is not recognizable as innovation on large social scale, but it functions as innovative practice (Slovakia, Finland) or it presents social innovation on small scale, in particular community (Italy).

Football supporters (The White Stones and other Varteks supporters) did something unprecedented in Croatia, in fact a social innovation – the establishment of a new football club. The conflict resulted in an innovation, but this by no means implies that the conflict disappeared, as it has now just obtained a more formal shape. The fans established their club with the old name and started from scratch in the lowest tier and have now become part of a system which was mostly hostile to them. However, they entered the conflict with football establishment and local elites as a club, as an official entity, and as a part of the system. It was the first time that supporters founded their own football club, despite the labelling and many obstacles. They became aware of the significance of their own creation:

> As for what the Stones did, it was special. No one had ever done anything like that before. That's why it is even bigger, and even more people want us to succeed, because then we will serve as a model for others, proving that it is possible to succeed out of nothing; starting from the last league, without any money, without players, without anything, even without grass, without a stadium, and the people will say: look, these guys made it, why don't we try? OK, it was not easy for them, but in the end they succeeded, they have their club, they know how it works, where the money comes from, how it comes – and I think that's why it should work, why it shouldn't stop. It is precisely because everybody else is looking up to us, because we're a role model and if we make it a hundred per cent – I mean we've already made it, but if we go a step further – many others will follow in our footsteps because they will see that we made it, that it is possible to start out of nowhere against others, that it can be done. (Tuljan, VS, HR)

Young Slovak repats (from Western European countries) who, while in Western Europe, were labelled as 'Eastern Europeans', found they were given a new label upon their return, namely 'those who had lived in the West'. This group of young people adopted, in part, an active attitude towards society but now with a new understanding and a certain self-esteem. They also entered into a conflict with their environment and, against their will, became part of the political scene, experiencing political divisions in their own (small) environment, irrespective of the culturological focus of their activities beyond any local political alignment. One of the wider frames of engagement in Slovakian society, one in which many young people have become involved, is undoubtedly the fight against corruption and nepotism:

> In Slovakia a young person needs to know the right people to get somewhere in life. One needs to struggle much harder here. There is favouritism and corruption, while over there they wouldn't dream of doing something against the law. They wouldn't dream of jumping a red light or speeding. (KK_PC, SRM, SK)

Being abroad for many was a turning point that significantly contributed to their future engagement in their homeland:

> Despite a few positive examples which I hadn't noticed before when I lived here, when I wasn't in England, I didn't use to pay attention to people who were activists, people who were volunteers. I lived my life as an ordinary Slovak who moans a lot. Then I went to England and I understood that you can live differently. I came back here, and I was frustrated after my return, but I noticed that there are some shining examples in our society such as young people who work and are involved with NGOs and who dedicate their time to these things. So the co-operation with these people has been helping me to overcome the thing I see all the time – what sort of nation we are. So these shining examples, people I'm getting to know and also other ambitious young people, are helping me. (PC, SRM, SK)

With such inspiration, young Slovaks created cultural centres in small provincial towns, organising innovative (and according to dominant culture partly subversive) demonstrations.

Young people from the Spanish part of our cluster also responded actively to the conflict with their community (which was a result of the labour and housing markets and reduced options in life and opportunities to satisfy their needs) through their own spatial intervention by self-building their own living spaces, collective or communitarian forms of living and housing, and developing urban gardens. Here too, the conflict has not disappeared, but the young people through their activities brought about their own empowerment and awareness-raising, gaining new knowledge and skills, becoming able to speak up in an even more articulate manner about the need for social change. Some started with the housing problem:

> Right now I am, like most of my friends, in a very precarious situation. None of us own a place to live yet. Well, we are still young, maybe too young to have inherited a home yet. (EC1, AAS, ES)

A consequence of living in various housing communities was taking new steps forward in public spaces and also indirectly in political ones:

> One of the processes we started was 'the citizen letter', and then what we did was to call entities and individuals, whoever was interested, to a participatory process to develop a citizen letter with some citizens' demands, to present it to all the political parties, and each one of the participants stated their position in each of the points. (T4, AAS, ES)

The Spanish case also shows how young people engaged in social innovation (self-construction, bio-construction, *masoveria urbana*, urban gardening etc.) and reached a level of influence which could be applied in broader society:

> …to involve the person who has the housing problem in their home, (…); if there were resources to extend that methodology to all the community, many more housing deficits could be solved at least in the short term with much fewer resources. (EC1, AAS, ES)

> Of course it surprises me, because in the end a complex process is opened up, because it is not an easy project but a complex one and it is started, is carried out and it seemed quite interesting to me that [name of organisation] with its own resources, was able to take decisions that were protest on the one hand, and that

were practical on the other; that is, formally we built a space on the one hand, but on the other we made visible a lack of space that the administration did not fill… (EC2, AAS, ES)

In Finland, young people also became active as a result of a conflict with the system and their deep distrust of political parties and institutions, gathering together in the centre and taking up the spirit of squatter tradition by occupying and inhabiting space for their own purposes, although in this case the autonomous space was supported by the state. The circus and rainbow groups also represent examples of an active relationship towards society, starting from self-empowerment and mutual solidarity. In a situation of tension surrounding migrants, they unintentionally became political actors to the extent that their opposition to right-wing resistance to immigrants is political.

And about the circus in general; when they had these protest camps for asylum seekers here at the railway station, we were often there with [an unofficial circus organisation and NGO social circus], just doing circus and bringing joy and playing with children … The children had come from difficult circumstances and they felt happy there. That was very nice to see. (Juho, HSO, FI)

The circus group in this case study would sometimes carry out their activities on a square at one end of which was an anti-immigrant group, and at the other end of which there was a protest camp occupied by immigrants, among whom there were many children. Thus, in a specific space, their usual circus activities became a strongly political activity which attracted immigrant children and reduced tension and unease, but at the same time sent a clear message to those at the other end who had gathered against the migrants. In other words, the activity to which they resorted after the initial conflict and which marked their autonomy, empowerment and response to distrust of political institutions brought them into new forms of organised and articulated conflict with social actors that constitute the anti-immigrant and right-wing politics of modern Finnish society. On a personal level, one of the respondents expressed this as follows:

EEMELI: I myself know people who have been camping out on the railway square and so on.

INTERVIEWER: Do you?

EEMELI: Yep … And when they joined the Soldiers of Odin, we didn't have anything in common anymore so …

INTERVIEWER: Yep. So they were your old friends?

EEMELI: Not that old actually but … Their whole lifestyle has gone to waste and their only life is, like, 'fuck off immigrants' and … I don't have anything to say to that. It sucks so much. (EEMELI ,HSO, FI)

In Naples, activities carried out in conditions characterised by serious deprivation demonstrated a will to live and a form of survival outside the patterns of crime and criminal careers offered by street life. Conflict with society here can be seen as socio-economically determined, and an attempt to avoid such conflict by participating in non-criminal activities and trying to live outside the default pattern in a region with one of the lowest education in the country and with serious levels of deprivation again led to activity striving for social change. Young people from the streets, whose criminal future was guaranteed, by getting involved in street art, circus and theatre activities, remained in their own neighbourhood and proved that a different life/a different future was possible.

