EURYKA

Reinventing Democracy in Europe: Youth Doing Politics in Times of Increasing Inequalities

**Integrated Report on Biographical Analysis
(Deliverable 6.2)**

Workpackage 6: Biographical Analysis

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General Introduction

In the current phase of economic, social and politica crisis, our societies are experiencing an increasing shift in political participation. This is most evident when we look at younger generations. The present integrated report on biographical analysis aims to contribute to knowing who those young people are who engage in political participation today across Europe.[1] Through the in-depth interview method, we have collected a large variety of data concerning the lives, daily routine, and major events and experiences faced by the young people who do politics nowadays.

The target population of this integrated report is young individuals who define themselves as members of different organisations/groups involved in socio-political activities. We have sampled our data on the dependent variable because our interest is to identify variation among those young people who are active doing politics and not which *kinds* of individuals do. Our interest is to study the connections between individual, collective and contextual factors in shaping young individuals' political participation. We investigate how such participation may lead young people to be a driver of social and political change, with an emphasis on new ways of political engagement and interaction that may feed into the development of new democratic models inclusive to their needs and voices. For this reason, we have not been interested uniquely in the initial phase of engagement, but also have turned to focus on the long-lasting social activity of participation of young individuals, which shifts across time between different positions and forms of political participation.

In this introduction, we first present a concise discussion of the sample design and then provide a general overview of the interviewing process. The introduction then includes sections that present exploratory descriptive analysis of the similarities and differences between those who are doing politics in the different cities across Europe that we have touched with our fieldwork. The last section of the introduction sets out some tentative very broad conclusions. The remainder of this integrated report is devoted to individual country reports, where the focus is on the fieldwork done in each city and the comparison is across young participants from the issue areas of different organisations/groups.

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[1] With *political participation* in this report we refer to a wide range of social, political and cultural activities, including protest/demonstrative, online, direct social and conventional electoral activities within an organisation/group.

1. Sample design

In terms of case selection, we have promoted a multistage and multilevel sampling design. We have first turned to sample the urban context (macro level), then the sample of organisations/groups (meso level), finally we have sampled on the individuals sociographic backgrounds (micro level).

Urban context

For each country we have selected one city that constitutes the fieldwork where each national team of the EURYKA consortium has conducted 28 in-depth interviews with young individuals (18-35 years old) who are doing politics. Cities were selected on the basis of a certain number of characteristics:

- "large urban area";
- cities with universities;
- socio-political active cities.

Following these very broad characteristics, the cities selected were: Athens (Greece); Barcelona (Spain/Catalonia); Bologna (Italy); Cologne (Germany); Geneva (Switzerland); Paris (France); Sheffield (UK); Stockholm (Sweden); and Warsaw (Poland).

For each country report we provide a summarised contextualization of the city where the fieldwork was conducted in terms of: population, socio-economic, socio-cultural and socio-political issues. If the broad characteristics are common across our sample of cities, on the other hand important differences exist: Athens, Paris and Warsaw are national capitals, they also show stronger inequalities in comparison with the other cities of the sample; apart from Cologne and Stockholm all the other cities, at the municipality level, have mayors coming from a centre-left political background; in Bologna and Sheffield, the university population is larger compared with the other cities of the sample. Without the intent of providing any systematic comparison in this introduction of the report, we highlight the main similarities and differences in the young people doing politics across these cities.

Organisations and groups

Within each of these cities we have decided to choose seven different types of organisations/groups, which vary along issue areas:

A) Left libertarian organisation/group (protest groups/Indignados/occupy protests/movement of the squares/squat)

B) Informal citizens/grassroots solidarity initiatives and networks of solidarity/social economy, social justice and reclaim activities as well as informal time banks

C) Feminist organisation/group

D) Student organisation

E) Center-right political party (mainstream)/youth branch

F) Center-left political party (mainstream)/youth branch

G) Greenpeace

Organisations/groups in the country reports, as well as in future publications, are recognised for their issue areas rather than being named specifically. This is done for security reasons, in order to protect the anonymity of our respondents. For each organisation/group we have designated we then have selected four young respondents (see below). In the country reports the comparison is across young participants from different organisation/group issue areas.

Sociographic backgrounds

The youth sample of the integrated report is composed of 252 young people (18-35 years old), 28 respondents for each of the nine cities selected for the fieldwork. The main demographic attributes of the full sample are summarised in Table 1. In each country report, we have reproduced a summary of the main attributes of the sample of respondents for each city.

In all the nine cities, respondents were selected in two ways: first, using information from the organisations/groups; second, through snowballing (asking interviewees to provide names of further potential respondents). As often is the case in qualitative research, young people who are socially and politically engaged were not selected as representative of a population (on which we have little uncontested knowledge), but, rather, we tried, with limited availability, to identify young people according to some possible variation across: gender, age cohorts, education, ethnic background and organisational position.

The socio-demographics suggest that our major pool of activists are university students or hold a university degree. This feature also shapes the class background of our respondents, who mostly come from a middle class background. Bologna and Sheffield further boost the education bias of our sample, but this is particularly the case because these are two university cities. In line with literature expectations, which speaks of biographical availability and hence lower likelihood of those involved in political activism to have childrens, only 12 out of the 252 interviewees had children.

Table 1. The sociographic background of our sample

Age range	Gender	Geographical provenience	Qualification	Current occupation	Partner	Children
18–20: 40 21–25: 82 26–30: 80 31–35: 50	Female: 131 Male: 118 NB: 3	Same country: 236 Foreigner: 16	Lower secondary school: 3 Upper secondary school: 74 Bachelor: 82 Master: 90 PhD: 3	Student: 71 Working student: 37 Unemployed: 15 Part-time job: 16 Full-time job: 113	Yes: 128 No: 124	Yes: 15 No: 237

2. Interviewing process

The time period of the fieldwork varied in the different cities, but overall it ran from February 2018 to January 2019. The 252 interviews lasted between one and two hours and were digitally recorded, by prior agreement from the respondents. We met each interviewee at a location of his or her choice, and prior to conducting the interview we informed him or her of our academic affiliation and of the aims of the EURYKA project. We also informed him or her of the interview's purpose and its 11 sections: (1) start; (2) life before participation; (3) initial activist involvement; (4) participant evolution; (5) sustained participation; (6) activities; (7) multiple participation; (8) possible disengagement; (9) impact; (10) future; (11) socio demographic issues. Every interview followed this scheme. The respondents were also informed that they could decline to answer any questions that made them uncomfortable and that they could discuss and add further suggestions to what they thought important in relation to the initial purpose of the interview.

3. Life before participation

The fieldwork in the nine different cities shows that the similarities overshadow the differences if we look at the primary socialization of our respondents. They generally seem not to have experienced any major challenging situation at the domestic and public levels. Because of this, the generational conflict hardly emerges as something relevant across our respondents during their first socialization.

Most of our respondents come from middle class families; they have grown up in families that have been generally permissive and supportive. In some cases, as in Cologne, Geneva and Paris, a few respondents with migrant backgrounds referred to some disagreements with their families, but not

open conflicts. Most of the respondents in Barcelona, Bologna and Paris come from Catholic families, but very rarely did they refer to this as somehow influential in their further political socialization. However, young respondents in Sheffield who come from Catholic families have spoken about how Catholicism has played a role in their growing up. Only in few cases was the religious orientation of our respondents' families mentioned as major reason for disagreement.

Outside the domestic sphere our respondents were first socialized during the daily time spent at school and given their engagement in sport and cultural activities. In Barcelona and Sheffield, the years at school emerged as particularly problematic. Apart from the case of Barcelona, no mention of socialization at the neighbourhood level seems to emerge across our sample in the other cities. Only in the case of Paris and Sheffield did a few of our respondents say they had experienced some difficult periods in their lives.

Regarding social relationships, the vast majority of our respondents highlighted friendship among their peers as an important asset during their primary socialization. This provided them with a resource in terms of growth, subjectivation and identity-building processes, and self-awareness. In the case of Barcelona, Geneva and Paris it has emerged that young people's experiences abroad had some major impact on the life of our respondents, opening up the possibility to see the world through different eyes.

4. The political socialisation process

Respondents in our sample, during the adolescent phase of their lives, shift from being generally interested in political issues or not showing interest at all to gradually starting very similar processes of political socialisation at home and at high school, during some important turning points. Where at home they first have opportunities to talk about politics, at school they experience opportunities for collective action, participating at demonstrations, public events, school occupations and so on.

If the vast majority do not come from politically active families (i.e. their families are not members of organisations/groups) our respondents suggest, to a large extent, that exchanges and discussions about politics and current events (i.e. listening to the news or reading newspapers) were daily practices in the household during their childhood (our respondents from Sheffield and Warsaw have apolitical families as well). The experience of those respondents with parents born in another country is somewhat different. These respondents were socialized into politics through discussions related to their parents' home country, something emerging in particular from our fieldwork in Geneva and

Stockholm. Most of our respondents say they share their families' political standing. Only a few respondents mentioned that their parents opposed somehow their political involvement (in particular in Barcelona and Stockholm). In the case of Stockholm and Sheffield, some families began to talk about politics only after the respondents became active involved in doing politics.

The high school context, and in Barcelona the university context, represents for our respondents the space where they developed social consciousness and critical thinking, which were instrumental to first express and affirm their political standings as individuals (this is to a less an extent in Sheffield). In some cases, specific charismatic teachers were mentioned as having a key role in their political socialisation by stimulating conversation on political current affairs or proposing influential books. Being a student representative – either in class-level or school-level – has been mentioned by our respondents as a step in their political socialization. These positions provided them with early experiences, evoking or further strengthening an interest in politics, placing them in a better position in terms of skills (i.e. taking up responsibilities and liaising with administrative bodies and institutions) and resources, which would prove fundamental for the next step of mobilising in an organisation/group later on in their life. In the case of Warsaw, young people politically socialize not through the school itself, but through non-governmental organisations that are often present inside the school environment.

Political socialisation among our respondents occurred at certain specific turning points where they say politics was discussed at home, at school or with friends. Within the same city, different age cohorts of young people mentioned they had been politically socialized in the aftermath of different transformative events: Athens (the US invasion of Iraq in 2002, the killing of a teenager by a police officer in 2008, the citizen mobilizations against the economic crisis and the murder of an anti-fascist rapper by a far-right activist in 2013); Barcelona (the citizen mobilizations against the economic crisis and the political relation between Catalonia and Spain over the last years); Bologna (the period of Berlusconi as Prime Minister, the G8 summit in Genoa in 2001 and the 2008 Onda Anomala Movement); Cologne (the racist attacks in East Germany in the late 1990s, the 9/11 attacks, the Iraq war, the refugee crisis and Brexit); Geneva (the initiative against minarets in 2009, the election of the first women to the Swiss national Council in 1993 and the 9/11 attacks); Paris (in 2002 when Le Pen got to the second round of voting for the Presidential election, the law reforms of Francois Hollande; the retirement reforms during the presidency of Nicolas Sarkozy, the terrorist attacks in Paris and Nice) Sheffield (Tony Blair's election as Prime Minister in 1997 and the war in Iraq); Stockholm (the national election in 2010 and the EU Parliament elections in 2014).

Only in the case of Stockholm did our respondents refer to the internet as a space where they acquired some political socialization.

5. Mobilisation and recruitment processes

Mobilization into organisations/groups most often happened when our respondents were at university, but some had begun already during high school (in particular respondents from Bologna), while for others it was once they first found a job (in particular respondents from Warsaw). Most of our respondents claimed that they were active subjects in finding the organisation/group that suited them best, to the extent that they depicted the process as quite straightforward. On the contrary, for others it was not premeditated and involved extensive political reflection regarding which organisation/group to enter (in Athens and Paris in particular) and as far as some tried out different organisations/groups before finding the one that worked for them (in Bologna, Cologne and Stockholm in particular). Most of the time, respondents' active membership within the organisation/group they feel closest to was a step they took with some friends or else they already knew someone within the group. Pre-existing networks and social connections seem to play a significant role in the recruitment process of our sample of respondents. In a few cases, they even created an organisation/group themselves in order to start doing politics. The respondents' narratives suggest continuity between the previous politicization phase and their first mobilization in an organisation/group. For the large majority of our respondents, the motivation driving their mobilization was to find a vehicle that would allow them in a practical way to be able to produce a better society.

Public events (i.e. demonstrations, strikes and occupations) and places (i.e. assemblies, squats and organic markets) were important arenas either for the respondents' self-engagement or for the direct recruitment of organisation/group present. At the same time, the internet and social media were described as providing yet another arena where our respondents were looking for information useful to their mobilization process. Social media are generally seen from our respondents as a site of useful information about politics rather than a mobilisation tool.

Once our respondents joined the organisation/group, they first refer to having taken part in assemblies. During this initial phase they first got acquainted with the organisation/group and its work.

6. Practices / Sustained participation / Multiple participation

In general from our respondents' accounts, we deduce that they have engaged in a wide range of political action repertoires over time, from election campaigning to demonstrations and direct social actions. As the countries' reports show, this very broad repertoire of actions is used differently depending on the type of organisation/group in each city. Despite such important diversity, which makes the participation of young people in each organisation/group a unique experience in terms of practices used across each country, what seems to be similar across all organisations/groups is that our respondents describe this type of activism as intertwined with the other everyday routines of their life and the practices used to respond to some kind of pragmatism and concreteness. Where all the different practices are more or less experienced at the beginning of the engagement in the following phases young people tend to engage in the practices that fit them best.

Sustained participation is supported, following our respondents' histories, by personal connections within the organisation/group; by having found a community of like-minded people with whom they share common concerns; by continuous interest in the activity of the organisation/group; by the satisfaction with their own position within the organisation/group, which makes them feeling responsible toward the organisation/group and/or the society in general, but also provide a meaning to their life; by the opportunity to learn more about society and gain knowledge and skills; by seeing that their engagement can produce social impact and by young people availability. Across all our cities it seems to emerge that for members of youth branches of right-wing and left-wing political parties, ideology still plays an important role. For the rest of our respondents, instead, ideology is no longer considered an important means of tying people within an organisation/group. On the contrary, being a non-ideological organisation/group appears to be an advantage for our respondents.

When it comes to youth participation, this often (and seems to be particularly the case in Paris and Sheffield) coincides with our respondents' accounts with multiple engagement simultaneously in different organisations/groups (to a less an extant in Barcelona). Overall, these experiences are highly valued as they create cross-cutting awareness and strengthen larger networks. Two of the main problems these respondents find to multiple participation are time and energy.

7. Evolution (Inside organisation / Change of participation outside organisation / Disengagement)

After joining an organisation/group on a volunteering basis, our respondents say they progressively acquired more responsibilities. Differences across types of organisations/groups exist, as our country reports testify, but in general the act of receiving recognition from the organisation/group corresponds with a higher engagement, political visibility, greater public and political responsibility, usually after a phase of learning internal dynamics. Furthermore, the evolution of members' roles depends on the presence (or absence) of specific periods. During more intensive political engagements, respondents suggest that they tended to intensify and strengthen their own presence and belonging. At the same time the level of engagement also coincides with young people's level of availability in terms of time and energy.

With respect to shifting from one organisation/group to another we suggest that this was the case more in some cities (Athens, Geneva and Stockholm) then in others, as well as we will see in our country's reports in terms of different types of organisations. Where moving from one organisation/group to the other is not felt as a breakthrough, then shifting happens more often. Respondents suggest some form of disappointment with the previous organisation/group before the shift. Disappointment ranged from disagreements with the leadership, divergent political convictions and problems with the identification of the organisation/group. Apart from disappointment with the organisation/group, also personal factors seem to play a role as well, such as: moving to another city, biographical availability, financial problems, experiencing difficult personal times, changed priorities.

Those factors that are relevant for switching from an organisation/group to another seem also to be helpful for fully disengaging from doing politics with an organisation/group. In this case, the issue of becoming older is referred to as particularly relevant as our respondents who have disengaged were starting to become tired of repeating things they had tried before at an earlier phase of their life. Other reasons behind disengagement are burnout after a period of high engagement.

8. Biographical impact / Future

Our respondents, from all the different cities as well as from different types of organisations/groups, seem to recognise the profound personal impact, most of the time narrated in a positive way, that doing politics has had on their own life. Respondents say they have acquired through participation different skills, to have became more sociable and self-confident, to have matured, to have became

more pragmatic in relationship with their political standing in order to achieve major outcomes, to have changed their priorities, and to have brought them knowledge. On the other hand, some of our respondents, in particular in the cities of Barcelona, Cologne and Warsaw, suggest in particular that participation has been an obstacle to their circle of close friends outside their organisation/group.

On the other hand, the great majority of our respondents have declared willing to continue participating, but only provided that it remains compatible with changes in their lives. Given that, for a sizeable minority of our respondents, political participation is conceived as the most important part of their life future activities are viewed as something that would in their future fit around activism.

FRENCH REPORT

PAMELA TORRES AND DIDIER CHABANET

1. City context

Population

Paris is the capital city of France. It is located to the north of the country and has a population of 2,220,445 inhabitants (December 2018), covering an area of 10,540 hectares and a density of 21,067 inhabitants per km[2], one of the highest in Europe. Demographically, Paris is the fifth largest city in the European Union. It is observed that the number of inhabitants has decreased slightly compared with the figures of previous recent years. This decline, which began in 2011, is predicted to continue for several years.[2] This is all the more striking given that most other French cities have gained inhabitants in this same time period. This trend can be explained by the fact that many people come to study in Paris, to start a professional life, to eventually start a family, and then leave the capital as soon as they can, usually when their family expands or when they retire. Stress, pollution and the high cost of living are the main contributing factors to this phenomenon.

Figure 1. Evolution of the number of inhabitants from 2006 to 2015
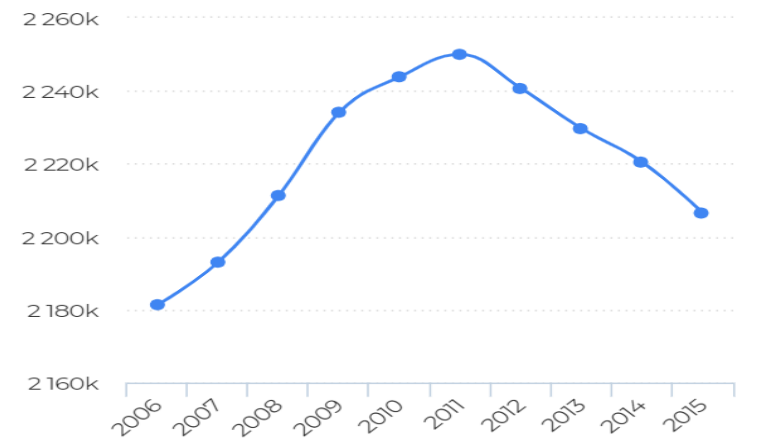
Paris is a young and dynamic city. Students and young active people (15 to 44 years old) are particularly numerous. The average age of inhabitants of the city is 39 years old.

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[2] https://www.lemonde.fr/societe/article/2019/01/22/la-population-de-paris-risque-de-diminuer-jusqu-en-2025_5412989_3224.html

Figure 2. Distribution of age groups over total population

(in comparison with the average of French cities)

Data 2015	Number of inhabitants	% of the population	% of the population in other cities (on average)
Under 15 years old	312 251	14.2 %	18.1 %
15 - 29 years old	514 644	23.3 %	13.5 %
30 - 44 years old	498 914	22.6 %	18.5 %
45 - 59 years old	404 781	18.3 %	21.8 %
60 - 74 years old	305 908	13.9 %	18.1 %
Over 75 years old	146 162	6.6 %	8.9 %

Paris is also a city of economic migration, i.e. it is a gateway to French territory for foreigners. The immigrant population of Paris accounts for 20% of the total population (this figure includes all those who arrived in Paris as foreigners, even if they have since acquired French nationality).[3]

Socio-economic issues

The population of the Southwestern districts of Paris are rather well-off, while those in the Northeastern districts are the most disadvantaged. However, a more detailed analysis reveals contrasting profiles.

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[3] http://www.linternaute.com/ville/paris/ville-75056/demographie

Figure 3. Five socio-demographic profiles in Paris (in %)[4]

	Social mixedareas	Vulnerable areas	Rich areas	Areas hosting executives in private rental parks	Middle-class areas	Paris
Population	542 000	212 000	347 000	672 000	467 000	**2 240 000**
Demography						
75 years old and over	5.6	5.9	10.7	8.8	6.1	**7.5**
Migrants	19.8	29.6	19.6	16.1	23.5	**20.3**
Under 24 years old	24.9	34.4	29.1	26.4	29.9	**27.9**
Housing						
Social housing	6.1	69.7	2.1	11.2	35.6	**17.6**
Activity						
Managers	46.3	17.1	51.3	50.5	33.0	**43.1**
Income						
Standard of living per person per year (in €)	26,100	15,300	41,500	30,200	20,300	**25,700**
Poverty rate	15.9	31.4	8.9	10.4	21.2	**16.0**

The average standard of living per Parisian is 25,700 € per year and is among the highest of all French cities across all departments. Nevertheless, this observation hides great disparity: the standard of living of the wealthiest 10% of Parisians is 6.7 times higher than that of the poorest 10%. These disparities are also observed geographically across the capital.

A quarter of Parisian neighborhoods are "socially diverse areas", hosting a wide range of population profiles. In these neighborhoods there are 542,000 people. The median standard of living is 26,100 € per year, very close to that of Paris as a whole. Similarly, the poverty rate is equivalent to that of the capital city as a whole (16%). The proportion of young people aged 15 to 29 in these areas is very high.

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[4] https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/2572750

One in ten Parisian neighborhoods is a "vulnerable area", mostly home to socially and economically disadvantaged people. This group represents 212,000 inhabitants. In these areas, the proportion of social housing is very high. The standard of living is the lowest in Paris: € 15,300 per year, while the rate of poverty is the highest at 31%: almost double that of Paris as a whole.

In contrast, more than 15% of Parisian neighborhoods are "rich areas" and home to 347,000 people. The proportion of property owners is high, comprising a lot of older people. The median standard of living is € 41,500 and the rate of poverty only 9%.

Three quarters of Parisian neighborhoods are "areas hosting executives in private rental parks". This group is the largest in Paris comprising 672,000 inhabitants. The standard of living is slightly higher than that of the capital generally, at 30,200 €. It is characterized by a significant proportion of executives and of private sector tenants. These areas are distinguished from "socially diverse areas" by a lesser presence of low-income individuals and students.

Finally, two out of ten neighborhoods, the "middle-class areas", account for 467,000 inhabitants. These are areas wherein the share of social tenants is twice as large as the average. The standard of living of this social class, 20,300 € per year, is a little lower than the Parisian average, while the poverty rate is a little higher: 21% compared to 16% for Paris generally.

From this analysis, the contrast between the wealthy Central-Western area and the more disadvantaged Northeast of Paris is confirmed. But Parisian districts sometimes present a wide diversity of socio-economic profiles. Thus, the three districts in which the most "disadvantaged" neighbourhoods are situated also comprise some of the substantially richer neighborhoods.

Socio-cultural issues

Paris is a fascinating city from a cultural point of view: with an abundance of theatres, music halls, museums, stadiums, gastronomy events, etc. The French capital is ranked among the top five most popular cities in the world for its culture and quality of life[5] and welcomed more than 10 million visitors in 2018.[6]

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[5] http://www.leparisien.fr/paris-75/paris-un-eldorado-pour-les-expatries-27-02-2018-7582260.php
[6] https://www.francetvinfo.fr/culture/louvre/paris-le-musee-du-louvre-a-accueilli-10-2millions-de-visiteurs-en-2018-un-record-mondial-selon-la-direction_3126931.html

Equal access to culture for all citizens is the main ambition of the cultural policy set out by the City of Paris. Investment in culture, social life, youth, sports and recreation together represents 8% of the overall budget of the City.[7]

This will ensure the continuation of an ambitious program of creation and renovation of local equipment dedicated to reading and access to knowledge (especially public libraries). Access for the greatest number, and in particular for so-called 'remote publics', continues to be a priority axis of Parisian cultural policy, thanks to a significant budgetary effort. In this perspective, enhancement of Parisian historical heritage, the major focus of the investment plan, is concretized in particular by a major project for renovating historical religious buildings.

Socio-political issues

As the capital city of France, Paris is a very active and a politically exposed city. Each major demonstration usually ends with a procession of people marching in the streets to challenge the national authorities and take advantage of the media exposure afforded to Paris. Long considered a bastion of right-wing politics, the city has tilted to the left since 2001. As a symbol city, it is now fiercely fought over by both sides.

Over the past three years, several leading social movements have developed in Paris. One such example is the "*Nuit debout"* movement, which was begun on 31st March 2016 following a demonstration against the Labour law and the flexibilization of the labour market more widely, it took the form of a series of gatherings organized on public squares. Without a leader or spokesperson, the *Nuit debout* movement organized itself into committees and decisions which were made by consensus at general meetings, following the principles of direct democracy. The movement was very popular among young people, spread over a hundred cities and was particularly strong in Paris until May 2016. Another recent example is the mobilization of the "Yellow Vests" movement which has been particularly strong in Paris. Parisian civil society as a whole is very intense. What marks the associative culture of Paris is its dynamism: Paris has 65,000 active associations, with 5,000 associations created each year and 550,000 volunteers engaged in one way or another. Finally, Paris and its suburbs regularly experience urban riots, some of which have turned severe. Sectors of the youth living in deprived neighborhoods are affected by unemployment rates of around 40% and serious forms of segregation, which have resulted in attacks against the police.

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[7] http://budgetprimitif2018.paris.fr/pdf/2018/synthese/Synthese_pour_les_citoyens.pdf

2. Sample of socio-demographic issues

This sample is composed of 28 young people (18 to 35 years old). The interviews were conducted in Paris, with the exception of five which were conducted via Skype, during the period between March and November 2018. Figure 4 shows the main socio-demographic attributes of this local sample.

Figure 4. Socio-demographic sample

Age range	Gender	Geographical demographic	Qualification	Current occupation	Partner	Children
18-20: 5 21-25:12 26-30: 4 31-35: 7	Female: 17 Male: 11	Paris: 11 North: 5 Centre: 4 South: 3 Foreigner: 3 Parisian region: 4	High school: 0 Bachelor: 15 Master: 13 PhD: 0	Student: 9 Unemployed: 1 Part time work: 1 Full time work: 10 Freelance: 3 Apprenticeship: 1 Civic service: 3	Yes: 7 No: 21	Yes: 2 No: 26

As summarized in Figure 4, the majority of French youth in this sample were aged between 21 and 25 years old. All of those interviewed had a high level of education, either a Bachelor or Master's degree. They had pursued their studies in different universities in Paris, in different disciplines, but mainly in Social Sciences [8] and the majority were now full-time workers. The fact that the interviewees' education level is higher than the average means that the sample is not representative of the youth population in Paris generally. Nevertheless, this can be explained, on the one hand, by the age range (most being between 21 and 25 years old) and on the other, by the fact that respondents occupy highly-skilled positions which require high-level qualifications. It is important to highlight the possible explanations for the fact that the majority of respondents are full-time workers and able to exert their activism at the same time: these youths have either already achieved a certain level of security in their jobs which has enabled them to engage in social and political participation; or they have specifically looked for a job which enables them to be engaged (in causes related to their jobs, or because they have the time to dedicate to other activities); or because activism has become their real job.

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[8] The selection process resulted in interviews being conducted mainly among Social Sciences students (particularly Political Science), which may represent a bias in the sample.

When it comes to geographical demographics, half of the sample (15 in total) were either born in or grew up in Paris and the suburban areas (Parisian region). Due to the fact that Paris is the political centre of the country and political powers are concentrated in the City, this may make people more open to political participation, but not necessarily to social engagement.[9] Many respondents began a process of social engagement and political socialization during earlier stages of their lives in their cities of origin, but their formal activism began upon their arrival in Paris. Accordingly, it is important to highlight the fact that the prestigious academic offering among Parisian universities attracts students from all regions of the country. Indeed, 19 interviewees came to the city either from the Parisian suburbs, from other regions of France or from abroad specifically to pursue their studies.

Finally, regarding gender composition, 19 respondents were female and 11 were male. The majority of the female participants were members of student, solidarity and feminist organisations, whereas most of the males were active within political organisations. Indeed, interviewees themselves highlighted the fact that women are still underrepresented when it came to political participation.

3. Life before participation

In general terms, primary socialization was similar across respondents. In fact, a very common pattern among interviewees was observed: during the earlier stages of their lives (more precisely during their high-school years) they were active in various social and solidarity organisations/groups (food banks, support for immigrants , etc.) and many of them decided afterwards to engage in political organisations, due to these previous experiences considered as valuable for their subsequent life paths. They also invested in other activities in parallel, such as sports (tennis, handball, football, etc.), music, arts and culture (photography, reading, history, visiting museums, etc.).

Respondents' families seem to have adopted a generally permissive and liberal type of education, based on trust, freedom and respect, meaning respondents were encouraged to make their own decisions while nevertheless observing certain minimal rules. Similarly, they were encouraged to be autonomous, while also encouraged to adopt a critical world view.

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[9] We refer to political participation as activism undertaken within political organisations per se (political parties and their youth branches); whereas by social engagement we refer to solidarity activities within different social organisations (as for the interviews, we can cite e.g. immigration aid, food banks, charity restaurants, etc.).

Many of the respondents' families had a Catholic background, which was not particularly reflected in the beliefs or religious practices of interviewees themselves. This means that although respondents grew up in Catholic backgrounds, they did not consider themselves to be religious, but rather secular or non-believers. Two respondents among the sample came from Muslim families, who mentioned having observed religious practices in their early lives, but not during their periods of political engagement. However, it is important to identify possible connections resulting from religious backgrounds and consecutive political participation: for instance, interviewees reported having core values such as solidarity, social awareness and particularly, the willingness to work for the good of society.

Most respondents from political organisations (both left and right) pursued their studies in public schools. A factor which could underpin this is the fact that students in public schools are more exposed to politicization, due to (i) their socio-economic diversity which favours some of the current debates, especially those linked to the state of public education and reforms; (ii) greater contact with the structure of the public education system (student trade unions on both student and teacher levels); (iii) students' different socio-political backgrounds, and so on. Very commonly, interviewees reported that their studies were linked to volunteering, associative and recreational activities, but not to religious organisations/groups. The majority of interviewees were very invested in their studies prior to their political participation. It could therefore be hypothesized that these respondents developed high-level performance at school, which would later serve them in their subsequent activism: skills acquired during their studies were arguably reinvested in their different fields of activism (oral and written skills in particular).

The majority of respondents across the various organisations reported that having lived abroad (through academic exchanges, Erasmus programs, working missions or simply travelling for leisure) had been important experiences for growth. They frequently described how these experiences resulted in political awareness and having a broader view of the world. Yet, they also recalled discussions with foreigners and friends alike about the different political situations in their countries, which made them aware of the weaknesses of each of their respective countries (e.g. low level of tolerance towards social diversity, radical political stakes, etc.) and consequently inspiring their desires to work towards change.

Regarding social relationships, the vast majority of interviewees highlighted friendship as an important asset during their primary socialization. This helped them to develop a sense of identity, as

well as increasing their confidence as both individuals and as members of a group. Yet there were very particular exceptions of interviewees who had not felt socially integrated at school, even some who had experienced harassment or bullying. Nevertheless, these respondents highlighted how this had steered them towards future political involvement.

