

## Executive summary

MYPLACE (Memory, Youth, Political Legacy and Civic Engagement) was a major cross-European research project studying the civic and political engagement of young Europeans. It used a mixed method (survey, interviews, ethnographies) and case study approach to map the relationship between political heritage, current levels and forms of civic and political engagement of young people in Europe, and their potential receptivity to radical and populist political agendas. The project is situated at the intersection of a number of normally unconnected fields of research including youth studies, democratic theory and participation, memory studies and far right studies. This report summarises its key findings in relation to three questions: How do young people understand politics and how do they engage (or not) with it? Are young people receptive to populist and radical right political agendas? How does the past shape the present and future of young people's engagement?

*On politics:* MYPLACE data suggest that young Europeans are neither apathetic nor disengaged. Young people across the locations studied show a high degree of ambivalence towards politics; just under half (42%) of those surveyed said they were 'interested' in politics while 58% said they were not. The survey also found a low level of trust and high level of cynicism towards politics, politicians and the political system. While this confirms politicians and political parties face real challenges in connecting with and engaging young Europeans our data lead us to suggest that they will find that the door is half-open not half-closed. This conclusion is based on interview and ethnographic data from MYPLACE which show that when loss of trust in politics and politicians is discussed in young people's own words, it is strongly linked to the perception of politics as having strayed from the pursuit of the public or collective good into a realm of self-promotion or pursuit of material self-interest. This suggests young people do not reject politics per se but a distorted version of 'the political'.

*On receptivity to populism and the radical right:* The potential for the 'radicalisation' of young European citizens is high due to a combination of: the ongoing economic crisis and austerity measures, that have disproportionately affected young people; heightened levels of security threat and pressure on European states to accommodate growing numbers of refugees and migrants; and the disaffection with mainstream politics noted above. MYPLACE research shows that, notwithstanding these pressures, young people continue to support the fundamental principles of democracy ( a democratic, multiparty system and an opposition that can freely express its views). It also found little support for extremist politics and low support for violence as a means of achieving political ends. However alongside a strong tendency towards 'liberal' attitudes on social issues such as gender and sexuality, there are indications, especially among the most disadvantaged young people, of hostility to immigrants and/or Roma people. Thus while the disaffection of young people in most countries does not translate currently into support for populist and radical right parties, some preconditions for such a development were identified.

*On how the past shapes the present:* A distinctive feature of MYPLACE research is an examination of the role of historical memory in shaping young people's contemporary political attitudes and behaviour. While the survey suggests young people do not always have a strong interest in history, the wider research demonstrates that historical memories, often transmitted through parents and grandparents, play a role in shaping their attitudes. MYPLACE worked closely with museum partners and research findings indicate considerable potential for schools and museums to help young people form sophisticated understandings of the implications of historical events and processes. In many countries, however, the research also found that young people (especially in countries experiencing acute economic crisis) feel caught in a 'depressing present' characterised by constrained access to employment, social benefits, housing or education. This makes it difficult to envisage an optimistic future for themselves or their country.

Research results have been disseminated widely through more than 420 separate dissemination events, including: peer reviewed publications; chapters in books; articles in the popular press; public engagement events; presentations to policy makers and the scientific community; radio/TV interviews; blogs; films/videos.

## Project context

MYPLACE (Memory, Youth, Political Legacy and Civic Engagement) was a major cross-European research project concerned with the civic and political engagement of young Europeans. It used a mixed method (survey, interviews, ethnographies) and case study approach to map the relationship between political heritage, current levels and forms of civic and political engagement of young people in Europe, and their potential receptivity to radical and populist political agendas.

The MYPLACE project ran from 01 June 2011 to 30 September 2015, and involved a total of 20 beneficiary organisations in 14 countries:

1. *Aston University, Manchester, UK*
2. *Caucasus Research Resource Centre, Tbilisi, Georgia*
3. *Centro Investigacao e Estudos de Sociologia, Lisbon, Portugal*
4. *Daugavpils Universitate, Daugavpils, Latvia*
5. *Debreceni Egyetem, Debrecen, Hungary*
6. *EURASIA Partnership Foundation, Tbilisi, Georgia*
7. *Friedrich-Schiller Universität Jena, Jena, Germany*
8. *Institut Društvenih Znanosti Ivo Pilar, Zagreb, Croatia*
9. *Scientific Research Centre "Region", Ulyanovsk, Russian Federation*
10. *Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester, UK*
11. *Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Athens, Greece*
12. *State Institution of Ulyanovsk Research and Development Centre, Ulyanovsk, Russian Federation*
13. *Syddansk Universitet, Sønderborg, Denmark*
14. *Tallinn University, Tallinn, Estonia*
15. *The University of Manchester, Manchester, UK*
16. *The University of Warwick, Coventry, UK*
17. *Universität Bremen, Bremen, Germany*
18. *Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, Spain*
19. *University of Eastern Finland, Kuopio, Finland*
20. *Univerzita sv Cyrila a Metoda v Trnave, Trnava, Slovakia*



MYPLACE explored how young people's social participation is shaped by the shadows (past, present and future) of totalitarianism and populism in Europe. In its original conception the project highlighted the potential for the growth in support for radical ideologies of the 'far right' among young people based on evidence that the European political space, especially the European parliament, was being colonised increasingly by populist and, somewhat paradoxically, Eurosceptic political parties and blocs. Since then (2009), there has been a steady stream of successes of such parties in national parliaments: Golden Dawn took 7% of the vote in Greece (June 2012); the Finns took 19% in Finland (2011); and Jobbik polled 20% of the vote in Hungary (2014). These parties also won seats in the 2014 European parliamentary elections where Jobbik polled 15% of the national vote, Golden Dawn 10% and the Finns 13%. More dramatically, Eurosceptic/nationalist parties won the elections for the first time in France (with 25% of the vote) and the UK (27%). Even Germany, whose political and economic investment in the European project has been seemingly unswerving, saw the anti-Euro currency party Alternative für Deutschland poll 7% of the vote and the far right National Democratic Party (1%) also take a seat. This brought into sharp relief the challenge at the heart of the democratic project in Europe. Acts of right-wing extremist terrorism in Norway and Germany and the emergence of new 'feet on the street' movements, like the English Defence League (EDL) and Pegida, have intensified scholarly and policy interest in the issue of right-wing extremism. MYPLACE started from the premise that these political trends are evident but neither 'new' nor the

outcome of discrete national 'political cultures'; they are rooted in a range of radical and populist political and philosophical traditions that are pan-European in nature and the popularity they currently enjoy is cyclical rather than novel. MYPLACE aimed to provide an honest and critical understanding of the potential of such movements to capture the political imagination of young Europeans today.

## Project objectives

The particular concern of MYPLACE was with the current generation of young people (under the age of 30). This generation is united by the experience of growing up in a Europe that, for the first time, is largely free of both right- and left-wing authoritarian regimes. They share the lack of any first-hand memory of the cold war and the associated fears and prejudices that divided Europe or any direct experience of living under a communist, authoritarian or fascist political regime. They share also, however, the experience of growing up in the first global crisis of capitalism in the post-World War Two period. The vulnerable social position of young people in such conditions makes them a prime recruitment target for parties and movements of the extreme right.

The specific objectives of MYPLACE were:

- To contextualise young people's civic engagement in regional, national and European historical contexts.
- To map and understand the process of the (re-)production, transmission and (re)interpretation of local, national and pan-European political heritage and experience.
- To measure attitudes to, and participation in, political organisations, social movements and civic action programmes among young people in Europe and to understand how these attitudes and engagements are differentiated along lines of gender, ethnicity, class and region.
- To measure views on legitimate forms of political representation and action within the context of different democratic heritages.
- To map the range of youth activism across Europe and the ways in which young activists are networked inter-regionally and trans-nationally.
- To understand the appeal of radical, extreme or populist movements to young people and its relationship to regional, national and European political heritage.
- To inform and assist policy and practitioner agencies to chart and evaluate the political responses to populism in the youth related policies of political parties and within young people's own activism.

## Work conducted

MYPLACE employed a combination of survey, interview and ethnographic research instruments to provide new, pan-European data on: the degree of engagement/disengagement from politics and civic activism among young people; political values and attitudes among young people and how they are shaped by local, national and pan-European political heritages; and the degree of support for, activism in, or receptivity to extreme political movements and agendas.

The MYPLACE project used a case study approach, conducting fieldwork in 30 locations across 14 countries within Europe (four locations were included in Germany - two in former East Germany and two in former West Germany) (see Table 1). These paired fieldwork locations were selected in order to provide within country contrasts in terms of hypothesised receptivity to radical politics. It generated extensive new empirical data consisting of four distinct but related data-sets based on: survey; semi-structured interviews; ethnographic case studies; and focus groups/expert interviews and inter-generational interview.

*Survey:* The MYPLACE survey was conducted in the 30 research locations between October 2012 and March 2013 employing a common survey instrument (with some agreed regional variations) and one of three sampling plans developed for the partners. In total 16,935 questionnaires were completed and a representative sample of young people for each research location was achieved. Analysis of data was conducted first at national level and consisted of analysis of each substantive question in the survey, comparing the two locations and examining the data more deeply using bivariate and multivariate techniques. The second stage consisted of a cross-country analysis on themes of: political interest, political

participation, citizenship, social networks, gender and sexuality, religion, minority groups, understanding of democracy, history and memory and European issues. These analyses were contextualised in existing literature and completed using a range of statistical techniques, employing mainly multi-level modelling.

*Semi-structured interviews:* Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a sub-sample of the survey respondents volunteering to take part in a follow-up interview. Participants were selected controlling for gender, ethnicity/nationality, age and education, and also based on the responses to two survey questions – on political (non)engagement and levels of (in)tolerance – to ensure a broad spectrum of opinions in relation to these two important dimensions of the research. Approximately 30 interviews were conducted in each fieldwork site resulting in a total of 903 interviews. The interviews employed a common schedule with agreed regional variations and nationally or locally appropriate prompts. The first stage of analysis was at the national level, comparing findings for the two research locations. This resulted in 15 national reports (separate reports for eastern and western Germany). The second stage of analysis consisted of a meta-ethnographic synthesis of all 903 interviews resulting in a cross-national analysis report.

*Ethnographic case studies:* The ethnographic data set consists of 44 case studies of youth activism conducted in 14 countries of Europe. Three cases were selected in each country and six thematic clusters were created each including between six and nine cases. The final set consists of 847 interviews as well as field diaries, textual, audio and visual data. Each case study was initially analysed discretely and written up as an individual case study. This was followed by the transnational analysis of cases at cluster level using a meta-ethnographic synthesis method.

*Memory studies:* The role of memory and political legacy in the formation of young people's engagement attitudes and practices was studied through a number of different qualitative instruments and in close collaboration with public institutions (museums, archives etc.) in each country. Fifty-six focus groups with young people and 73 expert interviews with museum curators, archivists and others engaged in the re-presentation of relevant historical periods were conducted as well as participant observation in sites of memory (museums, archives etc.). The findings of this research were submitted as national reports on discourse production, followed by a comparative report. In addition, in each partner country, approximately three case studies of intergenerational transmission of activism were completed, generating 180 interviews. The findings were analysed and reported at the national level.

An innovative qualitative data analysis strategy was devised for use within the Consortium based on an adaptation of the meta-ethnographic synthesis method to the analysis of systematically prepared primary data. This was set out for researchers in a Qualitative Data Analysis Handbook encompassing: Computer Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software (Nvivo) training; and extended details of file naming protocols and instructions for gathering socio-demographic 'attributes', using quantitative tools, coding interviews and producing 'node memos' and 'respondent memos' for cross-case analysis

## **Main results**

MYPLACE data suggest that young Europeans are neither apathetic nor disengaged. Young people across the locations studied show a high degree of ambivalence towards politics; just under half (42%) of those surveyed said they were 'interested' in politics while 58% said they were not. The problem is rather that this ambivalence combines with low levels of trust and high levels of cynicism towards politics, politicians and the political system to produce strong disinclinations to engage with formal politics. MYPLACE data show that, across Europe, young people feel remote from a perceived political elite. A measure of 'cynicism' based on agreement with two statements - i) 'politicians are corrupt' and ii) 'the rich have too much influence in politics' - showed the average level of cynicism among survey respondents to be 69.2%. While locations in Mediterranean countries of Greece, Portugal and Spain are most cynical about politicians and politics, universally the levels of cynicism are relatively high and there is little differentiation across gender, age, class etc. The more informal semi-structured interviews, showed that beneath the lack of trust lies an almost universally negative evaluation of politicians and political parties, captured by young people in their descriptions of politics as 'one big dirty game'. However, despite low levels of trust in political

institutions, high levels of 'cynicism' about politics, declining electoral participation and a preference for engagement in non-conventional forms of politics, MYPLACE data appear to confirm that young people continue to attach higher 'value' to traditional forms of participation. Voting in elections received the highest mean score for effectiveness of political action and more than 70% of respondents eligible to vote said they had voted in the last national elections while only 8% said they had not voted because they found it 'pointless'. While in many places there is a clear correlation between levels of trust in political institutions and voting - the highest rates for both are found in locations in northern European countries (particularly Denmark where over 90% of eligible respondents had voted, Germany and Finland) – we also see some anomalies. Thus in locations in Spain, where trust in institutions is low, there is nonetheless high turnout. In contrast, in the UK, where trust in institutions is in the top half, the lowest level of turn-out (39%) was recorded in one of the paired locations.

Our research shows that young people give a 'could do better' grade to democracy as they experience it daily themselves. Overall mean satisfaction 'with the way democracy works' across the survey sample was, on a scale of 0-10, just 5.01. In some parts of Europe there is very high satisfaction with democracy. Our research showed this to be highest in locations in western and eastern Germany, Denmark and Finland and in semi-structured interviews respondents in those locations expressed pride in their democratic system. However, in post-socialist and Mediterranean countries deep reservations and concerns about how democracy works for them were expressed including a sense that democracy was no more than 'a mask' (Georgia), that the state of democracy was 'much worse than under communism' (Slovakia) or that the country was currently living in an 'underground dictatorship' (Greece). Notwithstanding this, MYPLACE found little support for extremist politics and low support for violence as a means of achieving political ends. However alongside a strong tendency towards 'liberal' attitudes on social issues such as gender and sexuality, there are indications, especially among the most disadvantaged young people, of hostility to immigrants and/or Roma people. Thus while the disaffection of young people in most countries does not currently translate into support for populist and far right parties, some preconditions for such a development were identified.