> Because nowadays something essential that we are all lacking is listening skills! We don't have at our side someone ready to listen to us … Or the complete opposite of what it is supposed to be, when a guy ends up in company and in groups whose values are unstable, whose leadership is schizophrenic, young, immature … they will end up pursuing those values. They will also unload all their energy into the violent identity of the group. (Stefano, NSA, IT)

> Teaching theatre! Who would ever have thought it? I also think that the nice thing about it is that you are the one who is building up this spot in the world, and if you are actually doing it ... you are shaping the world already! (Gianni, NSA, IT)

Thus, in the five cases, conflict resulted in an active relationship of young people towards their environment and also, to a greater or lesser extent, to forms of social innovation. However, the conflict has not disappeared, but rather the young people have become social actors who enter the conflict in a different way, sometimes formalised and sometimes pushed into the political arena of society owing to the system's logic. While protagonists of the five mentioned cases created social innovation as response to conflict, their Estonian peers didn't have a chance to do something similar. It is interesting that some of the examples of Estonian rural youth becoming disappointed also mentioned cases where young people organised themselves to do certain legal project, but faced rejection of authorities. Respondents frequently mention examples of their projects being rejected in the context of massive support for all projects that were connected with Seto cultural heritage:

> We had a big group something like six to seven years ago, we still get on. We went to the council to get that lake sorted – to clean it up. We did all the work, got the plan on paper in a really detailed way and everything. We had these big plans how to develop it, and so we presented it to them. And they just rejected it. They said they have other priorities …That really threw us. We were so ready – but they just rejected it. It was one of the reasons for the bitterness of the young people towards the municipality. (Siiri, SETO, EE)

Apart from the Estonian case, in the other five case studies, young people were successful in creating something new. In some cases, they succeeded in providing a new identity that resulted from the same framework from which the negative stigma came into being (such as the young people in Naples) or in replacing the precarious labour conditions they were in with their own personal choice of occasional jobs which ensure them a certain autonomy and freedom (Spain). In Croatia they gained a new type of legitimacy and continued their fight as a new football club with the old name. In Slovakia they organised a cultural centre in small places, being the first social actor to promote inter-cultural dialogue and 'right to be different'. In Finland they succeeded in providing safe spaces which became the basis for social engagement and empowerment. In all five 'active' cases, it can be concluded that the young people turned the conflict into social innovation and then got involved in conflict again but in a more formal and differently articulated way. This also implies that the stigmatised young people were not devoid of agency. In their contexts and in relation to the social-structural aspects of their everyday lives, they managed to be active and turn to future horizons and social change.

3.2. What enables and what inhibits the social involvement of young people?

3.2.1. Institutional space/centre as 'The great enabler'

Among the numerous factors that can be mentioned as enabling the activity and social involvement of young people in the six case studies, the existence of some kind of centre particularly stands out. This can be a youth, cultural or other related centre, and in some cases an association or cooperative. In Croatia, this role is played by the football club that was established, while before the founding of the club there was the supporters' association. In Italy, a decisive factor in the different socialisation of a group of young people from a suburb of Naples was the existence of a cooperative from which many activities developed, such as circus/theatre and alternative sports. In Finland, the underground youth cultural and community centre in Helsinki was the actual hub and main base for the activism analysed in this cluster. In Slovakia, part of the young migrants who returned to a provincial town gathered around a cultural centre, and also joining one of the existing NGOs or the establishment of a new one was a central theme in their social involvement. In Spain, activist networks and the relatively institutionalised forms of alternative education were often based on do-it-yourself principles, which were of crucial importance for young people joining alternative housing projects. In Estonia, where young people expressed their rejection of the new elites and new patterns of culturologically desirable behaviour, showing adequate engagement through passivity, again a youth centre organising free-time activities was key in finding a way out and an occasional getaway from an environment in which young people felt rejected. Thus, without a certain centre (youth, cultural or related), NGO, cooperative or club, most of the activities and social involvement of the young people described in this cluster would not have been possible.

3.2.2. Significant elders – the great enablers: the importance of intergenerational interaction

The previously mentioned facts regarding the key role of the institutional space (centre, club, cooperative or similar) throw a new light on another important aspect, which is the presence of older actors, and the transfer of knowledge and experience, i.e. intergenerational interaction. In fact, only the Finnish case is based on a strongly generation-based relationship. Because the emphasis is on the generational aspect of the conflict and a generationally shaped perception of society, with a special focus on the perception of political parties, the author of the Finnish report even talks about intergenerational distrust. However, our insight into the importance of the existence of centres (youth, cultural etc.), NGOs and other institutions/networks/clubs, suggests precisely the opposite, i.e. without the activity of those older than 25, 30 or even more years of age, the existence of these crucial factors that promote activism would not have been possible.

In Croatia, among Varteks supporters and club founders there are individuals older than 30 years of age (at the time of conducting the study, the oldest respondent and a person crucial in Varteks' establishment was 46), and many of them are still active match goers and supporters. The division between those leading the club and those participating in the ultras subculture rites (flags, drums, pyrotechnics, chanting, attending away matches, etc.) is not generation-based. Of course, the youngest (16-18) are not part of the club's management, but they do attend some meetings and are aware that the club is led by people who are authentic fans, while the older members are equally represented in all the group's key activities. It is precisely the transfer of knowledge and experience from older to younger, the interaction and open intergenerational communication that enable the continuity of the White Stones as a supporters' group. Despite occasional conflicts within the group,

intergenerational trust prevails, the older group members are ready to entrust many activities to the younger ones, and this fact acts like a motor for the activity and social involvement of the young group members. The line between "us" and "them" is by no means generation-based; the police, the football establishment, referees or reporters are not labelled enemies because they are older but rather because of the way their institutions operate. The youngest White Stones members are aware that their older comrades are much closer to them than their peers who are not interested in football, or their peers who are enthusiastic about El Classico, the success of the national team, or even those who support FC Varaždin, which for young football fans is a symbol of corruption.

The Italian case study examines the poorest suburb of Naples, the basic and crucial moment of attracting a group of young people into non-criminal activities was the takeover of a cooperative by a charismatic leader called Gianluca, a respondent who was 38 years old at the time of conducting the study. Since he came from the same neighbourhood and spoke the same language, he managed to attract the young through activities such as street theatre and circus, alternative sports, and offering young people the opportunity to identify themselves with a group of peers from the same neighbourhood where up until then such identification was only possible as part of a criminal gang. Without an older leader and the existence of a cooperative, there would have been no enthusiasm or activities for young people, and they would have remained left on the street. Apart from Gianluca, other actors often highly educated- joined the cooperative who were able to talk the language of the deprived young people and who played the role of enablers of activities and social involvement, which had been inconceivable before the establishment of the cooperative. Besides Gianluca, there were also some other young educated people. Several respondents mentioned Giovanni (also a pseudonym), who was described by another respondent as follows:

> I was lucky to have Giovanni leading me back every time I went to work somewhere ... The only time he didn't do it was when I went plumbing, because he used to tell me I could benefit from learning a new job. In fact, I can do several kinds of repairs now. (Cristian, NSA, IT)

Engagement with the kids from poor neighbourhood was not one-generational, it included a wish to work with the families and it seems that youth workers, trainers of circus and theatre skills (some of them coming from the same background) succeeded in that:

> According to what I saw, one of the most precious things taking shape during performances is intergenerational connections (among the old and the young ones) that are brought to life. Additionally, we don't confine ourselves to working with kids, we work with parents too. This is not a parking area to us: you come here, you drop your son and then you leave. No! What really matters to us, is that you are looking after your son's path, and you are listening to us! (Nino, NSA, IT)

In Spain, respondents did not come from dysfunctional families and neighbourhoods such as those in Naples in which there was neither public transportation nor any social content. These young people already had a certain independence and self-awareness, as well as parental support, so they were able to get organised more easily and to participate in alternative housing forms or build permaculture gardens in an urban environment. They were used to reflecting on the structure of society and referring to the wider problems and social conditions of education, housing, unemployment, and precarious labour conditions. Despite their awareness of the fact that the younger generations had been hit particularly hard by austerity measures, these respondents also had no generation-based discourse and were also linked with actors who were part of the same

scene and who were over 25 or 30 years of age. What mattered was the content, certain knowledge or skills, the effort to recycle, to sort waste, to build houses from low-energy materials, and not the age of an actor who participated or did not participate in some of the aforementioned activities. Wishing to express the universal value of learning about essential things that can be initiated by a group of enthusiasts, activists or a project, one of the respondents pointed to the non-hierarchical character of such a universal learning principle, where age and hierarchical position ceased to be important, as this respondent from the Spanish case highlights:

> …because the learning has not only been for the students, but has been for the educational community in all regards, from the management team to the students. I think it has been a global learning experience for anyone involved. There have been times when the principal, or a teacher, or a student have been at the same level. (EC2, AAS, ES)

Another activist from Spanish case contributed to relativisation of generation based discourse:

> I have learned from this experience that age doesn't matter when connecting with other people, you know? Perhaps I can bond in a better way with a 90-year-old woman than with someone my own age. This can happen also with kids, you know? (HQ3, AAS, ES)

Among many statements regarding intergenerational interaction and transferring experience, some clearly point to the importance of older generations remaining active on the scene:

> I think that there are fewer people now. Some younger people have joined recently. I was the youngest for many years, and the former members have remained. If we talk about a generational renewal, it would be a small one. If the experience stands, it is because people involved since the beginning have remained; they have had kids or have gotten married, but still have an active participation. (T2, AAS, ES)

Significant elders in this context means older activists from the same group/scene and not parents, but in some cases even parents played that role: 'I got involved because my parents were already involved. They were part of the group of people who squatted the building, many years ago'. (T4, AAS, ES).