4. The political socialization process

A very large majority of respondents reported that their political interest was present from a very early age, but that it was somehow passive until they reached a certain level of "maturity", or until they found an organisation/group which best appealed to their interests and expectations. However, the final years of high-school (17 to 18 years old) symbolized a watershed in terms of political socialization, as they triggered the adoption of certain values and understandings. In other words, there are various reasons which can explain why the last years of high-school are characterized as such a watershed: it is the time when adolescents become more distant from their families, and at the same time become aware of social and political issues, as well as beginning to make future life choices, all of which leads them towards their political socialization processes.

The majority of interviewees reported having come from non-politically active families, although some cited family members who were engaged in social organisations. Nonetheless, among the more politicized families, there were some politically active members (either party political locally-elected family members, former members of political parties or former activists). Even with different political affinities, many of the respondents highlighted having had family discussions about politics, elections and current events (which were more frequent during periods of presidential elections).

This generation of respondents comes from the recent period of time when the National Front (Le Pen's family) has been close to winning presidential elections, as in 2002 the party got to the second round of voting against Jacques Chirac (1995-2007). Indeed, many described how their parents participated in demonstrations against the National Front and, in many cases, the parents took their children (the respondents) with them. It was also common among interviewees to refer to demonstrations against labour law reforms during the presidency of Francois Hollande, or retirement reforms during the presidency of Nicolas Sarkozy. It is interesting to observe that while respondents' families were for the most part not politically active, they were sensitive to politics, especially when it came to the extreme right, which they considered a menace to their political values (themselves being primarily left-wing).

In addition to this, some respondents' parents were part of the May '68 generation, that time being marked by a period of social unrest all over France in a quest for social justice and political emancipation. Importantly, this may explain why the majority of respondents' parents have a progressive mindset or belong to a left-wing political arena and believe in values such as social equality and solidarity. Moreover, many of them have been active in social and solidarity organisations, food banks, supporting immigrants, asylum seekers, etc. Among the four respondents affiliated with centre-right and right-wing political organisations, all of their families were left-wing. It could be that these interviewees positioned themselves in opposition to their parents' political views. Conversely, only two parents of the right-wing respondents were also right-wingers, although one of these right-wing respondents revealed that his mother switched to being left-wing. Only one interviewee reported voting for the extreme right.

The process of political socialization within the family unit was important for most respondents, as they acknowledged their social and political understandings originated from their families. For most this was a smooth process, even if it was also linked to the development of intellectual frameworks at school, this was challenging in terms of political debates at home. In other words, information derived from the interviews show a strong political influence is developed within the family unit. In fact, the majority of interviewees report having derived their political values from their parents: in fact, among the 30 respondents, a family political continuity is observed among 20 of them, whereas only 3 positioned themselves politically in opposition to their parents. As for the others, five were neutral about familial political affinities and two reported having themselves influenced their parents' political choices (meaning that their own engagement encouraged their parents' political participation).

It is important to point out the strong articulation between the political traditions of interviewees' families, their experiences at high-school and their subsequent political participation. Indeed, as already mentioned, early socialization within the family is an important element in their political pathways. Likewise, a large majority of respondents experienced their initial political socialization during high-school (most frequently as student representatives of their classes). For instance, high-school was described as having shaped and influenced their thoughts, and as being an opportunity that (i) put them in a better position in terms of skills (undertaking responsibilities and interacting with administrative bodies, being the representative for their classmates, etc.); (ii) provided them with resources which would be later used in their political participation (peers and teachers as human capital). Indeed, professors were mentioned as a source of inspiration in the respondents' processes

of political socialization, for introducing them to particular aspects, such as historical events, that they consider of political interest, or for introducing them to particular intellectual paths which they would later confront over the course of their political participation.

It was possible to identify one collective turning point among respondents: the terrorist attacks in Paris (January and November, 2015) and Nice (July, 2016), which were all present in the collective memory of many respondents, irrespective of their political leanings and memberships. Many identified these events as inspiring the beginning of a period of social and political understanding for them. For some as being the first time they were confronted with death (of friends or people they knew), making them feel involved or affected by the political climate surrounding them. Furthermore, the attacks made them change their perception of the urban space and how they relate to it, however, despite these tensions, they nevertheless felt a sense of national unity, which also resulted in an awareness of a collective identity. After the attacks, many of them felt a need to be part of a group in which they could discuss events and with which they could identify. The Paris and Nice attacks resulted in an intertwining process of individual and collective recognition for the respondents.

It was particularly interesting to observe (across solidary, environmental and political organisations) the many references to death (either of friends, family or close relatives), in terms of an event that marked their socio-political consciousness and how a personal dimension was confronted with an external condition, which then determined how their perception of the world would influence their actions thereafter.

Another common personal turning point reported by interviewees was that of moving from one city to another (the most common case among those belonging to environmental and feminist organisations was moving from provincial areas to Paris), as well as the beginning of their graduate studies. Both references were part of their socialization process as both introduced them to new social and political understandings, wherein they found a more defined political framework, which would help them to shape and settle their intellectual as well as their social foundations.

Indeed, another important turning point, particularly for some activists of political organisations, was the birth of a new centre-right political party in 2016, together with the creation (in 2015) of a youth branch by former members of a traditional left-wing political party. This represented a new political opportunity for the French political landscape. Interestingly, some of the present respondents were founders of this movement and are still currently appointed.

5. Mobilization and recruitment processes

The respondents were proactive in their own recruitment processes: their selection of their organisation/group was, in some cases, the result of previous participations (at high school, university or at the local villages, city halls, social organisations, etc.) so it was considered to be a natural process. Yet for others, it was not a process that involved extensive political reflection, as it was not premeditated, and they had no previous political references.

In the case of interviewees from environmental organisations, joining their group was, in most cases, their own initiative. It was also common to have respondents whose friends or peers had invited them to attend a first meeting (among environmental organisation and left-wing political organisations), which resulted in their subsequent membership. Having theoretical discussions about controversial issues was also a way for them to discover political paths which either matched their intellectual leanings or challenged their mindsets.

For respondents from left-wing political, environmental and feminist organisations, participation in demonstrations, riots and public assemblies during high school were important steps towards further activism and involvement. Nevertheless, each of them had different reasons for their activism. Importantly, these experiences helped interviewees to find a place in society and to have a feeling of belonging to a group. In particular, interviewees from both right and left-wing political organisations spoke of having been disappointed by student trade unions and their manifestos as being one of the reasons why they decided to become politically active.

Other turning points which triggered their activism (for members of political organisations and left-libertarian groups) were particular laws and political strategies (e.g. the Sapin law[10], or the use of Article 49/3[11] of the French Constitution), as well as disruptive events, such as police violence and repression at demonstrations as well as other political actions considered extreme. In the case of respondents from the feminist group, protests or other demonstrations in the public space were linked

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[10] Law on transparency, fighting against corruption and modernization of economic life, known as "Sapin 2", which is said to bring French legislation to the best European and international standards in the fight against corruption, and thus contribute towards a positive image of France abroad. The draft law was adopted by Parliament on 8th November 2016 and finally validated by the Constitutional Council on 8th December 2016.

[11] It is procedure for the adoption of laws without a vote, under the guise of rejection of the motion of censure which the opposition must file as a matter of form, with little hope of success. This Article was used to pass two laws in particular: the "Macron" growth law (Law for growth, activity and equal economic opportunity on 17th February, 16th June and 9th July 2015) and the "El Khomri" law which reformed the Labour Code in 2016. This happened under Hollande's government (Prime Minister Manuel Valls put them in place). He used this provision six times, three of these for the labour law (El Khomri law).

to personal experiences (of violence or sexual harassment). These made them want to get deeply involved to take action, beyond discourse, and these events represented big opportunities to rethink the place of women in society and in particular spheres, such as politics and sports. However, this desire to get involved was also accompanied by either previous awareness about feminism (derived from active family members or from the recent #metoo movement) or by current beliefs about feminism (resulting from more personal experiences). Additionally, the interviews highlight that it is important for feminists to be emotionally available during mobilization and recruitment processes, as their activism requires them to provide emotional support to women who have experienced violence.

It was frequent among student organisation members to become politically active during their experiences studying overseas. They described having been encouraged by their universities abroad, which provided them with a range of opportunities to get involved. For instance, it was common to have exhibitions, as well as meetings, during which they could learn more about the various organisations and their current projects. As a result, there was a wave of social awareness among students, which also motivated them to become politically active.

The role of social networks in the processes of political activism and recruitment is nuanced. Some respondents recognized these as sources of information that could have been useful for recruitment. However, in terms of activism, they reported this being a consequence rather of direct contact with peers, friends and family. Nevertheless, some respondents used the internet or social media to share information and communicate ideas (as reported by members of the right-wing political organisation). However they were also aware that social media does not reach everyone, which is why other actions are undertaken, such as leafleting, which facilitates direct contact with people. Being on-the-ground is important: in suburban areas, door-to-door actions are particularly necessary.

Only a few interviewees differentiated the various phases of the activism process: an initial observation process during which they had a vague idea of their participation, at this moment they were present in debates and were being trained. A second phase involved participation in specific campaigns and actively taking part in assemblies. And a final stage involved full-time commitment as they developed a deep understanding of their participation. It could be that those who experienced such a level of consciousness regarding these processes did so because their political leanings were in opposition to their parents' political views. In contrast, for those aligned with their parent's political values, it was more likely a natural process, with little reflection behind it, which could account for why they were less able to visualize the processes.

6. Practices / sustained participation / multiple participation

Student, solidarity, feminist and left-libertarian organisations are multi-task/multi-skilled groups. The respondents from these organisations implemented practices at different levels, which made them feel part of the organisation and take their share of responsibilities, as well as helping them to find a role which best suited them.

The student organisation had a horizontal structure, which meant they all got involved in a wide range of practices (from high to low skilled activities: lobbying, research, leafleting, administrative tasks, attending demonstrations, etc.). Despite this horizontal structure, they considered "some members to be the drivers of the group, without being the leaders". Nevertheless, there was a high rotation of activists which is linked to the period of their studies, resulting in a lack of continuity of their projects.

For the feminist organisation and, to a lesser degree, the solidarity organisation, their practices seemed to be more related to a personal turning point in their lives or to an emotional need. However, some respondents in the solidarity organisation described their participation as being related to their civic service, and as such that they felt strongly about the cause and their involvement. They moreover talked about how their activism was important to them in terms of the social link and human contact it created, filling a personal absence: communication, listening, emotional support, etc..

For the respondents of political organisations (mainly left-wing but some right-wing) and in the environmental organisation, participation in meetings, general assemblies or "coffee debates" were the main spaces of discussion and of political unity (or cleavage). Differences and diversity of arguments in the groups were considered to be a valuable source as it enabled them to embrace broader views without having to develop them into further coordinated actions. These spheres of discussion were important for those involved in political parties, as they got to know people and make themselves known, as well as forging networks and relationships. Specific committees were also mentioned as important practices wherein people are directly in charge of elaborating proposals and undertaking actions concerning issues which interest them: gender equality, environment and sustainable agriculture, etc.

Regarding the structure of political organisations, these have clear objectives and have structured themselves accordingly. Indeed, the right-wing political organisation had a national delegate (head of the group), national advisors, points of contact and regional coordinators, while the left-wing group appointed a president and delegates. They celebrate a national congress biannually as well as national

assemblies (on a more frequent basis), wherein they make decisions about their projects. Fundamentally, what these organisations had in common was collective work. For decision-makers (such as delegates and coordinators) the way the organisation is run is important and motivates them to propose different projects: having responsibilities is a chance to change practices in politics. Furthermore, what other groups had in common (the environmental and solidarity organisations) was the fact of organizing their work around monthly or weekly meetings, always with a structured operation and hierarchical counterparts.

Interviewees from the student, solidarity and left-wing political organisations all stated that political participation was what they would like to do as a living. They considered that political engagement and professional ambitions were linked, and they sought to have an impact on the projects they undertook and to dedicate their efforts to help others. Similarly, they enjoyed having a tight-knit group, as activism is also about the great moments. In the same vein, their activism was linked to the idea of group cohesion and shared ideas. They valued the chance to meet new people and to discuss with them. The level on which they can make an impact is a human one, as they are in contact with people and to do this, then, it is important to act from the roots (grassroots activism). In short, they considered that it is not easy to renounce one's engagement if there are responsibilities and convictions which underpin this.

Some of the motivations shared by interviewees from the environmental, feminist and right-wing political organisations (this last one to a lesser degree) are the projects they undertake. Respondents from these organisations felt positive about the fact that there are quite a lot of people fighting collectively for the same cause (environmental, against violence or political "anarchy", and so on), meaning that there is coherence of action and strong convictions. Even though it is a question of convictions, which require full commitment, they also value the flexibility to participate according to their availability (environmental), as the majority of respondents had multiple participation in different organisations.

Respondents from the left-libertarian group, as well as the youth branches of the political organisations (both right and left), evoked their ideological stances, as their participation was moved by the development of their beliefs, meaning that their projects were founded upon political views and strong commitments to a political cause. From the interviews, it was observed that political reflections were particularly important for both groups, as they wanted to contribute ideas to the future and to the current political project, their main motivations. The best format through which to achieve

these changes is political participation. Yet the left-libertarian group was mostly moved by a cross-wise value of social justice and not by political membership. However, for both groups, it was also about interacting in a friendly and welcoming ambiance wherein participants share the same ideas. This shows how ideology plays a role in their participation and to what extent the environment (friendly or not) offers resources of self-recognition, but which can also result in a potential politicization of practices.

Finally, multiple engagement was frequent among the respondents. Participation in different groups is not problematic, on the contrary: interviewees considered different causes as being complementary. Respondents from the environmental and solidarity groups were, in most cases, involved in other formal organisations (humanitarian, against poverty, etc.) or citizens' initiatives. These experiences are valued as they create cross-cutting awareness and strengthen larger networks.

7. Evolution (inside organisation / change of participation outside organisation / disengagement)
The solidarity, feminist and environmental organisations all have different levels of participation, and their evolution depends on their own engagement capacity. For instance, among these organisations there is some level of flexibility which is adapted to their time availability and especially to their interests (for environmental organisations), as respondents know in advance in which activities they can get involved. At the environmental organisation, there were different thematic groups, which each person could choose from. However, the right-wing political organisation also organized committees on different topics. Interestingly, their interviews revealed some issues which have been excluded from their discussions and which they considered to have been politically attributed to the left: for instance, gender equality and other gender issues such as homosexuality, which are not a priority in their policy agendas.

In terms of availability, political and student organisation activists all reported full-time commitment. Members in the student organisation even shared their involvement with their full-time studies. Particularly in the case of youth branches of political organisations, the level of engagement has a direct impact on their evolution. The higher the level of engagement, the more responsibilities could be assigned, which increased the possibilities that they would be appointed to different roles: Head or Coordinator, Vice-president of the Youth Section, etc. This type of recognition is related to a higher political action, a considerable influence in the group, having a greater voice and visibility, capacity to make decisions, but also to delegate responsibilities.

However, members' evolution could conversely be hindered by a lack of continuity, periods of time (especially demonstrations or political campaigns) during which they are very active and others during which they are less involved. Particularly during intensive periods, young people tend to be fully committed, and they sometimes cut relationships with family and friends as they don't want to be distracted. This is a way of pulling away from their families and is experienced as a form of emancipation. These are observed as periods of evolution and consolidation (or disillusionment) of their participation, which at the same time are related to the level of success of their actions.[12]

Members of the environmental group described a particular process of evolution within the organisation, as they joined the group as volunteers and had the opportunity to further develop their membership depending on their level of involvement. This evolution happened as they gained more responsibilities and were 'promoted' to positions as "organizers" or "coordinators" of a local group. Specific training in different areas, recognition, as well as upgrading a range of skills are all useful and necessary to advance. Communication skills were described as being important, useful to address different situations and types of actors.

Frustration, a feeling of being at odds with the group, lack of action, political interests, divergent political convictions, or the perception of having no impact in society are some aspects engendering low involvement and further disengagement. In addition to this, work is an important cause of disenchantment, especially when moving from politics to public policy or social work, as the latter is considered to have more of an impact. This path was valued by some respondents as a transformation of political activism into social engagement. Private issues such as experiencing difficult personal times, can be also linked to disengagement. However, positive periods of time, such as wanting to invest in their romantic relationship or a desire for new experiences, are also possible reasons for disengagement. Multiple tasks (studies, work, and relationships) and not necessarily multiple participation, are further aspects which may have distracted the attention of some respondents from their engagement. Some respondents saw themselves as passive participants, or as observers who remained in the group without contributing, but nevertheless listened, learned and networked.

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[12] Particular attention was paid to their evolution while their organisation was in power. The dynamic of the group and the intensity of the activities were such that they could not take a step back, frequently neglecting their private lives. However, it was mentioned that they were enthusiastic to focus on their private lives afterwards.

8. Biographical impact/ Future

The majority of respondents stated that their participation had impacted their private lives due to the demand of full-time availability for activism. They had less time to spend with friends and family, yet their relationships remained the same. The group members became their families in a way, due to the time spent together and the tight-knit relations created, increasing their sense of identity and belonging, which reveals how participation has positive outcomes in members' personal lives.

Many respondents highlighted a range of opportunities which are products of participation: conveying better arguments, having stronger convictions, creating awareness and being more knowledgeable about current issues and gaining a better understating of various stakes. It can therefore be understood as a process of ongoing learning, in which respondents are constantly becoming informed and consequently having successive shifts in their perceptions of political and social events which help to shape their political orientations. All of these provide them with new and better skills: critical thinking, research, public speaking and other communication skills.

Also, feeling more confident to communicate with others was reported. For instance, they mentioned having more and better discussions with peers and family members, developing awareness as citizens, viewing society in a different light, but also rethinking human relations and considering developing their own life projects. This might be related to the fact that some respondents recognized the importance of human contact and the need to work more on the ground, although all agreed that participation is about serving others.

Some respondents referred to an intergenerational gap due to different and more radical views towards politics and society. They perceived their generation as being very critical compared to their parents' generation, consequently raising the question about the type of demands they have towards the political class. Possible explanations for this gap are the fact that their generation face other challenges, such as higher unemployment rates, or wider levels of social inequalities, which also make them reconsider sources of power in politics (capitalism, traditional political parties, etc.).

From a more personal perspective (for interviewees from the solidarity and feminist organisations), respondents evoked an emotional impact, as their participation engendered significant emotional support. This was considered to be both exhausting and fulfilling, and as such helped them to direct their emotions in a more constructive way, even having a positive impact on their personal confidence.

In many cases, respondents described that they had become political advisors for their friends and family members. Their political participation was admired and had even influenced their parents' political awareness and participation (generally at a local level).

The vast majority of respondents imagined themselves engaged in the future, as they wanted to contribute to "changes in society". Beyond remaining politically active, they considered it important to always believe in a cause to defend; they highlighted the importance of finding the right people, those who move your interest towards a cause. This was particularly common for members of the student organisation, as they knew their participation was linked to the period of time of their studies and that this would come to an end once they completed their degrees. They therefore saw this time as an opportunity to prepare future members to take their places and to reconsider in which political arenas they wanted to get involved in in the future. Nonetheless, some respondents from all the organisations saw parenthood as a factor which could prevent them from engaging in future activism, as dedicating time to family and children would take priority. Similarly, disappointment over group policies with which they do not agree (e.g. immigration policy) are also factors which potentially hinder activism.

However, some members from the political organisations and left-libertarian organisation, were in favour of the possibility of joining other groups in the future, where they could learn about different values to those of their current organisation. Along the same lines, some members of the political organisations (especially right-wing) saw themselves running for elected positions, or being appointed. It was clear that for them, their current participation was consolidating their future political ambitions.

Some of the respondents' participation (in the student and solidarity organisations) shaped different perspectives about their future: particularly about their careers, confirming for them that they want to do a job in which they can exercise their political choices and not only be motivated by economic incentives, as well as being reluctant to work for large multinational organisations.

Behavioural changes derived from participation were perceived among interviewees of the left-libertarian, feminist and right-wing political organisations. Among the most important outcomes evoked were a greater feeling of belonging (to a community, to a group), of approval or of being validated by a group. It was also interesting to observe how activism can increase a person's capacity

to become either more critical or pragmatic about political stakes. For instance, some members became more pragmatic, while others purposefully became more radical and adopted extreme positions. (e.g. decided to quit voting and tore up their voting cards). However, pragmatism was not only the result of political participation, it was also accompanied by wider theoretical approaches during their studies.

9. Conclusions

Based on the respondents' narratives, similarities were observed across organisations, mainly in terms of (i) primary socialization: experiences living abroad which heightened political awareness; (ii) political socialization: at school and within the family unit; (iii) activism and recruitment processes: either having engaged in previous social participation (at social or within solidarity organisations), or their first contact with organisations/groups occurring through their own initiatives or through friends or peers, but not via social media. Other similarities were also observed, such as demographic elements, including the desire among many interviewees for activism, leading them to develop a sense of identity and belonging to a group, irrespective of the type of organisation. And a final similarity being their willingness to remain politically active in the future in order to defend a particular cause.

Conversely, interviewees went through different processes of development (levels of commitment and participation, types of responsibilities) leading them along distinctive paths, which were linked to the functioning of each organisation and to the opportunities they offered to respondents. However, causes for low involvement and subsequent disengagement were somewhat common across groups. The structural differences in each organisation (vertical or horizontal structures) resulted in dissimilar practices among interviewees. Also, the incentives that motivated them to maintain their participation were diverse across the organisations (e.g. links to their professional futures, having political ambitions or sharing the same values and ideas with the group).

GERMAN REPORT

LÍA DURÁN MOGOLLÓN

1. City context

Population

Cologne is the fourth largest city in Germany (after Berlin, Munich and Hamburg), and with a population of 1,084,795 inhabitants it is the most populated city in the province of Nord-Rhine Westphalia.[13] Out of this, 41% of the inhabitants are under 35 years old and 25% are between 18 and 34 years old. In 2016 there were 65,005 new arrivals to the city and 55,260 people moved out of Cologne. Among people of 32 years old and older, there is a negative balance, meaning there were slightly more people leaving the city than arriving to it, and the opposite is true for people 18 to 30; in 2016 this age group registered 33,356 new arrivals and 21,053 departures ,leaving a surplus of 12,303 new inhabitants for this particular age group. Moreover, 38% of the population has a migrant background and almost 20% of the people living in Cologne hold foreign passports. The most frequent nationalities amongst those with foreign passports are Turkey and Italy, followed by Iraq.

Cologne is divided into nine different districts: Innenstadt (inner city) Lindenthal, Rodenkirchen, Ehrenfeld, Nippes, Mühlheim, Kalk, Chorweiler and Porz. Cologne´s larger urban zone includes the city of Leverkussen and has a population of almost two million inhabitants. Moreover, Cologne´s larger urban zone is part of the "Cologne-Bonn metropolitan area" which includes the larger urban zones of Cologne and Bonn and the city of Leverkussen. The Metropolitan area of the Cologne-Bonn Region has over 3.3 million inhabitants and it was created in 1992 in order to unify planning, transport systems and investments in this region. As a result, the three cities in this metropolitan region (Leverkussen, Bonn and Cologne) are well connected with each other and several people commute regularly between them for work or leisure; according to the official statistics, approximately 261,000 people commute from other cities to Cologne for work and 115,000 of those living in Cologne commute to other places for work.

Socio-economic issues

As one of the largest cities in Germany, Cologne has a vibrant and diverse economy. It has been a

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[13] According to the city´s statistical office: https://www.stadt-koeln.de/mediaasset/content/pdf15/statistik-standardinformationen/cologne_facts___figures_2018.pdf

trade city that benefits from very good connections to German and foreign cities; because of its proximity to the border (Belgium and Netherlands), Cologne is a point of juncture for the ICE trains (long distance fast trains), it has Germany´s second largest port, as well as an airport (Cologne-Bonn Airport) that transports 12.4 million passengers each year. According to the statistics published by the municipality and the municipal agency for work, the unemployment quota in 2017 was 8.7% and the youth[14] unemployment was 5.8%. The job market grew by 3.2% between 2016 and 2017.

This growth in employment particularly benefited male workers and workers over 50. This increase in employment was above the national average which was 2.4%.[15] The increase in employment was split between part-time jobs (58%) and full-time jobs (42%). Still, one of the most remarkable differences is that while only 15% of working men are part-time employed, for women this rises to 42%. Furthermore, the number of people on "low-paid" and "mini-jobs" has increased but this is also partly because more people have taken on a second part-time job[16] in order to cover their expenses and/or improve their living conditions. According to the official data, women are overrepresented in these kind of jobs: in 2017 there were 44,900 women working exclusively with mini-job contracts compared to 29,600 men.[17]

During the last years, some employers have complained about the lack of qualified labour to fill several vacant positions, particularly those requiring vocational training in machine maintenance, gastronomy, care provision. According to the official statistics there are 36,143 open positions in the greater area of Cologne. Several national and international companies have their headquarters in Cologne and its surroundings. Among these are: Ford Europe which is, with about 18,000 workers, Cologne´s biggest employer, and Toyota which employs approximately 1,500 workers. Aside from the automobile, the pharmaceutical and chemical industries nearby, the city´s economy is strongly based on insurance companies and media companies such as WDR and RTL, as well as several publishing houses such as Taschen or Tandem Verlag.

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[14] According to the city´s data, Youth unemployment refers exclusively to people under 25.
[15] In: https://www.stadt-koeln.de/mediaasset/content/pdf15/statistik-wirtschaft-und-arbeitsmarkt/arbeitsmarkt_k%C3%B6ln_r%C3%BCckblick_2017_und_bisherige_entwicklung_2018_wia_pk_2018_2.pdf
[16] In the specific case of the workers who have been taking second jobs, the article specifically refers to a form of employment called mini-jobs". "Mini-Jobs" or minor employment, refers to a specific employment model whereby employers earn 450 euros or less each month. Moreover, under this employment model, employers can hire staff for part-time work without acquiring the insurance obligations that come with regular working contracts.
[17] Data from the municipality´s report published in 2018: https://www.stadt-koeln.de/mediaasset/content/pdf15/statistik-wirtschaft-und-arbeitsmarkt/arbeitsmarkt_k%C3%B6ln_r%C3%BCckblick_2017_und_bisherige_entwicklung_2018_wia_pk_2018_2.pdf

Cologne has a highly recognised Trade Fair that hosts several events and conventions such as: GamesCon, Hanuga (a gastronomic fair), Fitness Fair (FIME) Photokina and Art Cologne, the latter being the world´s oldest art trade fair. The trade fairs, the conventions and the city´s touristic attractions (like the Cathedral, the medieval houses around the city hall, etc.) bring numerous visitors each year: Cologne received 3.35 million visitors (between tourists and people attending the different trade fairs) in 2017. Out of this, approximately 1/3 were foreign visitors.

Socio-cultural issues

Cologne is known for being a liberal-leaning city with a high tolerance for sexual, ethnic and religious diversity. Besides this, the local mentality is strongly influenced by what the locals call the "Cologne coterie"[18] a term used to describe a network of acquaintances linked to one another by relationships of mutual obligation and cooperation. The "rule of the coterie" that states "we know each other, hence we help each other" can refer to Cologne as a city of open and friendly people, but also as a city of tight-knit cliques that are difficult to access for outsiders. Among the city´s most influential associations and cliques are the Carnival associations, some of which are over a century old.

The Cologne Carnival is 190 years old, it´s the city´s most important festivity and it attracts thousands of visitors every year. The Carnival associations still have a very salient role in the organisation of the event, particularly the more traditional ones like the "Great Senate Cologne" a tight-knight association integrated by 80 of the city´s business leaders who are in charge of gathering donations for the Carnival´s parades. The Carnival has a strong influence in the city´s cultural and leisure activities and it is common for different interest groups to organise their own carnival parties and for schools to host some sort of carnival activity.

Besides the Carnival, there are other important leisure events that take place in Cologne such as: *Kölner Lichter*, a fireworks and music spectacle that takes place every summer, and LitCologne a

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[18] The Cologne coterie and its influence on politics has been studied by local social scientists. For more see: Frank Überall: *Der Klüngel in der politischen Kultur Kölns* or Werner Rügener: *Colonia Corrupta. Globalisierung, Privatisierung und Korruption im Schatten des Kölner Klüngels*, 6. Aufl., Münster 2010.
he so-called "Cologne coterie" is a complex term with a Janus-faced nature: it can, on the one hand, refer to a climate of openness and friendliness in the city and to a certain willingness to help and to cooperate with others. Conversely, in its negative use, the Cologne coterie can also mean unclear relationships that cross the political, the economic and the cultural and involve exchanging favours. This latter use of the term borders with clientelism and corruption, and it is also denoting the implied exclusion of those who are not part of the "Cologne coterie" like the newcomers.

literary festival that opens the stage to new authors, as it also commemorates the works of the Cologne´s Nobel Prize Winner, Heinrich Böll. Apart from the organised events, Cologne has a diverse offer of leisure activities; with numerous pubs, restaurants, clubs, theatres and concerts.

Cologne has 99,770 students and nine universities, including public and private institutions. Besides the University of Cologne, the city has specialised universities like the university for Music and Dance, the German Sport University and two Universities for Applied Sciences and Media. Moreover, it is also the home to several research facilities such as the Max Planck Centre for the Study of Society, the Max Planck centre for Biology and Ageing and the German Aerospace Centre among others. The large number of universities, research facilities, the big companies (such as Ford, Toyota, REWE, along with the media companies) offering opportunities for vocational training, combined with the possibilities for leisure, are among the "pull-factors" that make Cologne an attractive place to live for young people from Germany and abroad.

Socio-political issues

Cologne is traditionally a Catholic city, and is home to one of the largest Catholic archdioceses in Germany. The Christian Democrats were the strongest party in the city but this changed after the war, when the Social Democrats took the leadership. The Social Democrats dominated the local political scene for four decades until the 1990s, when the city was shaken by the "waste affair". The "waste-affair" was a high profile corruption case that involved several of the city´s business and political leaders; between 1994 and 1999, business leaders gave bribes and illegal campaign donations to several of the leading Social Democrats in order to secure their support for the construction of a very controversial waste facility in the district of Niehl. The construction was approved and after the details of the negotiations became public, business and political leaders involved were investigated and several of them were legally prosecuted. Besides the trials, the scandal caused the demise of Cologne´s leading Social Democrats[19] and the end to their hegemony in the local scene. One of the discussed topics at the time was the extent to which this was a consequence of the "Cologne coterie" and the extent to which this tight-knit local cliques influenced the political culture and crossed ethical limits.[20] In the 1999 election, the Social Democrats received 12% fewer votes than on the previous

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[19] The scandal was known as the "waste-scandal" because it involved bribes from important local business people to SPD politicians for the construction of a highly controversial waste disposal facility. Moreover, it became clear that between 1994 and 1999 the Social Democrats had failed to report millions of DMarks in campaign contributions, thus violating electoral laws.