A distinctive feature of MYPLACE research is an examination of the role of historical memory in shaping young people's contemporary political attitudes and behaviour. While the survey suggests young people do not always have a strong interest in history, the wider research demonstrates that historical memories, often transmitted through parents and grandparents, play a role in shaping their attitudes. MYPLACE worked closely with museum partners, and research findings indicate considerable potential for schools and museums to help young people form sophisticated understandings of the implications of historical events and processes. In many countries, however, young people feel caught in a 'depressing' present characterised by constrained access to employment, social benefits, housing or education. This makes it difficult to envisage an optimistic future for themselves or their country. This feeling was most pronounced in countries experiencing acute economic crisis (southern European countries as well as Hungary) but by no means restricted to these locations.

Looking to the future, in semi-structured interviews we asked young people what their vision of a 'better society' would be. This included a range of suggestions for improving the economy and political system so that people could simply 'earn a living' and there were more 'direct' forms of democracy. However it was striking that many respondents expressed more general aspirations to live in a more considerate, tolerant and solidaristic society. Encapsulating the importance of the reauthentication of politics in this process, one respondent from Portugal expressed her desire for 'A more communicative society, politicians who really communicate with people and not with each other, pretending they are communicating with people' (Portugal).

## Main Results

Prior to the commencement of research involving human participants, MYPLACE was submitted for ethical approval to the University of Warwick Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Sub-committee (HSSREC). In parallel, each consortium member submitted an application for ethical approval either (i) to their own institution; or (ii) to the MYPLACE Ethics Sub-committee. Partners who submitted to their own institution first completed an 'equivalence' procedure to ensure that the partner institution's ethics governance was equivalent to that of the coordinating institution. For those partners submitting to the MYPLACE Ethics Sub-committee, application forms and guidelines were used that replicated those of the University of Warwick HSSREC. Approval was granted by the MYPLACE Ethics Sub-committee which included an independent external adviser. Empirical research was not allowed to begin until ethics approval had been received. The MYPLACE Ethics Sub-committee continued to be active throughout the duration of the project, responding to queries and monitoring ethical procedures both in the course of field data gathering and subsequently to ensure the maintenance of confidentiality and safe storage of data. No issues of concern related to ethics were experienced during the project.

MYPLACE employed a mixed method (survey, interviews, ethnographies) and case study approach to map the relationship between political heritage, current levels and forms of civic and political engagement of young people in Europe, and their potential receptivity to radical and populist political agendas. Survey, interview and ethnographic data were collected and analysed discretely by specialist researchers and outputs (deliverable reports) were produced for each data set at national or case study and cross-national levels. However, blocks of questions on each of the three main questions addressed in MYPLACE were included in each of the research instruments. While no pretension is made to having integrated the findings from each of the data sets (this was not included in the MYPLACE work description), the main results are reported here according to those three main questions: How do young people understand politics and how do they engage (or not) with it? Are young people receptive to populist and radical right political agendas? How does the past shape the present and future of young people's engagement?

## Research instruments, data collection and data analysis

### *Survey*

The survey measured young people's political and civic participation as well as their attitudes to a range of social issues. It employed a common questionnaire, devised collectively by the consortium following piloting and qualitative work undertaken in a preparatory fieldwork stage during which 66 focus groups with young people and 98 expert interviews were conducted. Findings from their analysis fed into the development of the questionnaire and qualitative research instruments. The questionnaire comprised 82 questions, many of which were multi item, and placed special emphasis on tools which captured the respondents' levels of knowledge, attitudes towards, and experiences of, extreme politics. Knowledge of and attitudes towards different aspects of democratic participation and representation were also included. The data – a total of 16,935 questionnaires – were collected between autumn 2012 and spring 2013 using one of three sampling plans developed for the partners.

The project used a case study approach, conducting fieldwork in 30 locations across 14 countries within Europe (four locations were included in Germany - two in former East Germany and two in former West Germany). These paired fieldwork locations were selected in order to provide within country contrasts in terms of hypothesised receptivity to radical politics. These locations and their hypothesised receptivity to radical political agendas are detailed in Table 1. These were the field locations for both the survey and the semi-structured interview elements of data collection in the project.

Analysis of survey data was conducted first at national level and consisted of analysis of each substantive question in the survey, comparing the two locations and examining the data more deeply using bivariate and multivariate techniques; these national findings were reported.

Table 1 – Summary of the 30 research sites and numbers of participants							
Country (ISO 3166-1 code)	Location	Hypothesised receptivity to radicalisation	Geographic notes	Survey		Semi-structured interviews	
Croatia (HR)	Podsljeme	Low	District of Zagreb	610	1216	25	61
	Peščenica	High	District of Zagreb	606		36	
Denmark (DK)	Odense Centre (Centrum)	Low	District of Odense	413	815	32	60
	Odense East (Øst)	High	District of Odense	402		28	
Estonia (EE)	Tartu	Low	City in central southern Estonia	634	1251	29	60
	Narva area (Ida-Viru County)	High	Area in eastern Estonia, bordering Russia	617		31	
Finland (FI)	Kuopio	Low	Town in central Finland	430	882	30	59
	Liekka & Nurmes	High	Two small towns in eastern Finland	452		29	
Georgia (GE)	Telavi	Low	Town, north west of Tbilisi	588	1167	30	61
	Kutaisi	High	City in western Georgia	579		31	
Eastern Germany (DEE)	Jena	Low	City in south eastern Germany	608	1216	30	60
	Rostock	High	City in north eastern Germany	608		30	
Western Germany (DEW)	Bremen	Low	City in north western Germany	604	936	30	60
	Bremerhaven	High	The sea port that serves Bremen	332		30	
Greece (GR)	Argyroupoli	Low	South western district of Athens	595	1195	30	60
	Nea Philadelphia	High	North eastern district of Athens	600		30	
Hungary (HU)	Sopron	Low	Town close to the Austrian border	597	1187	29	60
	Ózd	High	Town close to the Slovak border	590		31	
Latvia (LV)	Āgenskalns	Low	District of Riga	600	1200	30	60
	Forstate & Jaunbuve	High	Two districts of Daugavpils, close to the Russian border	600		30	
Portugal (PT)	Lumiar	Low	District of Lisbon in the main city area	596	1190	30	60
	Barreiro	High	District of Lisbon on the opposite side of the river Tagus	594		30	
Russia (RU)	Vyborg	Low	City close to the Finnish-Russian border	600	1199	31	61
	Kupchino	High	District of St Petersburg	599		30	
Slovakia (SK)	Trnava	Low	City north east of Bratislava	600	1200	30	60
	Rimavská Sobota	High	Town close to the Hungarian Border	600		30	
Spain (ES)	Sant Cugat	Low	Town close to Barcelona	592	1189	30	60
	Vic	High	Town around an hour from Barcelona	597		30	
UK (GB)	Coventry	Low	City in central England	542	1092	31	61
	Nuneaton	High	Town in central England	550		30	
				<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16,935</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>903</b>

The second stage consisted of a cross-country analysis on themes of: political interest, political participation, citizenship, social networks, gender and sexuality, religion, minority groups, understanding of democracy, history and memory and European issues. The analysis of survey data involved producing both country specific and Europe wide descriptions of political engagement as well as statistical modelling in order to highlight predictors of different levels and types of participation.

The case study design reveals geographical patterns which vary according to the subject of the analysis. It is often the case that country specific similarities between locations are accompanied by significant between country differentiation. However, this should not be regarded as evidence of a 'national average' as our research locations are not selected to represent each nation and while any association between the country specific findings reported here and nationally representative results may be noted in reports and publications, this is not an intended feature of our research design. Indeed, there are many instances of significant within country differences between the research locations making it possible to identify greater similarities between locations in different countries.

### ***Semi-structured interviews***

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the aim of eliciting the meanings attached to statements or opinions expressed in the survey by respondents, providing an opportunity for respondents to explain in a more nuanced way their positions on key elements of the survey and providing a space for the articulation of experiences or ideas of relevance to the research but not included in the questionnaire. Interviews were conducted in all 30 research locations with a sub-sample of the survey respondents, who had volunteered to contribute to a follow-up interview. Participants were selected controlling for gender, ethnicity/nationality, age and education, and also based on responses to two survey questions – on political (non)engagement and levels of (in)tolerance –to ensure a broad spectrum of opinions in relation to these two important dimensions of the research. The interviews employed a common schedule with agreed regional variations and nationally or locally appropriate prompts. These questions were organised into six blocks exploring: political heritage and transmission; history and memory in everyday life; participation and understanding of 'the political'; culture and lifestyles; understanding of the language of politics; and receptivity to populism/extremism.

Following a pilot of the interview schedule (July-October 2013), interviews were conducted between October 2013 and April 2014. Approximately 30 interviews were conducted in each fieldwork site resulting in a total of 903 (see Table 1) interviews being recorded by 72 fieldworkers. The mean length of interviews was 66 minutes. All recordings were transcribed and anonymised according to common protocols and deposited in the interview data bank.

An innovative qualitative data analysis strategy was devised by the MYPLACE consortium drawing on Burawoy's (1998: 5) 'extended case method' – which seeks to 'extend out' from the field in a way that allows the extraction 'of the general from the unique' - and adapting Noblit and Hare's (1988) meta-ethnographic synthesis method to the analysis of systematically prepared primary data. This was applied in the transnational analysis of both semi-structured interviews and ethnographic case studies. This was elaborated in the MYPLACE Qualitative Data Analysis Handbook which set out a coding strategy that provided for generating standardised primary data for project-level synthesis while at the same time allowing local teams to use their own theoretical frameworks to interpret their findings for national or case level reports.

The first stage of analysis of semi-structured interviews was at the national level, comparing findings for the two research locations. This resulted in 15 national reports (separate reports for eastern and western Germany). The second stage of analysis consisted of a meta-ethnographic synthesis of all 903 interviews resulting in a cross-national analysis report.



## Ethnographies

Ethnographic case studies were designed and conducted with the primary objective of providing profound insight into the practices of youth activism across the European space. In line with the overall case study design of the project, ethnographic cases were not selected according to a strict comparative research design but through the identification of context relevant cases (Pilkington and Pollock, 2015: 21-8). Thus national teams proposed case studies not according to pre-defined typologies but, drawing on preparatory research, that reflected youth activism in their local or national context. Three cases were selected in each country and six thematic clusters were created each including between six and nine cases (see Table 2). Since two specific objectives were to provide insight into youth activism in which authoritarian or populist agendas are *invoked* and youth activism in which authoritarian or populist agendas are *resisted or opposed* these clusters included ‘Radical right and patriotic movements’ (Cluster 1, n = 10 case studies) and ‘Anti-capitalist /anti-racist/anti-fascist movements’ (Cluster 2, n = 8 case studies). Case studies located at the intersection of clusters were included in the analysis of both relevant clusters (indicated in Table 2 by the use of italics in the ‘secondary’ cluster).

Researchers conducted ethnographic fieldwork in line with an agreed framework and guidelines for what constituted an ethnographic case study but were not constrained by micro-methodological instructions. This meant that studies varied in type – particularly in their use of classic ‘participant observation’ or more ‘virtual’ modes of ethnography – and each employed a unique combination of fieldwork techniques (including semi-structured or unstructured interviews, field diaries, informal conversations, documentary materials and visual images). Full methodological details relating to the selection and conducting of the studies can be found in Pilkington (2014) and Pilkington and Mizen (2015). Each case study was analysed, first, discretely and written up as an individual case study. The individual case reports and can be found at: [http://www.fp7-myplace.eu/deliverable\\_7.php](http://www.fp7-myplace.eu/deliverable_7.php).

Cross-case analysis was conducted at cluster level, drawing on the meta-ethnographic synthesis method noted above and codified in the Qualitative Data Analysis Handbook. This method generated a series of ‘concepts’ or ‘metaphors’ from the synthesis of individual case data. In this report, we illustrate in tabular form the ‘concepts’ derived from the synthesis in relation to the questions discussed and supplement this, where appropriate, with narrative examples of how a concept emerging from the synthesis at either cluster or cross-cluster level might lend new insight into our understanding of youth activism.