Thus in Spain, like in Croatia and Italy, a crucial factor encouraging activity is the existence of older actors with a history of activism themselves. These individuals may be older football supporters (who have already proven themselves on the terraces), charismatic youth workers with street credibility, representatives of activist networks or other actors ready to transfer their knowledge. They do so in the tradition of free do-it-yourself workshops characteristic of ecological and related movements, urban struggles and other actions associated with new social movements familiar for half a century already.

In the Slovak case of migrant repats, the sample was of young people who are already closer to adulthood than to being youths. Thus, a lack of generationally shaped activist discourse was to be fully expected. Of course, the distinction between present-day living conditions and the freedom to travel, and the conditions of the generations that lived under socialism and experienced travel constraints is very evident, but it did not suffice to create a generation gap. Moreover, parents as enablers of certain activities(like in the case of young squatters in Spain), in the Slovak case played an important role both in the decision to move abroad and also particularly in the stressful period of repatriation, when young migrants returned to their home country.

It was exactly what my parents used to tell me and my sister - especially my mum used to tell us - to do what they couldn't do. They couldn't travel. It was their dream, but we could live it because we had the opportunities. It happened many times, that there wasn't so much money lying about which I didn't even realise at the time, because I only said, 'hoorah a foreign trip, I want to go, it's important for me' and my parents knew it was important to me and they did their best for me to go abroad, and because of this I felt I had tremendous support and I wasn't at all afraid of following what I wanted to do because I knew my parents would support me. (KK_MCh, SRM, SK)

For most respondents in the Slovak case study, family and friends played crucial roles of support when young migrants decided to come back:

INT: And when you returned back home, did you live with your parents and become independent later?

SRM: At first I lived at my parents'.

INT: And later you tried to become independent?

SRM: It was sort of, perhaps a sort of security, that straight away I didn't have to look after practical things but I knew that I had an excellent relationship with my parents and they simply let me live, if I can call it that. It wasn't the same as being a ten-year-old again and they needed to look after me, basically they gave me the opportunity - okay stay at home until you know what you want to do and stuff like that. (MR, SRM, SK)

The Estonian case study demonstrates how the young people, who abstained from activities that were based on affiliation with the Seto culture, responded to the establishment of a new hegemony by passive rejection. The reaction of many of them to their feeling of disappointment and rejection was migration, i.e. moving from the region. For those who remained, the youth centre enabled get-togethers, and the enjoyment of races and excursions, which for the young people were a 'getaway' as they described it, an escape from a reality in which they felt abandoned and neglected. In this case, there was also no generation gap. The key division was, on the one hand, between Seto activists, the representatives of a new elite and a new cultural-economic hegemony, and, on the other hand, those who were dissatisfied and left out of the process of project financing and positioned at the bottom of the new social stratification. Young and old alike could be found in both groups, and among the interviewed young people there was no generational discourse that would base the 'us' and 'them' relationship on age.

The only refutational case, standing apart from the five reciprocal cases, is the Finnish case study: while the notion of generation gap and related perception almost completely dissolved and disappeared in other five cases, in the Finnish case it is still alive and enhanced. Intergenerational distrust was clearly articulated here, and the young activists gathering in the youth cultural and community centre in Helsinki, as part of their own perception of an 'us' and 'them' relationship, frequently perceived older people as 'the other' who opposed the young and were the protagonists of old, conservative values and a hated political system.

Who do they think will take their side in the Parliament if they don't vote for those who speak up? It is very, very alarming that young people don't vote so much anymore, because it means the Parliament will be full of these bitter old men who

hate everyone and hate their own life probably … Because if young people don't vote young people into the Parliament, who will then speak up about things such as, 'we have this issue here; we can't make cuts there, because if we make cuts there, it'll have an impact here…' Because those old grandpas in the Parliament don't care about studying. They don't need to study anymore. (Reuben, HSO, FI)

There are many statements from respondents in the Finnish case supporting the thesis of various aspects of intergenerational distrust:

INTERVIEWER: What's your opinion on older generations in relation to rainbow youth? Are there any kinds of generational differences?

ET, HSO, FI: Well of course there are. Like … whenever an elderly person notices that I'm wearing a rainbow badge, I get a bit scared that soon there'll be a granny shouting at me. Nothing is as horrible as a granny shouting at you. Because if you start yelling back at them, then everyone will stare at you, like, 'there's a rude young person'.

There is also a certain optimism that the younger generations are more open and more inclusive, more tolerant, more sensible to social issues; some of such thoughts are explicit in statements of Utu and Maryam:

I can say it like this, young people are a lot more open than older people because they are… There are so many things you learn as a young person so it's like that. But older people have grown in certain things so it is a bit difficult to…(Maryam, HSO, FI)

I feel that younger people might be very mature to decide on those kinds of things. And in my opinion young people should be able to have an impact in things that are related to them a lot more. There's a lot of talk on youth involvement, does it really happen? I'd say that in many municipalities it isn't realized as well as it's supposed to. Not even in schools. So, for example, if the age limit would be lower in voting that would guide young people to become interested in social issues earlier. (Utu, HSO, FI)

Several respondents felt that the reason behind a widespread opinion about younger generations as being more liberal and tolerant to differences than older generations, was mainly due to the internet and social networks:

I suddenly realized what's the biggest influence in this generation. What has influenced us the most, and in my opinion it's the Internet. I have noticed that I have gained so much from Internet and it is a big thing right now in other ways, too. You can get all information from Internet and that's also one reason why we are, why my generation is so liberal, because we know about everything. For example, I'm guessing that the older generation, they just lived in the information they could get inside their own country and they weren't so open towards differences. But Internet's full of differences. (Julinette, HSO, FI)

Intergenerational distrust is well established in this case and it presents one of the main characteristics of the activists' discourse among young people engaged in the Circus group and Rainbow Café. Some of young people from these groups are aware that there are also young people among extreme right wing groups, but it seems that such information is not enough to question

prevailing discourse of intergenerational distrust. This presumption that right wing activists are from the older generation is revealed in Johanna's shock at seeing young people among such protestors:

> Perhaps what shocked me the most was that when they were in [a protest in a small town in Southern Finland] making noise, there were lots of young people from that town. And I was, like, are you there because you want to see what's going on and what's the situation here, or are you there because you share their opinions for real. There were, like, young teenage girls there. Guys were putting stickers on their hoodies and… I do get shocked when young people join that kind of thing. I do understand that old people have grown up in such a different world, like 'in my youth nigger wasn't a bad word'. But today's young people are brought up in a totally different world and society. I would like to believe that they could see behind those things. (Johanna, HSO, FI)

3.2.3. Barriers/inhibitors as enablers of activism

When talking about barriers (inhibitors) to youth activism and social involvement, we cannot find a single point which all six studies have in common. There are several reasons for this. The studies describe the answers of young people to conflict and stigmatisation and, in five out of the six studies, the response is expressed through various forms of activism. Thus, young people have overcome the barriers and frequently they name them as the reason for their activism, particularly when they are related to deeper, structural aspects of society or when they are related to mainstream values, oppressive institutions or hostile social actors. What is considered to be an obstacle is at the same time the reason for the struggle, or it is considered to be an enemy. Another reason that the barriers cited diverge is because they are either very loosely described or related to particular individual circumstances, for instance a lack of time, marriage and family, work.

In Croatia, young people cite a football establishment burdened with corruption and court proceedings as an obstacle to greater involvement and activism. Furthermore, they consider the activities of the police and the judiciary to be an equal obstacle in the way of their engagement. In fact, the disappointment of young people with the circumstances in Croatian football was crucial in their decision to act resolutely and establish a club that would survive in a hostile environment. Here, like in the other case studies, what the young people mentioned as hindrances were actually also the causes of their action, and thus what was stated as an obstacle paradoxically played a role in promoting activism. In this case, it was the context of the commercialisation of modern football, corruption, match-fixing, repressive laws, the alienation of politicians from the people, and so on.