[20] This was discussed by the media and also by political scholars. See: Christoph Kotowski: *Der Kölner Müllskandal. Wie aus einer kommunalen Affäre ein bundesweites Desaster wurde*, in: Bodo Hombach (Hrsg.): *Skandal-Politik! Politik Skandal!*, Marburg 2012, S. 166–172 or Frank Überall: *Der Klüngel in der politischen Kultur Kölns*, Bonn 2007.

election, and a Christian Democrat was elected major. Since the turn of the century, the two major parties have been losing ground to the Green Party and the Free Democrats.

The current city council was elected in 2014 and took office in 2015. It consists of 90 seats which are distributed as follows: Left: 6; SPD (Social Democrats): 26; Greens: 18; Pirates: 2 Deine Freunde: 2; FDP (Free Democratic Party): 5; FWK: 1; CDU (Christian Democrats): 25; AfD (Alternative for Germany-right-wing anti-immigration party): 3; pro K: 2. The current Major Henritette Reker was elected as an independent candidate supported by the Christian Democrats, Green Party and FDP.

Because of its size and location, Cologne hosts numerous associations of all sorts: from sport and leisure, to trade unions, political associations and environmental groups are present in the city. Some of the informal citizens/grassroots solidarity and environmental groups have been promoting ´repair Cafes´ workshops where people can exchange skills and learn how to fix things themselves. In this vein, some of these groups have joined to organise the Fair Trade Fair that takes place twice a year and features the different fair trade and sustainable possibilities that the city offers; from gastronomy, clothing, leisure and fair city tours. At the time of the data collection, a lot of the activists interviewed were involved in the debates about the Hambach Forest (a forest about 45 minutes from Cologne).[21] Even though not all interviewees took part in these protests, they raised a lot of discussions (particularly within the context of the Carbon goals for 2030) and all of the groups conversed about this and adopted some position. In a few cases, the ongoing negotiations between the independent civic centre and the City to reach an agreement regarding the future location of the centre.

2. Sample socio-demographic issues

The sample for this report consists of interviews with 28 young people (18 to 38 years old) who are currently or have been actively engaged with an activist group based in Cologne. With the exception of two interviews which needed to be conducted on the phone, all other interviews were conducted in Cologne or Bonn,[22] at a location chosen by the interviewees. Table 1 presents the main socio-

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[21] This debate refers to the protests that environmental activists have organised against the energy company RWE. The company owns a part of the forest and had plans to clear cut it in order to start coal explorations. Since 2012 activists have been demanding the company to change this plan arguing that, given the pressing climate goals, opening a new coal pit makes no sense, and that the destruction of the forest could have severe environmental consequences. The company has argued that they own the lad they intend to clear cut and that they would be willing to reforest elsewhere in order to compensate for the environmental loss. There has been a squat in the forest since 2012 and between June and October 2018 the discussions intensified because of the order to evict the squat. For more see: https://hambachforest.org/squat/treehouses/

[22] These were cases of interviewees who either live or study in Bonn, but are engaged with activist groups that operate in Cologne.

demographic features of this sample. The interviews were conducted between April 2018 and January 2019 and in some cases involved frequent interaction with the groups selected.

Table 1: Socio-demographic sample

Age range	Gender	Geographical provenience	Qualification	Current occupation	Partner	Children
18-20: 1 21-25: 9 26-30: 9 31-35: 5 35-38:4	Female: 13 Male: 13 Other:2	Cologne: 6 Nord-Rhine Westphalia:9 Centre: 4 South: 2 North: 4 East: 1 Rather not say: 1	Real Schule[23]: 1 Gymnasium[24] :9 Traineeship:5 Bachelor: 4 Diplom: 4 Master: 3 PhD: 1	Student: 1 Working Student: 11 Unemployed: 1 Part-time work: 2 Full time work: 13	Yes: 19 No: 9	Yes:1 No: 27

Approximately one third of the interviewees come from big cities (six from Cologne, four from other big cities) and the rest come from rural areas (16); 15 of the interviewees were born and raised in the same province (Nord-Rhine Westphalia) and the rest come from different German regions. As the table shows, most of our respondents are enrolled at the university either at Bachelor or Masters level. The predominance of people with university degrees or enrolled at a university shows the ´academisation´ of many activist groups, something that was mentioned by several interviewees. The exception to this are the trade unions where there are more activists with no ´academic background´.[25] Some activists claim that this difference is at least partly explained by the fact that many political parties recruit young members at universities whereas the unions do this at schools for vocational training. In regards to personal lives, there are no differences between groups: only one activist is a parent, and almost half of the activists have partners.

Most of our interviewees work, either part or full time, and only a couple of them are either searching for a job or not working. Some of the interviewees who are currently enrolled at a university claimed that because of the lack of affordable accommodation in Cologne, it is important for students to work at least part time in order to cover their expenses.

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[23] Corresponds to an intermediate level Leave Certificate that qualifies pupils for vocational training.
[24] Corresponds to the Leave Certificate that qualifies pupils for university studies.
[25] This is the expression they used to when referring to people with university degrees.

3. Life before participation

Most of the activists interviewed depict their childhood years as "typical" and describe themselves as ´classical teenagers´ concerned with their social lives and with the search for their own identities. The childhood and family backgrounds do not significantly differ among activist groups, but rather among the social backgrounds; whether or not they had migrant parents and whether they describe their families as middle-class or working class. The general descriptions of childhood and adolescence indicate supportive family relationships and enough autonomy to search their interests. with parents who were very concerned with education.

Given the significant age differences between the interviewees in our sample (the youngest being under 20 and the oldest being over 35) the memories that they have of their early years differ as they correspond to different points in time; among the oldest participants, the German reunification was a very important topic that strongly influenced their conversations at home as well as the discussions at school. Among the youngest, Brexit and the refugee crisis were among the political events that were unfolding in the background as they were finishing school. Still, disregarding age and political group, most of them describe their families as "average middle class families" and the vast majority had parents with an "academic background" (university diploma) with the exception of three who described their families as "working class in a working-class neighbourhood" and two who described their familiar context as "very fortunate and protected". This depiction of a ´middle-class family with an academic background´ was particularly dominant among Greenpeace and party activists. The majority of the respondents describe their families as somewhat interested in politics but not really active; this was a frequent response disregarding the groups the respondents are currently engaged with. In a few cases the interviewees had politically active parents and this shaped their every-day conversations at home.

Several of our respondents describe the environment that surrounded them as they were growing up as "conservative but tolerant" and the same applied to the ways they described their families. Those who were born and raised in Cologne usually describe the city as "open and tolerant". The description they make of their families and family life indicates supportive relationships in spite of some differences in opinion and interest. Some of the interviewees with migrant background recalled more frequent disagreements about social topics.

The time at school is usually described in relation to the social aspects; making friends, dating, going out, and other leisure activities, and only in a few cases the respondents described the school as "repressive" or "limiting".

Several male activists were members of the fire department´s child volunteers; this was mentioned by interviewees from political parties, trade unions and Greenpeace. Religious groups and associations were not mentioned by any of the respondents, whereas sports or artistic groups and associations were commonly mentioned; at least 10 of our respondents had artistic and musical hobbies and several others were involved in sports clubs. Two of the respondents raised in Cologne were and continue to be members of carnival associations and still find them important for their social lives. Those who described their families as "working-class" also claimed they lacked the resources and the time for clubs and associations. Most of our respondents didn´t consider religion an important aspect of their upbringing even though most of them admit they were baptised. This was a generational difference with respect to their parents and grandparents but not a conflict.

4. Political Socialization Process

Interviewees in our sample have been politically socialised at home (this was the most prevalent answer) school or through personal experiences with injustice. To a lesser extent, political events with strong media coverage (like elections, environmental disasters, big demonstrations, racist or terrorist attacks) also incentivised some of the respondents to question themselves and take a position.

Regardless of the current political affiliation, most of respondents seem to agree when they describe their politics and history lessons at school as "boring", "uninteresting", "not really stimulating". With the exception of four respondents, who highlight the role of their school teachers in their political socialisation, most of our respondents were not really compelled by their politics classes either because they were superficial or because they failed to explicitly show them the ways in which their lives are affected by politics; they are taught about the political structure and the political system in Germany, but little was said about the role of civil society. In all cases it is made clear that the politics classes and their "effectiveness" depend to a great extent to the teachers´ approach and to their interest in discussing political topics with the pupils. In those cases in which political interest was stimulated at school, it was usually through activities that were not part of the syllabus but developed autonomously by highly motivated staff members; these include recycling workshops, social projects, discussions about current events, discussions and presentations about racism and discrimination, etc. Positions of responsibility held at school (class-speaker, student council president, developing small

social projects, recycling activities) played a significant role in stimulating leadership and social skills for at least six out of seven respondents who admit having held one of these positions during their school years.

Parental political discussions are described as a key factor in the political socialisation by most of our respondents. Most of our respondents described their parents as "politically interested but not active", meaning in most cases the parents were not activists but did watch the news, vote and show some interest in politics.

In the specific cases of union members and party members, the parental influence seems particularly strong: even when the parents were not directly party/ union members it sufficed with parents expressing support for their values and objectives. Party activists almost unanimously admitted that, in the end, their choice for a certain political party and for specific social and political concerns was shaped by their parents´ voting preferences and their conversations about politics at home. Likewise, environmental activists and those who, despite being engaged in other groups, express strong environmental concerns often mentioned that environmental awareness and contact with nature were part of their upbringing. Conversely, those engaged with feminist causes and left libertarian groups mentioned less influence from their parents´ political views. Interestingly, in the case of those respondents whose parents were born outside Germany, the first political socialisation relates mostly to their parents´ country of origin: the respondents with migrant background (six in total) mention how their parents kept following the news and the political developments from their home countries and gave little attention to German politics. Two of the respondents with migrant background recognise the role of the media in their political socialisation: one of them mentioned a children´s television show that presented political parties and candidates, the other one mentioned hip-hop and literature as important sources of political socialisation since they triggered her interest in knowing more about political characters and discussing about political problems. Furthermore, events that received a lot of media coverage (like the racist attacks in the 90s, or terror attacks, or oil spillages) were also influential in the decision of some of the respondents to get informed about certain topics.

Given the wide age range, the political events they remember are equally diverse; those who grew up during the 1990s recall the racist attacks in East Germany in the late 1990s, the 9/11 attacks and the Iraq war; all of these as ´dramatic and emotional events´ that pushed them to question political developments and take a position. The younger ones mentioned the refugee crisis and Brexit as two

important turning points; they tend to associate both events with growing polarisation and populism in Europe.

Political socialisation among the activists in this sample had a strong family influence but it seemed to be mostly an individualised (and to some extent emotional) process that involved a lot of reflection and a sense of lack of conformity; either with the state of the environment, with the course of politics, with some form of inequality. Feeling somehow ´distressed´ by a political event or topic, created an incentive for these young people to look for more information about the topic of their interest.

5. Mobilisation and recruitment processes

In most cases there is a ´definition of political priorities´ and a decision to become active; most respondents described this as a ´search phase´ during which they weight options and gather information. Those activists who had politically-interested parents, admit that their parents´ interests helped shape their political inclinations but their actual engagement process was mostly an autonomous decision (they all describe themselves as the agents of this process and not as subjects of ´preaching´) which took place after they had moved out of their parents´ house. Most of the respondents became regular activists after moving to Cologne, or a similar urban area.

In the cases of those activists who were class-speakers at school, this experience catalysed their interest in public debates and their willingness to take positions of responsibility. Nonetheless, most of the activists interviewed claim that they didn´t really attend demonstrations during their school years and that it was mostly afterwards that they started to attend demonstrations or public events. In the cases of activists engaged with the centre-right political parties, they admitted that demonstrations had rarely been of interest to them.

In the vast majority of cases, the transition from being interested in politics to becoming actively engaged with one party or group is a gradual process of autonomous self-reflection and research: some of the activists identified the topics that were important for them, then started attending demonstrations and discussion rounds every now and then, and then started searching for possibilities to become engaged in the cities they lived in at the time. In a few cases (some of the activists with migrant background and diverse sexual orientations) this process was triggered by personal experiences with discrimination or exclusion and a desire to change this.

In the case of those engaged with well-established and structured organisations (trade unions, political parties and well-established environmental groups) the initial process seems to follow a rather straight-forward sequence: they identify their interests and political inclinations, they identify the groups engaged with these topics and they attend a couple of public events and then a welcome meeting where they officially start acting as members of the group. Most of the activists engaged with these well-established organisations partly attribute their decision to join these groups to a sense of pragmatism; the idea that larger and better structured organisations have greater visibility and can, therefore, have a stronger impact on society. This particular argument was held by party members. Party activists were also the ones who most often had critical views of their own party and admit that, while the party is a ´good fit´ there is some degree of compromise to their decision.

There were two trends in the descriptions of the entry process; the "welcome meeting" or open plenaries which are usually held by more formalised organisations to welcome new members, and the social event or demonstration, which was how activists entered the less formalised organisations. Most of those engaged with political parties claimed that these initial/ welcome meetings took place at the universities, and that a lot of these recruitment activities for young activists tend to take place at universities. Union members mentioned that in their case, the unions introduced themselves to the new trainees on the first week of their vocational training and that, even though most of the first year trainees don't fully understand the function of the trade union at least half of them join the union after that initial meeting. The student union is a sui generis case; members are elected for different positions by other students, so there is a clear cut period for their engagement with this group. While the other groups had some "first-time" activists, the student union didn´t, and this could probably be due to its very structure and the fact that candidates have to be elected by their fellow students making it more plausible for those who are more experienced with leadership and volunteering to run for this positions. All of them had some previous experience with leadership or engagement.

On the other hand, activists engaged with less structured and less hierarchical groups, (left libertarian groups, feminist or informal citizens/grassroots solidarity.) mention they started attending events either because they were invited by friends or they found the events on social media. They tend to become active more quickly and take more responsibilities faster. Some of these activists engaged with less structured organisations specially highlight their preference for these less hierarchical and more flexible forms of activism since it allows them to shape the organisation itself. This was particularly relevant for the interviewees who were part of the informal citizens/grassroots solidarity collective.

6. Practices / Sustained participation / Multiple participation

For the vast majority of the activists, their sustained participation is motivated by the confirmation of their beliefs, the quality of the personal ties created within the group, and the satisfaction with their own "role" and position within the group. Long term activists were motivated by a strong feeling of identification; activists become acquainted with the group, its values, its strategies and they inform themselves better about the issues at stake. This has led in all cases to a process of constant self-reflection and questioning of their priorities and the way they are reflected by the group. Besides this, there is an important personal element; the extent to which they manage to build strong ties and enjoy the time spent with the group greatly influences the decision to remain. And lastly, taking positions of responsibility and being recognised for their contributions to the group was an important motivation for long-term activists. This isn´t limited to them liking the tasks they have, but feeling that they are needed: some of the activists in Greenpeace and the parties admitted that feeling responsible for some specific tasks and feeling that others acknowledge and appreciate their efforts helped them stay motivated even at times when they were tired or felt under pressure. In brief, a strong identification with the group´s members, values, strategies and a feeling of recognition play a key role in motivating these young activists. Within the smaller and less structured groups, there is also a sense of wanting to preserve the group and it is common for them to still be engaged in discussions about the profile of the group and to have a strong influence in shaping it.

According to their biographic narratives, activists are constantly evaluating their political priorities and their role within the group; they all describe their activism as an on-going process and themselves as active agents of their political evolution. Additionally, most interviewees acknowledged that becoming politically and socially active opens intellectual and social possibilities; activists interviewed claim that they have substantially broadened their social circle and their topics of discussion. In this process of self-reflection and increased socialising, several activists became supporters or members of other groups. Still, those who engage in different groups usually prioritise one of them above the others. In the particular case of Greenpeace, they combined this (as main activism) with a second more recent and less structured organisation that specifically tackles food waste and food redistribution. Two of the union members mentioned they were also party members (Social Democrats) but they highlighted that they were only passive party members and hadn´t taken on any responsibility. An interesting finding was that five activists from different groups (all of them under 25) and with diverse political positions, combined their ´main activism´ with a more ´passive´ engagement with a youth organisation called the Young European Federalists (JEF). Albeit being a

´secondary´ group for those who mentioned it, they all valued JEF as a positive initiative bringing together different visions for Europe.

In regards to the practices and activities, most of the organisations work with weekly meetings and assemblies and favour basic democratic decision-making. The more structured organisations tend to rely on ´representatives´ or ´speakers´ who mediate the relationship between the young activists and the central organisation. Conversely, smaller groups have more porous borders and are, therefore, more horizontal. Still, some of the activists admit that even within these horizontal dynamics there were some ´unofficial hierarchies´ based on seniority and level of involvement. Political parties, union and environmental activists mentioned that they attended these weekly meetings and, besides this, sometimes attended other meetings for special working groups within the organisation (these working groups include feminism, LGBTQ, entrepreneurs, lawyers, among others). Smaller and less hierarchical groups (informal citizens/grassroots solidarity collective, left libertarian and feminist collectives) relied upon more diverse repertoires of actions which include concerts, demonstrations, sit-ins, second-hand flea markets, exchange parties, etc. Still, they also use more conventional actions like discussions, assemblies and demonstrations.

The more structured organisations usually follow some guidelines from the central headquarters (whether this is the party, or the union, or the environmental organisation) and this influences some of their topics and activities; however, they all declared having some margin of freedom to propose actions and activities with a specifically local relevance. The guidelines might also include specific recommendations about how to behave when representing the organisation. In the cases of these larger organisations, activists have the chance to take part in seminars and workshops to learn more about the topics that are relevant for the organisation´s agenda and to acquire new skills they might need in their working groups.

The activists claim that despite there being some division of work and some hierarchies, the meetings are open and everyone can speak their mind and comment on the initiatives. Furthermore, they claim that within the groups, decisions are made by simple majority. Still, party members and union members recognise that it is sometimes difficult for the newcomers to be active in these meetings since they might not be familiar with the jargon used by more senior activists. The less structured groups appeared to be more interested in innovative and creative approaches to reach people and to raise awareness; these go from flea-markets, clothing-exchange parties, free bike-rentals, do it yourself workshops, artistic demonstrations and social media campaigns. In the case of the less

formalised organisations, activists claim that there are some basic agreements regarding the organisation´s profile and action repertoire, but there is a great openness for proposals and opportunities for the activists to bring in their own skills.

The case of the student union is interesting given that they do have a well-structured group with a clear-cut division of labour (they have representatives for sustainability, social issues, political education, social planning, etc) but since they have no "mother organisation" they have more freedom to set their own agenda. They also combine regular meetings (usually to set the agenda for the next month) with open discussions, parties and other social and artistic events. Furthermore, their meetings and exchanges with other student unions from other universities have a strong horizontal character.

An interesting aspect regarding party members is their critical attitude towards their own parties (in particular towards the ´mother organisation´): they all stated that they don't agree with everything the party stands for, but they share some core values. Most of the party activists mentioned the differences within each party and between the party and its youth branch. One of the differences between the mother parties and the youth branches, was that the youth branches were, according to the interviewees, more progressive and concerned with the environment.

Party activists who were also engaged in communal politics, mentioned a certain ´academisation´ of political parties. They attribute this to the fact that parties recruit a lot of new members at universities (and rarely at schools for technical or vocational training) and to the use of "technical or insider jargon" at party meetings. Engagement in political parties has to do with tradition and outreach (that which is known and available where the people are at time when they decide to become active) but also an element of identification and pragmatism: the idea that in the end, political parties are the organisations best suited to promote tangible change in society because they are the ones who best understand the complexities of the political system.

The identification of activists with their group is not limited to ideological aspects, it also includes the strategies used to promote their agendas; party members feel very strongly about voting, and tend to favour negotiation, writing proposals over demonstrations or riots. Additionally, the party activists interviewed favoured more holistic discourses about structural changes over issue-specific bargaining. Conversely, those engaged with the environmental organisation and the informal citizens/grassroots solidarity collective strongly favoured single-issue actions promote individual

empowerment and they felt strongly about ´being coherent´ with their own activism: this means being more critical consumers.

7. Evolution (inside organisation / change of participation outside organisation / disengagement)
In all cases, activists interviewed admitted they started as wallflowers: they attended an event (usually a meeting or party) and passively observed the situation. This ´wall-flower´ phase was more common among party members, environmental activists and union members. For the activists engaged with smaller and less structured organisations, the passive phase appeared to be shorter.

New activists usually observe and evaluate the organisation: its goals, strategies, the members and the internal dynamics. This way they get a sense of the group and decide whether or not they could find a place within it; in most cases this situation changes once they become more acquainted with the group and its members and manage to find a ´niche´ within the organisation. In several cases, particularly in the cases of the political parties and the unions, activists admitted that they had ´supporters´; senior activists who helped them understand the organisations´ structure and jargon. Furthermore, activists involved in political parties, Greenpeace and the Student Group sought the working group(s) that matched their skills and priorities. This was an important step in the process of developing a sense of belonging within the group. Most activists in the informal citizens/ grassroots solidarity collective were founding members or knew one of the founding members and rather than searching for a working group they sought concrete tasks. In these cases, the identification precedes the role given that they have helped shape the collective. The left-libertarian activists usually attended meetings and events organised by different working groups.

In some cases, working groups are where the activists create the strongest ties: four of the female party members were part of their party´s feminist group and one of them was starting a youth feminist working group within her party. The reason they chose the party´s feminist groups and not external ones are mostly pragmatic: the belief that a feminist agenda should be articulated within a broader political project and that political parties can be more effective in shaping the agenda than other groups.

Out of all the interviewees, at least seven have switched organisations (party activist, two of the environmental activists, one of the student union members) but only one has completely disengaged from every organisation (one former activist from a feminist group, a political party, and a student group). Still, even in her case the interest in political and social issues remain, she now describes

herself as an "independent feminist" and still organises and attends feminist and environmental demonstrations.

The reasons why activists switch organisations have to do with subjective judgements of the organisation and whether or not they manage to really identify with the group or their members. Some of the activists who switched groups admit that it was, at least partly, because they didn´t feel entirely comfortable with the group and it´s dynamic. In other cases, it had to do with a shift in their priorities: one environmental activist mentions that she switched from an anti-globalisation to an environmental group because she realised that the environment was more important to her and she identified more with the environmental activists. Conversely, moving to another city does not demotivate those who are fully engaged; in the case of party members, those who had switched cities stressed that they immediately sought the local youth party once they transferred to Cologne. This is partly because they perceive their activism with an effective way of opening new social circles. Other life changes, like illness or high pressure at university/work, lead some activists to be less engaged but not to disengage.

The overwhelming majority of the activists interviewed attributes an "activating" effect to their first organisation, this woke their interest in being involved which also implies reading more news, engaging in more discussions and thinking more frequently about the problems of society. As they started to feel more comfortable within the groups, most of the activists interviewed found a "role" or "their place" within the group. This has an effect on the activists' identities; assuming their role within the group can change the way they see themselves and the way they are seen by their peers. Union activists state that even though they are not actively trying to convince their families and friends to join a trade union, people around them assume that they, as activists, are better informed about certain topics and thus, they become referents for these issues. This was also mentioned by two of the more experienced party activists, both of whom had also city council experience.

The evolution as activists is, to some extent, a personal and emotional process; the establishment of robust ties and having an element of leisure involved in the activism are strong factors in the motivation to become more involved and to stay with a given group. Almost all activists, regardless of the political orientation, mentioned the groups atmosphere and the new friendships they have found as important factor for their further engagement and evolution. Besides developing this sense of connection with the people within the group, most of our activists show some level of identification with the values of the group and the means employed to promote and defend them. Lastly, the activists

who have been engaged longer, and those in smaller less-structured organisations, are also motivated by a feeling of having a place within the organisation and having a sense of purpose within it. Among the union activists, the support and expressions of gratitude from other union members was an important motivation for staying engaged.

8. Biographical impact / Future

Activists overwhelmingly recognise the impacts that activism has had on their lives. The impact includes personal, social and in some cases professional aspects; understanding how the groups actually work, changes in their priorities, changes in their judgement of their own behaviour, as well as changes in their self-image and circle of acquaintances are mentioned by activists of all groups. Unsurprisingly, the extent to which their lives have been impacted, depends on how "far down the rabbit hole they are willing to go": high intensity activists are usually more deeply impacted by activism but none of them claimed to be unaffected. Those who have been more actively engaged and have some positions of responsibility also recognise the "costs" of activism which include having less time for their studies and personal lives. Naturally, those who have engaged longer, tend to acknowledge this more and to have more perspective than those who only started recently.

One change that all activists mentioned was a boost in their self-image and self-confidence; they become more self-assured, more confident in their ideas and have a sense of belonging and purpose which –partly- derives from the group. Additionally, the reflections that derive from their political engagement also change the expectations they have from some of the people around them; several activists acknowledge that, while they are not necessarily expecting others to think like them, they come to expect certain values from the people with whom they have personal relationships. The feeling of "not just having fun but doing something meaningful with their free time" has a strong effect on their self-image. Some of respondents involved in the trade union and the student union mentioned that they gained a lot of social competence since they overcame the fear of public speaking and the anxiety of approaching people they have never met before. Likewise, those involved with political parties claimed that activism has made them more open to other points of view and more assertive; they have come to value the chance to discuss the topics they care about with people with different points of view. One of the activists from the centre-right party summarised this by saying that he learned to engage in discussions but without ever getting personal or becoming disrespectful, and to expose his views to people with different convictions and accepting that they wouldn´t necessarily change their minds. In some cases, activism also has an effect on the way they perceive and read news and certain situations, on their conversations with other people. Those involved in

political parties and trade unions, in particular, claim to have become more interested in following the news cycles and electoral processes.

In the particular cases of Greenpeace activists, informal citizens/ grassroots solidarity collective and some involved in political parties they mention that their engagement has led to them to rethink a lot of their consumption habits, to appreciate the chances they have had so far, and to try to become more "conscious consumers". This involves a constant revision of their own consumption and a greater awareness of their own "environmental footprint": some of the common strategies are: changing eating habits, looking for fair trade products, using public transport/bike, reducing their flights, buying second-hand clothes, etc. Activists involved in the left-libertarian group also admit to be more critical of consumerism and to try to become more conscious consumers and to make their own organisation more environmentally-friendly.

In regards to the professional aspects, most of the activists interviewed hadn´t necessarily changed their professional goals because of their activism but for some of the younger ones engaged with the environmental organisation and the political parties, the core values they share with the organisation have to some extent shaped their career choice and their views for the future. Four of the activists interviewed have changed their professional goals and priorities through activism: two union members, one student union member and an environmental activist. But beyond changing their career choices, an interesting effect is the ways in which high-involvement activism changes the way some activists perceive their profession; three of the female respondents engaged with party and environmental activism also claimed that the activism took pressure away from their careers since they felt that they could have a sense of purpose and self-realisation outside the professional life, and that they didn´t necessarily feel pressured to find a job that makes a social impact since they could do this through activism. Likewise, three of the male activists who are enrolled in the teacher´s training program admit that their activism has shaped the way they envision their future role as educators; not in terms of actively promoting their group but more in terms of promoting a sense of environmental awareness, solidarity, tolerance and justice.

In regards to the impacts on their personal lives, the vast majority claims that their families have been supportive and understanding with their activism, almost all of them mentioned having found new friends within the group, and three of them admit they now have less contact to their old friends. Delaying personal plans was a consequence mentioned by some of the high intensity long term activists; two of the older party activists, a feminist activist state that they could have finished their

studies a lot faster had it not been for the time they spent with their groups. Moreover, two of trade union members admit that their high-intensity engagement has at least postponed their plans of having a partner and starting a family.

Most of the activists used the words *learn* and *understand* when describing the impacts of activism. Learning relates to the organisational structures and understanding to social problems and positions. For members of the student union the experience of being a student representative has given them a deeper understanding of the university´s administration, the university´s problems and the main issues concerning the students. Members of more formalised organisations stated they had learned a lot about their organisations´ structures, proceedings and strategies.

Most of the party activists and union members claim that activism has made them more aware of the divisions within society: particularly the divisions related to social inequality, polarisation and those created by the school system. At least half of the interviewees mentioned that doing ´door to door politics´ and ´street activism´ confronted them with inequality in the city and the stigmatisation of some districts.

The activists interviewed expressed concerns about the future; those involved with environmental activism, and informal citizens/ grassroots solidarity collectives voiced their fear of environmental degradation and climate change. The growth of inequality and the need to make Europe "more social" was a cause for concern among those engaged in the trade union, the informal citizens/ grassroots solidarity group, the left-libertarian group, and a couple of the activists in the centre-left party. Lastly, the rise of several xenophobic movements across Europe, and the fact that the German right-wing party AfD has seats in the federal Parliament and in the city council is something that worries almost all activists: with the exception of those engaged exclusively with the environmental organisation, almost all of activists interviewed were preoccupied with the rise of this party and of xenophobia in general. Those involved in the centre-right party were slightly more optimistic about the future than the rest.

9. Conclusions

Generally speaking, the activists interviewed seem to agree on one thing; activism is a process that involves constant interaction and self-reflection; continuously gathering new information, rethinking their own positions, questioning themselves and the group. In this process, identification and self-definition play a great role. Furthermore, the general narrative of these interviews indicates that

parents and immediate environment do play a significant role in waking interest in political and social topics, but the actual process of becoming informed and finding a fit is mostly an individual one and usually takes place at a stage where the activist is establishing his/ her independence. Almost all the activists interviewed developed political priorities and orientations similar to those held by their parents and very few developed political opinions and orientations which are radically opposed to those of their parents and familiar background. Moreover, the vast majority of activists describe their families as "middle-class with academic background" and almost all of them had received a Higher Level Leave Certificate.[26]

The process of becoming activists seems to have followed several stages which each one goes through individually: being interested, finding information, attending events, actively looking for a group, finding a place within a group, etc. The greater difference is the pace at which activists manage to find a place in the group and find their own voice and this seemed to happen faster in the less structured organisations. The decision to remain part of a group is strongly influenced with the development of links with the group at a personal and at an ideological level and with having found a place within the group. In regards to the impacts of participation there also seems to be a consensus; almost all interviewees mentioned gaining maturity and self-confidence, increased time pressures, expanding their social circles, gaining rhetorical skills and becoming more critical.

The most significant differences between trajectories and identification seem to be determined by the level of formalisation of the group more than by the ideological lines. Likewise, the differences in political socialisation (i.e.. The role played by the parents, the media, the school, etc) don´t seem to account for ideological differences; well-established organisations (like parties and unions) seem to rely more on family and tradition than smaller ones. Similarly, the impact of activism on the activists´ identity, relationships and interests doesn´t seem to be significantly determined by the ideological lines.

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[26] In German called *Abitur*, this is the leave certificate that qualifies pupils for university education.

GREEK REPORT

MARIA PASCHOU AND ANGELOS LOUKAKIS

1. City context[27]

Population

The city of Athens is in the centre of the Attica region and has been the capital of Greece since 1834. It is located in the centre of Greece, extending over 38,96 sq.km (15.04 sq. mi) and having a population of 664.046 inhabitants (2011). This classifies the city of Athens as the biggest municipality in Greece (6.1% of the total population). With respect to the distribution of the population, more than the half of its population are females (52.5%), while almost 40% of people are less than 35 years old.