**Table 2 Overview of cases and data for WP7 cross-case analysis**

Individual case studies in this cluster	Country	No. Interviews
<b>Cluster 1: Radical right and patriotic movements</b>		
1. English Defence League (EDL)	GB	35
2. Golden Dawn (GD)	GR	10
3. Latvian National Front (LNF)	LV	30
4. Mladá Matica: Youth branch of Pro-Slovak culture organisation (MM)	SK	30
5. Moral panic over anti-immigration activism in Lieksa (MPL)	FI	15
6. Russian Run (RR)	RU	26
7. Ragged Cultural and Heritage Protection Association (RA)	HU	23
8. Torcida: Football hooligans as social/political actors (TOR)	HR	21
9. <i>Youth Organisation of The Finns (The Finns)</i>	<i>FI</i>	9
<b>Cluster 2: Anti-capitalist /anti-racist/anti-fascist movements</b>		
1. Civil Society Network (CSN)	DEE	9
2. The Anti-Discrimination Working Group of Football Fans (Anti Dis AG)	DEW	18
3. Ultra Football Supporters (UFS)	DEE	6
4. Anarchists (Anarchists, RU)	RU	28
5. The movement for free education/‘blockade’ (‘The blockade’)	HR	18

6. Estonian Pirate Party and Estonian Internet Society (PP/EIK)	EE	15
7. Anti-fascist punk activism (Anti-fa punk)	HR	21
8. <i>ARRAN/CUP (ARRAN/CUP)</i>	ES	30
<b>Cluster 3: Anti-austerity/Occupy movements</b>		
1. Young People in the Greek Indignant Movement (GI)	GR	28
2. Inflexible Precarious (IP)	PT	14
3. Popular Assembly Barreiro (APB)	PT	13
4. Student movement of Barcelona City (PUDUP)	ES	26
5. Local Occupy group (LO)	GB	19
6. WOLF - Forest Conservationist Group (WOLF)	SK	30
7. Occupy Denmark (OC)	DK	10
8. <i>Indignant Feminists (FI)</i>	ES	19
<b>Cluster 4: Gender and minority rights movements</b>		
1. Indignant Feminists (FI)	ES	19
2. NGO Helping Hand (HH),	GE	15
3. LGBT movement in Estonia (LGBT)	EE	15
4. UK Feminista: young women's feminist activism (UKF)	GB	30
5. Latvia for Tibet (LFT)	LV	30
6. Extracurricular activities of the Ambedkar School, Ózd (ABS)	HU	12
<b>Cluster 5: Youth sections of political, labour and state-sponsored organisations</b>		
1. Vse Doma (VD)	RU	22
2. Students' self-governance (SSG)	GE	42
3. The Youth Council of Tartu (YCT)	EE	19
4. Youth Organisation of The Finns (The Finns)	FI	9
5. The Trade Union Youth Group IGM (IGM)	DEW	13
6. <i>ARRAN/CUP (ARRAN/CUP)</i>	ES	30
7. <i>DEPOLIT (DEPOLIT)</i>	HU	24
8. Socialist Youth Front (Odense) (SUF)	DK	11
9. <i>Christian Democratic Youth of Slovakia (CDY)</i>	SK	19
<b>Cluster 6: Religion based organisations</b>		
1. Latvian Muslim Community (LMC)	LV	34
2. Church Choir in Telavi (CCT)	GE	16
3. Youth Division of the Greek Evangelical Church of Athens (YGE)	GR	16
4. Catholic Labour youth (CLY)	PT	13
5. Christian Democratic Youth of Slovakia (CDY)	SK	20
6. <i>Latvia for Tibet (LFT)</i>	LV	30

**Country codes** (ISO 3166-1): DEE – Eastern Germany; DEW – Western Germany; DK – Denmark; EE – Estonia; ES – Spain; FI – Finland; GB – UK; GE – Georgia; GR – Greece; HR – Croatia; HU – Hungary; LV – Latvia; PT – Portugal; RU – Russia; SK – Slovakia

## Findings: Politics and Participation

The findings with regard to the question of how young people understand politics and engage (or not) with it are summarised according to two main sub-themes: attitudes to, and understandings of, politics and 'the political'; and young people's participation and activism. The findings collated here are drawn from survey, semi-structured interviews and ethnographies and the source of data are indicated in each case.

### ***Attitudes to and understandings of politics and 'the political'***

MYPLACE data suggest that young Europeans are neither apathetic nor disengaged. Young people across the locations studied show a high degree of ambivalence towards politics; just under half (42%) of those surveyed said they were 'interested' in politics while 58% said they were not. However, the levels of interest were differentiated at the country and wider regional level; young people were more likely to be interested in politics in eastern Germany, Greece and Spain, but less likely to be so in Croatia, Latvia, Finland and Estonia. The varying level of interest in politics, moreover, must be seen in the context of low levels of trust in formal political institutions. On a 0 to 10 scale, young people tend not to trust the Prime Minister with an average value of 4.3, parliament

(4.5) and political parties (3.8) in their countries although the findings also reveal country and regionally based patterns. The least trusting responses were characteristic for young people from Greece, Croatia, Spain and Hungary, whereas Finland, Georgia, Denmark, eastern and western Germany have levels of trust at the midpoint of the scale.

Turning to the European level, the average level of trust in the European Commission on the same 0 to 10 scale is 5.2 it is thus higher than average trust in national parliaments. The highest average levels of trust in the EC are in both Georgian locations, Telavi (6.6) and Kutaisi (6.1) as well as the Finnish location of Kuopio (6.3). The lowest average levels of trust were reported in both Greek locations, New Philadelphia (3.7) and Argyroupouli (3.5), as well as the Russian location of Kupchino (4.3). When asked whether or not membership of the EU benefits their country, 49% of those surveyed agreed with this statement. The majority of respondents agree that EU membership benefits their country in all four German locations and in both Spanish ones. However, young people in Greece, Hungary and Rimavska Sobota (Slovakia) are far more likely to disagree. Moreover, ethnographic data reveal strong pockets of discontent with the EU. The synthesis of data from ethnographic case studies of young people active in 'Patriotic and radical right' movements found universal Euroscepticism with the dominant narrative being that the EU undermines national sovereignty and capacity (see Table 5).

Survey data reveal that lack of trust in institutions is accompanied by a strong sense of detachment from politicians and a largely negative view of them. Only 22% of respondents agree with the statement 'politicians are interested in young people like me'. In terms of classic markers of 'cynicism', the MYPLACE survey found that 60% of respondents agreed with the statement 'politicians are corrupt' and 69% agree with the statement 'the rich have too much influence in politics'. When examined regionally, a majority of the Danish respondents actually agree that politicians are interested in them whereas over 80% of our Greek respondents disagree.

The semi-structured interview data confirm the MYPLACE survey findings that young people display a lack of trust in political institutions and high levels of cynicism about politics and politicians. The interview data reveal that beneath this lack of trust lies an almost universally negative evaluation of the agents of politics (politicians, political parties), which are described across countries as: removed and distant from real problems; self-interested and self-serving; corrupt; deceitful ('not keeping their promises'); ineffective or inactive ('do nothing'); and indistinguishable from one another ('all the same'). This is articulated by young people in their descriptions of politics as 'one big dirty game'. The synthesis of data from the 44 ethnographic case studies of youth activism reveal that even among those young people who are actively engaged in social and political activism there is an almost universal rejection of politics and perceptions of politicians as a 'failed class' (see Table 6, row 3).

Particularly significant, for understanding the wider implications of this loss of trust in politics is the notion of politicians being self-interested since this undermines the sense that politics should be about serving the collective good. This confirms what Hay (2007: 1-2) considers to be a profound shift in understandings of 'politics' and the 'political' away from the pursuit of the collective good to the enactment of individual interests. The MYPLACE findings suggest that when politics is perceived as used for self-promotion or material self-interest, young people consider the meaning of politics – the concept of 'public good' – to have been distorted. It is this distorted version rather than 'the political' per se that is rejected.

It also important to note that when young people are prompted to explore what they consider to be 'politics' or 'the political' in semi-structured interviews, it is precisely the sites and institutions (sometimes personalities) of *formal politics* (parliamentary chambers, prime ministers, political parties, parliamentary representatives etc.) – in which they have low levels of trust – that constitutes their first association. However, where young people elaborate on these immediate associations, they sometimes evoke broader definitions of 'the political' which coalesce around the interrelationship between opinions utilising terms such as 'debate', 'dialogue', 'consensus' and

'conflict'. This is encapsulated in the metaphor, drawn from one respondent that politics is 'solving conflicts with words'. Some respondents go further and understand politics as being something lodged in the everyday – 'everything' and 'everywhere' – although this understanding of politics as going beyond the realm of 'formal' politics and political parties is less likely to be found in post-socialist societies.

Thus, MYPLACE data confirm other recent studies suggesting young people are characterised by widespread disaffection with politics. However, it finds that this is expressed only by some as 'apathy', or more accurately, a declared lack of interest in public affairs (Wattenberg, 2006; Blais et al., 2004). Young people's lack of interest is partially framed in a sense that politics is not a place for young people and a frustration that youth issues are rarely addressed by politicians. A second response is a more strongly articulated 'disavowal' of politics (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2002: 158), evidenced in the MYPLACE data by the paradoxical way young people may express strong, sometimes passionate, views about something in which they claim to have no interest. Indeed while traditional ideologies (left/right, liberalism/conservatism) were found to have little purchase for young people themselves, they considered it important that politicians held strong convictions and were showed passion – 'not fanaticism, just passion' – for what they believed in. Finally there was some evidence that young people responded to disaffection with formal politics by embracing it and reclaiming it. However, this narrative was a partial one and found mostly in locations in western and northern European countries participating in MYPLACE and very rarely in post-socialist locations.

Disavowal of formal politics does not equate to disengagement from society and its improvement. In semi-structured interviews young people were asked about their vision of a 'better society'. Their responses included a range of suggestions for improving the economy and political system so that people could simply 'earn a living' and there were more 'direct' forms of democracy. However it was striking that many respondents expressed more general aspirations to live in a more considerate, tolerant and solidaristic society. Encapsulating the importance of the reauthentication of politics in this process, one respondent from Portugal expressed her desire for 'A more communicative society, politicians who really communicate with people and not with each other, pretending they are communicating with people' (Portugal).

### ***Participation and activism***

The MYPLACE survey found that despite low levels of trust in formal political institutions, electoral participation was high. Of those young people eligible to vote in the most recent national elections, 71% reported have done so while 17% made a conscious decision not to vote. The remaining 11% reported that they would have voted but were unable to. Locations with voting levels in excess of 80% are; Podsljeme (Croatia), both Danish locations, Kuopio (Finland), both eastern German locations, Agenskalns (Latvia) and Vic (Spain). By far the lowest level of voting was in Nuneaton (UK) where only 39% of eligible voters chose to do so, with 43% of eligible voters deliberately choosing to stay away from the polls. The semi-structured interview data reveal that voting remains popular because it is regarded as 'a civic duty' and an 'easy way to effect change' while not requiring any open affiliation with a party. Only in some locations (UK, Greece), where the relatively high value attributed to political participation is accompanied by critical attitudes towards the political sphere ('they are all the same') were respondents found to deliberately abstain from elections.

It would appear that young people vote, despite their scepticism about formal politics because they see it as the most effective way to make their views known. On a 0 to 10 scale, voting in elections received the highest mean score for effectiveness of political action (6.9) among survey respondents, followed by gaining publicity through media exposure (5.9) and being active in a political party (5.4). Only 8% of those eligible to vote in the last national elections said they had not voted because they found it 'pointless'.

While young people might vote, they do not display a high degree of identification with political parties; more than half of respondents (59%) state that they do not feel close to any political party.

This is mirrored in extremely low levels of civic engagement. A composite index of participation in eleven civic and political organisations shows the overall average to be 0.3 on an eleven-point scale ranging from 0 (no engagement) to 11 (high engagement). There is considerable variation in civic engagement across locations and countries. Young people from the Nordic countries (Denmark and Finland), have the highest levels of membership of civic and political organisations while young people from Mediterranean (Portugal, Spain and Greece) and post-socialist countries (Hungary, Slovakia, Georgia and Latvia) have the lowest levels.

Semi-structured interview data show participation in formal organisations was widely rejected. Only in the regions with the highest trust in the political system (Denmark, Finland, Germany) was such participation evaluated positively. In other locations, respondents frequently rejected these forms of participation out of hand and considered their lack of inclination to work with political parties to be self-explanatory. Even in those locations where respondents are more active, interviews reveal that young people are reluctant to join parties because doing so marks a clear declaration of belonging to a political community (carrying the risk of being 'stigmatised') and requires commitment to a stable pattern of activities that they perceive as constraining. As is evident from the data from locations in Finland, Spain and Denmark, where respondents do participate in political parties, they take part for a relatively short period in specific actions or local organisations rather than taking up formal membership and participating at a higher level. Positive attitudes expressed towards trade union activities also give some insight into why participation in parties has declined; trade unions are perceived to be addressing real problems, unlike political parties, which are often criticised for being comprised of 'far from ordinary people'. It follows that if young people are to be attracted to participation in political parties, these organisations might need to develop flexible forms of participation in which young people can engage without feeling committed (and marked) 'for life' and which have a more direct and tangible connection with everyday problems and issues.

It is evident from interviews that wider attitudes to politics and politicians also have a negative effect on participation in political parties; joining a political party is perceived as being a step towards a political career when career politicians are associated with corruption and 'filling their pockets'. Respondents also indicate that other commitments and interests (leisure, education, but also work) also limit the opportunity for active participation.

The MYPLACE survey measured participation by asking whether respondents had participated in the last 12 months in 20 different activities. The data revealed large variations in the level of non-electoral participation across our locations. As an example, both locations in Hungary demonstrate a level of participation 25 times lower than some locations in eastern Germany or Spain. The survey also asked about involvement in different types of political and social groups. The most frequent forms of non-electoral participation and levels of involvement in social and political groups are outlined by location in Table 3.

The data suggest three distinct dimensions of young people's participation:

- *Private and individual participation.* This includes use of the Internet for political activities e.g. uploading political material, writing or forwarding a letter/an email with political content, signing petitions or engaging in political consumerism (boycotting or buying certain products for political, ethical or environmental reasons).
- *Public traditional participation.* This includes more classical dimensions of political participation such as volunteering in a campaign, contacting a politician, collecting signatures, giving a political speech and distributing political leaflets.
- *Protest action.* This includes participation in both legal and non-legal protest actions such as demonstrations, strikes, flashmobs and violent political events as well as occupying buildings or blocking streets or railways.