In Slovakia, the respondents frequently mentioned the closeness of Slovakian society as an inhibitor of activism and social involvement. An ambivalent relationship towards the inhibitors was manifested here as well, because such a closed society was one of the causes for emigration. Emigration and living in a foreign country also brought about ambivalent feelings. Return also evoked both positive and negative emotions, as the young people experienced a double stigma; in the West, they were 'those from the East', and in their own country, they became 'those who had lived in the West'. The already mentioned paradox in which what is considered to be an obstacle to activism (for example the introversion of society and corruption) becomes a basis for activism and a starting point for social change. This is best illustrated by the efforts of several repats in a small provincial town to establish and activate an alternative cultural centre and thus to encourage the development of civil society and the democratisation of their environment. However, along with

mobilising young people and other citizens open to innovative ideas and the concept of the right to be different, they have also encountered the strong resistance of the local political establishment and various forms of aloofness on the part of other young people.

The situation in Slovakia as regards the NGO scene is particularly burdened with the predominant political discourse which sees NGOs as an internal enemy, i.e. acting against Slovakia in the interest of other states. Despite playing the role of being a black sheep in the perceptions of a large part of the predominant culture, this is an attractive position:

> I knew that I'd be among people who want to stick out a little. Not that they'd have a particular need, but it's just how they are. Even being in a group of people similarly different is great support – meeting with them and seeing what they're doing and what problems they're facing. (M. R., SRM, SK)

Given the re-traditionalisation of post-socialist space and the predominant discourse which frequently has characteristics of nationalism and right-wing populism (Franc et al. 2018, Mustapić et al. 2018), a part of NGO activists in other post-socialist countries are frequently in a very similar position. Despite the fact that, in Slovak society, the term NGO sounds 'suspicious' in itself, the young repats in the case study decided to establish a new NGO. Regardless of the fact that it was potentially a source of conflict and an insecure area, these young people decided to undertake this step precisely because of the emotion and value it has, which does not exist in the corporate world. Similar to the young people described in the Spanish study, who consciously opted for a certain marginalisation and occasional jobs, believing that precarious conditions (about which most of their peers complained) actually enabled them to avoid having a steady job and to acquire a certain freedom and autonomy, in Slovakia the young repats chose a 'more difficult path' based on their own wishes and the activist intention to do something. In the words of one of them:

> Of course, when I moved, all my friends in Bratislava told me how they were going to recommend me to all sorts of companies. And that would be just as boring as anywhere else abroad, so I preferred to stay here in a small town. I didn't really know what was next, but my friends also returned and we thought of starting a cultural centre. We really went after what we wanted and what we didn't have in our town, and what we were actually capable of doing. We thought up this place to create something. (K. Ch., SRM, SK)

3.2.4. Structural barriers: (absent) state and neo-liberal values

In Italy, the selected area, and thus also the young people with which the study was conducted, is strongly class-based. Poverty and the culturological determinants of the region encourage the dropping out of young people from school at an early age, adolescent pregnancy, a high crime rate and the formation of dysfunctional families. In such an environment, the absence of efficient action on the part of state institutions, and in particular a lack of a social services network targeted at young people, plays a crucial role. One of the respondents experienced this as follows:

> Since I was born, the only answer the municipality has kept on giving back has been: there is not enough money. (Gianluca, NSA, IT)

In addition, one of the crucial problems is the feeling young people have that they have not had an opportunity for social integration beyond the local framework. In the words of a respondent:

Then you get sick and tired of the chances you missed and of those you lost. You let yourself go then, while forgetting to write, to read, to improve … because life has lost its meaning. You have to get by, you have to survive … that is your first and only worry. (Mauro, NSA, IT)

In Spain, some young people from the study experienced pressures of economic survival and lack of resources as well:

There was a point at which I could not survive like this … there was work, but you knew it was not something that was going to solve the year! It was like … I'm doing something but I'm still looking for something! (V2, AAS, ES)

Participation in contemporary society is marked also by the lack of time:

A participatory process in general, from my point of view, takes many hours, and those hours at the end are precarious. That is, the time is never paid for at the price that it should be paid for; it would not reach the minimum wage. What happens is that when people create a project that they believe in, it goes forward, but there is a need to generate change in that direction. (EC2, AAS, ES)

While young football supporters in Croatia mentioned the commercialisation process as being something that was destroying the real value of the game itself, young activists from Finnish case described how neo-liberal values are producing pressures and expectations, which put a special burden on them:

They don't set expectations but at the same time they do, so nowadays it's, like…Everything is contradictory. And in a way this kind of… This dystopia that somehow… I don't know. I somehow feel that everything… Nothing is clear. Everything's a mess and there are no answers to anything, if you think about young people. What a young person should do and what they could do. In a way, it is more, like, you can do whatever you want. The doors are open for you. So… So something like that. And the sense of competition which in a traditional sense has diminished but that's also intensifying all the time. We have to compete with someone all the time. We can't do anything without a goal. (Aleks, HSO, FI)

In the Finnish case, these neo-liberal values were the most frequently cited barrier to social involvement.

3.2.4.1. Structural barriers: patriarchy

Patriarchy and gender roles in the context of the re-traditionalisation of Croatian society are also held responsible for there being a smaller number of women in the nucleus of activist supporters. While men could continue with their supporters' career, even in their 'grandpa' age, girls are inhibited in that process by their role in patriarchal society:

INTERVIEWER: We've been with you on the stands for more than a year now and, apart from you and a few other girls, girls are very rarely seen. Were there more girls in the past? Who went?

STIJENA, VS, HR: Well in the nineties, – yes.

INTERVIEWER: I mean, I remember – I don't know if it was a banner or what – one was like a female crew. Were you among the girls too, or?

STIJENA, VS, HR: Well, there were a few of us in the group, maybe seven or eight. I know that two were in a relationship, and one of them in the meantime got married and stopped going. She distanced herself, and then I had a break when my maternity obligations started - pregnancy, resting, baby - but I was always somewhere around. I mean, going for a coffee with the crew …

INTERVIEWER: Wait, so you're basically the only one left from the old crew?

STIJENA, VS, HR: From the old girls crew, yes. I mean, I don't see any of the other girls.

3.2.5. Passivity

Logically, passivity as an inhibitor of involvement is prevailing among young people in Estonian case, where the general response to conflict was expressed in passive way. That is why they divided passivity into: (i) the passivity of others; and (ii) their own passivity. The typical comment about the passivity of others in the Estonian case study was: 'Rather there are very few activists amongst the youth. It's rather that…you choose the easier road' and typical statements regarding their own passivity were: 'Generally I am not interested in this', 'I don't do anything really', 'I don't go out much', 'I really don't care' and 'I don't know, it's better at home'. (The node passivity had highest frequency, 13 sources and 26 references) But, except 'own passivity', there are statements of young people within other cases, complaining about the passivity of others, pointing to apathy, conformism and lack of action among other people in their social environment:

> I think everyone in Varaždin takes the path of least resistance. No one wants to fight for anything. Just like in the rest of Croatia, actually, everyone just wants to sit back and watch someone else solve their problems. I think supporters are the last so-called subculture that hasn't been destroyed. I mean, not that it hasn't been destroyed, but all others are on thin ice. We're the only ones fighting against something. (Random, VS, HR)

When someone chose a pro-active position, other young people seem to be distanced and it could be a cause for loneliness and certain isolation, like one respondent from the Slovak case study expressed:

> It was really weird that all the people back home had no idea about the reality there. I had no one to really talk to, only the very few who had similar experiences. I suddenly felt distanced from the others. (M. R., SRM, SK)

3.3. What is the role of space in the different forms of social activism of young people?

Mutual coexistence and the direct bonds between people based on their spatial vicinity is one of the basic characteristics of man's sociability. Community undoubtedly represents one of the oldest forms of sociability. In the field of the social sciences, there have always been numerous debates about the theoretical concept of community. What many sociologists agree upon is the invaluable significance of community in the functioning of society as an integrated system. Tönnies ([1887] 1957) and

Durkheim ([1893] 1964) in their studies pointed to the extraordinary importance of community in the social changes of their time. The functioning of a community is manifested in the social relations, which enable the common needs of the people, and groups living in the community, to be satisfied. Thus, the community is a group of people sharing the same space, experience or interests. At the same time, space is one of a community's basic resources. In the context of the data analysis presented above, it is important to note the correlation between the significance which a space has for the studied groups of young people, and their conflicts with various social groups and/or societies on the whole. Conflict influences group members in a way that they are aware of their group connections, and it increases their participation in the group, mobilising them in defending their system of values from those who endanger the group interest. This may take the form of defending a space which is of crucial significance to the group in a practical sense in the area in which the group operates and builds its identity (cultural centres, stadiums, squares, etc.) or the claiming of public space in a symbolic sense through communication and demarcation with the aim of expressing one's presence and social significance (protests, graffiti, murals, stickers, etc.).