Figure 1. Distribution of age groups over total population by gender
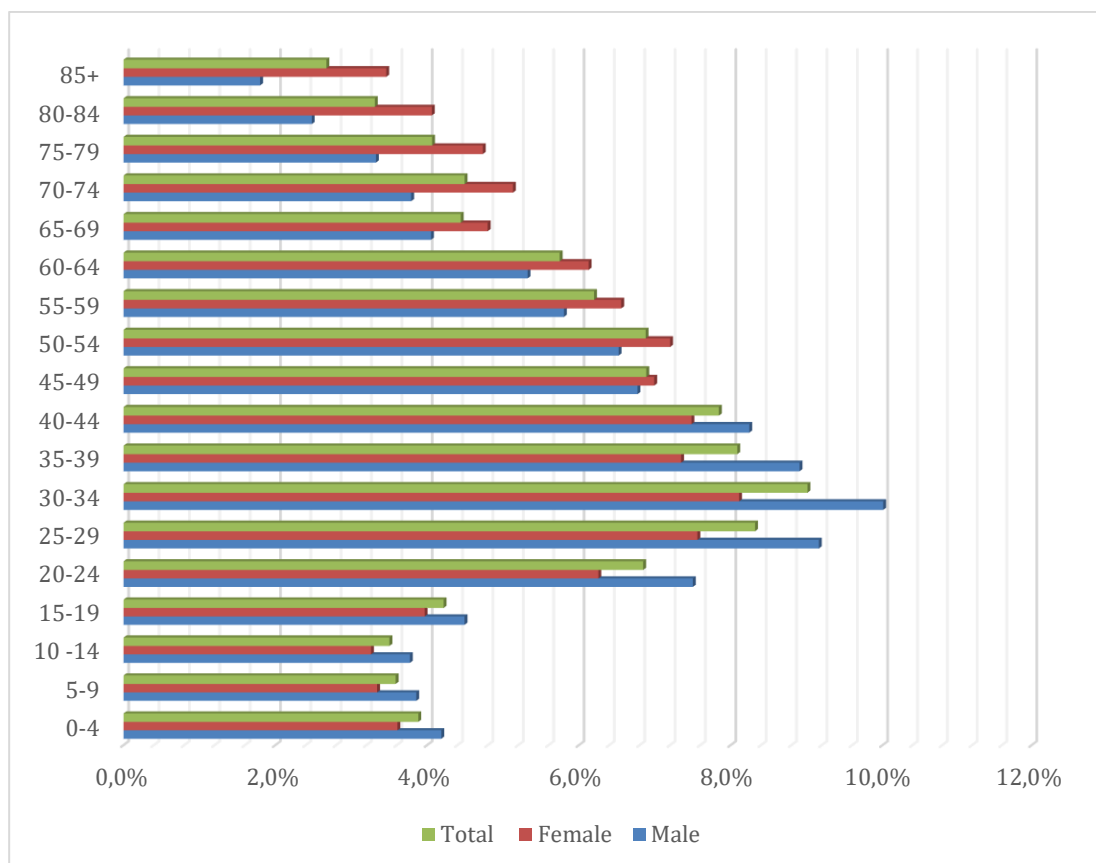
Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority (elstat)

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[27] Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority: http://www.statistics.gr

The city of Athens is also the core of the Greater Athens Area (GAA) or Athens metropolitan area, which consists of Athens municipality and 34 more municipalities, divided in four regional units (Central, North, South and West Athens), accounting for 2,641,511 people (in 2011) within an area of 361 sq.km (139 sq. mi). Until 2010, these four regional units were known as the Athens Prefecture - a former administrative body which was abolished in the same year. As for the different age groups that comprise the total population of the Greater Athens Area, almost 9% of inhabitants are between the ages of 10-19 years old, about 30% belong to the age group 20-39 years old (780,741) and 52.5% are more than 40 years old. With respect to the gender distribution, similarly to the city of Athens, females are more than males (52.4%) in the GAA.

As for the nationality of the residents, in the city of Athens almost 23% of the total population are foreign citizens. The vast majority of these (121,990) come from countries outside of EU and less than 20% from EU countries. In the Greater Athens Area, citizens whose origin lies outside of Greece represent only 11.5% of the total population, with more than 80% coming from countries outside the EU. With respect to the age composition of foreign citizens, 40% are less than 30 years old, almost half belong to the age group 30-59 years old and the remaining 15% are older than 60. With respect to gender distribution, both sexes are almost equally distributed among foreign residents of the Greater Athens Area.

Socio-economic issues

Moving to the field of the economy, the city of Athens and the Greater Athens Area are situated in the region of Attica, which is the richest region in Greece. More specifically, in the city of Athens the gross domestic product per capita is 32,031€, while in the Greater Athens Area it drops to 21,743 euros per capita (2016).[28] Athens and GAA in general are the administrative and economic centre of Greece. The economic sectors that contribute most to the economy of the area are public sector employment and welfare services, property management and real estate, as well as service delivery such as trade and tourism. With respect to the latter, Athens has a wide range of landmarks and sights, which attracts millions of tourists (domestic and international) every year. In 2018 the international flights arrivals[29] in Athens international airport almost reached six million – increasing by 20% in relation to the 2017 international flights arrivals. Because of the rapid increase in the number of tourists that visit Athens and the phenomenon of short term housing rentals via platforms such as

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[28] http://www.statistics.gr/el/statistics/-/publication/SEL57/-
[29] Source: Greek Tourism Confederation (SETE) http://sete.gr/el/statistika-vivliothiki/statistika/

Airbnb, serious housing problems are faced by inhabitants. For instance, in the city of Athens, in March 2018, there were 6.749 houses[30] available for rent at the Airbnb platform while in March 2016 there were only 2.114 (they increased more than 200%).

Moreover, with respect to the employment status in the Attica region, the unemployment rate[31] is around 20% – decreasing almost 1% from 2017. Furthermore, almost 65% of all the unemployed are females and approximately 12% are foreign citizens. Youth unemployment is also an important issue as 15% of unemployed people are less than 30 years old. Eurostat[32] data show that, approximately 31.1% of the inhabitants in the Attica region live at risk of poverty or social exclusion, 15% of the total population face monetary poverty and 15.5% of the population lives in households with very low work intensity.[33] Finally, the same data indicate that 20% of the population lives under severe material deprivation.

Socio-cultural issues

Athens is one of the oldest cities in the world (continuously inhabited for more than 5,000 years), with a very rich history. It is the place where drama was born, thus the city has a long cultural tradition. Globally recognized monuments such as the Acropolis or the Odeon of Herodes Atticus can be found in Athens, displaying the city's cultural heritage. Moreover, the Greater Athens Area hosts 50 museums and numerous open air archeological sites and historical buildings. In 1985, Athens was the first European Capital of Culture and in 2004 Athens was the city hosting the Olympic Games. Because of the latter, an important number of sports stadiums and places was constructed and a serious amount of gentrification projects took place around the city. From 2017, the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Centre starts its operation, as a freely accessed public space designed by the world famous architect Renzo Piano. It includes the Greek National Opera, the National Library of Greece as well as the Stavros Niarchos Park, one of the largest green areas in Athens, covering 21 hectares. Finally, in 2018 Athens was the world book capital.

In terms of higher education structures, nine universities with approximately 200,000 students are located in the Greater Athens Area. This fact makes Athens the city with the largest student population

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[30] Kolokotronis N (2018), The Geography of AIRBnB in the city of Athens, bachelor dissertation at the Department of Geography, Harokopio University, Athens.
[31] Hellenic Manpower Employment Organisation (OAED) http://www.oaed.gr/
[32] Eurostat https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat
[33] The indicator "persons living in households with very low work intensity" is defined as the number of persons living in a household where the members of working age worked less than 20 % of their total potential during the previous 12 months and it is used as an indicator for material deprivation.

in Greece. High numbers of student and young people make Athens a city with a wide range of cultural activities from street art to opera. As for the education level of citizens in Athens, 25% hold a university degree or higher, without showing important gender differences. Similar patterns exist for the GAA.

Socio-political issues

Athens, the capital of Greece, which is considered the birthplace of democracy, has a long tradition of social mobilisations. During the last decade, especially from 2010 to 2013, it witnessed large protest events against Troika Memoranda and austerity policies. During the summer of 2011, Syntagma Square facing Parliament in the heart of Athens, was occupied for a few months by the Greek protesters (Indignados).

At the national politics level, during the last elections of September 2015, the party of SYRIZA (left) was first in number of votes both in the city of Athens and in the GAA (35% of the total votes). At the municipality level, the mayor of the city of Athens comes from a progressive centre-left political background.

Economic crisis was a trigger point for civil engagement not only in protests but also in solidarity projects. Because of the crisis, thousands of formal and informal organisations and groups were established, aiming to cover needs left unmet by state policies or markets. These groups offer a wide spectrum of activities from covering basic needs such as food or health and medicines, to alternative and solidarity economy projects and from urban gardening to barter clubs and alternative coins. Engagement in this type of solidarity orientated activities foster the already established voluntarism in NGOs and charities. Today[34] there are about 1,117 civic, cultural and voluntary associations in the city of Athens and about 2.050 in the Greater Athens Area.

The refugee crisis was also an opportunity for youth mobilisation during previous years. Young activists, organised or not, tried to offer solidarity to refugees by providing food, clothes or blankets as well as by offering shelter. An example of refugee oriented solidarity mobilisations is the squat of the Athens City Plaza hotel,[35] which the activists occupied in order to provide shelter to refugees. However, the refugee crisis, in addition to the economic crisis, also triggered a number of counter-

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[34] http://www.enallaktikos.gr/
[35] http://solidarity2refugees.gr/

solidarity mobilisations by members of far right groups and parties.

Another example of a notable youth political culture is found in the central Athens neighbourhood of Exarcheia, which is considered a political and cultural resistance area. It is more recently known for the death of fifteen years old Alexandros Grigoropoulos, shot there by a policeman in 2008, followed by numerous protests (including commemorative) with youth related claims in Athens and across the country. It is also known for the high number of confrontational protests, squats and autonomous self-managed places, as well as for its anarchist oriented solidarity initiatives. The neighbourhood also has its own sports club, Asteras, which is ruled collectively via open assemblies and promotes values against those of the established football and sports industry.

2. Sample socio-demographic issues

The youth sample is composed of 28 young people (18-35). All interviews took place in Athens, in the period from September 2018 to January 2019. Table 1 summarises the main socio-demographic attributes of the sample.

Table 1: Socio-demographic sample
* Both settled in Athens with their families (during their childhood and adolescence respectively)

Age range	Gender	Geographical provenience	Qualification	Current occupation	Partner	Children
18-20: 5 21-25: 11 26-30: 10 31-35: 2	Female: 14 Male: 14	North: 1 Centre: 2 South: 3 Islands: 1 Athens: 19 Abroad*: 2	High school**: 12 Bachelor: 10 Master: 6 PhD: 0	Student: 6 Working Student: 7 Not working/ unemployed***: 6 Part-time work: 2 Full time work:7	Yes: 14 No: 14	Yes: 0 No: 28

** Ten of them are undergraduate university students; one of them has left the university after three years of study and one is student of vocational training.
** Two of them are looking for work (unemployed), three are in a transitional phase (i.e. planning postgraduate studies) and one is travelling the world.

As shown in the table, the majority of youth in our sample are aged between 21 and 30 years, with two almost equal in size subgroups (21-25 and 26-30 years old). In addition, most of them have a higher education, either bachelor's or master's degree, and are currently studying in different disciplines (undergraduate or postgraduate level). Most students work alongside their studies, both part time and flexible working, which reflects both the weakness of Greek family to afford paying the expenses of adult students (as it did until recently), as well as the fact that the Greek university is generally characterised by a lenient system concerning lecture attendance and studentship duration.

Regarding their origin, most of our participants are born in Athens and only one third of them came to the city as young adults. This may also be related with the crisis-induced impoverishment of Greek families which discourages youngsters' spatial mobility and which is also mirrored in the high frequency in which respondents report to stay in their family homes. By contrast, most of their parents grew up in the provinces and came to Athens in their adulthood. With respect to the educational and professional background of our respondents' families, most of them come from the middle and upper middle class and just under half of them come from lower middle- or working-class families. Thus, most of the time, at least one of respondent's parents is a university degree holder, while high status professions, such as doctors, legal professionals, academics and engineers are met quite often (i.e.. more than in 1/3 of the sample). Despite not being a representative sample, its deviation from the general population in status distribution suggests that youth activism is met more frequently in the better off families. As concerns family composition, most of our respondents have been members of nuclear families with two children, while other types – such as single parent or large families – are less frequently met in the sample.

3. Life before participation

Most respondents describe their childhood and adolescence as a pleasant and constructive period, emphasising relationships based on trust. With respect to the domestic sphere, openness, sincerity and close ties between family members – even in cases in which the parents were absent to work the most of the day – are most frequently reported.

A permissive and libertarian environment is mentioned quite often, with egalitarian values and tolerance being emphasised, whereas a conservative upbringing based on strict rules and which values responsibility and respect is met less frequently, particularly among the respondents of the youth branch of right-wing political party. Children with no siblings usually report having overprotective parents. Religiosity is rarely met in the family environments of the sample.

When it comes to their early social life, most young activists report to have been sociable and outward-looking, with an interest in collective spirit or in the commons. This is reflected in their frequent – and usually long-term – engagement in sports teams (volleyball, basketball, football etc.) or in culture-related groups like theatre groups and conservatoires, or, less frequently, in initiatives such as a youth group that publishes a newspaper or in community-based environmental initiatives, such as beach cleaning and reforestation. Other times, respondents mention extracurricular activities such as learning foreign languages, painting or playing chess, while a few also referred to free outdoor

play or hanging around with friends. Electronic gaming is mentioned only once. On the contrary, a considerable number of activists refer to the habit of reading books or their early interest in literature, philosophy or history, which is usually pertinent to the intellectual profile of their parents or connects with their political orientation.

The economic crisis and austerity seem to have significantly influenced the everyday life of Greek families. Some activists report its damage on family bonds due to the tensions produced by the shrinkage of family income, unemployment and precarity. The reference to the lowering of living standards and to changes in family routines, such as discontinuing family excursions at weekends, is also mentioned in some interviews. Notably, crisis impact has been widespread and not limited to lower socioeconomic strata, thus affecting professions such as freelance attorneys, doctors and high-ranking public officers, who lost their ability to maintain a household being based on the earnings of one person. Even those who come from well off families have most of the times referred to the post-2008 period as one characterised by generalised anxiety and uncertainty.

4. Political socialization process

Based on the Greek interviews, the family environment largely provides a motivation for early politicisation, with its main influence being political discussions or debates between parents or between them and their friends or relatives. The school, on the other side, is the place that provides opportunities for collective action and political socialisation.

The domestic sphere is where the transmission of the value system from the oldest' to the youngest' generation is taking place at first. Indeed, most respondents mentioned memories which relate their activism with their family life, such as listening or engaging in political conversation during the meals or while watching TV, reading books of political history recommended by parents or listening to parental advice on how to behave. Besides everyday routines, events such as a parent who lost her job or an incidence of bullying or of domestic violence, seem to have triggered political thinking. Still other times respondents refer to the influence of people of their close family environment, such as an erudite grandparent or an aunt who has been rebel in her youth.

Our interviews confirm that values go in step with ideological orientation, which is seen when juxtaposing parental advice with parents' political profile – and, most of the time, with the posterior political orientation of their children as well. Half of the sample comes from a purely left-wing political family background and the other half includes a majority of families with mixed political

orientation – each parent supporting either centre-left/social-democrat or centre-right/liberal-conservative, as have been expressed by the two predominant political parties of the bipartisan political system of the post-junta period in Greece – and a minority apolitical or unstable in their ideological family backgrounds.

In addition, two thirds of the sample come from families in which their parents have not been politically active, beyond the exercise of their voting rights. The activism type which is met most frequently among respondents' parents is membership in a political party – which often has its roots to the university students' uprising against the Junta at the Athens Polytechnic (National Technical University) in November 1973. Volunteering, humanitarian action and involvement in groups connected to new social movements (environmental/ feminist) appear marginally in the sample.

While young people start to assimilate the filtering of external events through the lens of ideologically conscious family members in their early adolescence, it is the school that provides them opportunities for primary political fermentation and collective action in subsequent years. Being a student representative – either in class- or school-level – has been mentioned by a little less than half of the respondents; however, quite often it is not considered to be a proper political action because it remains disconnected from state politics and thus it is considered to be irrelevant to respondents' future field of activism. Interestingly though, our data reveal a connection between the engagement in high-school student representation and university student unionism.

The quality of teachers as mentors and instigators of critical thinking is also frequently mentioned. Respondents exemplified this by referring to behaviours and initiatives of charismatic teachers, thus stimulating conversation on political current affairs and participatory teaching techniques.

Moreover, the school environment is related to the form of early political socialisation. Almost as many as half of respondents mentioned that they have participated in the occupation of their school building at least once during high-school. Another frequently mentioned form of political participation in the period prior to mobilisation is participation in demonstrations and public rallies. The school has, once again, a critical role to play, usually providing a reason to protest. This generation has suffered from successive and conflicting educational reforms that began a few years before the outburst of the economic crisis. Thus, students found opportunities to unite around a common goal, such as their opposition to the changes in the curriculum or the retrenchment of public expenses on education, as well as for case-specific issues, such as the inadequacy of school buildings

or lack of heating. Other reasons that brought students to the streets relate to austerity measures and solidarity with affected groups, such as support of their teachers' rights.

One of the most frequently mentioned occasions that stimulated activists' early politicisation was the killing of a teenager (A. Grigoropoulos) by police officers in the Exarcheia district of Athens in 2008, which caused widespread public unrest not only in Athens but all over Greece, with demonstrations still taking place every year in its memory. This event signified the malfunction of repression mechanisms and the motive to express public outcry against state authorities and the establishment more generally. The impact of this event has been felt more strongly among young Athenians who identified themselves with the victim. Likewise, the milestone of early youth politicization for the youngest cohort is the murder of the anti-fascist rapper P. Fyssas by a member of the far-right political party Golden Dawn in 2013. Other significant events which mobilized early protest participation are US invasion against Iraq in the early 2000s and the environmental destruction caused by summer wildfires in 2007. During this period of primary political socialisation, protest participation was occasional (i.e. event-driven) and occurred most of the times together with friends and classmates – and very few times together with family members. Interestingly however, most activists describe their early friendships as being apolitical and their closest friends of this period as being distant from politics.

It is noteworthy, that the adoption of contentious politics – participation in protest events and the occupation of schools – is omnipresent in the period of youth primary political socialisation of all activists except those who mobilise with the youth branch of the right-wing political party and those who mobilise with the environmental organisation. These two groups of activists have followed another path, in which political socialisation occurred through participation in school initiatives and volunteering.

Apart from the above mentioned forms of political socialisation, some respondents recollected memories of their early presence in cultural events, such as the multicultural and anti-racist festival in Athens. Others referred to their opposition to racist or discriminatory behaviours occurring either in class or in their neighbourhood, as usually related to the rise of nationalism and neo-fascism. Lastly, other forms of early politicisation are the exemption from the class on religious affairs and the communication of political ideas through the internet and social media (e.g. through personal blogging or setting up online forums).

5. Mobilization and recruitment processes

A main influence in mobilisation is the activist's background, the prevalent values cultivated at home and at school, the reading and influence of important others. Adolescent political socialisation plays an important role in predisposing engagement in specific areas of activism. The ideological orientation that is shaped before mobilisation solidifies through engagement in a left-learning or right-leaning group.

Many activists spend a few years on observation and providing distant support before joining a group. Respondents frequently report attending assemblies and political gatherings without being a member of the group who organises them. The reason for this is either because individuals are not yet confident enough for such a decision or because the group does not suit them or simply because they are unavailable for consistent participation at this early period. In most cases, it seems as if they were waiting for the right moment or occasion to mobilise, which most of the time comes with entry to university. Thus, participation in the general assembly of the student union becomes the vehicle for introducing a regularity to their political action, which is the first step towards becoming an activist.

All but one of our respondents are or have been university students in the past and this experience seems to have been critical for the mobilisation of the vast majority. University is characterised by openness, while studying in the university usually goes in step with the transition from adolescence to adulthood and a period of gaining autonomy. The fact that entering university is a transformative event in one's life-course is ascertained by the finding that this period coincides with mobilisation in groups unrelated to studentship or with multiple participation.

Participation in students' general assemblies brings students in touch with different student groups and helps them socialise and integrate themselves into the student community. As an arena of public dialogue, it makes mobilisation an easy and effortless process, because it provides the space to witness a range of voices whereas at the same time it is merely the status of being a student that shapes the collective identity of its members. It should be underlined that half of respondents initiated their mobilisation through membership in a student organisation, while almost two thirds of the sample has joined a student organisation while studying. Activists in environmental and feminist organisations are exemptions to this trend, with most of them having mobilised a few years after university entrance and in a context irrelevant to it.

Significant events that relate either to student life or to the broadest socio-political context, such as the occupation of the school/ faculty building or an educational reform, provide opportunities for both youth politicisation – as noted in the previous section – as well as to mobilize with a particular group. Field-specific significant events trigger participation in groups which mobilise outside the university, such as a case of public space reclaim, which is said to have prompted mobilisation with a local left-libertarian group.

Some other times, mobilisation is triggered by a small occasion that brings to the surface the memory of a past significant event or repressed emotions. As such, the memory of a close friend who has been assaulted by her father or that of a mother who had left her career to become an oppressed housewife are recognised to have impacted the decision to join a feminist group. In a rather similar way, memories of witnessing a natural disaster or of childhood activities which rooted the love of nature and of the wildlife are said to have fuelled the interest to engage in environmental activism.

The mobilisation of friends or fellow students or being approached by organisation members (which usually occurs during demonstrations) also impacts youth mobilisation, particularly when activism starts during high school or when it concerns an informal citizens/grassroots solidarity groups. Mass media campaigns and social media seem to have had marginal influence in most activism types except activism in environmental organisations, which has a formal structure and in which mobilisation largely is motivated by the organisation's website or Facebook profile and begins with making an online application to volunteer in the organisation.

Other times and particularly when mobilization is delayed, e.g. after university completion, activism follows contact with the organisation for another purpose. Hence, two activists reported starting their activism after making their internship in an organisation, which has been the turning point for the realization of the need to engage themselves in activism. Interestingly however, it has worked for others the other way around, with activists subsequently getting a paid position in the organisation.

Criteria for choosing one organisation over another active on the same field comprise agreement with its values and ideological leaning or its strategic role in fighting ideological opponents, its internal operation or its independence from party politics. Respondents from environmental and feminist organisations referred to party linkage as being the reason why they abstained from student activism. Student organisations' partisanship is perceived by the latter to be the instrument to canvass votes while they gain supporters by promising them personal benefits, thus avoiding meritocracy.

6. Practices / Sustained participation / Multiple participation

Activism involves a very broad repertoire of actions, which are used depending on the field and type of activism as well as the degree of the group's formalization. Despite the diversity of activist practices that make participation in each group a unique experience, there are some similarities across groups as well.

Protest actions are met in all groups, with all respondents reporting having participated in demonstrative actions such as public rallies and protest marches. This holds true even in the case of the informal citizens/grassroots solidarity group, which uses megaphone protests in the neighbourhood to incite local citizens' mobilization. Student unionism frequently uses the occupation of university buildings as a means to raise claims against the government or against the senate. Left-libertarian activists draw on the most confrontational and sometimes violent protest actions, such as the sabotage of the opening of commercial stores on Sundays. Environmental defenders use demonstrative or symbolic protest actions in natural environments – e.g. in the sea – which are sometimes risky for their own lives. Petitions as forms of online demonstrative actions are also mentioned by environmental activists.

Political meetings that predominantly materialize through the general assembly of their members also represent an almost ubiquitous trait of the operation of socio-political groups and organisations. It is however the less formal and radical groups that use the general assembly – which takes place usually once a week – as their main tool for decision-making and not merely as a process of political deliberation.

Apart from the assembly, socio-political gatherings may also serve communication and awareness raising purposes. This is the case of public speeches of invited experts, which is a frequently met action across the different fields and types of activism. Big and resourceful organisations afford to host large scale events. The organisation of scientific conferences and workshops are mentioned by the activists in the environmental organisation.

Cultural public events represent another type of action mentioned in our interviews. Thematic festivals such as the anti-racist festival or festivals organized by the youth branches of political parties are used as vehicles to increase the visibility of socio-political groups and to propagate their values. The less formal groups and those which lack the resources to organise big events, use low-budget cultural practices. Examples are free-of-charge video projections and organisation of parties, which

are mentioned by activists in the left-wing student organisation, the left-libertarian group and the informal citizens/grassroots solidarity group.

Another type of practice is alternative actions. Their alternativeness lies in that they promote unconventional options for the organisation of socio-economic life such as a free bazaar, a social kitchen and programs to educate or entertain community members – e.g. computer courses, language courses or theatre teams respectively – to name just a few. Such actions are mentioned by those who participate in informal groups. Specifically, participants of the informal citizens/grassroots solidarity group refer to these actions as strategies towards social integration and strengthening of the bonds between community members. Left-libertarians emphasize self-organisation targets. Initiatives aiming at self-organisation, such as the setting up of a self-managed canteen, are also mentioned by activists who have been engaged in left-wing student organisation.

While activism across groups has several traits in common, some distinct features are met in each of them.

As established in the previous section, youth activism in Greece largely includes a passage from student unionism, as reflected in the vast majority of our sample. Participation in student organisations involves everyday and usually full-time engagement, which comes not as a surprise given the willingness and availability of people to get into it at this period of their lives. Our respondents describe this type of activism as intertwined with the other everyday routines of their student life, taking place in-between lectures and evolving while they socialize with comrades in student haunts throughout the day. The writing and distribution of political text is apparently the most frequently mentioned practice of student unionism.

Activism in youth branches of political parties is characterized by a structured internal operation organized across sectors which correspond to governmental departments. Division of labour within the organisation is hierarchical – mainly in the youth branch of the right-wing party – with most activities relating to setting up the political agenda of the youth responding to current affairs in politics and to publicly communicate the group's political positions.

A particular trait of the left-libertarian group is that it evolves around two distinct and equally important spheres: one includes the practices towards the realization of its political imperatives and the other represents its social life towards autonomy.

The informal citizens / grassroots solidarity group has many similarities with the left-libertarian group but differs in that its socio-political aims are given priority over the purely political ones. This is reflected by highlighting a practice of food redistribution as the central practice of the group. It seems that participation in this group type, unlike the above mentioned ones, despite being based on a specific set of left-wing values, abstains from defining an ideological profile for itself, thus prioritizing openness to the local community.

Environmental activism is characterized by the adoption of initiatives that aim to protect and maintain the natural environment, as well as the dissemination of environmentalism through campaigns. According to our interviews, this type of activism does not define very clear boundaries between activists, members and volunteers, particularly in big international organisations, such as the one studied. Unlike the rule in other types of activism, members here can be financial supporters without being involved in any other processes of the organisation, while the organisation occupies a considerable number of paid staff to accomplish its aims, many of whom are selected amongst those who are already engaged as volunteers in the group.

Feminist activism is likewise interested in disseminating the ideas of the social movement that led to its creation. Its practices prioritize political advocacy and support of a specific target populations, i.e. vulnerable women such as imprisoned, migrant and abused women. Notably, the organisation studied deals with the more classic feminist agenda and not with LGBTQ+ issues – at least in terms of action plan.

As regards activists' sustained participation, this is subject to their continued interest in the activity of the group and their availability. Ties between comrades and friendships that are established through long lasting group engagement are also drivers of continuing participation. Most activists engage in activities and roles that fit them best, based on their competences and preferences in relation to the needs of the group. An activist in the left libertarian group for example justifies his role in the group on the basis of his interest in the political and movement-related processes rather than the social life of the group. Others report the opposite and still others report being engaged in more specific tasks, such as creative ones - e.g. producing posters. With the exception of student unionism where participation is almost a holistic experience (or it is gradually becoming so), all other types of activism studied allow flexibility in the level of activists' engagement. The oldest activists report making a

distant contribution, which usually relates to online activity, such as the organisation of website content, the publication of electronic newsletters or social media activity.

Multiple participation usually occurs through engagement in subgroups linked to the main/umbrella group or due to the connection between different groups, such as between a student organisation and a youth branch of a political party. Networking, as a main feature of activist practice, promotes new collaborations between groups and individuals towards setting up new initiatives which then may evolve as separate groups with their own internal organisation and flow of activity. Other times, multiple participation involves activism in different fields – e.g. a feminist organisation and a neighbourhood assembly – or subfields – e.g. within environmentalism – and occurs due to the activist's interest in each of them. As to the time and energy allocated to each of them, this fluctuates, depending on the activity and the resources available in each group and on what the activist prioritises on a given period. Multiple participation, finally, reduces the availability of personal and leisure time and this is why it is mainly met in periods when the activist has not too many obligations.

7. Evolution (inside organisation / change of participation outside organisation / disengagement)
The trajectory of the individual activist evolves by going through changes in the level of engagement within a group/organisation, by shifting between groups or by engaging in multiple participation. Such changes occur because opportunities or barriers show up with respect to the group in which the activist is mobilized, the evolution of her personal interest and availability and the broader socio-political context or their combination.

As concerns the evolution of activism within a group, it largely depends on the group itself. Student unionism has a limited duration, which is defined by the period of academic study. The first year is usually a period of acquaintance with the group, the third one is when engagement levels rich their highest, while in the fourth year most activists withdraw in order to devote themselves to finishing their studies and leave room for the youngest. As described in an interview, the turning point in the transition from the of primary stage of acquaintance with the group to the stage of serious engagement comes through occasions in which the newcomer is asked to accomplish a specific task, which is usually simple, pleasant and not very important, but which anyway highlights the significance of individual contribution.

With respect to the evolution of individual roles, student organisations and organisations which represent branches of left- and right-wing political parties allow a gradual increase in the level of

involvement and in the roles assigned in terms of responsibility and ranking in the hierarchy. They did so by establishing hierarchy based on the length of stay in the group: newcomers assist old members and try to attract new ones by being engaged in activities such as sticking up posters; later on, they upgrade to becoming responsible for recruiting their followers; then, they undertake managerial positions.

In informal groups, hierarchy seems to be replaced by the allocation of responsibilities across thematic groups. Respondents who have been previously engaged in radical student groups, as well as activists of the left-libertarian group, distribute roles in rotation or based on agreement between members. A similar tactic seems to be followed by feminist organisations and by the citizens informal/solidarity group, where roles are distributed based on needs and availabilities. Activism in the environmental organisation revolves around projects with the activist having less autonomy and flexibility in switching between different roles, responsibilities or tasks assigned – a trait that accords with the formality of the organisation. What both environmental and feminist activism share in common is that their members have a deep interest in their agendas and are committed to them – which may or may not be combined with other fields – as reflected in their tendency to engage themselves in different groups/organizations of the same field throughout their course in activism.

Based on our findings, young activists pass through various types and fields of activism. There are too many reasons for activists to further their activism by joining other groups, which is often fostered by knowing other people who are already engaged in the group. Broadening the scope of their activism is meaningful in relation to their own personal sensitivities or the circumstances. Contextual factors are influential and create new opportunities in activism. The richness of politically significant events during the last decade in Greece has definitely influenced activists' own trajectories. The economic crisis incited grassroots mobilization to respond to the public demand for direct democracy – eg. through setting up local citizens/neighborhood assemblies – or for the creation of solidarity networks. The huge refugee inflow in 2015 motivated various actions in response to this alarming situation in support of refugees' needs and rights. The same year has been also marked by SYRIZA's election and the referendum on the acceptance of Troika's bailout program, events which have admittedly influenced mobilization in left-wing oriented youth or student organisations which were until recently linked to the different political components of the governing party.