<b>Table 3: The main patterns of non-electoral participation of young people in Europe</b>			
<b>Country</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Political action battery (3 most popular activities)</b>	<b>Involvement in political and social groups (10% or more)</b>
Croatia (HR)	Podsljeme	Signed a petition (40%), political consumerism (26%), participated in a demonstration (22%)	Sports club (33%), religious or church organisation (21%), political party (13%)
	Pešćenica	Signed a petition (42%), Participated in a demonstration (16%), Attended a public meeting (16%)	Sports club (26%), religious or church organisation (15%)
Denmark (DK)	Odense East	Political consumerism (44%), signed a petition (40%), uploaded political material to the internet (27%)	Sports club (55%), trade Union (38%), religious or church organisation (21%), human rights organisation (19%), student union (18%), immigrant org. (17%), neighbourhood association (15%), environmental organisation (10%)
	Odense Center	Political consumerism (57%), signed a petition (43%), uploaded political material to the internet (37%)	Sports club (60%), trade union (44%), student union (22%), human rights organisation (20%), religious or church organisation (19%), immigrant org. (15%), political party (12%), neighbourhood association (11%), environmental organisation (11%), animal welfare group (11%)
Estonia (EE)	Narva area (Idu Viru)	Voted in student union elections (14%), volunteered in an election campaign (10%), signed a petition (8%)	Sports club (37%), students union (17%)
	Tartu	Voted in student union elections (29%), signed a petition (20%), attended a public meeting (18%)	Sports club (53%), students union (27%), Militarised youth organisation (12%), animal welfare group (11%), environmental group (10%)
Finland (FI)	Liekka and Nurmes (PK)	Signed a petition (32%), political consumerism (25%), voted in a student union elections (25%)	Sports club (32%), trade union (27%), student union (19%), religious or church organisations (11%)
	Kuopio	Political consumerism (59%), signed a petition (49%), voted in a student elections (22%)	Student union (51%), sports club (40%), trade union (39%), religious or church organisation (11%)
Georgia (GE)	Kutaisi	Volunteered in an election campaign (12%), attended a public meeting (11%), participated in a demonstration (7%)	None
	Telavi	Attended a public meeting (16%), volunteered in an election campaign (8%), participated in a demonstration (5%)	None
Germany (western) (DEW)	Bremen	Participated in a demonstration (46%), political consumerism (44%), signed a petition (42%)	Sports club (56%), religious or church organisations (38%), environmental organisation (11%)
	Bremerhaven	Attended a public meeting (40%), signed a petition (38%), political consumerism (36%)	Sports club (51%), religious or church organisations (24%)
Greece	New Philadelphia	Voted in student union elections (47%), participated in a demonstration (31%), attended a public meeting (19%)	Sports club (29%), student union (18.5%)

(GR)	Argyroupoli	Voted in student union elections (40.5%), participated in a demonstration (32%), uploaded political material to the internet (21%)	Student union (25%), sports club (23.5%)
Hungary (HU)	Sopron	Voted in student union elections (4%), attended a public meeting (2%), signed a petition (2%)	None
	Ozd	Signed a petition (3%), voted in student union elections (2%), attended public meeting (2%)	None
Latvia (LV)	Agenskalns (Riga)	Attended a public meeting (24%), signed a petition (19%), voted in student union elections (10%)	Sports club (30%), student union (14%), environmental organisation (11%), animal welfare group (10.5%)
	Forstate and Jaunbuve (Daugavpils)	Attended a public meeting (13%), signed a petition (10%), voted in student union elections (8.5%)	Sports club (12%)
Portugal (PT)	Lumiar	Voted in student union elections (39%), participated in a demonstration (27%), signed a petition (21%)	Student union (29%), sports club (24%) religious or church organisation (10%)
	Barreiro	Voted in student union elections (19%), participated in a demonstration (14%), participated in a strike (10%)	Student union (13.5%), sports club (12.5%)
Russia (RU)	Kupchino	Participated in a flashmob (22%), attended a public meeting (22%), political consumerism (22%)	Sports club (28%), a student union (13%), environmental organisation (10.5%)
	Vyborg	Participated in a flashmob (20%), participated in a demonstration (17.5%), attended a public meeting (16%)	Sports club (37%), a student union (17%), political party (16%) trade union (16%), religious or church organisation (15%), human rights organisation (12%), animal welfare group (11.5%), environmental organisation (11%)
Slovakia (SK)	Rimavska Sobota	Signed a petition (24%), attended a public meeting (13%), voted in student union elections (9%)	Sports club (23%), animal welfare group (12%)
	Trnava	Signed a petition (30%), uploaded political material to the internet (16%), collected signatures (12%)	Sports club (32%), animal welfare group (12%)
Spain (ES)	Vic	Participated in a demonstration (64%), participated in a strike (54%), attended a public meeting (35%)	Sports club (38%), leisure-time education organisation (19%), popular culture association (18%), student union (11%), neighbourhood association (11%)
	Sant Cugat	Participated in a demonstration (62%), participated in a strike (56%), uploaded political material to the internet (40%)	Sports club (45%), leisure-time education organisation (26%), popular culture association (16%), student union (11%)
UK (GB)	Coventry	Signed a petition (47%), voted in student union elections (36%), donated money (27%)	Sports club (54%), student union (41%), religious or church organisation (35%), environmental organisation (16%), peace organisation (11%), human rights
	Nuneaton	Signed a petition (46%), donated money (18%), uploaded political material to the Internet (17%)	Sports club (35%), religious or church organisation (19%), a student union (12%)

The MYPLACE survey found *private and individual participation* to be more prevalent among young people, less demanding in time (with the exception of political consumerism) and other costs such as exposure to the public, and usually occurring in the private sphere. In semi-structured interviews, respondents talked particularly positively about signing petitions. In contrast to protest action such as participation in demonstrations, it was perceived as anonymous and safe; a 'quick and easy' way to participate. Petition signing thus combines the advantages of voting (safety and ease) and of demonstrations (being issue-related). On the other hand, interviewees were highly sceptical about its effectiveness. Political consumerism is frequently rejected for financial reasons ('price comes first') especially in the post-socialist region. Where it is practised, although environmental and animal welfare concerns are mentioned as influences on consumer behaviour, the most frequently mentioned driver of consumer activism is patriotism (buying national products to support the national economy).

Survey data show television and the Internet are the two modes of information used most by young people to obtain information about politics and public affairs and semi-structured interview data confirm that young people are aware of the potential of the Internet (especially social media such as Facebook) for reaching and mobilising people. However, interviews suggest there is a digital divide (Schradie, 2011) between a small active and creative minority and the majority who opt for more passive forms of web-based activity and do not create content actively. Active respondents were found in Denmark, Germany, Spain and Finland. Interviews suggest widespread scepticism about the effectiveness of virtual activism and many respondents also regard the Internet as a dangerous place characterised often by a negative tone and a place where they are vulnerable to harassment. This makes them reluctant to reveal political attitudes on the net openly since they fear future negative consequences.

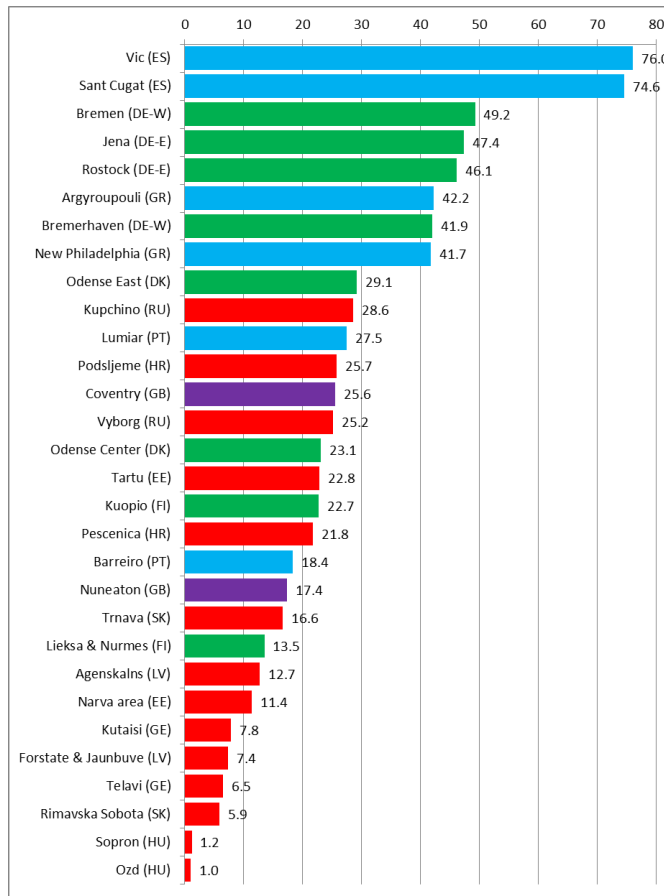
*Public traditional participation* was encountered among only a very small group of young people. The vast majority of survey respondents in all 30 locations had not participated in any 'public traditional' activities in the last year. However, this form of activity is relatively equally distributed across countries and relatively stable over time. As noted above public traditional participation is usually evaluated as the most effective type of participation.

In contrast participation in *protest action* was more volatile across time and space. The survey data, for example, show a reduced rate of participation in global terms but a heightened tendency to participate in protest actions of those surveyed in locations that have experienced a greater impact of the current financial crisis (see Figure 1). Semi-structured interview data confirm that, in contrast to public traditional forms of participation, unconventional activism is evaluated positively but often regarded as relatively ineffective. Joining demonstrations, for example, was seen as providing the opportunity to 'raise your voice' on a particular issue but also perceived as being unlikely to make any real difference ('I won't change anything on a protest'). Interview data shed further light on survey findings indicating low levels of participation in demonstrations in some locations; interviewees reported there was simply a lack of opportunity to do so. This was especially true of rural locations (in Finland and Hungary) but was also evident in the difference in levels of participation in the two sites in Estonia as well as more widely across the post-socialist region (with the exception of Georgia).

Participating in violent and illegal protest activities is universally regarded by survey respondents as the least effective form of political activity. On a 0-10 scale, such participation scored 2.9 and 3.5 respectively. Semi-structured interviews also showed that engaging in violent or risky actions is viewed as acceptable by few respondents. Rejection of such activism is usually explained in relation to a desire to avoid risk but is sometimes accredited to moral positions ('I hate violence') or rational judgements that such actions are 'illogical' and counter-productive. However, it is generally accepted that the instinctual defence of family, loved ones and one's own rights sometimes requires one to take risks and even defend oneself or close relatives with force. Violence is also regarded as a means to draw attention, especially of the media, to an issue or to send a message. For some respondents



**Figure 1: Participation in protest activity**



This shows the combination of five questions: ‘There are different ways of being politically active. During the last 12 months, how often have you done the following?’ Q16\_11: ‘Participated in a demonstration’, Q16\_12: ‘Participated in a strike’, Q16\_16: ‘Participated in a violent political event’, Q16\_17: ‘Occupied buildings or blocked streets / railways’ and Q16\_18: ‘Participated in a ‘flashmob’ all measured using ‘never’, ‘once’, ‘twice’ or ‘three times or more’ options. These response options are then weighted (0=never, 1=once, 2=twice and 3=three times or more). These theoretical groupings of questions are then tested for statistical reliability using Cronbach’s alpha. Response values are then summed/combined (maximum of 15 (3x5 questions)). They are then standardized (divided by 15) to create a 0-1 scale. For the graphs these have then been converted to a 0-100 scale to compare areas. Using this approach combines both participation across a range of activities and frequency into one scale.

from the Spanish locations, violence is tolerated or legitimate if committed not by individuals with indiscriminate targets but by large groups with specific goals. This is justified by the claim that this prevents a deeper, and more serious, structural violence of profound poverty. The Occupy and Indignant movements were mentioned in this regard but in a very limited number of locations, primarily in Spain and Greece as well as the UK.

The ethnographic case studies conducted involved close-up research with young people who were politically and socially active and allowed MYPLACE to gain insight into what young people gain from activism and why they engage in it. Table 4 summarises the concepts that emerged from the cross-case synthesis of ethnographic data in relation to the question ‘How do young people understand and experience their own activism?’. As illustrated in Table 4, the emergent concepts derived in each cluster demonstrate that activists understand collective action in both emotional and rational terms. The analysis of data from cases in Cluster 1 (Radical right and patriotic movements), for example, revealed the sense of family, friendship, loyalty, solidarity, community and belonging to be the most salient meaning attached to activism; this was experienced as a feeling of being ‘like one big family’ and

through the physical pleasure of activism or ‘getting a buzz’. Meanwhile rationalisations of activism were embedded in concepts of ‘self-realisation’, ‘extending activist relationships and alliances’, ‘efficacy’ and ‘personal benefits’ reflecting the opportunities for personal development that activism provides. The cross-case analysis reveals that emotions and rationality are not necessarily separated in motivations for activism (Crossley, 2002: 50); when respondents describe their activism as motivated by ‘having an impact’, ‘being heard’ and signifying ‘no surrender’, for example, they articulate both that they have a serious point they want to make as well as the pleasure they take in its cathartic or emotional expression through ‘finding a voice’, ‘being seen’ or ‘not bowing down’. For one young activist the rationalised and emotional meanings of activism come together in the affective practice of chanting (at demonstrations) through which what the group stands for is expressed but in a way that binds the group emotionally: ‘we give a chant and make it loud and proud of who we am’ (English Defence League, UK)

**Table 4 How do young people understand and experience their own activism?**

<b>Cluster 1: Radical right and patriotic movements</b>	<b>Cluster 2: Anti-capitalist /anti- racist/anti-fascist movements</b>	<b>Cluster 3: Anti-austerity/ Occupy movements</b>	<b>Cluster 4: Gender and minority rights movements</b>	<b>Cluster 5: Youth sections of political, labour and state-sponsored organisation</b>	<b>Cluster 6: Religion based organisations</b>
One big family	Knowledge is not a commodity	Emotional Activism	Friendship	Strong together, achieving something together: The meaning of community	Togetherness
Getting a buzz					Emotions
It was a rational choice		Becoming and Remaining Active	Extending activist relationships and alliances	Break the Limits and just bring theory into practice': Objectives and Motivation	Personal benefits
Self-realisation	Leaving a message	Expectations and Demands		This feeling of accomplishment: Self-realisation and satisfaction	
Having an impact			Becoming/being who you are	This ability to do small actions...: Efficacy of activism	Usefulness
Being heard			'Let's make this life better	Not a tool of a political party: Working independently	
No surrender	Violence as a reaction, not as an attack	Spaces of Liberty and Freedom	Becoming empowered, finding a voice	'I feel I know more about public affairs now': Gaining more knowledge	
I don't care about the consequences		(In)determinate Meanings			

A second example of the entwinement of rational and emotional meanings of activism might be taken from the analysis of cases in Cluster 3 (Anti-austerity and Occupy movements). In this cluster level analysis, it was found that the financial crisis of 2009, against which respondents had participated in protests, was described using the metaphor of war and conflict that had brought 'catastrophe', 'carnage', 'disaster', 'calamity' and 'destruction' to large swathes of Europe. The use of such language underscored the intensity with which activists viewed the crisis and its aftermath. At the same time the synthesised metaphor of war and conflict is used to *explain* as well as evoke crisis; austerity was explained in terms of an offensive by the rich against the poor and the crisis was thus understood not just as a matter of economics but a political subjugation of people and countries. The concept of 'emotional reasoning' was thus developed to capture the way in which emotions are central not only to maintaining motivation for participation but to their reflection and deliberation on the concerns that they come to hold (Mizen, 2015).