Manuel Castells (2000) considers space as an expression of society. By observing urban spaces, Castells talks about the manifestation of the cultural patterns of a certain society in a space whereby the emphasis is on urban society. He further mentions the widely recognised growth of a networked society and wonders whether modern cities exist only in information flows, as their spatial foundation is gradually losing its importance. A well-founded continuation of reflections on this topic is offered by Saskia Sassen (2016) with her global city concept. In her view, great "metropolises" have started losing their spatial importance, becoming more significant as meeting points for economic operators and largely devoid of any spatial elements. The lost importance of urban space makes us reflect on some concepts of certain authors that point to the significance of the spatial element based on its symbolic meaning for the inhabitants of a certain urban environment. For Lefebvre ([1974] 1991), space is the result of action and not a self-sustaining foundation on which the actions of individuals are manifested. If we, according to Lefebvre's postulates, observe social space as a product, it also serves as a tool of thought and action, and in addition to being a means of production, it is also a means of control, and hence of domination and power (1991, 26). Lefebvre questions perceptions of social space and categorises them as illusions: 1. the "illusion of transparency", and 2. "realistic illusion" (1991; 27, 29). They both serve to make the impact of different social practices, that influence the functioning and shaping of social space, opaque. By this, the author makes known that all is not as it seems, and that social space should not be taken for granted, but that it is necessary to find different ideological and discursive activities/practices and structures which intrinsically further shape information, knowledge and communication. Furthermore, Lefebvre names the following factors as constituting social space: "(1) the social relations of reproduction, i.e. the bio-physiological relations between the sexes and between age groups, along with the specific organisation of the family; and (2) the relations of production, i.e. the division of labour and its organisation in the form of hierarchical social functions" (1991; 32). Moreover, for Lefebvre (1996), there is a significant distinction between inhabiting an urban area and the rationalist-commercial logic of the urban *habitus*. To inhabit an urban area implies leaving a trace in it, building and modelling it according to specific patterns of a certain culture or community. On the other hand, there is the aforementioned rationalist-commercial logic of the urban *habitus* which is best described through diverse investments and interventions in urban space, all with the aim of generating a profit for private investors, whereby the field of inhabiting and modelling space is narrowed through the activities of direct space users. 'Direct space users' here refers to most of young people in this cluster. It is already mentioned that the existence of institutional space (as well

as more informal variants of communal space in Spanish case) presents one of the strongest common point regarding six different social contexts of young people's responses to conflict and to stigmatisation.

3.3.1. Market pressures and struggle for space

Actualisation of Lefebvre's distinction mentioned above is best confirmed by the personal experiences and group dynamics in the Spanish study, where space was the starting point of activities in several ways, regardless of whether it was urban or rural space. The Croatian, Slovak, Finnish and Italian cases are not outside the market conditions, but the struggle around space is not determined primarily by the market, the space is in different ways given and partly sponsored by the state. Contrary to that, *masovería* is a concept born under the market pressures and it functions in both rural and urban spaces, and refers to an arrangement in which tenants do not have to pay rent (or a part of the rent) if they renovate and refurbish space in various ways. The economic necessity is here connected with (agreed upon) interventions in space, where living space becomes work space, and space for various types of associations (collectivism and communitarianism) and raising awareness of housing problems as part of a broader social and structural entity.

> Housing is a burning subject since rents have increased that much, touristic apartments are a big problem and now we have lots of foreign investors buying homes here, you know? So, of course, now we are demonizing a problem that could have been demonized long time ago, you know? (HQ2, AAS, ES)

> Raise the children, everything! Pay the rent ... the reason I like this model of housing (referring to *masoveria)* is because I think ... if we did not have to pay rent, or we would have to pay much less rent, how would our lives be? Now we dedicate more than 30% of the salary, almost 50% to pay the rent, eh? It is very much, also compared to other countries, right? That is not fair! (HQ1, AAS, ES)

Apart from *masovería*, occupying empty spaces (at least temporarily) and actions on the fringes of the law (including the legal, illegal and non-legal area in between) provide even more of an emphasis on one's own intervention in space and community-building through autonomous action. Forms of communitarianism and collectivism are also strongly present. As the study was conducted in five different locations and comprises several related groups, examples of small groups participating in alternative aspects of construction by using biological materials or other low-energy materials are also significant.

> I see that bioconstruction is starting a rather large path, which is expanding enough in towns; … wood, straw bales, adobe. I have studied, above all, the system with clay, with adobe. I have also been doing some courses and a research job. (EC1, AAS, ES)

> We certainly have something in the web that represents us all, but for me personally it has to do with ... how to approach the space, the city, houses, the people that live there! That is, how to facilitate the tools and ... and that the process of building the space, giving it meaning and living will become much more participative. For me, the ideal would be for everyone to have the tools to build their own place, the capabilities, ideas and resources. (V3, AAS, ES)

Starting as a response to economic (market) pressures, the initiatives of young people are leading them towards understanding space as a way of life and site of struggle, which they share with other young people in this cluster, even if the space in question was granted or sponsored by the state:

> And there are many other things around how we share the house, concerns of interest to us regarding food, speculation, gentrification, easier accommodation ... it was interesting to take part in that fair and try to explain what [names *masoveria* project] was, because we saw that we have a fairly holistic approach to rethinking life, you know? Not only related to the house, but also about ways of being able to live. (HQ4, AAS, ES)

3.3.2. Given space and appropriation

In most of the cases, the space is not conquered (squatted) like partly in Spain, or negotiated through market conditions, but is provided by the state, NGO, cooperative or similar. Nevertheless, such space has to be inhabited, appropriated and organised. In Croatia, where young (and not only young) football supporters established their own club, they had to start with a pitch as a necessary condition for playing football.

> The first practice was the Varteks selection on that pitch in Jalkovec, which looked, at the time, like you'd come to a farmer's field, like there had been horses; the best part is that horses did use to graze there! You come from some First League and end up on a real farmer's field; you come to a playing field that has no façade, that doesn't even have a fence. You could measure the grass in percent; I don't know, eighty percent dirt, twenty percent grass. Those were the initial problems we had to face as soon as we founded the club, no one gave us a stadium nor did anyone give us anything, we had to do absolutely everything from scratch. From scratch! (Eminence Grise, VS, HR)

Young supporters in Croatia started to work together - building up the fence, chasing moles, building up the toilets - in fact changing the space and appropriating it, and making it more functional to their own purposes. By contrast, their peers in Finland did other types of appropriation with similar outcome – adopting the space to their own feelings and intentions, for example by painting the walls with political messages:

> And the Youth Cultural and Community Centre is quite a good manifestation of it… It is a political place but also everything else, too, and there's quite a lot of political, what is it now… messages [in English]. Political messages on the walls. Yep. There's a lot of political messages on the walls. (Juho, HSO, FI)

Appropriation of space could have several aspects, (related to the context, space itself, aesthetical preferences etc.) but the result is always that inhabitants of space feel at home, on their own, free and safe.