Withdrawal from a group usually comes when the activist ceases to be satisfied with his mobilization within the group, which may be due to disagreement or due to the fact that the group does not anymore

meet the activist's expectation. Other reasons behind discontent and withdrawal are exhaustion from intensive engagement or just the need to have a break. Some respondents referred to periods in which they remained distant or inactive and then they mobilized again. Personal reasons of disengagement are travelling, getting a full-time job, having health problems or family obligations. It is hard to predict when disengagement is definite, as long as our disengaged respondents are still young and none of them excludes the option to rejoin.

8. Biographical impact / Future

Activists report that their activism shapes their way of thinking and behaving. It makes them more responsible and responsive to the socio-political reality surrounding them. As described by an activist in the informal citizens/grassroots solidarity group, riding the bus gives them the opportunity to identify people engaged in activism, since they will be the ones who would react and intervene in an incidence of unfairness or discrimination, while everybody else would not.

Activists recognise the most precious reward from their activism to be the meaningfulness it provides to their lives. It is usually argued that participation is itself an empowering process: it promotes self-actualisation, helps people mature and provides hope and belief in social change. The most frequently mentioned personality skill gained through activism is a combination of courage and self-confidence. Its benefits unfold when standing in front of an audience as well as in other stressful situations when fear and hesitation impede self-expression.

Another important set of qualifications gained relate to the experience of being engaged in political deliberation as well as to the practice of writing political text. Hence, some respondents refer to their acquired ability in critical thinking and constructive criticism due to having spent so much time in political conversation. Activism is perceived to be a learning process by some activists. Activists who engage in environmental and feminist organisations refer to the issue-specific knowledge gained. Argumentation, rhetoric and debating skills are emphasised by members of youth branches of political parties.

Other skills acquired relate to engagement in operational and technical tasks, such as website development or graphic design, handicraft or administration. While participants in the left-libertarian group and the informal citizens' group mention gaining such skills through their activism, the participants in the youth branches of political parties and in the environmental organisation refer to

them as being skills they already possessed before being assigned the respective task in the group they are involved in.

Most respondents agree that their activism impacts on the way they relate with other people but does not deteriorate the quality of their closest relationships. Thus, while some of their parents are sceptical due to their offspring's participation in contentious politics or due to their devotion to the group instead of studying or pursuing a career, they nevertheless accept their choice and usually become more supportive with the passage of time.

What seems to have changed, particularly for those whose activism is fuelled by ideological (left-wing in our sample) radicalisation, relates to their wider socialisation, which is refined to the point that it corresponds to a tacit agreement on the basics as it is reflected in values and lifestyle. On the contrary, those whose field of activism relates to institutional politics – youth branches of political parties in our sample – most frequently report having become more open in their socialisation – e.g. a legal professional refers to the benefit of building up a clientele through his membership in the youth branch of the political party. Others report to have become more tolerant or less "toxic" with people. Additionally, the relationship with comrades as a special type of relating to others which is characterised by respect and sharing a worldview instead of the proximity that governs friendship relations, becomes increasingly important in the everyday social life of activists.

Activism as an everyday practice apart from its benefits poses some challenges as well. It becomes strenuous at times, or it may be a source of tension and disappointment when things go off track. Overall, however, it is positively evaluated by young activists and is a part of their self-determination. As for their future, they all intend to continue or even broaden their activism on the same field or its continuation – such as trade and sectoral unionism to follow student unionism. Left-libertarians search for autonomy is reflected in planning other projects of self-organisation and in pursuing employment in alternative and social economy or self-employment options. Some of those who volunteer in the environmental organisation wish their volunteerism helps them to find a job in the same field.

9. Conclusions
The study of interviews with Greek activists demonstrates that youth activism is largely shaped by the socio-political context that defines the opportunities for youth mobilisation. Moreover, the field

of activism and the type of group in which activists engage relate with the development of a particular culture of activism in terms of action repertoire and the evolution of the activist.

Our studied sample grew up witnessing a first period of flourish marked by the entry of Greece into the Eurozone, Athens hosting the Olympics, the construction of the Acropolis museum and a second period of the Eurozone crisis, most notably in Greece, with deepening recession, mass unemployment, harsh austerity and civil unrest, following the 2007 global economic crisis. Looking at the family level of our studied population, an initial sense of security was soon replaced with a feeling of insecurity. The changes that took place in the urban socio-cultural landscape of Athens together with the Greek crisis of 2009, the related Eurozone crisis, the increase in the quota of migrant population, which intensified with the refugee crisis since 2013, and a generalised political scenery of instability and polarisation – fuelled by political scandals of corruption, new political alliances and the collapse of the old two-party system – formed a stimulus-rich, socio-political environment in which young people initiated their political socialisation.

The attempts of successive governments towards educational reform which started few years before the outbreak of the economic crisis and have been thereafter combined with the targeting of spending cuts in education led to frequent occupations of secondary and tertiary educational units by students. Furthermore, the influence of crisis-related anti-austerity and pro-democracy social movements, grassroots actions of reclaim and the emergence of numerous civil society solidarity initiatives have also provided several opportunities for youth mobilisation. Last but not least, events that unmasked police violence and rising neo-fascism triggered youth uprising and rioting.

Hence, young Greeks nowadays seem to be familiar with the adoption of contentious politics as a main tool of their political action irrespective of their field of activism. Based on the findings, participation in public demonstrations and in school occupations are forms of political action met in the primary political socialisation of all activists except those who mobilise with the youth branch of the right-wing political party and with the environmental organisation, both of whom initiated their political socialisation through school initiatives and volunteering.

Another prevalent trait of our studied sample is student unionism. Given that the vast majority of our sampled activists are or have been university students in the past, most of them attended the general assembly of the student union and joined a university group to mobilise in support of their student rights. Thus, student unionism seems to be to a great extent the entry gate to activism, which holds

true for all types of activism, but particularly for the youth branches of political parties which are linked with student groups or organisations.

The type of the socio-political group an individual joins plays an essential role both in her mobilisation and evolution as an activist. Involvement in informal or less institutionalised socio-political settings, such as in a grassroots solidarity network or in a left-libertarian group, is usually initiated through friends or acquaintances by word of mouth or during occasional participation in other political processes – e.g. protest events – where young people are approached by group members. By contrast, recruitment in formal settings, such as in big environmental or human rights NGOs, usually occurs through the organisation's public appeal for volunteers via campaigning in the mass media and social media.

Subsequently, radical politics and/or alternative practices of self-organisation and solidarity characterise sustained participation in non-formal groups, whereas institutional politics are predominant in formal organisations. Furthermore, the degree of a group's formalisation defines to a large extent the roles undertaken by an individual activist within the group, with formal organisations being characterised by vertical organisational structures and a hierarchical model in the distribution of roles based on experience and qualifications. Contrariwise, the informal groups have non-hierarchical, horizontal structures in which the degree of individual involvement and responsibility lie on a combination of the group's needs and the availability of individual members.

The longer the engagement with activism, the bigger its influence is. Admittedly, activism benefits young people in their self-realisation and in gaining personality and social skills. Hence, despite usually becoming strenuous and time-consuming, most activists wish to keep on being engaged and bring elements of their activism in the planning and organisation of other spheres of their lives – the private and professional ones, since it gives them a life compass.

ITALIAN REPORT

LORENZO BOSI, ANNA LAVIZZARI AND STEFANIA VOLI

1. City context[36]

Population

Bologna is the capital of the Emilia-Romagna region. It is located in the North-East of Italy, and has a population of 389,326 inhabitants (January 2018). It is ranked seventh among the 7,954 municipalities in Italy (about 0.65 per cent of the Italian population). The average age is 46.4 years.

Figure 1. Distribution of age groups over total population, by gender
(Bologna City Council, 2017)[37]

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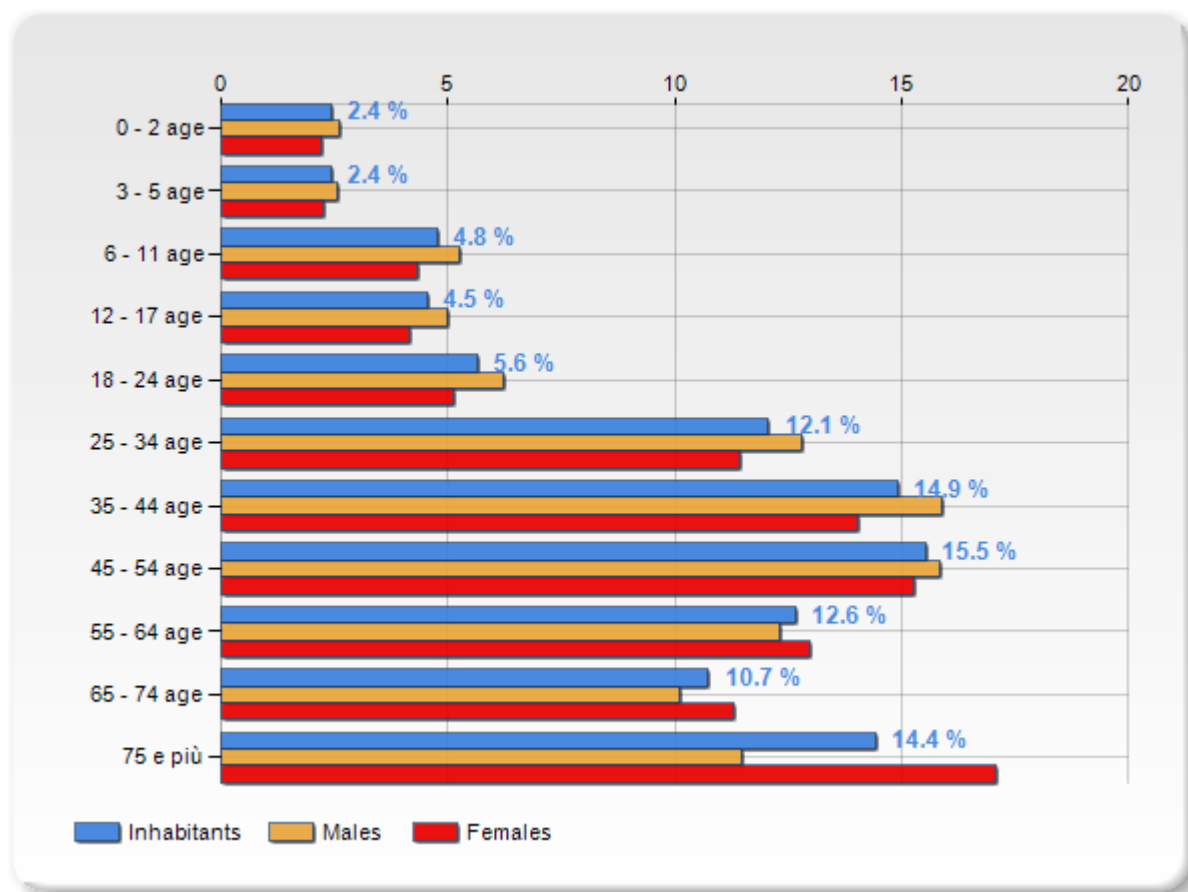
[36] Sources: http://demo.istat.it/bilmens2017gen/index02.html; http://inumeridibolognametropolitana.it/;
www.comune.bologna.it/iperbole/piancont/noterapide/popolazione/2017/La%20popolazione%20di%20Bologna%20al
%2031%20dicembre%202017.pdf; https://www.cittametropolitana.bo.it/statistica/;
https://www.cittametropolitana.bo.it/statistica/Engine/RAServeFile.php/f/Medec/sintesi_qvita_2018_CMBologna.pdf.
[37] Source: https://ugeo.urbistat.com/AdminStat/en/it/demografia/eta/bologna/37006/4.

In 2015, Bologna became a "Metropolitan City", a new form of government which replaced the provincial administrative body and merged 55 municipalities. The metropolitan city of Bologna has approximately one million inhabitants (December 2017). These include about 164,000 young people (18-35 years old), 68,840 of whom live in the municipality of Bologna, 156,771 are underage (0-17), and some 144,000 are 35 to 44 years old.[38]

Foreigners represent 11.7 per cent of the total population, with 148 different nationalities being present in the metropolitan city area, and including 36,907 young citizens (18,947 in the city of Bologna alone). The municipality of Bologna is ranked at number 293 among 7,954 municipalities per percentage of foreigners of the total resident population. Bologna also attracts new residents every year (0.21 per cent more in 2017 as opposed to 2016); in 2017, three out of four new residents came from Italian municipalities. Among these, a quarter came from Bologna's metropolitan city area (24.8 per cent), and another quarter from the South and from the islands (24.4 per cent). New foreign residents make up 33.7 per cent of total immigrants (i.e. 4,935 people), while two-thirds of new residents are Italian citizens. Compared to 2016, migration from the metropolitan city area in 2017 increased by 3.1 per cent.

Socio-economic issues

From an economic point of view, the metropolitan city of Bologna is one of the richest areas in Italy (the third richest in 2017), with an income of about 25,000 euros per capita. It is a major railway and motorway junction in Northern Italy, and covers an area with a strong presence of important industries in the fields of mechanical engineering, electronics and food. The city's largest employers work in manufacturing, trade and construction industries. It also contains a vast number of co-operative organisations. Over the last decade, Bologna has witnessed a significant expansion of its tourism industry. Since 2008, the city's airport has almost doubled its passenger numbers (from about four to eight million). At the same time, the tourist presence in the city has grown, reaching 2.5 million presences in 2016. This phenomenon is having incisive repercussions on the socio-economic structure of the city. In recent years, for example, because of the high number of students and the growing tourism industry, citizens (including students) are facing a severe housing problem, more so than in the past.

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[38] Source: http://inumeridibolognametropolitana.it/dati-statistici/popolazione-residente-eta-e-comune-al-31-dicembre-serie-storica-0.

Furthermore, drawing on a survey about local residents' 2016 income tax returns, the City Council's statistical office has highlighted the growing distance between rich and poor; the richest age group was composed of more than 60 taxpayers, while younger age groups faced increasing economic difficulties. In particular, in 2015 taxpayers under 30 years of age represented only 8.6 per cent of the population, and declared 3.7 per cent of their total income (a sharp decrease in the last decade), while taxpayers over 60 years old represented 40 per cent of the total population, and declared 42.8 per cent of their income. Foreign taxpayers constituted 10 per cent of the total population, even if they earned half of what Italian citizens earned. The gender difference was marked as well; in all age groups, women's incomes were lower than those of men.

Approximately 90 per cent of Bologna's residents consider the quality of life in their municipality as being very high. Overall, there is a consistent and generalised satisfaction with the metropolitan city's services and with the quality of the environment. However, compared to the past residents are less satisfied with the income level, leisure time and the general economic situation. Of the total population, young people (18-34 years old) attribute a higher value to the quality of life in their municipality (85 per cent). Their main concerns are related to precarious economic conditions and uncertainties about the future, and emerge in their assessment of working conditions (i.e. salary, job security). The level of dissatisfaction among this age group exceeds that of both the other age cohorts and the metropolitan average.

Socio-cultural issues

Bologna hosts the oldest university in the western world. Founded in 1088, the University of Bologna is still one of the most important academic institutions in Italy and Europe. In the academic year 2017-18, 82,900 students chose the University of Bologna: 77,025 of these were Italian students, with 45 per cent coming from other Italian regions.[39] In the previous academic year, the University of Bologna ranked second, after the Sapienza University of Rome, in terms of enrolment numbers. With its large student population, Bologna is a major cultural city with a long-standing heritage. It is a centre of entrepreneurship, culture, research and development, and it also hosts the internationally renowned Cineca—Italy's largest computing centre, made up of a consortium of Italian universities. Its tenure as European Capital of Culture in 2000 boosted the city's lively arts scene, which is composed of a variety of museums, bookshops, theatres and festivals. With regard to the quality and quantity of cultural events, the city is highly rated at the international level, especially for its musical events; in

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[39] Source: https://www.unibo.it/it/ateneo/chi-siamo/luniversita-oggi-tra-numeri-e-innovazione.

2006, Bologna was recognised by UNESCO as "City of Music Creativity". At the national level, Bologna is listed among the biggest Italian cities in terms of consumption and offer of cultural events. Culture accounts for six per cent of the City Council's entire budget. There is a general and unanimous consensus on the quality and offer of cultural services; these are, however, more concentrated in the city centre, to the detriment of the areas outside the metropolitan city. About 64 per cent of the population possesses a diploma or degree, with some territorial differences. The city of Bologna has nearly twice the number of graduates as compared to the rest of the metropolitan area (37 per cent against 20 per cent), whereas the presence of graduates is prevalent outside the city (40 per cent against 35 per cent).

Socio-political issues

For a long time, the city of Bologna (and the Emilia-Romagna region at large) has been associated with the concept of "good governance", thanks to the government of the Italian Communist Party, and the social democratic parties that arose from its ashes. Today, the majoritarian party, and its voters' culture, have deeply changed. Despite this progressive shift, Bologna maintains a strong leftist culture. It has a long tradition of openness to social and political cultures and movements; in comparison with other Italian cities, it also has an important tradition of active engagement in political, social and civic life. Today there are about 900 civic, cultural and voluntary associations, formally registered and operating in the whole metropolitan area, as well as several informal political and cultural groups, collectives and associations. Social participation in voluntary associations involves over a quarter of the adult population; active volunteering and membership of social solidarity associations are most frequent, followed by participation in public meetings and assemblies, and cultural and sporting activities. Lastly, citizens also adhere to parties and trade unions, and take part in passive engagement (e.g. donations). Although the territorial gap shows no particular differences, social and political commitment is slightly higher in peripheral areas.

Young people living in the metropolitan city are particularly active, and use multiple forms of expression to gain visibility in the public sphere. For this reason, their relationships with local institutions vary, and depend on the type of participation put in place. Many of the groups that young people adhere to accuse local institutions of an incapacity to provide the support needed for their survival, consolidation and autonomy. Social networks appear very solid and widespread across the territory, with a tendency to strengthen, in comparison with the past. Social relations are an important resource; family and friendship solidarity are widespread throughout the metropolitan area (90 per cent in parental relationships, and exceeding 85 per cent for friends).

2. Sample socio-demographic characteristics

The youth sample that we composed for this report consists of 28 young people (18-35 years old). All interviews took place in Bologna, in a time period that ranged from February to July 2018. Table 1 summarises the main socio-demographic characteristics of the local sample.

Table 1: Socio-demographic sample

Age range	Gender	Geographical provenience	Qualification	Current occupation	Partner	Children
18–20: 5 21–25: 13 26–30: 4 31–35: 6	Female: 16 Male: 12	North: 9 Centre: 5 South: 6 Islands: 1 Bologna: 7	Lower secondary school: 1 Upper secondary school: 8 Bachelor: 11 Master: 8 PhD: 0	Student: 15 Working Student: 3 Unemployed: 1 Part-time job: 1 Full-time job: 8	Yes: 14 No: 14	Yes: 1 No: 27

As shown in the table, the majority of respondents in our youth sample have an age range between 21 and 25 years. In addition, most of them have a higher education, either at Bachelor or Master level, and are currently enrolled at the University of Bologna, in different disciplines. Very few of the respondents work part-time alongside their studies.[40] These data allow us to confirm the importance of the University of Bologna for our specific case. The university attracts many young people from different Italian regions; as we observed in the previous section, this capacity of attracting people is a specific feature of the city of Bologna. Young people who are politically and socially engaged in Bologna are, for the majority, enrolled at the university, or have followed a university career. It must be underlined that this particular feature forms the basis of a bias in our sample, when it comes to age range (21-25 years old); for many young people in Bologna, the university years correspond with the years of active political and social participation. As we will see, a possible explanation for the low number of young people working at the same time might be the challenge of managing time between study and activism. This feature also shapes the class background of our respondents, who mostly come from the middle class. It seems important to stress that most of our respondents come from outside Bologna: 21 out of 28. This fact is peculiar to the case of Bologna, in comparison with other Italian cities; many young people select Bologna for its prestigious university, but also for its active political life. As we will see in the following sections, our respondents started a process of political

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[40] We consider PhD students as being 'employed' by their university.

socialisation in their local contexts, but eventually mobilised politically in an organisation/group only upon arrival in Bologna. If this is a rather common feature of students who move outside their local contexts, in the case of Bologna it is particularly strong, given the reputation that the city has in the country, in terms of political participation.

3. Life before participation

In general, primary socialisation is mostly apolitical and somehow very similar among our respondents, despite their being active in different socio-political organisations/groups.

The families of our respondents seem to have adopted a general permissive and libertarian approach to education, without strong impositions. Our respondents described their relationship with parents mostly as being characterised by trust and independence, linked with the drive to take an autonomous, respectful and critical attitude toward the world. The generational conflict within as well as outside the family (i.e. in the school system) does not appear to have been of any relevance to our respondents, in their first socialisation, before they started to socialise politically. Most of their families have a Catholic background; Catholic schools, catechism or the Scouts, or a combination of these, were indicated by the majority of our respondents as being part of their primary socialisation. In most cases, religious interests and involvement disappeared as time went by, especially when the respondents approached university life, and consequently moved away from the home context. In other cases, Catholic education coupled with early volunteering or recreational experiences in religious associations remained significant drivers for current activism/volunteering in other groups, as values of social justice are often linked to a 'good Christian' identity. By contrast, some respondents also pointed out how their family members' Catholic political orientation became a major reason for disagreement, especially around social and civic issues.

The time spent at school and practising sports is also mentioned as being part of our respondents' primary socialisation process. School years are often described as a time of transition, from the respondents' childhood to their first act of politicisation. In addition, sports (e.g. volley, karate, football, horse riding, judo, athletics, basketball, etc.) are very present in the early life of our respondents, mostly as a way of escaping from a not too stimulating school environment, and/or from small and monotonous provincial contexts, where the largest part of the interviewees come from. Most of those respondents coming from outside Bologna shared a general, critical view of the first phase of their socialisation. They sustained that, in consequence of the latter, they decided to move

to a city like Bologna because they wanted to engage in a context that could stimulate them at last, in particular their socio-political attitudes.

A few times adult persons other than the respondents' parents (or grandparents) appeared to play a prominent role in primary socialisation; small groups of friends represent a resource in terms of growth, subjectivation and identity-building processes, and self-awareness (especially for LGBTQ people), which in some cases brought about political involvement.

4. The political socialisation process

If some respondents described their political interest as having somehow always been present and 'on hold', and were waiting to reach the age and the organisation/group that would best suit their engagement, for others a process of political socialisation first started to have an effect on them when they were growing up, that is, between the age of 16 and 18 years.

The vast majority of our respondents declared that they came from non-politically active families (i.e. not members in an organisation/group); in the everyday life of these families, regardless of their political leanings and their social and geographical origins, daily exchanges and discussions about politics and current events (i.e. listening to the news or reading newspapers) were the norm. Given that this generation of respondents grew up during Silvio Berlusconi's presence on the political scene (1996–2011), it is not uncommon that the major political discussions at home, on television or in the newspapers were all related to Berlusconi. At the same time, we encountered aspects of a resistance tradition, mostly represented by the respondents' grandparents' experience in World War II or in connection with some specific local context, and of a Catholic tradition that coexisted in the same family context, sometimes linked to a belief in values such as social justice, solidarity and equality. More than half of the respondents' parents belonged to a leftist (i.e. anti-fascist) or progressive political area. The process of political socialisation inside the families was fairly smooth for most of our respondents; for only very few of them it was challenging, in terms of leading them to different political positions as opposed to their families. As pointed out in the section on primary socialisation, the generational conflict among our respondents seems very low, or almost absent.

If the school system is generally described as the place of their primary socialisation, the secondary school context, in particular, was described by many of our respondents as politically formative. Here many said to have initiated a first process of political socialisation. The vast majority of our respondents, for example, have been representatives of their classes or schools. Although they did not

claim that this role was political in any way, in their view it was instrumental in evoking or further strengthening an interest in politics; it placed them in a better position in terms of skills (i.e. taking up responsibilities and liaising with administrative bodies and institutions) and resources, which would prove fundamental for the next step, namely that of mobilising in an organisation/group later on in their life. In some cases one particular professor was mentioned as having been specifically important in the respondents' process of political socialisation, in that he or she managed to attract the respondents' attention to previous periods of mobilisation in the Italian context, or toward relevant secondary literature. Quite different is the case of respondents who are active in the youth branch of the centre-right political party that we examined. They said to have experienced what they felt was a hegemonic leftist culture at school (in particular in Bologna), different from what they experienced at home. At the time this led them to show their opposition publicly, joining an organisation/group later on.

Apart from those respondents who are active in the youth branch of the centre-right political party, it is possible to identify two collective turning points, which represent crucial moments for most of the young activists of our sample, in terms of political socialisation: the G8 summit in Genoa in 2001 (and its traumatic transmission of memories); and the 2008 Onda Anomala Movement, followed by the 2010 student movement against the "Gelmini law".[41] These political landmarks were regularly mentioned throughout the interviews, and described as key moments of an individual process of politicisation. Depending on personal and political experience and/or date of birth, the interviewees referred to just one of these key moments, or both. For people in their thirties, the G8 (and its consequences) constituted a biographical watershed: the beginning of a period of more radical political awareness, of the search for a broader political confrontation and – in some cases – a more defined political context. In many cases, self-managed social centres were the "landing places" of this political search conducted by young people, alone or with a few friends. In these cases, social centres became a place of political training, where our respondents said to have started expanding their social and political horizons and networks. With regard to the other collective turning point, the Onda Anomala Movement, this drew the attention of students who – in one way or another – felt involved (sometimes for the first time) in what was happening around them, and who started to feel the need to "change something".

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[41] From 19 to 22 July 2001, the G8 leaders held the 27th summit in the North-Italian city of Genoa. Violent clashes between protesters and Italian police and law enforcement led to the tragic death of Carlo Giuliani, a 23-year-old Italian anarchist. Between 2008 and 2010, the so called Onda Anomala ("Anomalous Wave") student movement mobilised against the "Gelmini law", the reform of the public education system proposed by the then Minister of Education, Mariastella Gelmini, a member of Berlusconi's Cabinet.

In addition to these two collective turning points, another one, exclusively for (left-wing) political party activists, was the birth of a new centre-left political party in 2007, and a series of political campaigns led by key political figures. These represented a new political opportunity for many young people, who then decided to get involved both in the youth branch of the party and in the party itself. Many of these young people therefore consider themselves as 'natives' of the party.

5. Mobilisation and recruitment processes

The selection of the socio-political organisation/group is based on multiple criteria. In general, our respondents claimed they were active subjects in their own recruitment process: the selection of the organisation/group seems "naturally" to result from previous socio-political experiences (i.e. in secondary school or university groups) or inclinations. Either way, it results from an agency that the respondents were keen to claim.

Attendance of their first demonstrations, public assemblies and other socio-political activities during the last years of secondary school represented, for the respondents, a further step in the process of their political socialisation, and also the next step toward activism and involvement. The latter often occurred during their first years at university; our respondents said that they were interested in finding a group to be part of, in which they could recognise themselves and finally do what they had always wanted to, in terms of contributing to the making of a better society. For some activists now involved in informal groups (i.e. student, alternative action, feminist or left-libertarian groups), taking part in demonstrations or school occupations without premeditation or political reference points, and with their friends, represented a turning point: the moment in which political interest and curiosity are channelled through active membership within the group they feel closest to. At the same time, members of the environmental group we examined indicated how specific events, such as the nuclear referendum, or broader problems such as pollution, have been turning points for their involvement. In the case of those respondents active in the feminist group, demonstrations or political actions in the public sphere (such as occupations or sit-ins) made them feel intimately and deeply involved, and represented important moments of awareness; these were linked to the possibility of thinking about women, gender and LGBTQ issues in terms of political struggles, differently than in more traditional, political contexts. In some specific cases, our respondents traced the roots of their willingness to find an organisation/group to upsetting events (i.e. police repression or countermovement violence), which sparked their desire to actively engage in political groups.

Public events and places are important arenas for the recruitment of new members to organisations/groups. Organic markets (and the social centres where they take place) were the meeting point for the earlier activists of the alternative action group, and became a form of political socialisation in public arenas, very much like a social gathering project. Also, participation in demonstrations or public assemblies often represent a common feature, or even a turning point, in the recruitment process, either through the individuals' self-engagement or through direct recruitment by group members present at these events. Occasionally, young people's encounter with a political community happens through, and finds a response in, the groups' activities and symbols: leafleting, the announcement of events through flyers or banners in university areas, and the organisation of public debates or actions often represent the respondents' first point of contact, from which involvement starts.

The internet is another place, albeit not alternative to physical spaces, where people look for and find news and information that is useful to the recruitment process. It is the site of an active research and a chance to enter into contact with groups. Respondents indicated social networks and groups' webpages as a direct means of making contact with the organisation/group, particularly the more formal ones, from which the recruitment process would then start (for example in the case of the environmental youth branch of the centre-left political party we examined). Some activists themselves used social media to initiate their militant career, opening social media pages and forums where to discuss political issues with peers and share information and knowledge.

In the case of the alternative action group, and of more formal organisations (e.g. the environmental group), participation was affected by the group's acceptance of a request that prospective members had presented to the organisation. In other groups it depended mostly on individual decisions; even when activists mainly joined organisations individually, most admitted that they already knew (or had previous contacts with) activists within the organisation. In this sense, pre-existing networks and connections play a significant role in the recruitment process. This phenomenon emerges across genders, and is prevalent in university and feminist collectives, as well as in political parties' affiliated groups, more than in alternative action groups and formal organisations.

For the majority of our interviewees, taking part in assemblies was the first and most concrete step they took once they joined an organisation/group, and which preceded any other active commitment: a phenomenon that has been described as a sort of 'observation' phase, in which young people get acquainted with the organisation/group's mechanisms, dynamics and constituency. When assemblies

and other activities of organisations/groups start to have priority over the ordinary and extra-ordinary activities of the majority of young people, their belonging and commitment to the chosen group is eventually confirmed.

6. Practices / Sustained participation / Multiple participation

Among the most informal groups of our sample were left-libertarian, alternative action, feminist and university groups; they said that their groups put in place a wide spectrum of practices mixing traditional and innovative repertoires, which allow people to feel and consider themselves activists even if they are involved only in some of the practices.

In general, from our respondents' accounts we deducted that the assembly remains the most traditional activity these groups (i.e. left-libertarian, alternative action, feminist, university) have in common, and that they give it a quite similar meaning; it is considered "the" main collective "space" where decision-making processes take place, where to share and develop collective reasoning and where to experience (more or less) horizontal democratic practices. In other words, it plays an important role in building trust and common identity among members of the same group and, as a consequence, in sustaining their participation. Also, respondents refer to their participation in assemblies as a "measuring system" of their level of involvement in the group.