### **Findings: Receptivity to populist and radical right agendas**

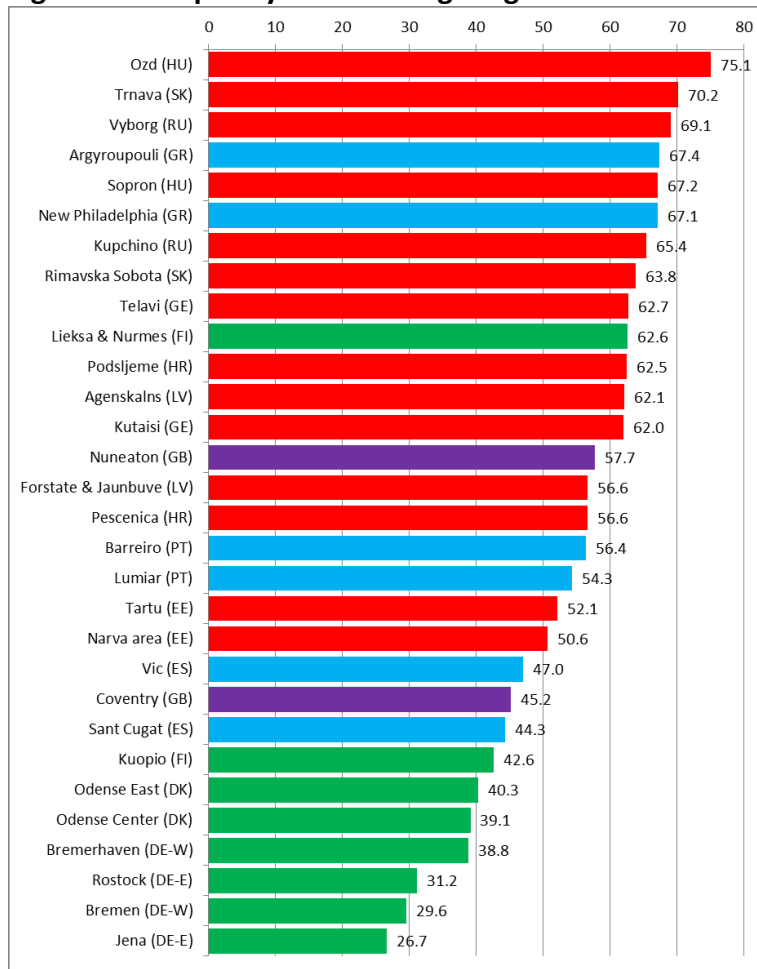
The findings in relation to the question of whether young people are receptive to populist and radical right political agendas are drawn from survey, semi-structured interviews and ethnographies and the source of data are indicated in each case.

Measuring the propensity to radicalism through representative surveys is notoriously difficult. The standard measure of electoral behavior or preference is difficult in the case of young people, of whom a proportion are too young to vote and, as discussed above, often disinclined to engage with formal politics. In the MYPLACE survey only a minority of respondents reported feeling close to any political party and thus the proportion reporting closeness to fringe parties of the radical populist right was even smaller. Comparative statistical analysis of data on support for, or feeling close to far right or populist/radical right parties, is thus not warranted. However, it is worth noting three country locations where a significant number of respondents did report voting for, or closeness to, far right or populist/radical right parties, albeit that the three parties in question (Golden Dawn, Jobbik and The Finns) vary greatly in terms of ideology and extremeness. Of MYPLACE survey respondents who had voted in the last national election in the country: in Greece 16.7% had voted for Golden Dawn (more than twice the proportion of the general population); In Hungary 27% had voted for Jobbik (12% more than the general population); and In Finland, 14% had voted for The Finns (5% less than the general population). In the Greek locations, however, almost twice as many respondents (32.7%) had voted for the left wing party SYRIZA. Of those reporting they felt close to any party: in Greece 20.5% of survey respondents felt close to Golden Dawn; in Hungary 47% felt close to Jobbik (although Hungary – at 19% – also had the lowest percentage of young people reporting they feel close to any political party.); and in Finland 22% felt close to The Finns.

Comparative analysis is possible, however, if we compare support for ideas rather than parties. One measure of receptivity to radical right agendas used was a composite variable based on agreement or disagreement with the statements: 'Foreigners should not be allowed to buy land in [COUNTRY]'; '[COUNTRY] should have stricter border controls and visa restrictions to prevent further immigration'; 'When jobs are scarce, employers should give priority to [COUNTRY] people over foreign workers'. Using this variable, we find that locations in post-socialist countries of Hungary, Slovakia and Russia, together with Greece have the highest tendencies towards receptivity and German and Danish locations have the lowest (see Figure 2).

Another measure of such receptivity to radical right agendas is attitudes towards minority groups. On this variable, the survey found that young people in Western European locations, especially eastern Germany, are least likely to have negative views towards different minority groups and to advocate limiting the access of migrants to a range of resources. Young people in post-socialist locations, along with Greece, tend to express more negative views and are more likely to be exclusionist towards migrants. Young people in locations in Greece are much more likely than others to have xenophobic attitudes, whereas eastern and western German locations are clustered at the bottom of the

**Figure 2: Receptivity to radical right agendas**



This shows the combination of three questions from two banks of questions: Q26\_4: Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? 'Foreigners should not be allowed to buy land in [COUNTRY]'; Q41\_1: 'Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? [COUNTRY] should have stricter border controls and visa restrictions to prevent further immigration'; Q41\_4 'Again, do you agree or disagree with the following statements? When jobs are scarce, employers should give priority to [COUNTRY] people over foreign workers. These are measured using 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'neither agree nor disagree', 'disagree', 'strongly disagree'. These response options are then weighted (4= strongly agree, 3=agree, 2=neither agree nor disagree, 1=disagree, 0=strongly disagree) apart from the 'foreigners should not be allowed to buy land' which is reverse coded because it is a negatively orientated question (should not) rather than a positively orientated question (should). These theoretical groupings of questions are then tested for statistical reliability using Cronbach's alpha. Response values are then summed/combined (maximum of 12 (4x3 questions)). They are then standardized (divided by 12) to create a 0-1 scale. For the graphs these have then been converted to a 0-100 scale to compare areas. Using the approach combines the strength of agreement/receptivity across a range of questions.

xenophobia scale. Locations in Hungary, Russia and Georgia are at the top of the welfare chauvinism and exclusion scale; in these locations young people favour limiting access by migrants to a range of resources.

The cross-national analysis of semi-structured interview data reveals that engagement with 'extremism' and 'radicalism' is heavily concentrated in a small number of countries. This pattern of concentration broadly reflects data from the MYPLACE survey, which found the highest rates of 'receptivity to the radical right' and 'negative attitudes towards minorities' in locations in the post-socialist countries of Hungary, Slovakia and Russia and also in Greece. The data show also that the extreme right has much higher visibility for young people across Europe than the extreme left, although the latter features in particular in narratives of respondents in Spain and, to a lesser extent, eastern Germany.

Although support for extreme right and radical ideologies and movements was universally a minority position among respondents participating in semi-structured interviews, there was genuine sympathy and openness to these ideas and movements in some cases.

Such empathy was usually constructed around concerns over ethnic tension, immigration or 'threats' posed by religious minorities although the specific issues raised vary considerably across locations, reflecting the very different compositions of, and political discourses in, each location and country. The desirability of controlling immigration into the country was found predominantly among northern European and Nordic countries since for respondents in locations in the Mediterranean and former socialist countries the impact of emigration rather than immigration on society was of greater concern. Exceptions to this rule include Russia and Greece where anxieties about immigration and immigrants were voiced. A particular animosity is reserved for Roma communities across the locations. In addition to anti-immigration or anti-minority sentiments, support for the extreme right was expressed as being a consequence of these parties having proved themselves an effective force

in local government or because they were believed to be somehow 'different' from, and more trustworthy than, the mainstream parties from which respondents felt distanced. Where respondents did not profess personal support for the extreme right, they explained the support of others as either the product of individual traits ('stupid' or 'racist' people vote for them) or systemic problems (support for such parties is a product of economic crisis and failure of the political system).

In interviews respondents also articulated their rejection of radical and extreme ideologies and movements. The rejection of right wing extremism was primarily related to accusations that such parties and movements were 'racist' or exploited anti-immigration sentiments or ethnic minority tensions. The reasons for the rejection of left wing extremism differed and focused on: the reactive and unattainable nature of parties' policies; concern about the implications of anti-EU stances; and the rigid nature of their discourse and inability to collaborate. The data also suggest that support for extremist or radical parties is partially 'hidden' due to their social stigmatisation.

Other measures of receptivity to radical right agendas in the MYPLACE survey include attitudes towards women and homosexuality. On this marker locations in Denmark, Finland, Spain and Germany were found to have the most egalitarian responses. The least egalitarian views were expressed in locations in Georgia, Greece, Slovakia, Latvia and Russia. Women's access to abortion is supported most strongly in locations in eastern Germany, Spain and Estonia. Young people in locations in Russia, Greece and Georgia are the most likely to believe that women should not have access to abortion.

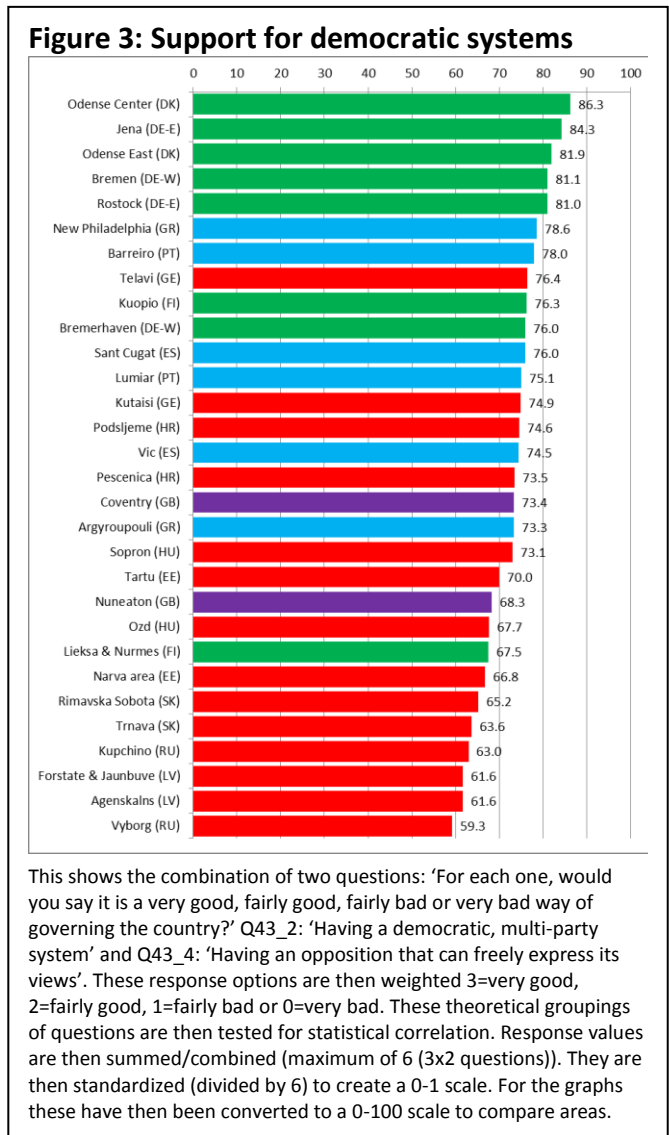
The ethnographic studies conducted for MYPLACE included a cluster of ten case studies of 'Radical right and patriotic' movements. Following Mudde's (2007: 25-30) distinction between classic 'extreme' or 'far right' political parties (which are in essence antidemocratic) and a new populist form of the radical right (which remains broadly democratic despite opposing some fundamental values of liberal democracy and promoting an ideological blend of nativism, authoritarianism, and populism) and data were analysed to reveal what elements of either far right or populist radical right ideology and practices are articulated or adopted by young activists in these movements (for a list of movements in this cluster see Table 2). This synthesis generated 11 concepts of which the most populated relate to core ideological elements of organisations in this cluster including those expressing activists' relationship to nation ('patriotism', 'we want our country back' and 'nativism') and (in)tolerance ('their way or no way', 'immigration' and 'multiculturalism') (see Table 5).

It is important to note in relation to these findings a significant degree of continuity in attitudes between young activists participating in these movements and the 'ordinary' young people interviewed as a sub-sample of the representative survey. Indeed, synthesis of data from ethnographic clusters on both 'Radical right and patriotic movements' and 'Anti-capitalist /anti-racist/anti-fascist movements' showed that members of organisations in both these clusters rejected descriptions of their views or actions as 'extremist' or 'radical' declaring themselves to be 'not racist' or 'not that kind of extremist'. MYPLACE qualitative data thus appear to confirm that activism in populist radical right movements is more accurately conceived of as engagement with 'a radicalized version of mainstream ideas, and not as a "normal pathology" unconnected to the mainstream' (Mudde, 2007: 297).