> Well, every single person who comes here for the first time… They might feel a bit like, what's going on here. What is this place. I don't know… It isn't… The floor is dirty and there are wires hanging from everywhere. But it also offers a possibility, like 'hey! People don't expect anything from me here! (Aleks, HSO, FI)

To take care of the space is part of getting close to the space, it is especially important when the given space is not determined by expectations of adults (who symbolically or literally gave that

space, or who represent institutions who did) and the testimony of the author of the Finnish case study report, from her field diary (coded within the node regarding youth cultural centre in Helsinki, together with respondents' statements) is a perfect illustration of that:

> However I notice that it's nice to come to the centre. I have received my very own keys at yesterday's weekly meeting, which strengthens my feeling of being like home. I open the doors, put the lights on, bring my stuff on the sofa. Before eating my afternoon snack I decide to wipe the corridor floor and carpet as well as tidy up in the kitchen a bit. I notice that I'm pondering whether my interest in cleaning tells about wanting to be useful while I'm doing my research or truly about starting to feel at home in the space. I remember how, during my first week of fieldwork, the director of the centre told me that young people can freely participate in planning and making the programme, and all programmes are a result of young people's wishes. This results in them feeling at home in the space and taking care of it. I wonder whether this is happening to me, too. (Author of the report, HSO, FI)

The football pitch was given, but appropriated by the supporters. The youth cultural centre in Helsinki was also given, but inhabited and appropriate by activists (Circus group and Rainbow Café). Spaces in Italy and Slovakia were also given, not squatted or conquered, but appropriated by the young people. Perhaps the only case where the space was also given but not especially appropriated is the Estonian example; young people there sporadically used the services of the youth centre, enjoying in races or excursions as getaways from everyday reality in the region dominated by new cultural hegemony based on the Seto heritage.

3.3.3. Public space and (temporarily) appropriation

Apart from their own space (which is not theirs in the sense of private property but in all other meanings), young people in most of the cases use, temporarily conquer, appropriate and negotiate public spaces. In the case of the football supporters in Croatia, usual appropriation is related to the football stadium where they know exactly which part of the terraces is their part and who stands on a particular part of the terraces, but the example of Corteo (procession of people, usually occupying the middle of the street) is much better example of creation of temporary autonomous zone in the public space in the centre of the city:

> We didn't do Corteo from some years ago, you know, and this time it was more than two hundred of us, walking with the banner and flags, it was really great, we were in the middle of the road, people watching, some of them clapping hands and greeting us, some did it from the windows, police escorting us, helicopter above, but they did let us do it, not a one of us was arrested that day. We went to the centre, we felt on our own, like, you know, this is our city and the city is ours! (Tomahawk, VS, HR)

The Finnish case study shows how young people use public spaces as a certain way of appropriation, through their protests and similar manifestations, including the most important event for Rainbow Café activists – Gay Pride procession. But, beside the temporarily nature of protest or manifestation, which is usually an event of maximum one day duration, there are public places with frequent and in fact constant appropriation, with the result that certain public space, like the park in this case, become appropriated. Alppipuisto Park in Helsinki is good example of that kind of practice:

INT: Yep. What do you think, why is it Alppipuisto?

JUHO: It is quite peaceful, it's a bit off the map and there aren't that many… People don't go there a lot, it isn't a central place. People are passing by, but few people actually stop there. Of course during summer the park is packed, perhaps. But people are mostly chilled; they aren't passers-by or drunken people. So it has a reputation of being a hippie park or something.

INT: So what is the best place to do circus?

MATTI: Well, I think it has become the Alppipuisto Park, because all the other hippies hang out there, too. [laughs]

INT: Hippies hang out there? Is circus something that hippies do?

MATTI: You see… Some people are…. Some are more into dreadlocks and stuff, but then again there are also people who don't seem like hippies. So in that sense we aren't a hippie group, but the core group who started all this probably was. And they felt at home in Alppipuisto Park regardless of why they went there in the first place. So it is a natural choice to go there to do this [circus]. (Matti, Jusso (HSO, FI)

Young activists in Spain organised initiative to change the neighbourhood and to make access where it was not possible because of a wall in the public space. They also tried to intervene in public space with the idea of public, even mobile, gardens and orchards:

There was a wall, then you did not see from one side to the other of the square, and you no longer had the space from the square to sit, to do whatever… and it [the initiative of opening the access to] transformed the neighbourhood a lot…. People in the neighbourhood worried that this would end up being a vacant lot, a wasteland, one of those who accumulate garbage… Let's see! It is not just a garden, but … ah … the idea was that it was a place where it would be nice to hang out and stay there. Mmmm … then we were inspired by some Berlin plots or I do not know what, they have now .. mobile orchards .. (HQ3, AAS, ES)

In Slovakia, young repats differ from their fellow citizens in the places to which they have returned because of the social capital they have acquired abroad. The environment perceives them as different, and their being different (a double stigma) was also visible in their use of public space in a small provincial town, which as a result attracted other young people from the local environment. As opposed to large towns such as Bratislava, where such spaces exist (for example alternative centres), in a small town, a cultural centre which organises events which are innovative and unusual for such a milieu, focusing on multiculturalism and the right to be different, was something new. It immediately drew the attention of the local authorities and political parties, but it also aroused the interest of young people, who identified with such content. A struggle for power was also present in this space. For example, the town authorities forbade gatherings or putting tables on the pavement outside the centre. Young people brought their chairs from home and sat there, forming a peaceful, non-violent protest by reclaiming the public space in front of the cultural centre.

3.3.4. Space and identity

In the Italian study, about young people from a deprived neighbourhood in a suburb of Naples, space is crucial in a different way. It is not about one's own choice of space, as in Spain, but rather the neighbourhood space is a strong determinant and a double framework of identification. The first

framework of identification refers to a period which is not part of a choice or action outside the usual exposure to socialisation patterns that are frequently marked by crime and life on the streets. This first framework also refers to a strong stigmatisation and determinism of one's own domicile in an area of strong deprivation and one of the lowest levels of education in the whole of Italy. The second framework of identification was formed after becoming familiar with the work of a cooperative led by Gianluca, where a group of young people for the first time met other interaction patterns and learnt new knowledge and skills. They did so while continuing to live in the same neighbourhood with their peers. Thus, they experience new excitements, which are no longer associated with conflict with the police and the risk of being beaten up or ending up in prison, but are rather associated with the risk incorporated in certain highly-demanding circus acts or alternative sport activities such as parkour, a sort of urban athletics, and acrobatics. In both periods, the neighbourhood and the group remained the main framework of identification but on significantly different grounds. Furthermore, the street as a public space became the place where new skills and new socialisation patterns were demonstrated. The space was reclaimed but, as opposed to control of the area for criminal purposes as at the beginning of the usual neighbourhood socialisation, now it is about controlling their own psychophysical abilities which are manifested in space through circus and athletics skills. The same space that led to prison or death has now become a living space thanks to the intervention of the same young people, with the help of older members of the cooperative and others who helped in establishing the two main groups: Trerrote and Il tappeto di Lqbal. Old neighbourhood identity advanced and enhanced with a specific feeling of belonging to the group.

In the Finnish case study, space is again crucial, this time as a youth cultural and community centre in which the two described groups were active; the circus group and the rainbow café. The building that houses the centre used to be occupied, but in 2014 the City Government allowed young people to use the space. Independent of ownership issues, the iconic structure, which lends it the air of an underground punk centre, is still present, regardless of the fact that the circus group is more attractive to a hippy style, while the rainbow café primarily appeals to LGBT activists. In this case, space denotes freedom and autonomy, providing a feeling of security and enabling activities to take place that are important in the lives of the actors using it, from practising certain skills to getting together or planning activities. Through the space, and with the help of the space, a community is formed. The community grows through conflict with the authorities and represents a reaction which is a result of the prevailing intergenerational distrust. However, it is the existence of the claimed space that is crucial for the development of the community. Identity here is not fixed, despite the sensitive play regarding notions like 'hippies' or 'LGBT activists', emphasising identification with the cultural centre as the free and appropriated space. This space is at the same time open to everyone except the extreme right (Nazis).

> JOHANNA: But, like, you should understand what humour is and when you need to be serious, and also understand the values behind all the activities at the centre.
>
> INTERVIEWER: Yep. What are they in your opinion?
>
> JOHANNA: I don't know whether 'no Nazis' is a value, but we don't discriminate against anyone. Everyone's welcome as they are, and there are gender neutral toilets and all that. We are a no-discrimination zone and the doors are open to everyone. (Johanna, HSO, FI)

The group which gathers in the space collectively goes out of it into the city's other public spaces in order to point out, through varying forms of activism (protests, events), the social injustices and inequalities in Finnish society, and in particular the difficult status of marginalised social groups.