In the view of our respondents, the alternative action and feminist groups act as a network of pre-existing or new, individual or collective, subjects; in these cases, rather than a common identity and political uniformity, differences within the group were said to serve as a source of wealth, as a strength and as an opportunity for broader exchange—multiple participation is easier for them, as we will see below. Furthermore, because of the significant number of participants and the variety of issues they cover in their political interventions, these groups promote working tables or thematic groups that stimulate a broader and more inclusive participation, allowing them to streamline these decisional processes and elaborate proposals during assemblies. It is an effective practice also for people who claim not to be able to take the floor during assemblies, and thus promotes even more horizontal and empowering political practices and transparency.

Respondents in more formal and structured organisations (i.e. political parties and environmental organisations) said that these groups, too, organise their work and build their identity around weekly meetings and assemblies. Yet, their organisational structure is more vertical and stratified, as they have representatives and coordinators at different levels. Moreover, their networks and scope of

activities have a regional, national and international reach, and the groups operate within the same organisation or through links with other groups and organisations of similar types, for example through exchanges with youth branches of political parties in other European countries. Along with this, respondents claimed that the repertoire of action of these groups includes a mixture of conventional and unconventional activities, such as sit-ins, petitions, public debates and assemblies, protesting as well as lobbying: activities which involve all members in almost the same way.

Simultaneously, participation in informal groups develops during everyday life, bringing together new and more traditional political actions, and multiplying the levels of individual participation: participation in organic markets (either as producers or as regular clients), meetings and demonstrations; organising events and happenings; occupying places; reading a mailing list or reposting contents on social networks—this all becomes part of a multilevel repertoire of actions that makes participation sustainable over time, and to the majority of people. Above all, in less structured organisations (e.g. the alternative action and feminist groups), it allows people to find their own place and role in the group that suits them best.

From our respondents' accounts we also deducted that the university group, which in our case is more traditionally organised and structured in comparison to other existing student groups, and the left libertarian one seem to require a more homogeneous and higher level of participation (in terms of hours, efforts, sacrifices). In these specific cases, militancy is an immersive brand experience, a life priority if not a life choice, where unity and general consensus within the group play a more important role than in other cases; multiple participation is more difficult for them, as we will see below.

For respondents engaged in the youth branches of the centre-right and centre-left political parties we examined, a strong commitment to the political cause in the long term constituted the main motivation behind their sustained participation. At the same time, they justified their choice of being part of a 'party-model' group by their practices, which they valued for being concrete, pragmatic – with respect to more informal political groups – and close to institutions, administrative bodies and the electorate. In this sense, such groups are definitely more structured and hierarchical than informal groups, although we noticed a sharp distinction being made between the youth-led branches and the parties themselves: in the youth groups, members often consider themselves a group of friends, and promote democratic practices of engagement that are much more horizontal, while disregarding the parties' involvement as too bureaucratic and hierarchical, and less pragmatic.

In general, in our respondents' accounts participation is seen to constitute an ongoing experience, in the sense that people feel that personal and cultural goals match the groups' goals and practices, and are intertwined with the groups' political aims, whereas personal and political levels mirror and contaminate each other. This feature clearly emerged in the path of certain young people involved in environmental activism; a specific work method and code of values (pacifist, non-violent) with different rules was infused in their practices as volunteers/activists as well as in their daily lives. These values were therefore carried out and sustained in daily practices, such as recycling, using less plastic, and so on.

As our respondents suggested, sustained participation is also linked to a sharp pragmatism, which matches politics from below, daily and concrete actions, and the overall and deep desire to "really change something" and provoke processes of change in many aspects of people's everyday lives (at odds with traditional and institutional politics). All our respondents felt very close to the territory they live in, trying to modify it through their daily presence and actions. They claimed to have a strong confidence in their own group's capacity – more than in that of other groups – to change the world. Respondents coming from the feminist group, in particular, strongly felt the potential for a deep transformation of the world, which finds its roots in the new global feminist movement. For them, the achievement of this objective was in itself a reason for ongoing resistance/existence.

Ideologies, in our respondents' view, are no longer considered an important means of tying people together. On the contrary, being a non-ideological group appears to be an advantage for our respondents. Instead of ideologies, they prefer to speak about values, such as anti-sexism, anti-fascism, anti-racism, anti-speciesism, and the desire to build networks beyond ideological positions, bridging different collective or individual positions—this happens especially in the feminist and alternative action groups, as well as in the environmental ones. By contrast, for the members of youth branches of the centre-right and centre-left political parties, ideology still plays an important role, as members recognise themselves in traditional political views: from left Communism to social democracy, for the youth branch of the centre-leftist political party; from conservatism to liberalism, for the centre-right one. Yet, they do not overemphasise the importance of ideology, as they tend to adhere to and express their commitment under the broader frame of 'social justice'. As in the other groups, these respondents also strongly believe in their group's capacity to intervene in society and bring about social change, though stressing that the most appropriate format through which to achieve change is by means of traditional politics and parties.

In different ways, the relational context and human relationships within organisations sustain a long-term participation; being part of the same group, sharing intense experiences and values, and performing the same political practices make relationships among members different from "normal" or "standard" friendships. People are aware that they can count on mutual aid and support, and on networking; they feel part of a political community, made up of people who share a political project, but also a life project. In general, respondents declared that political participation made them feel good, that it was something they strongly believe in and a choice they reconfirm every single day, through their daily activities.

When it comes to multiple participation, it is evident that many young people, coming from different groups and backgrounds, understand activism in intersectional terms. In the case of party-affiliated respondents, this often coincided with multiple engagement in student organisations that matched the group's ideology; activists in the centre-left youth branch of a party-affiliated group would thus participate in left-wing student organisations, while the opposite applied to activists in centre-right parties. As mentioned in the previous section, this is often the result of previous activism and experience/political socialisation, which is then maintained at the university level. Similarly, respondents from the environmental organisation were, in the majority of cases, involved in other formal organisations (e.g. human rights organisations), or informal citizens' groups active in their territory. Overall, these experiences were highly valued for their potential to cut across different issues, and contaminate the different groups with diverse practices, imported from one to the other. Feminist and alternative action groups, too, included respondents who claimed to be involved in other trans/feminist groups, and/or associations, and/or social centres, as they were set up as a network and allowed different experiences of activism (i.e. not necessarily in the same political field or with the same social/political objectives), which nonetheless converged within the group, making it richer of political instances. Furthermore, their local and national levels are intertwined, and some of their members are therefore active in both.

7. Evolution (inside organisation / change of participation outside organisation / disengagement)

According to the type of organisation/group, the distribution of roles and responsibilities may change. This, as it emerges from our interviews, has a direct impact on the different evolution of activists' roles inside the organisations/groups. In the university group, all our respondents said they shared a similar (and high) level of participation; from the very beginning to the end, they all experienced a full-time, daily commitment (as, for example, during occupations), with few differences among members of the group. Conversely, left-libertarian, feminist and alternative action groups contained

different levels of involvement, and the evolution of the activists' experience depended mostly on the availability of individual people's availability – which may vary over time, that is, increasing, decreasing, or following an oscillating trend – and inclination. Furthermore, for the feminist and alternative action organisations, the division into thematic groups or the role rotation every six months (as happened in the alternative action group) allowed people to experience different kinds of roles and responsibilities. In the youth branches of the political parties, although many young people no longer have the opportunity to undertake a 'political career' in traditional terms (as opposed to the past, when becoming a 'politician' was considered a job), the possibility to increase their responsibilities and advance in their role as 'secretary' or 'leaders' of neighbourhood sections – both in party youth branches and in the parties themselves – is a common trend among this type of activists. Many of them therefore actually move fast from being rank-and-file militants to becoming responsible for entire groups, circles, sections, and so on. For members of formal NGOs, such as the environmental group, being a 'volunteer' is a specific status within the organisation, which comes with different degrees of responsibilities, depending on experience. However, role evolution inside the organisation might change the moment a volunteer is appointed as coordinator of a local group, and in the case a volunteer decides to 'turn' into an activist; this involves direct actions and a different repertoire of tactics, which require specific training.

Long-standing activists said they feel more responsible than they used to in their initial period of political activism. For our respondents, receiving recognition, having a greater experience and closer political and human relationships (inside and outside the group) has increased the feeling of responsibility, and therefore also their level of involvement. In general, the act of receiving recognition from the organisation corresponds with a higher engagement, political visibility, greater public and political responsibility (e.g. becoming a spokesperson or a contact person between the group and other groups or contexts, speaking with journalists or institutions), and so on. Furthermore, the evolution of members' roles depends on the presence (or absence) of specific political struggles, demonstrations, campaigns or actions; during more intensive political engagements, people tend to intensify and strengthen their own presence and belonging. Oftentimes, an increase in the level of participation corresponds with, or is related to, entering into closer relationships with other members.

During times of intense activities, such as the preparation of big demonstrations or electoral campaigns, the division of labour – between logistic tasks, on the one hand, and political processing and decision-making through assemblies and meetings, on the other – might also present itself as a different alternative to more or less committed activists. More intense moments of activism can

alternate with other, less demanding moments; either way, respondents with long-standing roles of responsibility affirmed that they needed to lower the level of activism in order to be able to perform other activities in their life (i.e. jobs or relationships external to the group). This requirement emerged above all among some feminist activists, especially if they were workers.

Before entering their respective and current – at the time of the interviews – organisation or group, some respondents experienced participation in more formal groups (e.g. Amnesty International), though only as a short-time experience. For them, this kind of experience revealed to be unsatisfactory and less stimulating.

Work resulted in a lower level of involvement for all our respondents, while being students corresponded with a greater availability of time. Indeed, work – much more than studying – and private issues (i.e. external to the organisation), more generally, can be reasons for disengagement. However, periods of intense study, such as exam sessions or thesis writing, also corresponded with lower engagement, particularly in the case of activists who participate in more than one group. In addition, disengagement might also result from disenchantment with the group itself. Few activists mentioned how the group's activities no longer matched their expectations, particularly in terms of political aims. Some people also remained in the group for a long time but without contributing actively, merely absorbing acknowledge, listening and learning, but without experiencing any evolution in their activism.

8. Biographical impact / Future

According to all our respondents, political participation seems to have produced a real change in their lives, regardless of where they are active. Most activists' leisure time is dedicated to militancy. This implies a big change also for their private life; activists have less time for friends, relationships and activities outside and beyond the group. In general, respondents do not speak about this change in terms of a sacrifice or waiver, unless they suffer a time of distress and burnout. On the contrary, a positive ring prevails in their accounts. At the personal level, participation makes our respondents feel good (as in happy) and realised as individuals, as they are part of a collective project, which positions them in the world and helps them understand that they are not alone, for example in terms of being a young women, a worker, a young anti-racist, a right-wing activist in a city like Bologna (which tends predominantly toward the left), and so on.

Pragmatism is at the basis of the activities of the majority of our respondents, who highlighted how activism provides an opportunity, and imposes a responsibility, to stay informed, research, study and be politically and technically knowledgeable (depending on the issue). It can therefore be labelled as an ongoing training and learning experience. In fact, our respondents stated that activism has affected the way they look at the world and at their own city, making them feel more comfortable in personal exchanges with different people, in particular with adults. Also, living in a political community, making and experiencing new friendships and comraderies, and building different human relations, impact on our respondents' lives and, in general, their life projects. Many respondents also mentioned how they became 'referents' for specific issues (political, environmental, student's life, etc), for friends who weren't politically engaged, and even for their family members.

This fact oriented their future toward militancy, as it gives youth perspectives and hope; they all imagined themselves, in one way or another, as being actively and politically engaged in the future, far from institutional politics – as in the case of informal and more radical groups (i.e. feminist, alternative action and university groups) – or within the national, institutional political landscape, as in the case of the youth branch of party-affiliated groups. The university group's members spoke about their engagement as a "short-term project": a kind of involvement that would come to an end with graduation, even if they stated that their desire to continue as militants in the same political area was not under question.

Participation also impacts on activism itself. For those who came from previous political experiences, feminist and alternative action groups put in place new practices which affected and implemented their political gaze and behaviour. It is very common for young people to describe their own current experiences as a never-ending learning process.

Beyond a sharp increase in political awareness, many respondents spoke of having acquired different skills through activism, as well as going through behavioural changes triggered by these experiences. Some crucial outcomes of these changes include an increase in self-esteem, and the ability to become more pragmatic and moderate in one's positions (both for party-affiliated and environmental activists). These changes were, in turn, reflected in the respondents' daily lives, particularly in their communication skills and in their ways of approaching other people, be they close friends, family or the public. Both in the case of party-affiliated and environmental groups, many female activists/volunteers argued that this experience 'trained' them at the emotional level; thus they became less afraid to express their ideas, speak in public or feel judged. In general, communicating,

knowing how to disseminate ideas and values, and approaching the public, were mentioned as being significant outcomes at different times. These included developing skills of different kinds, which ranged from writing press releases or translating political ideas into a political program, to the management of group dynamics, or even the management of a bar during self-funded initiatives, and so on.

At the working level, being an activist means taking a political approach to job choices, plans and expectations. For the alternative action group's members – whose activism corresponds to their working environment, their being militant organic farmers – this translated into the building of a political community based on a mutual support system and self-managed practices, which aims to break up mainstream economic mechanisms that structure agricultural production. For those who are not self-employed or home owners, just salaried workers or tenants, the aim is to found co-operatives or to own their land in order to achieve more autonomy.

Finally, for those who are not yet workers, and especially for activists in the university group, the aim is to find an autonomous job that enables them both to go on supporting their political choices, and its legal consequences, and to ensure financial autonomy.

9. Conclusion

Among the types of organisations/groups examined here, we have found strong similarities in our respondents' accounts, in terms of primary and political socialisation as well as in terms of biographical outcomes and the desire to remain politically involved also in the future. Hence, based on our respondents' accounts, we have not identified any specific types of socialisation that may lead to a particular kind of organisation/group, rather than another. At the same time, participation in an organisation/group seems to have very similar effects on the biographical level of our respondents, despite their being involved in different organisations/groups.

At the same time, in our case the mobilisation process, the practices, and the sustainment and evolution processes, reveal differences based on the organisation/group the respondents were active in. Formal and informal organisations/groups seem to most differentiate the type of participation of our respondents.

POLISH REPORT

BOGNA KIETLIŃSKA, MARIUSZ PIOTROWSKI AND MARCIN SIŃCZUCH

1. City context
Population

Warsaw is the capital of Poland and the administrative centre of the surrounding region (*mazowieckie voivodship*). The population stands at over 1,765, nearly 5% of the country. The average age of residents is 42.8 years, which is over one year higher than the average for Poland. The gender distribution shows that there are more women than men (54% to 46%).

Figure 1: Population by age in %
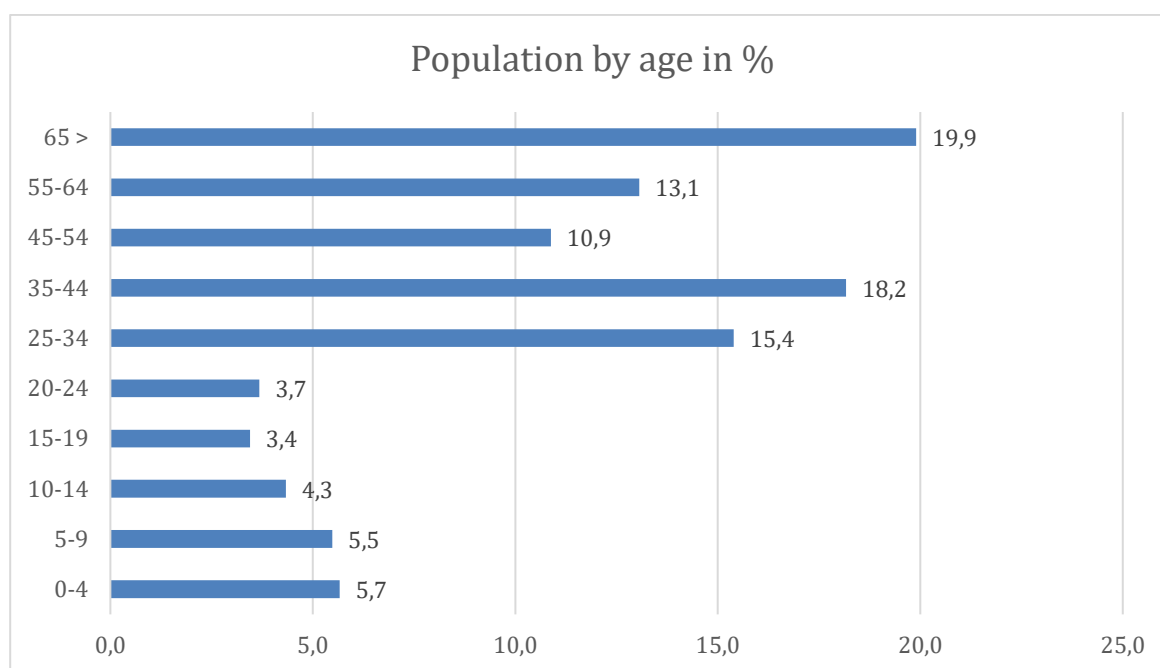
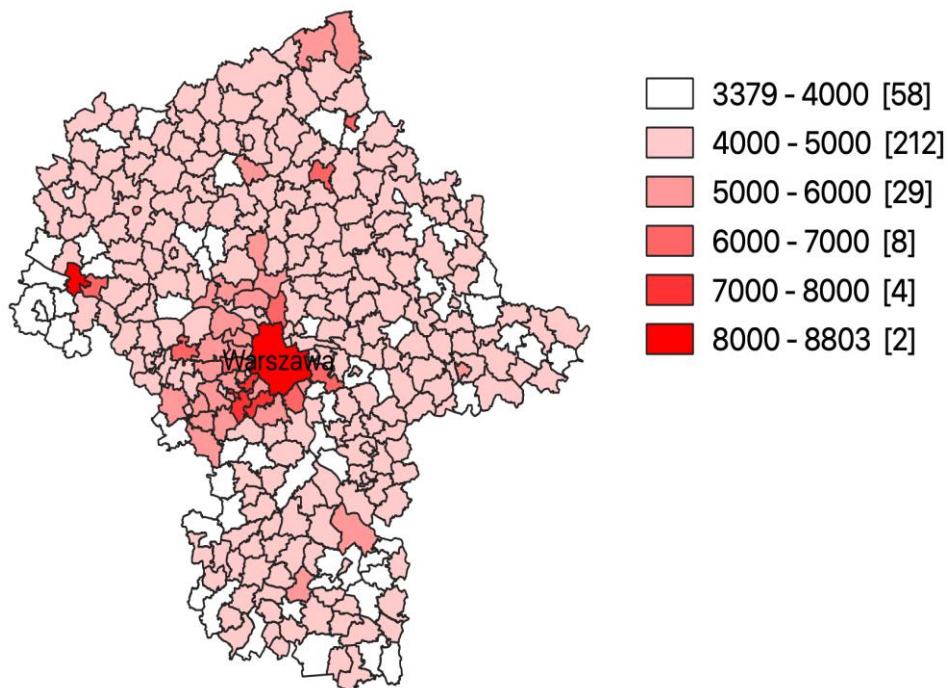*Source*: Data by Central Statistical Office (2018)

The share of the foreign migrant population in Poland is relatively low compared to western EU countries, however it is systematically growing. The official number of foreign residents coming from the EU who had received work permission in *mazowieckie vovidhip* in 2018 was 115,000; however, estimates suggest that more than 150,000 foreigners (EU and non-EU) live in the Warsaw municipality alone. Among non-EU migrants in Warsaw, the majority consist of Ukrainians (more

than 50%), and after them Vietnamese, Byelorussians and Russians form significant shares. Research estimates the number of migrants in Warsaw as 8% of the population.[42]

Socio-economic issues

From an economic point of view, Warsaw is one the richest parts of Poland. The total income of the city's budget in 2018 exceeds the sum of 15 billion PLN (three billion EUR). The share of Warsaw′s economy in the country′s GDP exceeds 17% (75 billion EUR), and GDP per capita is almost twice higher than average for Poland. The average salary in Warsaw reaches 6,000 PLN (1,400 EUR) and the registered unemployment rate in 2018 was at the level of 1.5% (compared to 3.8% for the country and 4.9% for *mazowieckie voivodship*). Simultaneously, Warsaw is surrounded by one of the poorest areas in the country. Metropolitan influence is spatially limited, and narrowly concentrated. Nearby villages and cities are very dependent of the capital, especially if well connected by public transportation.

Figure 1. Borough income per capita (2017)

Source: Central Statistical Office; quotas in PLN. 1 = 4.3 EUR

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[42] http://www.migracje.uw.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/raport-power.pdf [accessed 20.03.2019]

There is a large gap between Warsaw and rest of *mazowieckie voivodship*. In the region, 70% of counties receive budget income at the level not exceeding five thousand PLN per capita. This equals to 60% of Warsaw income. In consequence, a great migration to Warsaw has been observed over the last 25 years. The main migration reservoir for Warsaw is the surrounding regions and the north-eastern part of Poland. The permanent migration balance indicator in Warsaw is positive. In 2017, it equalled 4.46% and is bigger than in 2016 by 6.1%. The birth-rate in Warsaw in 2017 had increased by 1.25% compared to 2016.[43]

Young people come to Warsaw for education purposes and the majority remain in the city to continue their professional careers. With the higher cost of living (mainly housing costs), there are much higher salaries in Warsaw compared to other Polish cities. Over 79% of Warsaw′s inhabitants consider Warsaw as a better (40%) or not worse (30%) place to live in compared to other cities in Poland.

Socio-cultural issues

Warsaw is the one of the most important cultural, science and education centres in Poland. There are 15 public higher schools (university level), and 60 with non-public (private) status. In almost 75 university level schools there were 2,395 students, which is 18% of the total number of students in Poland. Due to a vivid academic life, Warsaw is also an important centre of science activities, hosting governmental and NGO research and development branch institutions as well as science education and communication organisations. As an important centre of university level education, Warsaw attracts a considerable number of foreign students.

The capital of Poland also has a high concentration of cultural institutions. There are 14 national museums and over 27 theatres, alongside more than 200 libraries. A significant number of cultural activities are dedicated to young people specifically. The city has the largest in Poland per capita number of theatres, cinemas and other cultural centres, presenting the possibility of spending leisure time and participating in cultural life. Many other forms of cultural and social activity meet minority groups′ needs and expectations. Warsaw, due to the dynamic migration and population changes, is known as one of the most open and culturally diverse cities in Poland. A significant number of social and cultural events are focused on showcasing the current and past cultural diversity of the city.

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[43] https://warszawa.stat.gov.pl/opracowania-biezace/opracowania-sygnalne/ludnosc/stan-i-ruch-naturalny-ludnosci-w-wojewodztwie-mazowieckim-w-2017-r-,1,12.html [accessed 20.03.2019]

Warsaw is the second tourist city after Krakow in Poland. The number of passengers at city′s airports

exceeded 21 million in 2018. Among 25 million of Warsaw′s visitors, the significant share come to

the city for business purposes. The presence of foreign tourists influences cultural life; in 2008, Warsaw received the title of European Capital of Sport.

Warsaw has a long history, which is still present in social and political life. We can especially mention the traumatic memories and experiences of World War II such as the German occupation; the Ghetto 1943 Uprising and the 1944 Warsaw Uprising are similarly vivid. Before 1939, the city was a bi-cultural agglomeration, mainly due to a Jewish, majority Yiddish-speaking population. Nowadays, Jewish cultural heritage has become an important part of the city's cultural identity, which is reflected in several cultural events and festivals.

Socio-political issues

Warsaw is the centre of political life in Poland because of its administrative position. It is also the home of Frontex, the agency responsible for the security of the external borders of the European Union, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), and the OSCE agencies. The presence of governmental institutions, parliament, political parties, and media headquarters is an important factor influencing the possibilities of social and political involvement. Due to this fact, the level of political activity compared to the rest of the country is relatively high. Almost 9% of all NGOs registered in Poland are located in Warsaw (over 10 thousand organisations). Almost 2,000 NGOs located in Warsaw work in the field of culture.

Since 2007, Warsaw has been governed by liberal and left-liberal coalitions. Political leaders receive

stable and strong support from the majority of the city′s citizens. Opinion polls show that an average

75% of citizens positively assess various aspects of life conditions in the city. Lately, the city′s

government has become more active in the field of equal rights and promotion of tolerance with special respect for LGBT and migrant minorities.

The political attitudes among Warsaw′s citizens are diverse. From one side, the low unemployment

rate, growing economy and high living standard foster a pro-liberal orientation, but the more traditional, right-wing attachment is also noticeable. Support for liberal and left oriented parties

dominates among younger citizens of Warsaw. This goes along with strong support for European integration, democracy and a liberal set of values. However, it must be noted that the intention of political commitment amongst young people in Warsaw is undermined by individualism and their prioritisation of a professional career over social activity. As mentioned in the first section, a significant part of the young population in Warsaw consists of migrants from other areas of Poland. Some of them feel less connected with the local community of the city, while others have an important impact on the social and political life of the city.

2. Sample socio-demographic issues

All respondents have formal ties with their organisations (were members of organisation or employed staff). The sample is composed of 28 young people (21-35 years old). All the interviews took place in Warsaw, within a time period from April to August 2018. Table 1 summarizes the main socio-demographic attributes of the local sample.

Figure 2. Socio-demographic sample

Age range	Gender	Geographic province	Qualification	Current occupation	Partner	Children
21-25: 8 26-30: 13 31-35: 7	Female: 16 Male: 12	Warsaw: 28	High school: 5 Bachelor: 3 Master:20	Unemployed: 1 Part-time work: 4 Full time work: 23	Yes: 17 No: 11	Yes: 3 No: 25

The majority of the research participants were in the age range between 26 and 30 years old. This is similar to observations from other studies, which indicate that the dominant category of NGOs' workforce in Poland are people pursuing higher education. Almost every one of the interviewees has received an education with a background in humanities subjects (sociology, political science, law.). A few of the respondents tried to study in science, but resigned. In interview, they mention that NGOs represent a good job opportunity for their degrees. Half of them were born outside Warsaw, but they came to the city for education (mainly studying) purposes. Over half of them are engaged in partnership relations, but only three have children. This can be explained by considering the high level of job insecurity in the NGO sector. Even if they consider themselves lucky to work for an NGO, respondents complained that their salary is relatively low according to Warsaw's standards.

3. Life before participation

The definition of borders for a "life before participation" is different to establish. Some respondents state that they did some voluntary actions at a very early age ("I initiated the action of cleaning up local cemetery when I was eight years old"), others began their activity during education in lower high school or even when they began to study. The majority of respondents become active on the social ground at the age of 15-17 years old.

The two main paths towards being an activist lead through involvement in voluntary actions or school self-government. Social life before participation is focused on the circle of school friends and family. A minority of respondents, (especially those belonging to non-formal organisations or pro-ecological movements) report identification with subcultures, like punk or anarchist movements. Sport or scout movement membership was only incidentally mentioned as important parts of life before political involvement.

The primary socialization in the majority of families is based on openness and partnership. In some cases family conflicts are mentioned, but in general family members are supportive or at least neutral. School environment plays a basic role in life before participation. The school class is the natural milieu where friendships and social contacts arose. School life forms a social space, where activism and involvement are possible. However, teachers are rarely mentioned directly as important actors, role models or sources of intellectual stimulation. In their case, more often lack of interest or even criticism is reported. The majority of interviewees received good marks or at least experienced no major problems with education achievement; however, in some cases they experienced stigmatization because their political beliefs, orientation or way of life.

Family relations can be described by four models. In the first model, parents represent rather liberal attitudes while relations in the family are based on partnership and openness. In this model, relatives of our respondents do not present strong political involvement nor identifications. According to this, decisions on the education path of interviewees rely on their own choices, with only slight influence or advice from their parents' side. In some cases, emotional distance or even the unconcern of closest relatives is reported.

In the second model of primary socialisation, parents and relatives express clear political involvement, mostly liberal or leftist (even if they are religious). In this case, relatives form an important reference for young people. Relations in the family are based on partnership and children

are encouraged to make their own and independent life choices and decisions. The two above models are most common among respondents from student organisations and left-wing parties.

The third model covers cases of families of conservative, religious and right-wing background, where traditional ways of thinking are transmitted to the younger generation and accepted by the youngest members of family. This model appears only among right-wing party activists.

The fourth model of family relations is focused around various types of dysfunction. It covers intergenerational conflict, emotional and identity-formation problems and family disintegration caused by parents' emigration, divorce, etc. This model is particularly present among respondents representing grassroot/solidarity movements, left libertarian organisations/groups and feminist groups/organisations.

The expression of loneliness, misunderstanding and a lack of support from their circle of friends or school was also mentioned from respondents of different backgrounds. Political activity besides other factors opens up the possibility of enlarging the social circle of interviewees.

4. Political socialization process

They are two main sources of political socialization of Polish respondents. The first is family of origin and the second comprises various forms of organized social life. In the second category, the main positions go to non-governmental organisations, often present in the school environment. Those respondents who come from families of strong political traditions choose their organisational affiliation more carefully and consciously, whereas in the case of others their first decisions concerning experiences of citizenship and political activity seem to be more accidental. In many interviews, the concept of the "natural born" activist is present. According to this view, respondents declare that they had the "will to do something for others and with others" as far back as they can remember, so their later decisions and activities were a consequence of "natural disposition".

Political socialization in families has a rather osmotic character. Here, attitudes, values and world-views are transferred during everyday communication, telling stories about family history and so on. Parents often avoid clear political declarations, rather they formulate statements on social and economic issues from which their political convictions can be derived. Examples of intergenerational conflict are present, however they do not dominate. The majority of parents represent left or central-liberal view on politics.

There are three "degrees" of family politicization. The first degree might be described as a lack of politics in family life. This means that closest relatives are not members of political parties/organisations, nor are they interested in the field. This situation at least in one case were experienced with much regret and disappointment, but in other cases political indifference and lack of involvement were described in neutral terms.

The second level, most common among Polish respondents, could be described as limited interest in politics within the family. In most cases parents or other relatives have a recognizable set of political convictions, which are expressed during our respondent childhood.

5. Mobilization and recruitment processes

The process of mobilization and recruitment has a chain-like structure. The first step of involvement in any kind of activity causes a widening of perspectives, establishing new contacts and finding new possibilities of being active for the majority of respondents. The beginning of activity is often seen as an interplay of accidentality and inner factors described generally as the "will to do something". "Accidentality" covers cases like meeting people who are active, finding an organisation in the neighbourhood, receipt of parents' help and/or advice (information) from them. The age of mobilization differs largely. Some of the interviewees began in the years of early adolescence (10-12 years old) other define starting point of their involvement quite recently (3-5 years ago), i.e. during their academic study, other started in the time of high school education (16-18 years old).

Members of political parties (left and right) usually were conscious of the direction of their involvement. They apply for political organisations membership, almost as fast as it was possible, at the age 16-18 years old.

The road towards membership in student organisations leads through activity in school self-government, local youth boards, international youth exchange projects or other voluntary activities in non-governmental organisations.

For the majority of respondents, including members of leftist organisations, LGBT movements, roots solidarity cooperatives and ecological movements, participants' "activity journey" starts with voluntary involvement in actions, protests or other forms of activity. In their case, the process of

selection of the target organisation is often based on a series of trials and attempts, necessary for the right choice of belonging.