**Table 5 What elements of far right or populist radical right ideology and practices are articulated or adopted by young activists?**

<b>Concepts</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
<b>Patriotism: 'We do it for the nation'</b>	Single most prevalent concept with no refutational cases. Patriotism expresses a largely positive, self-identification with nation that includes a special concern for the welfare of one's nation and fellow citizens but not at the expense of hatred or discrimination of others.
<b>'We want our country back'</b>	A primarily defensive resistance to groups and forces seen to be threatening the nation and 'native' people. Those who threaten vary widely including old (past 'occupiers') and new (Islamists, globalization) enemies. This concept expresses a defence of national sovereignty rather than an expansionist or imperialistic nationalism (the latter are considered to be refutational cases).
<b>'Immigrants in our own country'</b>	Respondents voice a sense of injustice that it is they who are 'immigrants', 'a minority', 'second class citizens' or discriminated against or victimised in their 'own country'. This partially confirms existing literature suggesting that nativism is a position that is shared across radical right/populist parties in Europe in that it captures some advocates of ethnically based citizenship or monoethnic nations (preserved for native ethnic groups only). However, citizenship is generally seen as open to all regardless of ethnic background while the dominant expression of relations between 'native' and incomer populations is defensive.
<b>'Their way or no way'</b>	Captures attitudes to ethnic and religious minorities. Five main themes emerging largely confirm existing literature about hostile perceptions of ethnic minority and immigrant communities: everyday encounters and tensions; perceived dominance/aggression; criminality; cultural incompatibility; and preferential treatment. The hostility articulated is often towards very different groups of people and framed in different historical and contemporary experiences.
<b>Immigration</b>	Universally expressed preference for the greater restriction of immigration into their country. In some cases, specific policy suggestions for who should not be given the right to enter the country were noted while in other cases it was suggested that certain requirements should be made of. Only in extreme cases did respondents argue that immigrants should be repatriated or expelled.
<b>Multiculturalism</b>	Synthesises more ideological reflections by respondents on the principles underpinning racial and ethnic equality and inequality. The prevailing view is that 'No-one should be judged on the colour of their skin.' This basic commitment to racial and ethnic equality is distinguished sharply in respondents' narratives, however, from 'multiculturalism' which is characterised as an ideology imposed from above and, in its current implementation, it has reached the point where too much tolerance is in danger of tipping over into intolerance (towards the native majority). In a few, extreme, cases inequality is believed to be biologically rooted.
<b>Populism</b>	Identified as a key value (embodying real democracy and the enactment of the will of the people) in only one case (The Finns). However, this finding should be read alongside a strongly anti-establishment ethos across cases found in relation to views on politics and 'the political'.
<b>Euroscepticism</b>	There was almost universal consensus in attitudes to the EU. Views across the cluster were almost universally negative and the dominant narrative of Euroscepticism is that the EU undermines national sovereignty and capacity.
<b>Gender and sexual equality</b>	Synthesis is difficult because of diversity of cases. Some cases (especially RA, LNF, RR) confirm existing literature that suggests extreme right organisations embrace a wide anti-equality agenda underpinning classic far right organisations (as evident in calls for a return to traditional gender roles and homophobic sentiments). However, in other cases, we find striking refutation of this not least in the visible and active LGBT division of the EDL.
<b>Social inequality</b>	Views on social inequality were extremely diverse and defy easy synthesis into a single concept. In some cases organisations were characterised as working class movements (EDL, The Finns) although adherence to class positions was also rejected in other cases (GD). Similarly anti-global capital views were found across a number of cases (especially Torcida, GD) yet capitalism was not rejected definitively by them while free market capitalism was considered the best system to date by some (The Finns).
<b>Spirituality and healthy lifestyle as means of combating moral degeneracy</b>	Captures different world views expressed in a small number of cases that incorporate a vision of the current world as in a process of degeneration or degradation, apportioning blame for this (usually the media, wider 'liberal ideology' or 'the west' with which the latter is associated) and a range of different strategies of activism designed to resist or counteract it.

A similar continuity across survey, interview and ethnographic data is found in relation to support for democracy and relatively little support for any radical alternatives to it. Survey data show young people’s satisfaction with democracy to fall around the middle of a 0-10 scale across locations as a whole, although locations in Denmark, Finland, eastern and western Germany have higher average levels of satisfaction with democracy, whereas Mediterranean countries including Greece, Spain and Portugal have lower average levels. Although there is far from universal satisfaction with how democracy works in young people’s own experience, however, when asked about the desirability of different types of political systems, there was wide support for the fundamental principles of



democracy based on a combined measure of support for ‘a democratic, multiparty system’ and for ‘an opposition that can freely express its views’ (see Figure 3). Respondents from locations in Denmark and eastern Germany tend to have more positive views towards democratic political systems, whereas, locations in Russia, Latvia and Slovakia tend to be less positive. Young people in locations in Georgia, Croatia, the UK and Portugal tend to have more positive attitudes towards non-democratic political systems. Locations in Germany (western and eastern), Finland and Spain are more likely to be negative.

Semi-structured interview data confirm the MYPLACE survey findings that young people in Europe were strongly committed to ‘democracy’ even if the means of getting there – ‘politics’ – appears a ‘dirty’ business from which they would rather distance themselves. However, there was also widespread criticism of democracy as currently constituted and experienced. Democracy, in principle, was defined by respondents as: freedom of speech; the exercise of ‘voice’ or ‘power’ by the people; choice; and equality. Respondents were critical, however, of current representative democracies citing dissatisfaction with: ‘majoritarianism’; de facto rule by an elite (in the form of elected

representatives); the limited opportunities for participation, which gives a ‘false sensation of people power’; and prioritisation of the interests of political parties over voters. Criticisms of democracy, as currently experienced, are also strongly regionally differentiated. Reflecting findings in the MYPLACE survey, satisfaction with democracy is highest in locations in western and eastern Germany, Denmark and Finland. Criticisms of democracy are also very clearly demarcated between: post-socialist societies where democracy is considered to be, at best, ‘a work in progress’ and, at worst, absent or no more than ‘a mask’; and the rest of the participating countries where minor imperfections in, or limitations to, ideal versions of democracy are identified. Exceptions to this rule are, firstly, the locations in the three Mediterranean countries where respondents also used the post-socialist terminology of democracy as ‘false’ to describe the polities they live in. A second exception is eastern Germany where respondent narratives are closer to those of western German respondents than

other post-socialist countries in that they demonstrate a general trust in the political system and pride in their democratic system. Support for authoritarian or single-party alternatives to multi-party democracy is universally weak and interview data confirm the survey findings indicating support for non-democratic systems was mainly clustered in post-socialist locations.

A similar principled support for, but critique of, current experiences of democracy is found across the ethnographic case studies and is expressed in the concept of 'dormant democracy' (see Table 6).

**Table 6 What are young activists' perceptions of politics/the political?**

Cluster 1: Radical right and patriotic movements	Cluster 2: Anti-capitalist /anti-racist/anti- fascist movements	Cluster 3: Anti- austerity/ Occupy movements	Cluster 4: Gender and minority rights movements	Cluster 5: Youth sections of political, labour and state- sponsored organisation	Cluster 6: Religion based organisations
Democracy: the lesser evil	Wrong democracy	The failure of democracy	Dormant democracy	'Make it work on a grassroots level': Support for democracy, but...	Need for democracy
Politics is not us	Ready to take sides: differentiating between apolitical and anti-political	The failed political class	Politically disengaged voters?	Politics are one big game: Rejection of political parties and politicians  We have nothing to do with politics: Understanding the term 'political'	Rejection of politics  Interest in politics Engagement with politics <sup>1</sup>
Silencing		Voting will not change anything	A politician's promise? Like an advertisement: pick me, pick me!	I think you can make a change without using violence: Radical, extremist or populist references	Rejection of extremism
Two tier system		Surveillance and repression	Politics: a trick, a game	The EU is a monetary union, it is not yet a political union: Perceptions of the EU	
Beyond left and right		Economics dominates politics	Third way: neither left nor right?	Unfortunately, people do not pay much attention to politics: Perception of society	Closeness to the left

'Dormant democracy' expresses metaphorically the finding across all six clusters that while young activists generally supported democracy (by which is meant, in most cases, representative democracy) as the best form of political system, they experienced current forms of democracy as being 'sham', having 'failed', or not constituting democracy as they understood it. Across all clusters, there was a strong articulation of the belief that while democracy was the best system available, it was not practised in the best way. This was articulated through synthesised metaphors such as 'wrong democracy' (Cluster 2), or 'democracy in crisis' (Cluster 3). Democracy is presented as incomplete or illusory and explicit or implicit reference to the 'hegemonic illusion' of contemporary

<sup>1</sup> Concepts in red font are refutational cases.



versions of liberal democracy are made by respondents in both left and right wing clusters. Dissatisfaction with the current state of democracy can lead to a sense that ‘we live in a democratic state with no democracy’ (Latvia for Tibet, Latvia). In the case of former socialist countries, rejection of the current system as constituting democracy is often articulated with reference to continuities from the former state socialist regimes.

While there is common disenchantment with the current state (albeit differently constituted in each context) of democracy, views on what should replace it are more varied by cluster. Remedies to the current democratic malaise broadly fall into two types: the need for more, and more direct, democracy; and the need for an authoritarian alternative to democracy. Calls for more direct democracy are strongest among Cluster 2, 3 and 5 cases. They are also predominantly from: northern European (especially German, Danish and Finnish) contexts where relatively high overall satisfaction with democracy is accompanied by engaged critique of its deficiencies; and Mediterranean countries where there is deep frustration with the current crisis which is seen as not only economic but also a crisis of democracy. Described variously by respondents as ‘liquid democracy’, ‘direct democracy’, ‘neighbourhood democracy’, ‘immediate democracy’, ‘grassroots democracy’ or ‘participatory democracy’, what is evoked in the name of ‘real’ democracy is a greater immediate, everyday participation in political decision-making as opposed to the ‘sham’ democracy constituted in electoral participation once every four years. In relatively rare cases dissatisfaction with democracy was accompanied by a desire for stronger and more authoritarian rule. This was particularly pronounced in some national cases (Latvia) as well as clusters (Cluster 1, ‘Radical right and patriotic movements’).

This confirms existing literature which points to the co-existence within young people’s views of a profound disillusionment with the current democratic system alongside the retention of a fundamental support for democratic forms of government and little commitment to radical alternatives to democracy (Pilkington and Pollock, 2015). It finds remarkably little support for extreme or radical alternatives to the democracy with which people are disenchanted. Moreover, the strength of the reciprocal translation across clusters and the fact that refutational cases emanate mainly from countries with shared experiences of the past (state socialism in eastern Europe) or present (acute economic crisis in the Mediterranean countries) suggest that fundamental rejections of democracy may be explained by wider national or regional contexts rather than by types of activism or location on a right-left political spectrum.

## **Findings: The role of the past in shaping the present and future engagement of young people**

MYPLACE explored the role of the past in shaping the present political and civic engagement of young people and their likely receptivity to populist and radical right agendas in the future through dedicated blocks of questions related to history, memory and commemoration in each of the survey, semi-structured interview and ethnographic case study instruments as well as a dedicated programme of research organised in a discrete work package. The latter focused on exploring the role that problematic or ‘difficult’ periods of the past play in political and civic activism of young people and research activities were structured in two phases that were carried out in collaboration with non-academic partners who also took active part in dissemination of research findings at the final stage of the project. Thus the findings with regard to the question of how the past shapes the present and future engagement of young people outlined in this report draw primarily on the basis of the memory targeted research, supplemented by reference to the findings from survey, semi-structured interviews and ethnographies.

During the first phase of the memory studies research, how historical discourses are manifested and transmitted across generations in ‘sites of memory’ such as museums, archives, memorial sites, commemorative organisations, etc. were analysed on the basis of observation of historical discourse production in the countries and regions of our research. Our understanding of ‘sites of memory’ as a concept has been developed from Nora’s *lieux de mémoire* which problematizes the relationships

between memory and history. Nora (1989) opposes *milieux de mémoire*, real environments of memory in which memory is embodied as lived experience, to *lieux de mémoire*, sites of memory where memory is crystallised to such an extent that it disappears. Observers stress the importance of sites of memory for production and transmission of historical discourses within society (Radley 1990: 57). The regional partners in MYPLACE developed partnership relationships with public non-academic (or semi-academic) institutions identified as important 'sites of memory' in order to access and examine different sites of historical discourse production. Among these sites of memory there are 13 museums, one archive, one public-law institution, two NGOs, and in the case of the Georgia the research has involved visits to a number memorial sites in the locality (see Table 7).

**Table 7 The non-academic partners involved in MYPLACE**

Country	Non-academic partner (e.g. museum, NGO)
Croatia	The Memorial Museum at the Memorial Site (Jasenovac) and The Croatian History Museum (Zagreb)
Denmark	The Dybbøl Battlefield Centre
Estonia	The Art Museum of Estonia, Kumu (Tallinn)
Finland	The North Karelian Provincial Museum (Joensuu)
Georgia	Caucasus Research Resource Centre
Germany	Bunker Valentin (Bremen) and Buchenwald concentration camp
Greece	Contemporary Social History Archives (ASKI)
Hungary	House of Terror Museum and Holocaust Memorial Centre (Budapest)
Latvia	The Museum of the Occupation of Latvia (Riga)
Portugal	The Associação 25 de Abril (Lisbon)
Russia	The State Museum of Political History of Russia (St. Petersburg)
Slovakia	The Nation's Memory Institute
Spain	Memorial Democràtic (Barcelona); and The Exile Museum (MUME) (La Jonquera)
UK	Herbert Art Gallery and Museum (Coventry)

The construction and representation of historical narratives in the sites of memory were analysed on the basis of participant observation in the public institution settings and a total of 73 expert interviews with the institutions' staff members. Young people's experiences of the historical discourses and their memory-work were explored through a total of 54 focus group discussions with young people who had visited and interacted with the discourses around the 'sites of memory'. The young people participating in these discussions were both those who visited the museums as part of their school/college curriculum and those who can be described as activists because of their active engagement with particular social and political issues.

The second phase of this element of the research focused on the intergenerational transmission of political heritage and historical memories to young people within their families or from other significant older generation people in their life. Here we explored whether and in what ways the young people's active approach to society, community, their political views and values, and experiences of participation in the politics are shaped by their families and older generation. In particular we were interested in both mechanisms of memory production in family and relationships between family memories about the past events in the local/regional/national history as they impacted on family members' lives and young people's socialisation into particular attitudes towards

politics and society. Thus, we understand family memory and intergenerational transmission of political heritage as a complex process. On the one hand, what is remembered within families is shaped to some extent by more institutionalised and public forms of historical narratives (Klein, 2000), including those manifested in the sites of memory. On the other hand, family might represent the channel for transmission of alternative historical narratives to the ones dominant in the public domains (Pine et al., 2004). One of our main goals was thus to gain insights into how this dynamic works and what are its outcomes. A total of 180 intergenerational interviews with young people and their family members in 14 countries were conducted as well as ethnographic observation of the family settings and visual and sensorial materials collected and analysed.