> I have two viewpoints on this. Before I was part of this activity here, I used to go to Pride, because it was nice and I met my friends there, my friends in the Rainbow community. Back then I only thought of Pride as a party. I didn't even know that there was something more during that week when I was 18 years old. And even later, I can see that Pride has grown a lot. It is a norm nowadays, so it does have an impact. It used to be a protest. Then it grew so big. The support is something unbelievable. I don't remember which year it was when there were 10,000 people more than the previous year or something. I can't even describe how I felt because so many had come there to support. They weren't even necessarily Rainbow people; they just wanted to come there and say 'hey, here we are and we can see you'. Pride has made such a big difference … And there's a need for Pride until everything is normal. (Kärppä, HSO, FI)

Experiences of not belonging to the city were also a source of intergenerational distrust among young activists. In connection with these experiences, respondents mentioned the discomfort they felt based on their ethnic affiliation or sexual orientation as they walked through the city. Racism and homophobia were parts of different socially produced urban spaces and a continuous negotiation within spaces in which people appear as subjects of age, race, gender and class. Thus, young activists from the Finnish study described their experiences of living in the city as a public arena in which complex encounters, exposures and negotiations over belonging, took place. Apart from the issue regarding sexual orientation, mentioned above, there is also the issue of belonging to a minority ethnic group. One young respondent describes her experiences of being in the city public space as follows:

> I do notice that if I'm hanging out with friends who aren't Finnish, people look at us differently than if I were alone in a gang where everyone's alike … And if I speak Arabic on the phone I do feel a bit troubled nowadays, because I don't know at all how someone might react to it. And if I'm out with my family, we do get those strange looks. (Maryam, HSO, FI)

In the Spanish case study, identity and space are not linked in the subcultural sense (as in the Finnish and Croatian case studies), but more as a site of activist identity more broadly, be that linked to environmental, housing, urban garden, bio-construction or other activism. Perhaps the only part which is similar to the Croatian and Finnish case studies is the part regarding squatting, because the identity of squatters could also bring negative stigma in society. It seems that young people in the Spanish case study, see themselves as activists in a much broader sense, not limited to 'old school' identity of squatters which prevailed in the 1980s, but being aware that people outside their circles use that notion to label them:

> I think that, in general, there is a lack of awareness, and when there is a trouble they automatically see us as squatters. As if the squats were… anyway, a very unfair stigma. (HQ4, AAS, ES)

In Croatia, great importance in terms of space began with the town as an identification point for Varteks supporters, and continued with the space of the stadium, the pitch or the part of the terrace which the fans had claimed for their rituals. Varaždin as a town, along with the club, is a key

identification symbol for the White Stones. This is visible in numerous banners, murals, stickers, tattoos, and chants. It is particularly important to point out a distinguishing feature of this group of young people in relation to others in this cluster, which is their readiness to defend the town's honour by participating in occasional fights with other ultras groups coming to Varaždin for football matches.

> Well, I remember Bad Blue Boys (fans of Dinamo FC and Torcida (fans of Hajduk FC) walking through our town towards the stadium, and some other groups less often, and then we'd come and throw things at each other - fists, batons - but that was maybe, you know, thirty seconds, a minute, and that was it. Now, if you were punched, OK; if you weren't, even better. (1990, VS, HR)

After having established the club, the fans entered into permanent conflict with the local establishment, among other things because of the impossibility of using the town stadium where FC Varaždin played, the club which was led by the same people who had previously led the old Varteks to bankruptcy and changed the club's name. On leaving their terrace (the ultras subculture is emotionally attached to their part of the terrace in the stadium), there were numerous challenges, as the fans were involved in other forms of social activism which resulted in a new identification with a space but this time with a space on the town's periphery: a ground they had built themselves and for the construction of which they had collected their own financial resources.

The Estonian study, which differs from the others in many aspects (passive rejection instead of activism, the absence of the group, regular use of given space and youth centre services without appropriation) also contains various levels of relationship to space as a key place in this cluster. Contrary to the young Slovak repats who returned after short-term emigration, young people leave this area permanently. Considering the fact that this is a rural region, the migration of young people to urban centres is by no means unexpected. However, the study points to the fact that, along with unavoidable economic factors, there are also specific culturological aspects of migration which can be explained by disappointment with the new prevailing pattern of favouring the Seto culture. The new hegemony within the Seto region was manifested as domination of public space. This particularly hits those young people who do not want to participate in such a cultural pattern. For example, the researcher evoked an incident during a Seto event in which a group of young people played pop and rock music in English at the other end of the space. This led the majority participants of the event – the Seto activists – to drown them out with typical *Leelo* singing, which is a symbol of the Seto culture, so that the smaller group of young people withdrew from the space. In addition, the youth centre space was important for those young people who remained in the region, because it offered them a getaway from an environment in which they did not feel accepted, regardless of whether the getaway was some nearby activity or an excursion to another space. Young people in this study became losers because they didn't accept the identity based on Seto culture. Apart from division regarding conquered or given space, in the Estonian case it is about the lost space.

3.3.5. Space and social engagement: concluding remarks

All groups in the study have in common the establishment of networks that rely on spaces as places of living, work, activism, and raising awareness of social problems through action in space. The characteristics of the establishment of the aforementioned networks include the transfer of knowledge beyond the logic of profit, a do-it-yourself ethos, solidarity, an ecological consciousness and an emphasis on waste recycling and sorting. The crucial element is space which, whether private

or public, becomes a place of interventions, exchange, connecting private life and work, and a transfer of knowledge. Through activity, the space is changed and becomes part of the scene, a place for creating a specific life experience that suggests freedom, autonomy and a critique of the existing economic and political system. The critique of the system is not for its own sake, and nor does it remain at a general level; activities in space, participating in numerous workshops and skill transfer/learning, together with various cultural practices and appropriations of space have very substantive and tangible consequences for the respondents.

Ultimately the forms of use and symbolic significance of space, for the groups of young people that were the subject of the studies in this cluster, represent a common trait. Admittedly, there are certain differences in terms of their methods of using space, the implications which a certain space has as a symbol of the group's social activism, and the importance of a space for the young people as regards the perception of that same space in the local community or in society as a whole. Except for the Estonian case, for all groups of young people in the studied cases, space was a strong factor in building a feeling of sharing and belonging to a group. Kevin Hetherington (1998) in his successful attempt to destroy the old-fashioned notion of 'new social movements', used the notions of space, performance and politics to show how expressive communities operate their lives and identities in contemporary society. Most of the subjects of research in this cluster could fit into his argument. However, we still use the classic notion of social movements, not only because it still prevails in sociological textbooks, but also because authors of case-study reports in this cluster as well as respondents themselves used it in most of the cases. The work of Habermas (1984) or Touraine (1995) served well to explain the aspects of respondents' articulations and (self)reflections in the Spanish case study. Notwithstanding the differences between how social actors are understood in the subcultural theories of Phil Cohen (1972) or Dick Hebdige (1979) and notions of neo(tribes) proposed by Maffesoli (1996)[1], either of these terms could be used to describe social actors in the Croatian and Finnish case studies. The focus of this report is not on continuity of that theoretical debate, but at least, considering the importance of the notion of social movements, it should be mentioned that the data collected in this cluster clearly points to the arguments of centrality of emotion and affect in contemporary youth (and not only youth) movements/subcultures/tribes/affective alliances. Almost all cases in this cluster (especially the Croatian, Finnish, Italian and Spanish studies) emphasised the importance of friendships, loyalties, emotions, hugging, expressivity and other characteristics found in recent studies on social movements, expressive communities, affective alliances and similar social actors (Pilkington et al. 2018; Perasović and Mustapić 2017.) In this cluster, it is evident how those characteristics are performed and lived in concrete space. The great importance of space for young people and their social involvement is described ultimately as the difference between life and death by one respondent from the Spanish case:

> [names self-building collective equipment initiative] has been a revulsive, isn't it? The fact of being able to build something of our own, a space that will answer to many of the needs we have. One of the things we have always claimed is the theme of space, when [a collective equipment initiative] closed, we had no space to do things and if we do not have activity, we die, that is ... (T4, AAS, ES)

---

[1] Differences which are, arguably, over-emphasised in the work of Bennet (1999) or Muggleton (2000).