6. Practices / Sustained participation / Multiple participation

Regardless the type of organisation, the new, non-traditional variants of actions' repertoires prevail in the experience of Polish respondents. More traditional in form, regular assemblies are of minor importance (alternative organisations and cooperatives, grass-roots movements). Young activists' tasks in their organisations are well defined. Almost all respondents declare their responsibility for precisely named actions, continuous events or fields inside their organisation. They are dealing with design and conduct press conferences, meetings, trainings, protests, help initiatives, networks of cooperation and so on. According to this fact, the main fundamental question connected with being an organisation member is "how to do something" and not "what to do". As a consequence of this goal-oriented perception of activity inside organisations, the ideological debate, confronting ideas, finding consensus and providing reflection on actions are less mentioned, and put aside – the main focus is on efficiency and effectiveness of performance.

The tendency described above prevails in testimonies of members of youth branches of political parties (left and right) and youth/student organisations. The core of sustained participation in their case might be understood in terms of contacting other members during everyday activity inside the organisation. Networking includes exchange of information, finding partisans, building support as well as work with task and duties. This becomes a priority in umbrella organisations (represented by student/youth organisations in our sample). Such a model is present especially in hierarchized organisations (youth branches of political parties and student/youth organisations) where decisions are transmitted from decision centres to the bottom. In this case, we might interpret networking as an alternative form of influencing decision process accessible for ordinary members, particularly when their social networks include the decision makers or other important actors.

Participation in an organisation's life is focused around "special events". This concept covers a wide variety of actions depending of type of organisation. In youth branches of political parties they are: press conferences, public political meetings, less often political protests or demonstrations "against" which are considered a bit less efficient and not fitting the pattern of doing politics in a modern way. In students/youth organisations core events are described as trainings and youth conferences. In other types of organisations, special events covers political protests, cultural events, like concerts or

performance, food markets and various form of protest actions. In those types of organisations, networking is most mentioned as a "way of being" not only a way of dealing with tasks and duties.

The form of participation that can be called "familiar networking" could be observed among participants from alternative communities, grass-roots solidarity movements, ecological, feminist and LGBT organisations. The two main dimensions of sustained participation in that case are networking and emotional bonds with the social circle associated with organisation. Organisation forms a supportive social environment, described by respondents in terms like "green island" or "positive bubble".

Here also the feeling of "finding a new family" is often emphasized. The organisation environment is located in opposition to the "world outside", with special underlying of the unique character of social relations, friendship, received support, understanding and the right to be understood inside the collective. As a consequence, and because of the large number of participants and the variety of issues they cover in their political intervention, these groups promote working tables, task-oriented teams or other *ad hoc* groups which allow a broader and more inclusive participation, allowing actors to streamline these decisional processes and elaborate proposals during meetings. Organisation itself serves as a platform of debate for people who share similar world views, however they may differ in their particular opinions. In the alternative organisation and grass-root solidarity movement, traditional, regular assemblies play an important role in building trust and common identity among members of the collective and, as a consequence, in sustaining their participation. Also, respondents refer to their participation in assemblies as a "measuring system" of their level of involvement in the group.

A set of individual "tête-à-tête" meetings, is a common practice among members of youth branches of political parties and youth/students organisations. Their main purpose is to negotiate rather than to mobilize. The source of this form of sustained participation comes from the world of adult politics.

Multiple involvement and blurred involvement is a kind of general rule among our respondents.
The border between the professional work of interviewees and their involvement in organisations is often blurred. Some of them are in managerial positions in their associations or are taking responsibilities for an extensive set of tasks. This type of engagement often goes along with paid positions (in youth/students, LGBT, feminist and grass-roots cooperatives). In other cases (youth

branches of political parties, alternative-left organisations), respondents receive remuneration for separate single assignments or jobs.

According to the intensity of involvement of our respondents, two models of conduct appear. The first one, the model of limited, part-time participation, is rare and present only among single ecological-environmental, LGBT, feminist and left-alternative organisation members. The second one, where political activity is rather time-consuming and engaging, dominates in testimonies of all respondents, but is especially visible in the case of youth/student organisation, youth branches of political parties, and grass-root cooperative members. A high level and intensity of involvement leads to conflict between engagement and private life (youth branches of political parties, youth/student organisations) or between political activity and professional careers (LGBT, and student/youth organisations, youth branches of political parties).

The majority of our respondents were formally tied to their organisations (except the ecological organisation members). Formal inclusion means a form of membership or permanent, paid job. Such permanency was prevalent among members of student/youth, feminist, grassroots cooperative and LGBT organisations.

Ideology is mainly understood in the context of activity and community. Direct identification with political ideology is more clear among members of political parties, left-alternative, feminist and ecological-environmental organisations. According to this, the left-wing, right-wing, anarchism, feminism and ecology were mentioned and precisely named as ideologies. In general respondents have tendency to avoid the term "ideology" as stigmatizing because of its totalitarian associations (e.g. the ideology of communism, Nazi ideology). In practice, the ideological choices and preferences are formulated in the terms of "values", "world views", "way of living". The ideology, regardless the use of the term, must be seen as an important factor shaping respondents' involvement and activity. The formation of particular "world views" leads to engagement and participation in the organisation composed of people sharing and supporting the same values. There is no evidence of ideological shift during the stable involvement period – the time of seeking identity is located in the high school years, or at least before full involvement and participation. Alongside the "will to do something for the people", ideology (understood as the strong commitment to the set of values) must be seen as the most important factor underlying social activity.

The role of ideology is a constitutive factor in creating social ties. Sharing the same values strengthens the groups within the organisation, and simultaneously, group impact supports the ideological choice of the respondents.

7. Evolution (inside organisation / change of participation outside organisation / disengagement)

The general model of career path in the organisation could be described as voluntary activity- full participation-voluntary activity model. At the beginning, young people try to understand an organisation, mainly by becoming involved in separate carefully chosen ways or events, then they become more involved, and start to carry responsibility for tasks and actions. The next stage of career path inside the organisation is full time engagement, often joined with a paid or managerial position. For the majority of respondents who reached this stage, the choice between involvement in social/political activity and private life priorities (such as a family life, a better paid job, a professional career) becomes the most crucial issue. In consequence, after a time of full-time involvement, a gradual withdrawal from extended activity is observed. They seamlessly transfer into the position of advisors, supporters or – as a beginning – incidentally involved volunteers. This kind of change is accompanied with life-course dynamics. For respondents who reached the level where self-identity is composed and stabilized (end of university level study), the need for supportive, value-based social circle is weakened. They put their focus more on individual and rational goals than on collective, value-based and emotionally saturated actions. The above-described scheme is recognized especially among members of student/youth, feminist, environmental and LGBT organisations.

Young people involved in youth branches of political parties (left and right) treat their activity inside organisations as a step towards participation in professional politics. Taking positions in parties' structures or local government and other forms of presence in the "serious political game" makes the border between voluntary involvement and professional activity blurred.

The same level of professional involvement in politics is being reported among members of student/youth organisations, however, in their case, activity in organisation and in politics is perceived as two separate, sometimes contradictory spheres. Youth activists report that the area of professional politics, where they are active on several positions, is a valuable resource of skills and competencies, but being tied together with rigorous demand of subordination towards the rules of the "political game" rather disappoint the majority of respondents from this group. Even if still active in professional political life, they confront its reality to work in youth/student organisations, where there are such priorities as shared values, feeling of friendship and actions oriented towards the common

benefits of young people. The model of multiple participation, where activity in different organisations (youth-oriented organisations and parties or other political bodies) persist continuously for a relatively long period of time is most visible among respondents coming from youth/student organisations.

The other model of ties with an organisation's life-world can be observed in the case of alternative-action and left-libertarian organisation members. In their case, the organisation is perceived as a life-world, offering wide range of activities and securing most important needs, like housing (left-libertarian) or a source of regular income (alternative action), as well as a community of shared values. In such a model the bonds with the organisation are sustained and the involvement of organisation members becomes enhanced. The time perspective of participation for the interviewees from mentioned above categories of organisations (especially alternative actions) develops into life-long engagement.

However, the level of ideological identification with an organisation and its community is also strong in the case of environmental, LGBT and feminist organisations, these branches do not offer resources that are necessary to access financial and housing independence. Sooner or later, the dilemma between a well paid job and political/social activity is recognized by activists belonging to these types of organisations. The majority of them are conscious of this or at least will partially withdraw from organisational involvement in the predictable future.

Regardless of such a perspective, all respondents associate their career inside the organisation with personal growth. Learning new competencies, gaining new skills and experiences are mentioned by almost all of them. Working in an organisation makes them more conscious, more organized and generally increases their position in the job market. In general, receiving recognition from the organisation leads to a higher engagement, political visibility, greater public and political responsibility (such as: becoming a trainer, local leader, spokesperson or a contact person between the group and other groups or contexts, speaking with journalists or institutions, participation in advisory bodies, etc.).

Furthermore, the evolution of members' roles is also shaped by the presence (or absence) of specific events and actions (like political campaigns, demonstrations, campaigns or actions). In such a circumstance, our respondents tend to intensify and strengthen their own presence and belonging. Oftentimes, increasing the level of participation corresponds with (or is related to) getting closer

relationships with other members. Beside this, the moments of intensification of action serve as a trial period: those who confirm their competencies and involvement are offered better positions inside the organisation. But this kind of boost and escalation of tasks and jobs also makes the contradiction (tension) between having a professional career (as well as other personal life-goals) and political/social involvement more visible and troublesome.

8. Biographical impact / Future

According to opinions of all Polish respondents, political participation produces a real change in their own life. They dedicate most of their free time to it, which means that there is not much left for other activities and contacts with people beyond the group. Activism often resulted in a change in the social circles of our respondents – new people were mostly connected with their engagement and over time replaced many previous relations. In some cases, political activism led to the end of friendships and family problems. As one of our interviewees said: "Political involvement influences not only body, but also emotions and mind. It's very exhausting but in the same way very addictive". Nonetheless, a great majority of our respondents don't regret they decided to get politically involved and perceive their activism as one of the most, or even the most important part of their life. It means that the rest of their life is fully subordinated to political activity and as such requires very good organizational skills. Only one respondent seemed to regret his devotion to a political party and choosing it over his academic career, however he also confessed that it had helped him to escaped from the typical career scheme of someone from a little city. However, it also had a negative impact on his work in the media, because journalists should be apolitical.

Thanks to their activism, respondents learned a lot about group and decision-making processes, social interactions in general (also how to listen to others) and how to cooperate and meet halfway with others. Activism taught them a lot of discipline and responsibility for their own actions, but also how to trust and depend on others. Activism also means access to information from the primary source and influencing people.

They also gained a variety of practical skills like: computer graphics, editing documents, the use of word press, journalistic skills, practical knowledge on feminism and youth policy, organizing concerts, sound production, acoustic and PR skills.

The main reason for being activists is the faith that it really changes something. It doesn't only mean changing the external world, but also the internal one. Some of the interviewees said that through

their social/political activities they had become more mature, less emotional and developed their self-assertion. One interviewee also admitted that only because of her social engagement did she finally understand why she had been raped and thanks to her organization she managed to get over it.

However, political and social activism also leads to the situation when other people have very specific expectations from people who are engaged in it. Activists feels like being "marked" in some way, which can have positive but also negative impact on their life. In some cases, this also applies to family relations.

Even though activism fills every single minute, most respondents still want to stay active. After such a long time of social and political engagement it's difficult to distinguish activism from "everyday life", especially that for many of them it's all their adult life: "I can't do it differently, even though sometimes I would love to know how to live without it. Political involvement gives you adrenaline. Even now, when I'm sick, I can't stop. My whole life is subordinated to it."

Our interviewees don't imagine a situation which could force them to stop being engaged in political/social activism unless something bad would happen with their health. Health and in some cases family reasons would be the only things that could make them leave this kind of life, because when one has started, it's hard to stop: "I see myself only as an activist, however I would also like to know how to breathe without it, but for now it's impossible. Activism is such a big part of me, that I wouldn't be able to exist without it. I can't imagine that I concentrate only on my academic career and leave everything here. I'm afraid of being burn out one day. I would like to come to the moment when I could concentrate on something else. But in the same time, I can't imagine that, I was born like this."

9. Conclusions

On the basis of the interviews, the factors shaping patterns of involvement in social and political actions of young people in Poland can be described as similar, regardless the type of organisation. The most visible and important elements behind the involvement are: the "inner need" for activity rooted in collective context ("doing something for others"), seeking a supportive group of people sharing the same values and world-views and looking for types of action leading to self-development. Across the type of organisation/group we observed strong similarities in our respondents' accounts in terms of primary and political socialization as well as in terms of biographical outcomes. Although, in the case of respondents who are closer to more traditional forms of political participation, the

family impact on social and political socialization, based on presence of significant role models among relatives is more visible. Participation in an organisation/group seem to have very similar effects on the life course and biography level for our respondents, despite being involved in different organisations/groups to the given stage. Close to the phase of starting professional career, the choice between remain in activity or gradual withdrawal is to be made. If the organisation offers the possibility of transferring to a professional career (usually in politics) or creates a supportive milieu (like alternative communes) the probability of remaining active grows. In the Polish case the mobilization process, the practices, the sustaining and the evolution processes show some differences according in which organisation/group our respondents are active. The line differentiating different habits and experiences goes between, from one side, youth branches of political parties, alternative, left-radical and student/youth organisations, and for the other – the rest remaining types.

TERREN, FONT, FERRAN AND CLUA

1. City context

Population

Barcelona is the capital of Catalonia. It is located in the North East of Spain and has a population of 1.620.343 inhabitants (2018). It is the second among the 8,124 municipalities in Spain (representing around 3.5 % of the Spanish population). The average age is 44 years old.

Figure 1. Distribution of age groups over total population by gender
(Barcelona municipality, year 2018)[44]
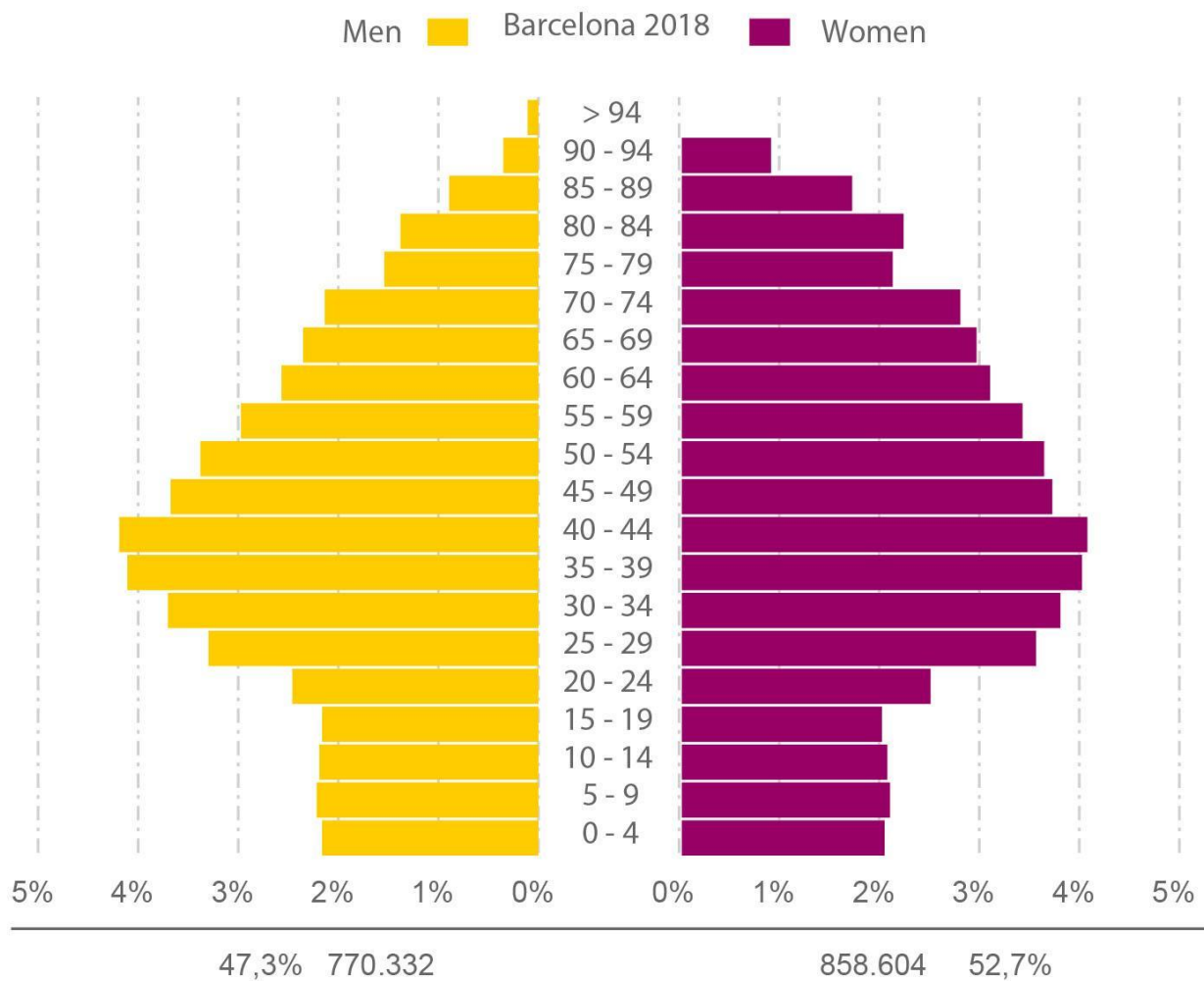
Administratively, Barcelona is the regional capital of the Autonomous Community of Catalonia (with 7,496,276 inhabitants in 2017). The functional urban area of the city of Barcelona is its metropolitan area, whose administrative name is *Àrea Metropolitana de Barcelona* (AMB). It includes 36 municipalities and a population of 3,247,281 inhabitants (2017). On an institutional level, several organisations operate in this region: city councils, metropolitan bodies, county councils, agencies and consortiums, organs of the regional and state governments, as well as European bodies such as the Union for the Mediterranean. On another scale, we have the Metropolitan Region of Barcelona, larger than the AMB and one of the largest urban agglomerations in Europe, which includes more than five million inhabitants. This area represents 63.7% of the Catalan population and the 10.2% of the Spanish population.

Figure 2. Map of Barcelona's metropolitan units and population (2017)
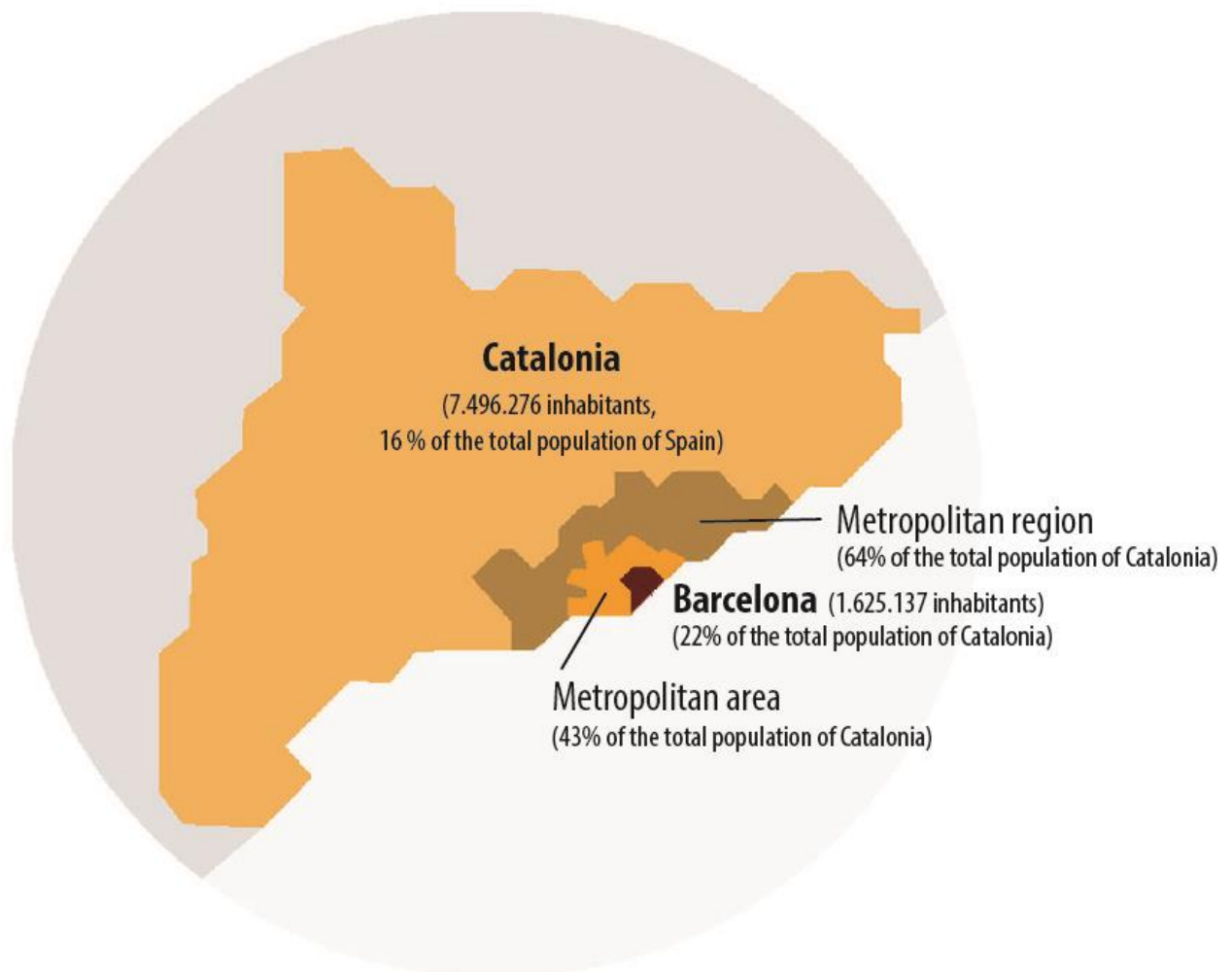
The population composition is very complex, due to the growth dynamics of the metropolitan area of Barcelona after several decades of population growth based on an intense immigration from the rest of Spain and from abroad. Foreign citizens represent 14% of the total population of the metropolitan area. The city of Barcelona had a population of 1,620,343 in 2018. Foreign citizens represent 18% of its total population (of which 30% are from other European countries). In terms of numbers, the top three origin countries are Italy, China and Pakistan. By age group, 15.1% of the total population are underage (0-17 years old); about 22.4% are young (18-35 years old); 42.1% are between 36-65 years old and 20.4% are older than 66 years old.[45]

Socio-economic issues

Barcelona has historically been in a privileged position in Spain's urban revolutions. The city has played a key role in pioneering the several economic turns that have marked the development towards the current global economy. Barcelona was considered the "Catalan Manchester" at the beginning of the twentieth century, and it continued to be a strategic city after the establishment of the so-called post-carbon economy. Today Barcelona is representative of knowledge-based urban development and its ICT-based activities. Globally, Barcelona enjoys a leading position as a place for production and research, as a tourist destination, business centre, cultural and innovative hub, and a commercial and leisure harbour.

The metropolitan area of Barcelona plays a leading role in the context of Europe. Its strategic geographic position and population density are supported by a network of transport (railway, road, sea and air) and communications that connect it to the other main metropolitan areas on the continent and the Mediterranean arch.

Several rankings place Barcelona as an important city in terms of foreign investment. According to the Global Cities Investment Monitor 2018 of KPMG, Barcelona occupies the ninth position among the world's urban areas in terms of foreign investment rates. Also, Barcelona is the European city with the best promotion and recruitment strategy of foreign investment for the period 2018-2019, according to the FDi Cities and Regions of the Future Report 2018-2019 (Financial Times group).
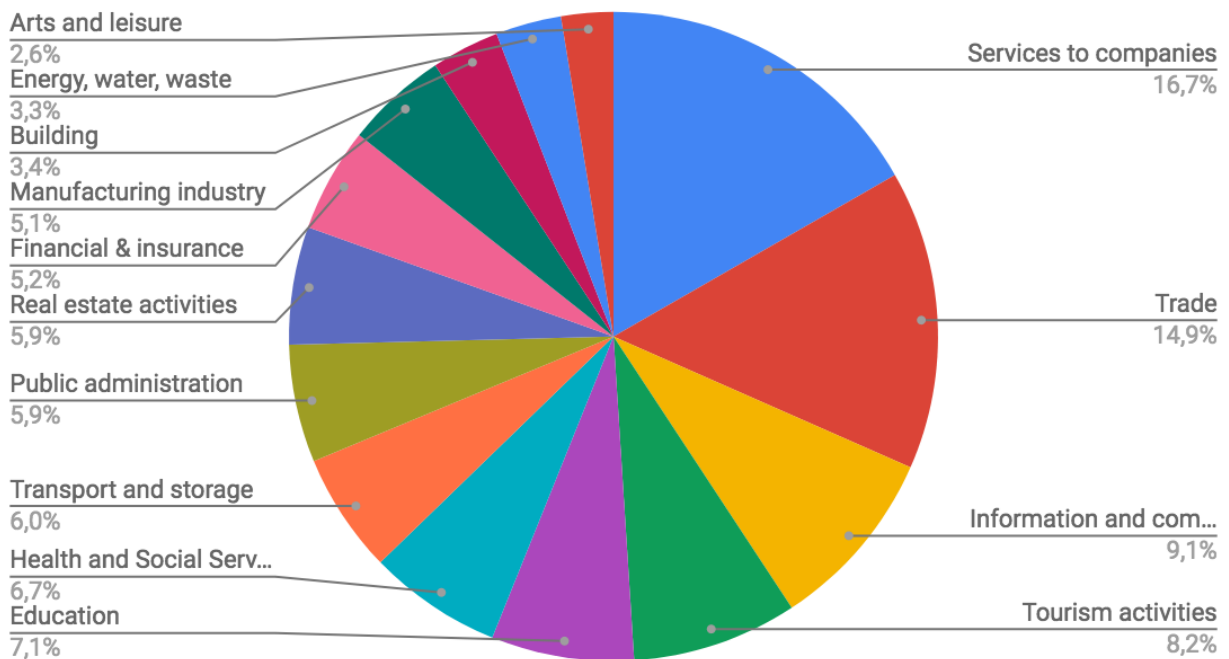
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[45] Sources: http://estadistica.bcn.cat/

The Metropolitan Area of Barcelona also leads the ranking in terms of exports. The AMB gathers a fifth (19.8%) of the total Spanish sales abroad. There are 40,634 exporting companies in Barcelona today, which represent a quarter (25.1%) of the total number of Spanish exporting companies.

The structure of Barcelona's economic sectors in terms of gross value added (GVA) could be summarised as follows (data from 2017):

Figure 3. Barcelona's economic sectors

Barcelona's economic sectors (2017)

- Arts and leisure 2,6%
- Energy, water, waste 3,3%
- Building 3,4%
- Manufacturing industry 5,1%
- Financial & insurance 5,2%
- Real estate activities 5,9%
- Public administration 5,9%
- Transport and storage 6,0%
- Health and Social Serv… 6,7%
- Education 7,1%
- Services to companies 16,7%
- Trade 14,9%
- Information and com… 9,1%
- Tourism activities 8,2%

Source: Barcelona City Council

From an economic point of view, the metropolitan area of Barcelona is one of the richest areas in Spain. It is at the core of the economic activity in the province of Barcelona, as well as of Catalonia. The AMB concentrates half of the total production (GDP) and workers of Catalonia. Nevertheless, after the last economic crisis of the late 2000s, indicators of poverty have been on the rise in the city. High rates of youth unemployment and the increase of precariousness in the living conditions were clear indicators during the post-crisis period, and they have become a pattern of the current evolution of the city. Following the negative evolution of living conditions and the increasing inequalities over the last years, the poverty risk or social exclusion rate (AROPE) of Catalonia stood at 19.4% in 2017.

Although this rate is inferior to the Spanish one (26.6%) and the EU-28 one (23.5%) for the same period, the city has experienced the effects of an increasing cost of living (mainly related to the rising prices of the housing market). According to the Observatory of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, in 2018 the main problem in Barcelona was access to housing. This has resulted in a significant increase in evictions since 2017. In fact, in 2018 there were an average of 20 evictions per day in the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona. Barcelona was the city with the highest ratio of evictions due to unpaid rents in Spain. Housing prices in the city rose significatively over the last years.
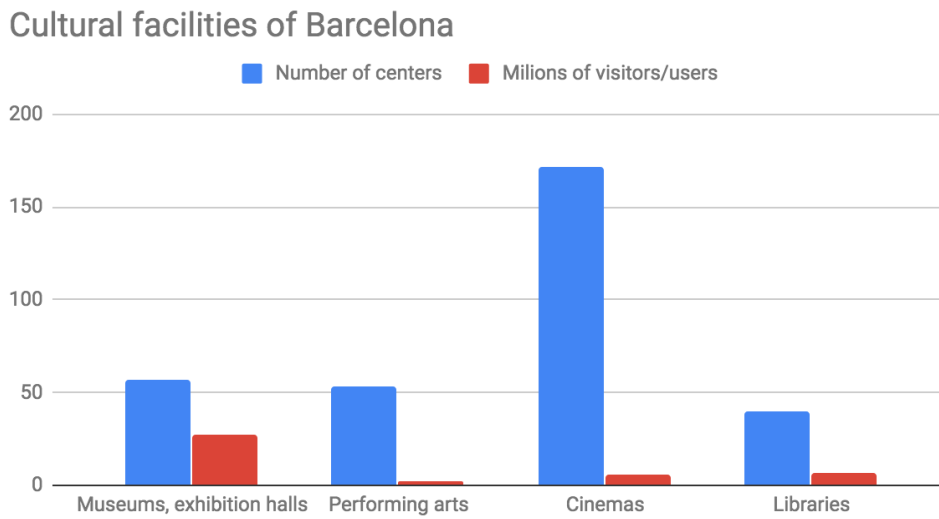
Socio-cultural issues

Barcelona has a long tradition as a capital centre for social organisations. The social tissue of Barcelona has been considered as key in the city's political evolution since the restoration of democracy in the 1970s, as well as part of the city's cultural heritage. In 2017 there were 52 formal civic centres and 20 informal community centres, all of them offering a rich agenda of activities. The 2017 Panoramic Report[46] on third sector activities in Catalonia estimates that there is a total of 5,350 entities in the city of Barcelona, of which between 4,700 and 4,800 are associations. There are different models of associations, from complex managerial structures to very local self-managed organisations, the majority of which are configured by militants, associates and volunteers more than by paid professionals.

Barcelona is also a vibrant city in terms of cultural production, offer and consumption. During decades it has been the capital of the editorial industry in Spain. In 2017, 49.5% of the Spanish editorial industry was based in Barcelona.[47] Over the last 20 years it has developed into an important cluster of creative industries linked to mobile technologies. It has become the Mobile World Capital, with important events like The Mobile World Congress taking place each year in the city.

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[46] Torre Jussana -Centre de Serveis a les Associacions. Informe Panoràmic 2017 http://www.elpanoramic.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/informe2017.pdf
[47] Source: Spanish Ministry of Culture

Figure 4. Cultural facilities of Barcelona

Cultural facilities of Barcelona

Legend: Number of centers (blue) · Milions of visitors/users (red)

Chart showing for Museums, exhibition halls; Performing arts; Cinemas; Libraries — y-axis 0 to 200.