The transnational analysis of national case studies in young people engagement with the 'difficult' past highlights several commonalities in production, transmission and content of historical narratives in the regions across Europe in which MYPLACE research has been conducted.

First, historical discourses at the institutional level are quite politicised. Thus all public institutions which are also 'sites of memory' have clear political agenda in the representation of the particular 'problematic' periods and/or events of national history. This is important in the context of evidence from semi-structured interview data that respondents often lack the critical skills to recognise political manipulation embedded in these messages or unpick monolithic discourses to expose how history was used for political purposes. The exceptions to this were primarily found in those research locations where conflicting and contesting narratives are evident within the political community, for example the post-Soviet states of Estonia and Latvia where there are large Russian-speaking minorities, with different understandings of the past, or post-war Croatia or even Georgia. However, in these sites, self-victimisation and emotionally heated narratives mean that respondents are rarely able to incorporate the other side's narrative and use it to critically reflect on their own. In this sense history has been unable to achieve its potential to facilitate the recognition and understanding among respondents that there is a plurality of legitimate opinions in society.

Second, memories of World War II play a significant role as a formative historical narrative for national and local identities. This is evident even in case studies where WWII was not the 'difficult past' in question (UK and Denmark) or/and countries which were not directly involved in the war (Spain and Portugal). This is reflected in the MYPLACE survey data, which found that in ranking the importance of different historical events, respondents ranked World War II (85%) as the most significant of the listed events and periods from their countries' perspectives. Semi-structured interview data also identify WWII is a common reference point for all locations in the MYPLACE study including in those countries which did not take part in the war. WWII is narrated as a national trauma although often through the medium of family memories.

Third, in the majority of case-studies the traumatic periods/events identified are in the living memory of the parents' generation (e.g. establishment and collapse of state-socialism in Central and Eastern Europe, civil wars and revolutions in Greece, Croatia, Portugal and Georgia, dramatic political and economic transformations in the UK, and post-socialist states). The same pattern was found among narratives of respondents participating in semi-structured interviews where the discussion of historical events was dominated by themes of conflict, war, national independence, state transformation or system change as well as the roots of current economic hardships.

Fourth, a strong presence of social memory was registered in all cases. This social memory exists in interaction with official and/or institutionalised historical discourses, and is, to a certain extent, shaped by them but also used as a source for alternative historical interpretations.

Finally, the past often features in young people's narratives as a reference point for justifying or rejecting growing xenophobia and nationalistic attitudes in society. This is confirmed by MYPLACE survey data which shows high variance in the significance, or lack of significance of the Holocaust as an historic event. The importance of the holocaust varies from a low of 18% in Lieksa/Nurmes

(Finland) to 91% in Jena (eastern Germany). Data from semi-structured interviews also showed how the past – especially the distant past – can be used by young people for building a positive, glorious image of the nation (or (pre-)ethnic ancestors).

From our analysis of the national reports we can conclude that young people are sensitive to over politicisation of historical discourses where the representation of the difficult past is manipulated in the interest of current political agenda, which differs from what they know from home or alternative social environments. In response to this young people develop different strategies in interpreting the past events as important for their present. These strategies range from their complete disinterest in the past resulting in 'presentism' to active engagement with the past as a resource for their political stance. Another aspect of young people's critical attitudes towards institutionalized historical discourses is that they rely on family memories and interpretations of the past, sometimes critically evaluating them or fully embracing them as a more comprehensible and trustworthy source of knowledge about the past. The political heritage of the past they acquire through interactions with the older generations. At the same time political values and attitudes of their parents' and grandparents' generation might be challenged or dismissed as inappropriate to their present day conditions. This conclusion correlates with the observation that family constitutes an important site for the mnemonic socialisation.

The findings of the national case studies on the family and intergenerational transmission of memories and political heritage demonstrate a number of common as well as specific characteristics:

First, although family memories are unique and (inter)subjective they are also shaped by local and national historical narratives that provide family narratives with structure that links important landmarks in a family's history with events in national history. Thus family memories are not isolated from discourses within which the national and regional identities are constructions. The tropes and myths from the family past and the national history are often mixed and interwoven in the family mnemonic narratives. On the one hand, institutionalised historical discourses provide family memories with the sense of significance and belonging to the nation, on the other hand, stories passed down in the family give more emotional and intimate meanings to the events in national or regional history. They also blur the borderline between the imaged collective identities, such as national bodies, and populate the often linear narratives with diverse social and historical agents.

Second, the political or social engagement of (grand) parents does not have a direct influence on the young people. The most decisive factor for young people's engagement seems to be their everyday life world and their living environment. If history or politics or any kind of social and political issue are presented to them as relevant for their *own living and environment*, than they are more prone to engage in this regard.

Third, this correlates with one of the important conclusions of our research that young people are active co-producers of family memories. They do not passively receive family history, but engage in the process of selective interpretation of those stories that have relevance to their own experience (or are linked to the present concerns of society) and their sense of identity.

Fourth, young people's attitude towards politics and politicians are at least partly shaped by cognitive mobilizations that take part in course of family discussions of political subjects that sometimes go alongside transmission of family memories. At the same time, political views or even activism are not necessarily transmitted unidirectionally from the older generation to the younger one as has been suggested in the literature (Vollebergh et al., 2001). The British case-study demonstrates that while young people co-produce the meanings of the past in the course of family mnemonic socialisation, older generation of respondents might re-interpret the political ideas and discourses they socialised in during their youth to accommodate the views of their children or grandchildren. In some situations, the political activities of young people might even lead to their parents becoming more involved with political issues that concerns children. In such contexts parents learn about political values of their children. Thus political socialisation in family has to be seen as

multi-dimensional process that implies that young people can also act as initiators of intergenerational transmission of political heritage.

Fifth, a number of case studies (in particular Germany, Greece, Russia, Spain, Croatia, Latvia, UK) show that often young people encounter thematic taboos (e.g. ethnic minorities, migrants, armed conflicts, civil wars and ethnic cleansing, etc.) that are closely linked with the national memories of the 'difficult past', which are either silenced (subjected to social amnesia) or discussed in very normative language. In these contexts alternative discourses play an important role in opening up public debate about difficult political subjects. This, however, absolutely requires an open field for discussions – at school, in the media and in politics. Otherwise, the already visible tendency to distinguish between 'us' and 'them' (with regard to migrants in Germany, UK, and Greece, the supporters and opponents of the annexation of Crimea in Russia, people in support of Catalan independence and those who are against it in Spain, etc.) might too easily lead to populist attitudes.

Sixth, retrospective assessments of the past, misremembering (if not forgetting the details that do not fit in the widespread perception of the past conditions) and nostalgia that sometimes accompanies it should be seen as respondents' reflections on their present conditions. Thus the subjects of nostalgia are important to consider as issues that concern respondents in the present. Nostalgic narratives often feature 'noticeable absences' both in the lives of our respondents and society in general. In the UK, for example, young people and their older family members often talk about full employment and work ethics associated with being employed rather than receiving welfare support. It is precisely the current economic recession, austerity policy and high level of unemployment among young people that trigger such nostalgic memories.

Finally, although dis-engagement of young people with political and social issues is often seen as one of the challenges that Europe faces in the present and in the future, our findings demonstrate that there are no essential differences between those young people who do not show interest in politics and those who are politically or civically active. Both might hold strong views on contemporary political issues that concern their age cohorts or local communities. At the same time, lack of trust in mainstream political parties and political establishment is often declared by those who enact their political views and those who are less active. Therefore, we suggest the discourse of 'political dis-engagement' is inadequate in its description of young people's attitudes, practices and motivations for being involved in 'political activities'. Our research suggests that young people demonstrate much stronger emotional attachment and tendency to act on the issues that are directly relevant to their experiences, and their communities. This needs to be considered in any policy recommendations that aim to address the perceived 'lack of political engagement' of young people.

MYPLACE research demonstrates that history and associations with it matter in shaping young people's political and civic engagement. Survey data show that young people are interested in recent history; 29% state that they are very interested and 56% a little interested. In semi-structured interviews, respondents also frequently mentioned that they are interested in history or at least that remembering the past is important. Thus history is a means through which political messages can reach them. Our focused research into the role of the past in shaping contemporary engagement demonstrates moreover that young people do not just 'receive' but interpret history in relation to their contemporary political concerns. This has clear policy implications; it suggests that the most successful 'memory work' with young people is likely to be that which seeks to provide scope for personal interpretations rather than to impose particular meanings. At the same time, the over-politicisation of the past and manipulation of its interpretations in some cases studied (particularly in post-communist countries where higher sensitivity to politics of history and memory is visible) are often the cause of young people's radical rejection of mainstream historical discourses and a search for alternative, and potentially dangerous, discourses that might lead to political radicalism.

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## The potential impact, main dissemination activities and exploitation of results

MYPLACE makes a significant contribution to our understanding of youth activism due to its employment of a combination of survey, interview and a large number and range of ethnographic case studies of youth activism. This integrated and complex research design generated significant methodological innovation and these are outlined and evaluated in relation to the case study based survey, the meta-ethnographic analysis of qualitative data, and the integration and triangulation of data in mixed method projects in three methods-focused articles to be published in Pilkington, Pollock and Franc (eds) (forthcoming, 2016; full details below). MYPLACE findings are important to society more widely for a number of reasons. Firstly, despite the very real challenges politicians and political parties face in gaining public support and trust across Europe, our data show that in relation to youth at least, the door is half-open not half-closed. Secondly, the way in which cynicism about politics is framed in young people's own words suggests that the loss of trust in politics and politicians is strongly linked to the perception of politics having strayed from the pursuit of the public or collective good into a realm of self-promotion or pursuit of material self-interest; this suggests young people do not reject politics per se but a distorted version of 'the political'. Thirdly, despite widespread public discussion of the potential for the 'radicalisation' of young European citizens, or the emergence (out of the economic crisis) of a 'lost generation', our research shows that young people in fact continue to uphold the fundamental principles of democracy.

From the start, MYPLACE embedded a partnership approach in its fundamental and applied research into young people's political and social participation across a diverse range of 14 countries. The ambition of the research was matched by a similar determination, given the policy significance of the topic under investigation, to involve policy-practitioner partners in the research from design through to dissemination and impact. The chief means by which this was achieved was through the novel creation of Youth Policy Advisory Groups (YPAGs), which played an important role from the outset in the work of the project.

### Impact – how MYPLACE benefits societies

Policy, impact and dissemination formed a significant part of the project and pursued the following main objectives:

**At European level** to enhance science-policy links by providing scientific data and policy briefs on issues relating to three policy priorities: participation of young people; respect for cultural diversity; and the fight against racism and xenophobia. At European level the most relevant agencies and outlets identified were:

- The EC Youth in Action Programme (2007-13);
- The European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy (EKCY), a partnership between the European Union (EU) and the Council of Europe (CoE);
- CORDIS, the EC's Community Research and Development Information Service.

**At national level** to enhance science-policy links by developing an active flow of information and exchange to relevant national institutions and organizations; to develop a relevant policy publication, drawing on MYPLACE findings, in each of the national languages and working in conjunction with local policy makers and youth work practitioners.

The MYPLACE findings provide an insight not only into how young people in the survey locations perceive the problems they and their country face – including that of youth disengagement from politics – but also their potential causes and explanations.

From the point of view of policy intervention, the survey findings make it clear that more attention should be paid not only to specifically youth issues and problems (such as, for example, education

and youth unemployment), but also to general societal problems, such as the crisis of trust across Europe. Young people, it seems, are reproducing the attitudes of the majority of 'adult' society in relation to high levels of 'cynicism' when it comes to the leaders of the country and a range of issues relating to the legitimacy of political systems. Although informed critical attitudes often accompany interest and engagement in politics, lack of trust and efficacy have a significant impact on willingness to participate in social and political life and this hinders the development of a vibrant and active civil society.

### **Collaboration with non-academic partners and dissemination of research findings**

The work for MYPLACE involved the production of research findings and policy implications in direct 'co-productive' relationships between academic researchers and museum and other 'sites of memory' partners, investigating young people's interpretations of a 'difficult period' in the national/regional history. This cooperation involved different formats ranging from co-production of the art and history exhibitions (Portugal, UK, Georgia and Russia), participation in running outreach programmes with young people (UK, Slovakia, Georgia and Latvia), organisation of the workshops and conferences (Estonia, Greece and Finland), publication of information leaflets and brochures, and books (Hungary, Denmark, Croatia and UK). In the number of case-studies the collaboration between research team and non-academic partners lead to production of multimedia materials, such films, radio podcasts and slide shows (Latvia, Slovakia, UK, Russia and Georgia). In all national case-studies, the sites of memory were used to access the historical discourses representing the problematic periods of the past in question through conducting expert interviews with the members of staff, observing permanent and temporal exhibitions, etc. At the same time, participation in and co-operation in running outreach programmes of non-academic partner organisations provided researchers with reach empirical material on young people's engagement with the past and interpretation of historical events by conducting individual and group interviews and focus groups.

In addition, the collaborative projects, developed with museum and archive partners, incorporated a more direct co-productive approach. In Estonia, for example, a joint conference with the partner-museum during which presentations were made by both sides and discussion touched themes which crossed over the fields of social research and art. In the UK the collaboration with the local museum took form of participatory action research addressing needs of the hard-to-reach groups of young people and fostering community engagement through a number of workshops that had their focus in urban memories and industrial heritage in West Midlands. In the course of the workshops the process of knowledge exchange and mutual learning from all parties involved (the museum practitioners, MYPLACE researchers and young people) took place resulting in the museum using MYPLACE research findings in their outreach programs, researchers utilising museum's colleagues approach of communication with wider audience, and young people becoming a co-producers of research materials and museum exhibitions (e.g. multi-media productions, photographic exhibition, book). Similarly in Russia, research work was conducted in close partnership with the museum of political history that resulted in staging a docudrama in the museum presenting the research findings that had direct relevance to thematic focus and scope of the museum's exhibitions. Such event facilitated both the finding dissemination to broader audience of museum visitors and further contextualisation and personalisation of the museum representation of the 'difficult' periods in Russia's recent history. In Georgia, the non-academic partners became a local YMCA organisation that as an NGO provided educational services to the young people (including IDPs from the zone of military conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia) in a small provincial town. The collaboration resulted in a production of the short documentary about the problems and process of integration of the younger generation of IDPs in the local community. While working on the film young people learned about role that the recent problematic past had on the political and cultural processes in their town. Moreover, the impact of raising awareness and engaging with young people lasted beyond this dissemination event. Thus, the year after these activities a number of young participants continue to



be actively engaged in life of local community working as NGO volunteers or even starting their own NGO addressing the issues relevant to town's youth.