4. Conclusion

All six analysed studies focused on groups of young people who, to a greater or lesser extent, and in various ways, were stigmatised (labelled, stereotyped, marked) and who were in conflict with the society in which they lived. Everybody responded to the conflict and to the forms of stigmatisation in their own way, thus confirming that stigmatised young people, including even the most difficult cases of deprivation, such as that in Naples, were not without agency. Action, expressed as a rejection of a subordinated position, was mostly actively expressed, while rejection in the Estonian case took on a passive form; nonetheless, as a reaction to a situation through which young people expressed their attitude (even if through migration), it demonstrates a form of agency.

Most of the studies suggest a conflict with the local community and/or society as a whole, through which the young people created some sort of social innovation. However, the conflict did not disappear with this, but rather the conflict framework became formalised. In most of the analysed cases, the outcomes of social activism, and the organised action of the young people, were empowerment and a more intense feeling of belonging to a group and sharing its identity. In addition, they developed self-respect and self-esteem, gained a certain reputation, and at the same time experienced a serious conflict in a broader social context. As social actors who, depending on the various contexts, fought with much more powerful opponents in the public political arena, the feeling of mutual connection within the group became stronger. In addition, in most cases there was the awareness of the broader implications of social activism and the feeling of belonging to global and national social movements, which was expressed in concrete actions, but also communicated on social networks and via symbols. Furthermore, these case studies also confirmed the findings of broader studies of young people, which suggest mass distrust of the political system and a low level of participation, particularly when it comes to the conventional forms of involvement of young people in society (Franc, Perasović, and Mustapić, 2018).

In many cases, the social engagement of the analysed groups of young people and the articulated goals of their operations distanced them from the former escapist, isolationist models of group operations. This is particularly evident in the Croatian and Italian examples but also in the others. What all six case studies have in common is the existence of a public space as a physical and symbolic integrative place for social activism. Most frequently it is a cultural or youth centre, a cooperative, an NGO or, in the Croatian case, their own football club. This integrative place by no means constrains the young people in terms of using other public and private spaces in the struggle for the realisation of their own vision of a better society and social change. It is key to an academic interpretation of their understanding of community, community-building in a space, and communication with the help of space, both within the group and with society as a whole.

What all the cases have in common (a material, symbolic and in various ways institutionalised space) also points to another aspect that clearly proved to be crucial in five of the six studies. This refers to the presence of actors who do not belong to the category of young people (which, in our definition, was up to 29 years of age). This represents intergenerational trust within a group but also the common ground that exists in sharing similar values through mutual cooperation and helping in the transfer of knowledge and experience to young people through social action. For most young people, the relationship between "us" and "them" has no generational connotations but is important in terms of values, except for the young people from the Finnish case study, who consider the mainstream culture exclusively conservative and make no distinction between the political system and the older generations. Strong agency and multiple forms of action which through conflict result

in social innovation and social engagement, along with the importance of space and the necessary presence of older generations, represent findings that largely differ from the stereotypes that exist in the public mind, including sometimes also the academic community, when it comes to stigmatised and conflict-prone groups of young people in Europe.

5. References

Bennett, A. (1999) Subcultures or neo-tribes? Rethinking the relationship between youth, style and musical taste, *Sociology*, 33(3), 599–617.

Castells, M. (2000) *Uspon umreženog društva- Informacijsko doba: ekonomija, društvo i kultura*, Zagreb: Golden Marketing.

Cohen, P. (1972) Sub-cultural conflict and working class community, *Working Papers in Cultural Studies*, 2, 5–52.

Durkheim E ([1893] 1964) The Division of Labour in Society. New York: Free Press

Franc, R., Perasović, B. and Mustapić, M. (2018) Youth, history and a crisis of democracy? Perspectives from Croatia, In: Pilkington, H.; Pollock, G., & Franc, R. (eds), *Understanding youth participation across Europe from survey to ethnography*, pp. 227-263, London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Habermas, J. (1984) *Theory of communicative action, Volume One: Reason and the rationalization of society*, Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press.

Hebdige, D. (1979) *Subculture: The meaning of style*, London: Methuen.

Hetherington, K. (1998) *Expressions of identitiy*, London: Sage publications.

Lefebvre, H. (1996) The right to the city, in Kofman, E., and Lebas, E., *Writings on cities*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Wiley-Blackwell.

Lefebvre, H.([1974] 1991) *The production of space*, Blackwell: Oxford.

Maffesoli, M. (1996) *The time of the tribes: The decline of individualism in mass society*, London: Sage.

Muggleton, D. (2000) *Inside subculture: The postmodern meaning of style*, Oxford: Berg.

Mustapić, M., Perasović, B. and Derado, A. (2018) The Populist 2017 electoral campaign and cultural policy: A case study of the return of 'outcast' Željko Kerum onto the Croatian political scene, In: Šešić Dragićević, M. & Vickery, J. (eds), *Cultural policy and populism. The rise of populism and the crisis of political pragmatism*, pp. 88-99, Istanbul: İstanbul Bilgi University Press.

Perasović, B. and Mustapić, M. (2017) Carnival supporters, hooligans, and the 'Against Modern Football' movement: Life within the ultras subculture in the Croatian context, *Sport in Society*, 20(7), 121-136.

Pilkington, H., Omelchenko, E. and Perasović, B. (2018) 'One big family': Emotion, affect and solidarity in young people's activism in radical right and patriotic movements, In: Pilkington, H.; Pollock, G., & Franc, R. (eds), *Understanding youth participation across Europe from survey to ethnography*, pp. 123-152, London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Sassen, S. (2016) The global city: Enabling economic intermediation and bearing its costs, *City & Community*, *15*(2), 97-108.

Tönnies, F. [1887] (1957). Community and society [Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft]. Oxford, England: Michigan State Univer. Press.

Touraine, A. (1995) *Critique of modernity*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Project Identity

PROJECT NAME Promoting Youth Involvement and Social Engagement (PROMISE)

COORDINATOR Jo Deakin, University of Manchester, UK.
Jo.deakin@manchester.ac.uk

CONSORTIUM Raffaele Bracalenti, *Istituto Psicoanalitico per le Ricerche Sociali, Italy*.
r.bracalenti@iprs.it

Eckart Müller-Bachmann, *Christliches Jugenddorfwerk Deutschlands e.V., Germany*.
eckart.mueller-bachmann@cjd-nord.de

Zyab Ibanez, *Universitat Autonoma de Barcelona, Spain.*
zyab.Ibanez@eui.eu

Raquel Matos, *Universidade Catolica Portuguesa, Portugal.*
rmatos@porto.ucp.pt

Ivan Chorvát, *Univerzita Mateja Bela v Banskej Bystrici, Slovakia.*
Ivan.Chorvat@umb.sk

Kaisa Vehkalahti, *Finnish Youth Research Network, Finland*.
Kaisa.Vehkalahti@oulu.fi

Annett Wiedermann, *YES Forum (Youth and European Social Work), Germany*.
annett.wiedermann@yes-forum.eu

Anna Markina, *University of Tartu, Estonia.*
Anna.Markina@ut.ee

Markus Quandt, *GESIS - Leibniz Institut Fur Sozialwissenschaften E.V., Germany*.
Markus.quandt@gesis.org

Elena Omelchenko, *National Research University, Russia*.
omelchenkoe@mail.ru

Ben Perasović, *Ivo Pilar Institute, Croatia.*
ben.perasovic@gmail.com

FUNDING SCHEME Horizon 2020 Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020), Societal Challenge 6 – Europe in a changing world: inclusive, innovative and reflective societies", call YOUNG-2015.

DURATION May 2016 – April 2019 (36 months).

BUDGET EU contribution: 2 500 000 €.

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

FOR MORE INFORMATION Contact: Ben Perasović (ben.perasovic@gmail.com) (this report), or Hilary Pilkington (Hilary.Pilkington@manchester.ac.uk) or Jo Deakin (Jo.deakin@manchester.ac.uk)