### Youth Policy Advisory Groups (YPAGs)

Across the project as a whole collaboration with relevant policy-practitioner partners was very broad. Our specific policy objectives were achieved through the innovative means of Youth Policy Advisory Groups (YPAGs), which were set up in each partner country between academic research colleagues and a range of policy partners (including Youth in Action programme, local and national politicians, representatives of Ministries of youth and/or education as appropriate, NGOs with both a general and a specific youth remit, leading academic 'youth' experts, and members of think tanks with relevant foci). YPAGs met regularly to: (i) advise on the development of the research, (ii) discuss the significance of emerging findings, (iii) advise on the production of Policy Briefs and (iv) facilitate the dissemination of research findings into policy arenas at local, national and European levels. The size of the YPAG and its constituent membership varied in accordance with the priorities and circumstances of each country (Table 8).

**Table 8: Composition of YPAGs**

Country	Membership of YPAG
Croatia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• youth policy experts</li> <li>• relevant city representatives from both the research sites</li> </ul>
Denmark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• youth ministry officials</li> <li>• municipal representatives from the research sites</li> <li>• members of relevant NGOs</li> <li>• policy experts</li> </ul>
Estonia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• representatives from think tanks</li> <li>• national government officials</li> <li>• representatives of municipal authorities in the research sites</li> <li>• youth council members</li> <li>• youth experts</li> </ul>
Finland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• members of relevant government departments and agencies</li> <li>• representatives of the Centre of Youth Organisations through which links with the Ministry of the Interior were established</li> </ul>
Georgia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ministry of youth and sport representatives</li> <li>• NGOs,</li> <li>• policy experts</li> <li>• UNICEF</li> </ul>
Hungary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NGO and Youth Association representatives</li> <li>• representatives of social service providers to various groups including youth</li> <li>• public and private research representatives</li> <li>• public officials from the ministry responsible for youth</li> </ul>
Germany	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federal level government officials</li> <li>• youth experts</li> <li>• representatives came from both former eastern and western Germany</li> </ul>
Greece	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• members of youth organisations</li> <li>• a representative of the municipality of one of the research sites</li> </ul>
Latvia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• government youth officials</li> <li>• youth experts</li> <li>• NGO representatives</li> <li>• a Board member of the National Youth Council</li> </ul>

Portugal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• representatives of youth and sports organisations</li> <li>• the Youth Ministry</li> <li>• City Council of one of the research sites</li> <li>• a member of the Youth Observatory</li> </ul>
Russia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• academic experts</li> <li>• activists of youth organisations</li> <li>• representatives of the city council of one of the research sites</li> <li>• a government official</li> </ul>
Spain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• academics in youth studies and/or participation</li> <li>• representatives of youth associations and youth platforms</li> <li>• practitioners in youth politics (from the fieldwork sites or the regional government)</li> </ul>
Slovakia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• relevant state officials</li> <li>• representatives of NGOs</li> <li>• policy experts</li> </ul>
UK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• representatives from local government</li> <li>• the Museum partner</li> <li>• local youth workers</li> <li>• national think tank representatives</li> <li>• NGO representatives</li> <li>• policy experts</li> </ul>

## Dissemination

MYPLACE used a multi-layered dissemination strategy, which was updated throughout the project to reflect the requirements for exploitation of the numerous data sets that were created. An innovation was the use of visual dissemination, both still and moving images, to enhance impact.

There have been substantial dissemination activities – to date, over 400 separate publications and events have taken place. These include peer reviewed journal articles, chapters in books, plenary conference papers, seminars, posters, media briefings on radio and TV, presentations to policy makers, web site notifications and publications, blogs, workshops, films, press articles and press releases, exhibitions, public engagement events, films, conference organisation, videos and publicity flyers.

## Public Web sites

The two websites provided a resource used by all research teams as well as a window to the wider public. The original project web site is: <http://fp7-myplace.eu>. This was used both as a resource for the project teams via an intranet part, as well as for public dissemination. It went live on 01 June 2011 and evolved over the course of the project. Towards the end of the project it was determined that a dedicated 'dissemination' web site would facilitate greater impact.

A new project web-site was therefore created: <https://myplaceresearch.wordpress.com/>. This contains important textual and visual materials which showcase headline findings from the project. It also contains links to major publications related to MYPLACE. This website requires minimal maintenance and will continue to be supported after funding has expired. The new website is dedicated to dissemination activities incorporating both visual and textual outputs. The aim is to appeal to academics, policy makers and practitioner audiences.

## Visual dissemination

Five professional standard films were produced which span ethnographic work - from the UK (on the English Defence League), Russia (on anarchists and the pro-Kremlin "Nashi"), and from Portugal the "precarious Inflexible" movement - as well as a general overview of the MYPLACE project's aims and findings. These films are available at: <https://myplaceresearch.wordpress.com/films/>

A photo album 'Young Europeans: between ideas of the past and the future', featuring photos from fieldwork in Latvia, Greece, Russia, Slovakia, UK, and Spain allows users to see MYPLACE in action with explanatory notes. This is available at: <https://myplaceresearch.wordpress.com/photography/>

Videos of memory based museum events in Latvia, Russia, and Slovakia demonstrate the importance of working with practitioners showing the reach that museums have in mobilising knowledge of past events and the ways in which they are currently understood. These are available at:

<https://myplaceresearch.wordpress.com/memory/>

## Outputs

### Thematic Reports

A series of 'Thematic Reports' was produced with a view to highlighting key findings from different sources of MYPLACE data. These reports follow a common format and have at their core bar-charts which summarise the location-specific findings on key variables from the survey. The reports cover many different themes, including:

- *Democracy*
- *History and memory*
- *European issues*
- *Citizenship*
- *Attitudes and trust*
- *Political activism*
- *Religion*
- *Attitudes towards minority groups*

In addition two further thematic reports were produced using the same format:

- *MYPLACE contribution to the 2015 Youth Report*
- *MYPLACE UK Election Special*

These are available on the new project website <https://myplaceresearch.wordpress.com/reports/>.

### Policy Briefs

Three policy briefs were published during the project in February 2013, March 2014 and March 2015. The production of these at appropriate stages through the life of the project was one of the prime vehicles through which policy messages were developed and disseminated.

**Policy Brief 1:** This set of 15 documents was published, in both English and other national languages, in February 2013. Since the project at that time was actively gathering research data, it principally provided an overview of the programme of research: <http://www.fp7-myplace.eu/policybrief1.php>.

**Policy Brief 2:** Published in March 2014, this set of 14 documents, reported the findings from each of the 14 partner countries, comparing data from the two contrasting fieldwork sites, and utilizing the results from both the wide ranging survey, and the sub-sample of semi-structured interviews. The reports were published in English and, in collaboration with their YPAGs, each partner also produced their own report in their national language for purposes of dissemination and development of impact activities: <http://www.fp7-myplace.eu/policybriefs.php>.

**Policy Brief 3:** This brief, which focused on the transnational findings and their implications for important European policy agendas, involved data from four aspects of MYPLACE:

- Research with museum partners on historical memory,
- Young people's attitudes to politics and involvement in political activism,
- Ethnographic case studies of young people's civic engagement ,
- Ethnographic case studies of young people's political engagement.

Preparation for this brief was facilitated by the Policy Forum (see below), at which researchers, policy makers and practitioners worked together to draw out the policy implications of the research. This brief was produced in English (<https://myplaceresearch.wordpress.com/policy-publications/>), and translated versions in national languages: <http://www.fp7-myplace.eu/policybriefs.php>

### **National policy publications**

Each country partner produced a national policy, published in their national language, drawing on the full range of MYPLACE research and the national policy implications. These publications reflect national circumstances and relevant policy priorities: <http://www.fp7-myplace.eu/policybriefs.php>

### **Presentations at meetings and conferences**

Findings from the MYPLACE project have been presented at a wide range of academic conferences worldwide to both national and international audiences. MYPLACE specifically held two dissemination meetings:

#### **MYPLACE Policy Forum** (20 November 2014 in Brussels)

This interactive forum provided an opportunity for MYPLACE researchers to share the project's findings with policy and practice experts from across Europe, including representatives from the European Parliament, the Council of Europe - EC partnership, European Network Against Racism (ENAR), ThinkYoung, European Peacebuilding Liaison Office, city councils, and regional and city youth councils, European Institute for Democratic Participation, Roma Press Centre, a number of national and regional NGOs, as well as representatives from the EC and academic institutions across Europe; a key focus of the day was to involve members of the national YPAGs into the forum. The aim was not to deliver concrete policy recommendations but to co-produce proposals with policy and practice experts. Questions, suggestions and feedback from the delegates were used to inform the production of the Policy Brief 3 and the templates for National Evidence-based policy publications.

#### **MYPLACE Final Conference** (Dubrovnik, Croatia, 6-8 March 2015)

The conference programme allowed space for 16 papers in parallel sessions, in addition to four plenary sessions. A total of 89 delegates attended the conference which included leading academics in the field of youth, politics and radicalization, members of NGOs linked to the project, policy makers and practitioners. Many of the papers presented at this conference are included in the Palgrave edited collection described below. YPAG members from a number of countries were active participants in the Final Conference, acting as rapporteurs, discussants and chairs of sessions. A special session showcasing work with non-academic partners including visual dissemination was held in Dubrovnik old town on 5 March 2015.

## Dissemination via Social Media

Pages were created on:

Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/?sfrm=1#!/pages/MyPlace-Project/205449016184671>)

Twitter (<https://twitter.com/#!/myplaceproject>)

A YouTube channel was established (<http://www.youtube.com/user/TheMYPLACEProject>).

A MYPLACE blog was created: <https://myplacefp7.wordpress.com>. The blog site enabled MYPLACE researchers to respond quickly to unfolding events and to comment on contemporary news issues. Over the course of the project, there has been a series of over 100 posts

## Publications

Two volumes of articles based on the MYPLACE project as a whole have been prepared. The first is published as Pilkington, H. and Pollock, G. (eds) (2015) *Radical Futures? Youth, Politics and Activism in Contemporary Europe*, Sociological Review Monograph Series, Oxford: Wiley, Blackwell. This volume includes 11 contributions based on research conducted for MYPLACE from 21 consortium members and the collection is also published as a special issue of the international peer reviewed journal *Sociological Review*.

The second is in preparation and will be published in 2016 as Pilkington, H., Pollock, G. and Franc, R. (eds) *Understanding Youth Participation across Europe: From Survey to Ethnography*, Basingstoke: PalgraveMacmillan. This volume includes four introductory articles written by the editors setting out the theoretical and methodological approaches and innovations of the MYPLACE project and nine contributions by a total of 28 consortium members. In this volume all articles either triangulate data from different datasets or undertake cross-national comparison or synthesis of data.

## Other dissemination activities:

In addition to the above, the research results have been disseminated widely through various means including: articles in the popular press; public engagement events; presentations to policy makers and the scientific community; radio and TV interviews; films and videos; and the organisation of workshops and conferences (Table 9).

**Table 9: Summary of the dissemination activities throughout the project**

Type of dissemination	Total nos.	Type of Audience
Articles in the popular press	52	Civil society; Policy makers; Media; Industry; Scientific community (higher education; research)
Exhibitions	3	Civil society; Policy makers; Media; Scientific community (higher education; research)
Films and videos	11	Civil society; Policy makers; Media; Industry; Scientific community (higher education; research)
Interviews (with the media)	15	Civil society; Policy makers; Media;
Media briefings, including press releases and TV clips	19	Civil society; Policy makers; Media; Scientific community (higher education; research)

Oral presentation to a scientific event	226	Scientific community (higher education; research); Policy makers; Media
Peer-reviewed publications in scientific journals	20	Scientific community (higher education; research)
Presentations to a wider public	39	Civil society; Policy makers; Media; Scientific community (higher education; research)
Organisation of conference	6	Scientific community (higher education; research); Policy makers; Media
Organisation of workshop	20	Civil society; Policy makers; Media; Scientific community (higher education; research)
Posters & flyers	5	Civil society; Policy makers; Media; Scientific community (higher education; research)

Further presentations of MYPLACE data will be made in the future. Several more peer-reviewed publications are in press, under review or in preparation.

### Data set availability

The questionnaire survey will become available to all researchers through the Data Archive at the University of Essex. At the time of writing documentation has been submitted to the Data Archive and it is anticipated that in the near future that the data plus supporting guidance documentation will be made available to researchers on request. The protocol is such that the Data Archive houses the data and includes a description of it (both brief and detailed) in its on-line database. Researchers interested in making use of the data are required to register with the service and submit a brief rationale which explains the research or pedagogic purpose that the data will be used for.

Discussion at the final Steering Committee meeting (Dubrovnik, March 2015) raised the question of whether materials from the qualitative research elements of the project might be deposited in a qualitative data archive for future researcher access. Subsequent discussion led to the conclusion that the sensitivity of the material (even after anonymisation) in many individual case studies meant that it would be difficult to make the materials available more widely. Moreover, since materials were gathered in native language, it would be more appropriate for partners to respond to any requests from other academics for access to materials on a case by case basis.

## The project public website address, and relevant contact details

The original website <http://www.fp7-myplace.eu/> provides information on the background to the project, a description of the ten work-packages, and a list of partners (with links to the institute home page). In addition it also holds information about the output of the project, including thematic reports and Policy Briefs which can be downloaded. There are links to MYPLACE blog, Twitter and Facebook accounts. The new website <https://myplaceresearch.wordpress.com/> has links to film documentaries, museum events, and a photo gallery.

The project logo is: 

A list of all the beneficiaries, and contact details of the Principle Investigator, is given below:

No.	Institute	Short name	Location Country	Principle Investigator Contact e-mail
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