Source: Observatory of Cultural Data, Municipality of Barcelona, 2017

In terms of the level of education, the city council offers data from 2017 stating that 47% of Barcelona's citizens have a secondary education, 31% have a higher education, 18% have a primary school education, 3% have not studied at all, and the remaining 1% is unknown. According to the city council, in the academic course 2015-2016, there were 604 primary education institutions, including nursery schools, of which 44.5% were public.

According to the Catalan University Quality Assurance Agency (AQU) the number of higher education institutions in Barcelona stands at four public and four private universities, with campuses in Barcelona and its metropolitan area.

Socio-political issues

The local government in Barcelona is ruled by the Municipal Charter. The mayor is the highest authority and head of the municipal council, the organ of political representation of the citizens of Barcelona, which is composed of 41 councillors elected every four years. The municipality is divided into 10 districts with powers over local services. Each has its own district council, the composition of which is proportional to the election results obtained by each party in that district.

In its more recent history, Barcelona's City Council has been run mainly by left-wing parties. The Catalan Socialist Party was in power for more than twenty years from the first municipal elections (1979) after the restoration of democracy until 2011. From 2011 to 2015 there was a period of right-

wing leadership with the political party *Convergència i Unió* (liberal Catalan nationalists) at the forefront. The results of the 2015 municipal elections were in part a reflection of the social discontent manifested through the 15M Indignados movement, which had a significant impact in Spain and gained an important local representation in Barcelona. The activist-based political organisation *Barcelona En Comú* won the elections with the support of the leftist parties.

The context has changed regarding the current electoral context (the next municipal elections will take place in May 2019). The so-called "Catalan process" developed on aspirations to self-determination at a Catalan/Spanish scale has centred the political debates and has also polarised political options. This process has had a strong influence on the political participation at the local scale too, resulting in an increased interest in political issues among young people. It is important to keep in mind that the interviews took place at a time when the claim of self-determination, linked to the vindication of democratic rights, represents one of the main issues on the political agenda, and has mobilised millions of people. To have an idea of the number of participants in the demonstrations, what could be considered as the first demonstration in the Catalan independence movement took place in central Barcelona on July 10, 2010 against limitations in the autonomy of Catalonia, and particularly against a recent decision of the Spanish Constitutional Court to cancel or reinterpret several articles of the 2006 Statute of Autonomy of Catalonia. The number of people taking part in the demonstration was estimated at between 1.1 million (according to the local police) and 1.5 million (according to the organisers). Following demonstrations (e.g., Catalonia's national day on the 11th September) have attracted similar numbers throughout the years. The number of voters at the October 1st 2017 referendum on independence was 2,286,217.

The "Catalan process" has generated substantial controversy with respect to the national identity, not just in relation to sovereign aspirations but in relation to the level of identification with the Spanish monarchical regime and the current Spanish Constitution. On the one hand, there is an increase in the activation of the social base (at all ages) that supports aspirations for independence from what (especially after the police intervention during the Referendum of October 1st 2017) is being perceived as a repressive state, as well as those who stand against independence (conceived in nationalistic terms), often called unionist or constitutionalists. In any case, this issue has strongly conditioned the placement of Catalonia's youth on the left-right ideological axis.

2. Sample socio-demographic issues

The youth sample is composed of 28 young people (18-35 years old). All the interviews took place in Barcelona or in municipalities located in the Metropolitan Area, from September 2018 to January 2019. Table 1 summarises the main socio-demographic attributes of the local sample.

Table 1: Socio-demographic sample

Age range	Gender	Geographical provenance	Qualification	Current occupation	Partner	Children
18-20: 8 21-25: 7 26-30: 8 31-35: 5	Female: 12 Male: 16	Barcelona: 10 Metropolitan Area: 5 Rest of Catalonia: 3 Spain: 5 Foreign: 5	Elementary school: 1 High school: 2 Bachelor: 11 Masters: 12 PhD: 2	Student: 10 Working Student: 4 Unemployed: 2 Part-time work: 2 Full time work: 10	Yes: 13 No: 15	Yes: 3 No: 25

As shown in the above table, the respondents in our sample are spread in terms of age-range, although slightly less interviewees were between the ages of 31 and 35. There is also diversity when it comes to geographical origin. Indeed, around half (15) of our respondents come from Barcelona or its metropolitan area, while the other half (13) come from other municipalities in Catalonia, other parts of Spain, or other countries.

The current occupation of the interviewees of our sample is rather balanced as well. While 16 of them are working (either full time, part time or student jobs), 12 are not (either studying or unemployed). Only two of our respondents were not working nor studying during the interview process. Looking at education, we see that an overwhelming majority (89%) of our respondents hold a university degree and/or are currently studying at university.

These characteristics in relation with their occupation, studies and job conditions reflect a pattern already detected in a survey published in 2017 about young people in Catalonia.[48] The survey is situated in a "post-crisis" job market scenario in Spain, which has left behind destruction of companies

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[48] Population of 15 to 34 years residing in Catalonia. Sample: 3,423 individuals. Source: Serracant i Melendres, P. i Sala i Torrent, M. 2018. Enquesta a la joventut de Catalunya 2017.
http://treballiaferssocials.gencat.cat/ca/ambits_tematics/joventut/observatori_catala_de_la_joventut/enquesta_joventut_Catalunya/publicacions/

and jobs in the years 2008-2013 without recovering the pre-crisis rates of economic growth and employment creation. This scenario is characterised by the persistence of high unemployment rates and strong inequalities in terms of job security, salary, working conditions, professional perspectives and social protection. In this context, the young population is particularly vulnerable to the risks of labour market exclusion and precarious employment. Temporary jobs and low wages have been consolidated as a structural element in the process of insertion into the labour market, at least for an important part of the young population. The transition between education and training processes is undergoing significant changes, with the extension of this stage (more time studying), the breakdown of linearity, reversibility and the diversification of youth transitions. In line with expectations, only three out of the 28 interviewees had children.

In addition, the majority of young people interviewed have high educational levels (bachelor, master or PhD) and/or parents/family in qualified jobs. This circumstance coincides with the general relationship between the socio-educational level and the level of participation, in which young people with higher level of education, or those who come from more prosperous contexts or from a high economic and educational level engage more in participatory and political practices.[49] Only three out of the 28 activists interviewed were neither studying at university nor held a university degree. One was still in high school and the other two were working (both were from abroad – Ecuador and Romania).

3. Life before participation

Most of our respondents come from middle class families, with at least one of the parents in full time employment. Most of the respondents describe their childhood in positive terms, describing their relations with parents as respectful, even when they disagree on some issues. However, in some few cases our interviewees have experienced personal events (such as the divorce of their parents, losing a mother, or living or seeing violent situations at home) which have been influential in their development and in how they perceive social inequalities, especially gender-based. In only two cases they referred to religion as something relevant in their lives, even when some of them have attended Catholic Schools. In fact, some of the respondents have specifically referred to this Catholic background as not influential at all.

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[49] González, I., Collet, J., & Sanmartín, J. (2007). Participació, política i joves. Una aproximació a les pràctiques polítiques, la participació social i l'afecció política de la joventut catalana. *Barcelona: Institut de Govern i Polítiques Públiques.*

A clear pattern could not be identified when it comes to how our respondents described their school experiences. However, while many described the school environment as intellectually stimulating and inspiring, a few of them presented their school environment as apolitical, segregated, and talked of their childhood and schooling as a difficult experience in general. For some of them, studying in a school outside their neighbourhood has delayed their involvement and participation in their local community, as their friends were not close to them. The neighbourhood was in many cases presented as an important element in their primary socialization process.

Most of the interviewees mentioned taking part in extracurricular activities while they were at school. Scouting was mentioned on several occasions, along with various sports (football, basketball, athletics) and, to a lesser extent, artistic activities such as playing music or painting.

4. Political socialization process

Many of the respondents in our sample defined their political socialization as a gradual process built through attending conferences, meeting new people, reading books, seeing or participating in events or protests, among others. However, this political socialization process has been particularly influenced in our sample by two general events in Spain these last years: citizen mobilizations against the economic crisis and the austerity policies (e.g., 15 M), and the political relation between Catalonia and Spain over the last years. In many cases, one or both of these events have been mentioned by our respondents as important moments in their politicization process.

Looking at this process of political socialization, we see a rather clear distinction between respondents whose families are interested and/or involved in politics and those whose families are not. On the one hand, some reported growing up in families interested in politics and/or involved in political organisations. In some cases, their parents were involved in politics or left-libertarian organisations when they were young (young people were particularly active in Spain during the last years of dictatorship). They describe in many cases political discussions at home, and how some parents (usually the father) are very interested in reading about politics, or actively involved in left-libertarian organisations (often mentioned as an example of their own current participation). This has been an important factor in the politicization of some of them, as it has facilitated their access to information and books at home. In other cases, older brothers or sisters have been an important reference or example. They were in many cases taken to protests with their parents as children or teenagers, representing influential experiences in their political socialization. They mentioned for example demonstrations about the war in Iraq, refugees, austerity measures, public education, as well as

independence protests from 2012 onwards. This group seemed to mention less conflictual relations (whether ideologically-based or not) with their family, and, as expected, seemed to have received more support from their family when engaging politically. In some cases, they described their parents as becoming less committed and moving towards a more right-wing ideology with age.

On the other hand, some reported having a family that is not interested at all in politics, or whose interest and participation is limited to voting. These had a political socialization process that mainly took place outside their family and presented more conflictual relations (often ideological) with their family and less support (when not direct criticisms and doubts) when starting their engagement. Some activists pointed out having had initial problems with their parents who did not see their activism as something productive that could bring anything positive to their future and who thought that they should invest more time and effort to their studies.

Several activists mentioned school as an important trigger of their political curiosity and a driver of their political socialization process. Some of them started having political discussions in high school. They mentioned influences such as discussions with teachers or history classes, which made them discover class struggles, among other things. School was described by some as the place where they first developed social consciousness and critical thinking. For young girls, high school has been a important moment in the process of feminist awareness, when beginning to live uncomfortable or discriminating situations. The respondents active in feminist groups also describe the time in high school as the moment when they started to discover themselves as part of a particular group with specific problems (discrimination, oppression). In these cases, it has been very important for them to meet other people with the same concerns as a way to feel accompanied and start the learning process on these issues.

An even more important step in many of our respondents' political socialization process was starting at university. This step is described as a time of major changes, including moving out of their parents' home (in some cases moving to Barcelona from another city or region), choosing a degree, meeting new people, discovering a variety of political organisations, among other things. In many cases, arriving at university was presented as the moment when they started to be interested in participating more concretely.

The neighbourhood was also mentioned in several interviews as being important in their political socialization process. Some of them link this process to the associative tradition of their

neighbourhood. Several respondents talked about scouting during their childhood and the impact that it had in terms of politicization. They often described the Scouts as a space where they could exchange and discuss ideas and values, and sharpen their critical thinking. Some presented it as an escape from schools (often conservative or catholic) that did not provide such spaces, and in which political discussions were not commonplace. In some of these cases, participating in scouts has continued over the years. In other cases, travelling with their family to other countries, or the direct contact with nature since they were children have been for some of them important influences in their conception of the world and their awareness of the need to take care of it.

In a few cases, the awareness has come after a personal situation in which they have needed support from an organisation, as in the case of evictions. After this experience these respondents have discovered the importance of understanding social inequalities as something beyond their particular problem, and how they are not responsible for their situation.

5. Mobilization and recruitment processes

In a large majority of cases, participation in protests, demonstrations or strikes has been one of the activities identified as triggers of more active participation. Respondents also mentioned readings and other educational resources, whether alone or shared with friends. Looking at the mobilization and recruitment processes, or the turning points that triggered mobilization among our respondents, we could identify four main types of process.

First, some interviewees had a clear idea about what they wanted and the direction they were going to take. These tended to take initiatives to find the people, spaces and organisations that suited them best, by browsing the web, going to organisations' offices, or choosing their university or city based on the social movements that were there, and on the local context. In some cases, they tried or visited some organisations before deciding on the one that suited their interests the most. One of our respondents even explained how she started activism in a will to meet new people with similar concerns and that this primary drive was soon replaced by anger and a true passion for the cause.

Second, a significant proportion of the interviewees in our sample described having started their mobilization and entered in contact with organisations through personal encounters with engaged individuals who introduced them to an organisation. In many cases, these encounters happened when arriving at university and/or when moving to Barcelona.

Third, a few respondents declared having created an organisation themselves to fill an existing gap. Two of the interviewees described having gathered with schoolmates to create a student organisation in their high school, or some other organizing neighbourhood friends to create a local group to develop youth-led actions, such as reclaiming a space for young people. In these cases, older relatives or friends, as well as contacts with other similar organisations have been influential, as they have used this knowledge to organize their own interests.

Fourth, in many cases, mobilization and the decision to contact and join specific organisations were triggered by particular events, which are seen as turning points between political socialization and mobilization. These events were often either of a more personal (e.g., evictions) or public (15M, Catalan independence) nature. For instance, a few interviewees explained that they had mobilized as a direct reaction to the threat of eviction that they were under. They thus contacted an organisation to look for help and meet people who were facing the same issue. Once they started to participate they have continued being involved in helping others with the same problems, also taking action to solve some social problems in a broader sense (not just stopping evictions, for example, but also changing laws or public policies).

Regarding more public events and processes, both the "Catalan process" (independence movement), which began in 2010 and triggered several key events (especially the Referendum of October 1, 2017), as well as the mobilizations of 15M against the consequences of the economic crisis and the austerity policies that followed have been present in most interviews and described as crucial moments in their politicization but also in their mobilization process. In some other cases, professional or academic developments (starting a training, or trying to find a practical side or a motivation for their studies) have played an important role in some respondents' mobilization.

For many interviewees, taking part in assemblies was among the first activities once they joined or just before joining an organisation. This can be seen as a primary and more passive phase of observation, during which they get acquainted with the organisation and its work.

6. Practices / Sustained participation / Multiple participation

Participating in an organisation or association is not a homogenous action, as there are many ways to do it, differing either by the level of involvement, the responsibility, the dedication or the roles that develop over time. Across respondents, the most widely mentioned practice was attending and participating in assemblies, where collective thinking, debates and decision-making take place. In

other cases, participation was limited to attending various activities, protests or meetings. In some cases, especially those in left-wing political parties or left-libertarian groups, after a time attending only assemblies they have started to take on other responsibilities, for example working in particular commissions, involved in the organisation and development of projects, attending coordination meetings in some external organisations or accepting a more engaged position inside the organisation, assuming responsibilities in the bodies of representation or management, or even in all of them at the same time. In other cases, especially for students or workers, the level of participation depends on different periods (exams, deadlines), and some of them deem it important to find a balance between private life and participation, for example on weekends (spending time with family or friends).

In many cases, when talking about their practices, activists from the left-libertarian and informal citizens groups mentioned providing support, guidance and advice to people in difficult situations. In several cases, these activities included providing legal support, informing vulnerable groups about their rights in specific situations, trying to build a space where everyone feels safe and respected. For some of them, participation is directly related with their studies, professional background or job (politician in right-wing political parties, lawyers, journalists).

Another important and common element among the interviewees was pedagogy and awareness-raising. This was particularly – but not exclusively – the case among feminists and environmental activists who frequently mentioned the importance of raising awareness about these issues in their activist work. Opening people's minds to the issues at stake or the need to recognize diversity were in some cases presented as the most important aim and driving factor in their activism.

When it comes to these driving factors maintaining their participation, a significant proportion of respondents in our sample declared that having found a community of like-minded people who they can relate to played an important part in their sustained participation. Interviewees often mentioned finding a place with people who shared their concerns and ideology, a place where people understand each other. Meeting new people and making strong friendships were also among the most cited positive aspects related to their activism.

Across our interviewees, one of the most recurrent drivers of participation was the feeling of responsibility, whether towards particular youth collectives, other activists of their organisation, or society in general. They often felt a commitment to change and improve things, particularly unfair situations. Another related factor is the anger and disagreement with how things are for vulnerable

people, especially for young people or some specific collectives (feminists, informal groups). As problems linger, they feel the need to continue working to change things.

Another important driving factor in many of our respondents' sustained participation lies in seeing the impact of their work, seeing that it can have a positive social impact. This feeling is related to another significant driver in their sustained participation: the feeling of purpose, of being useful. Many reported this feeling of purpose related to doing activism. Some even declared feeling empty when not participating for some time.

One important source of motivation in their sustained participation is working directly for their own goals through their own means, for example doing things for young people (informal local groups, student organisations) without needing an adult or a public administration to organize it. Some of them, in particular those in left-libertarian organisations or feminist groups, pointed out also the importance of the internal processes, the care and respect for differences, the need to address social problems from an intersectional perspective.

A few respondents are participating in more than one organisation at the same time. In all the cases these organisations are quite different as they have different goals, action fields and time requirements. Some of the most common combinations are student organisations at the university and local youth groups at their neighbourhood, or political parties (left-wing youth branch) and local organisations (feminists, left-libertarian). In some cases, student organisations have limitations to multiple participation, as they demand full time dedication and exclusive participation. The main motivation for multiple participation is to work on different issues and on different scales, something related to their own evolution as activists. One of the main problems these respondents find to multiple participation is time. On the one hand, in some cases assemblies and activities overlap and they must decide each time how to organise and which organisation is a priority at every moment. On the other hand, even when they can attend because timetables coincide (between week and weekends, for example), participating in all the activities is very difficult and it implies giving up other things, like hanging out with friends or spending time with family.

7. Evolution (inside organisation / change of participation outside organisation / disengagement)
The patterns of evolution in our respondents' participation vary across interviewees and organisations, often depending on personal and contextual changes. Some activists participate only in one organisation since the beginning, or remain in one after trying (without involvement) other

options. In some cases, even when they have moved to a different city they have continued in the same organisation or a similar one (environmental, informal, left-libertarian). Others mentioned an evolution inside the organisation, assuming more responsibilities or changing the focus (towards feminist concerns, for example). In some cases, particularly among very young activists, they describe a first phase of learning internal dynamics, of ideological learning, a more passive time that leads to a more active involvement once they get used to it. Some of our interviewees described an intermittent participation (even disengaged at some points in time), but that they were always participating in one way or another. Some have reported changing to other organisations, due to changing interests. In some cases, their evolution has involved participation in new organisations to incorporate other scales or causes (for example, young people in student organisations involved after a while in more locally-based organisations, or in political parties). In these cases, they wanted to combine the work oriented for students with other issues, related with the "Catalan process" (independence movement), with social issues (housing, feminism) or with local issues.

Most respondents recognised their privileged position in relation to other people suffering inequalities (particularly socioeconomic) and other forms of oppression (gender, sexual orientation, among others). Many of them described participation as something you can afford only if you have your life "in order" (economic, social, legal). These activists often say they do not fight for themselves but for others who cannot do it.

In the case of our disengaged respondents, two main factors were cited as reasons for putting an end to their participation. Around half of our disengaged respondents reported having stopped participating due to financial reasons. Some decided to leave a precarious job and look for another, some had to work more hours or found a new job with more responsibilities, and thus could no longer dedicate themselves and their time to activism. The second factor is related to finding their place in the organisation. Around half of the respondents who have reported having disengaged from their organisation mentioned the fact that they could not find their place within the organisation. Some were starting to be frustrated as they did not see a real possibility of having an impact, while others were starting to feel too old for their organisation, got discouraged, or had disagreements.

The issue of age is particularly relevant in organisations where involvement starts when they are very young (in the left-wing political youth branch, they tended to have started participating at 16 or 17 years old), or in organisations with a known end date imposed by the characteristics of the organisation (e.g. student organisations, when they finish studying). In some of these organisations,

disengaged respondents started to feel out of place, exercising an "adult power", or they got tired of repeating things they had tried before and have not worked.

8. Biographical impact / Future

All the respondents mentioned the fact that participation has had a profound personal impact on their own life, even for those who have disengaged. Many of them reported having become more sociable, open-minded and confident. Some reported having improved in terms of affective skills, they have changed how they relate to others. They also describe activism as something that brought them knowledge, something that has kept them informed and updated.

Some of them also pointed out that they feel more responsible, more aware of their responsibility vis-a-vis social issues, other people who depend on them or with their academic or professional commitments. Militancy often also made them feel more empowered, giving them a sense of satisfaction, of having done and doing something meaningful, with an impact.

Many interviewees in our sample talked about changes in their relationships since they started activism. On the one hand, changes that have had a positive impact. In many cases they explained being better at relationships in general, being more open to new ideas, better able to listen and leave room for others to express themselves. On the other hand, for some of them (in particular those involved with feminist or LGBTQ issues) participation has made some relationships more difficult, sometimes even non-existent. Many of them reported having lost contact with friends, engaging in heated debates with people who were less informed or sensitive about certain issues, and having lost patience when exposed to some attitudes or comments. One respondent from a feminist organisation explained that when starting to deal with these topics and becoming engaged, more and more confrontational conversations with old friends started to take place. For respondents from right-wing parties, their participation throughout these last years has resulted in lost friendships, especially in the Catalan political context of confrontation between supporters or detractors of independence.

Militancy requires time, and it has had an important impact on our respondents' time management. Many have had to change their habits or even stop doing some activities they used to do in order to adapt and find the time to participate. Some of the interviewees mentioned the sacrifices that they have to make in order to be able to participate. For example, some of them still live with their parents to avoid too much financial pressure and as a way to have more time to participate. Emancipation would make participation more difficult.

The relation between their activism and their studies or professional life is important for a majority of the interviewees. For university students, the engagement helps them better understand what they are learning, it is seen as a source of motivation. They would like to continue not only participating in their organisations, but also having the opportunity to apply all the things they have learnt and their abilities at the professional level. For older activists, it has in some cases become important to find a job related to their values and interests, and also to transmit the knowledge acquired through their participation to other areas, for example, to the class in the case of teachers.

Although to different extents and in different ways, all the respondents in our sample declared that they would keep participating in the future, or at least that they would like to do so. Even the disengaged respondents stated that they would like or had planned to start activism again, in another form and/or in another organisation. Even though the desire to maintain their participation was unanimous, a distinction can be made in terms of the power of their conviction and the emphasis on the things that could impede their participation. Indeed, some declare that they will continue participating and fighting for what they believe in "no matter what happens". Although some of them recognise that there can be some obstacles on the road, they will make sure to adapt. Some of these have stated, for example, that they did not understand not participating today. In a few cases, they even recognized that they would be willing to give up certain things (maternity, a stable job) that could prevent them from continuing.

On the other hand, some have declared willing to continue participating, but only provided that it remains compatible with changes in their lives. These mentioned finishing their studies, finding a new job with more responsibilities or having a family as the main life changes that could potentially put an end to their participation. Limitations to participation in the future could be related to job precarity (for example leaving the country to find a better job), legal issues or repressive reasons (as a consequence of their actions), or ideological disagreements with the organisations. In some cases, they showed interest in expanding or changing their level of participation to other contexts, more related with 'adult activism'. In this sense, they distinguished between young organisations (student organisations, young left-libertarian groups) as something temporal and adult groups (political parties, left-libertarian groups, feminist organisations), in which they hope to find a different purpose in the future.

9. Conclusions

Although we did not find significant or recurrent similarities or differences across different types of organisations, we could identify important similarities and differences in activists' paths and profiles. When discussing our respondents' political socialization, there were abundant references to two key influential events and developments that took and are taking place in Spain and Catalonia, namely: the 15M protests and the Catalan independence movement.

A clear distinction could be drawn in the socialization and mobilization paths of interviewees whose parents and family are interested and/or involved in politics and those whose families are not. While some were taken to protests with their parents and received support when starting their engagement, others were politically socialized and engaged outside – and with no support from – their family.

Another important finding was that 25 out of 28 of the interviewees in our sample are studying at university or hold a university degree, coinciding with the general relationship between the socio-educational level and level of participation. Moreover, many of them described starting university as an important moment in their processes of political socialization and/or mobilization.

Across different stages of engagement – from primary socialization to evolution to another organisation – the neighbourhood/local level was in many cases mentioned as a key element and as a more realistic scale on which to act for positive social change.

When it comes to our respondents' mobilization, although we could identify 4 distinct 'mobilization paths', in a majority of cases, participation in protests, demonstrations or strikes have been the activities identified as triggers of mobilization or more active participation.

Across our respondents, we found important similarities in the drivers of their sustained participation. Indeed, most interviewees mentioned having found a community of like-minded people, feeling a sense of purpose and responsibility, and the satisfaction of seeing the impact of their work.

Taking stock of their experience as activists, all the interviewees in our sample believed that their participation has had a profound personal impact on their life, even for those who have disengaged.

Looking forward into the future, all the respondents – although to different extents and in different ways – declared that they would keep participating, or at least that they would like to do so.

SWEDISH REPORT

LUDVIG STENDAHL AND KATRIN UBA

1. City context

Population

Stockholm is the capital of Sweden and the biggest city in Stockholm County (*Stockholms län*); it is the region where we have interviewed youth activists. With a population of 2.3 million, Stockholm County is the largest region in Sweden and it forms about one fifth of the total Swedish population of 10 million (2017, SCB). The average age of the people living in the region is 39.2 years (40 for women, 38.3 for men). See Figure 1 for distribution of age groups.

Figure 1. Population distribution in Stockholm region over gender and age[50]
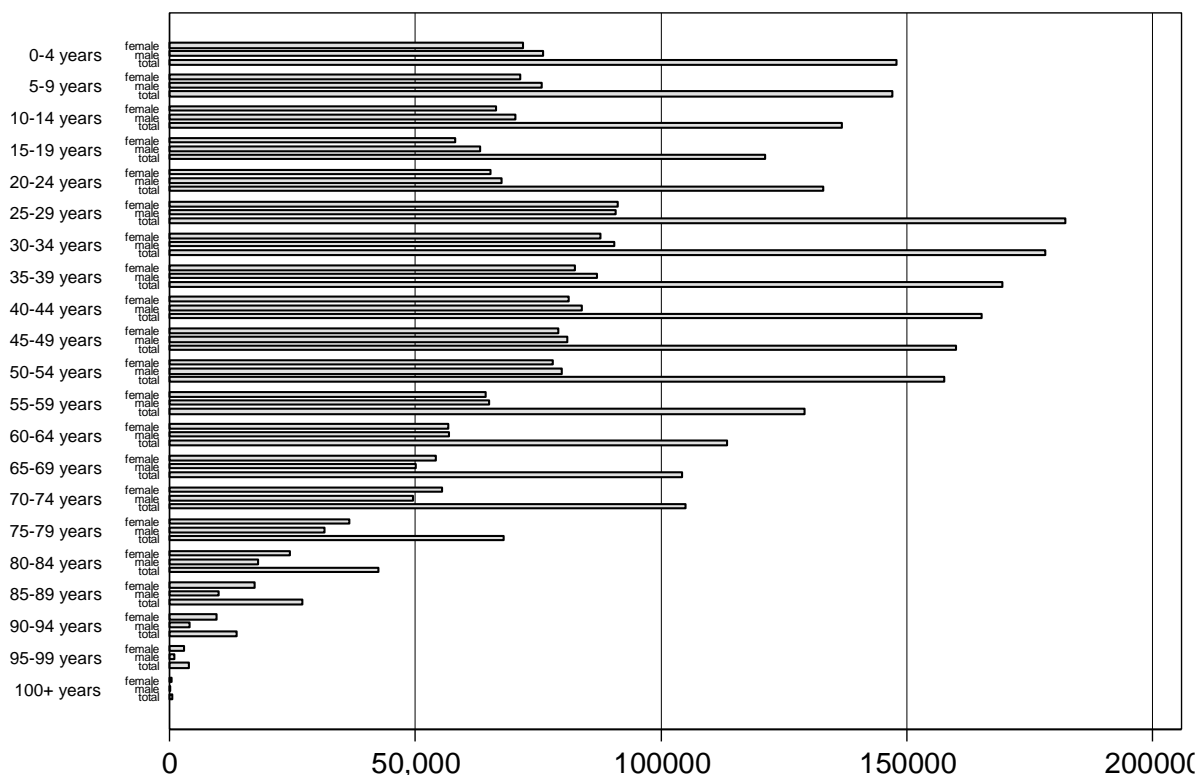
The region is composed of 26 municipalities, including the city of Stockholm. The region is also called "Stor-Stockholm" (Greater Stockholm/Metropolitan Stockholm). The population is constantly increasing due to urbanization, immigration, and the increased number of births, and the number of

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[50] Figure is made by authors, using data for 2017 as presented in the website of the Statistics Sweden (www.scb.se).

inhabitants is particularly increasing among adolescents and elderly people.[51] Of the total population increase in Sweden, about one third of it is happening in Stockholm County. The region is considered as one of the most attractive metropolitan regions in Europe, alongside cities like Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin, and Dublin.[52]

About 33% of the people in the region are born either outside Sweden or have two parents who were born outside Sweden. However, only 11% of the people living in the region are not a Swedish citizen (SCB, 2017). There are about 100,000 foreign citizens between the ages 15-34 years old, coming mainly from other Nordic countries, as well as the other EU countries and former Yugoslavia, but also from many Asian (Iraq, Syria), African (Somalia), and South American (Chile) countries (Ibid.).

Socio-economic issues

From an economic perspective, Stockholm County is the driving force in the Swedish economy and one of the most developed regions in Sweden. The region has the highest regional GDP per capita in the country, 41% higher than the national average in 2014.[53] The median annual income in the region for people older than 20 years was in 2016 about 25 550 Euro (income excluding taxes, SCB 2016).

Stockholm is facing major challenges with regards to infrastructure and the housing market, which both need rapid development due to the population growth in the city. Housing construction is currently not keeping pace with the population growth, and new ways of organisation and financing are needed to tackle these challenges. Likewise, the population growth puts increasingly more pressure on the region's infrastructure – roads, railways, public transportation – which demands more investments and improvements of said systems.[54]

In international comparison and rankings, the quality of life in Stockholm is considered good.[55] A 2018 report from the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth showed that commuter

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[51] https://www.sll.se/verksamhet/Regional-utveckling/Nyheter/2018/11/lanets-befolkning-okar-med-en-miljon-till-2060/
[52] https://www.sll.se/globalassets/4.-regional-utveckling/uppfoljning/rufs-arsuppfoljning-2016.pdf?_t_id=1B2M2Y8AsgTpgAmY7PhCfg%3d%3d&_t_q=utlandsf%c3%b6dda&_t_tags=language%3asv%2csite id%3a8824540f-e7eb-44a0-94f3-c48a0b63798c&_t_ip=212.53.109.239&_t_hit.id=PublicWebv2_Cms_EPiSrvr_EpiDependencies_Document/54330&_t_hit.pos=5
[53] Ibid.
[54] Englén et al. 2015. "Challenges Facing the Stockholm Region: New Solutions Urgently Needed". Report prepared for the Stockholm Chamber of Commerce. Stockholm: KTH Royal Institute of Technology
[55] https://mobilityexchange.mercer.com/Insights/quality-of-living-rankings

municipalities, that is, municipalities close to big cities, had the highest quality of life in the country. Several of the municipalities in Stockholm County fall into this category[56]. In terms of quality of life, availability of services, education, and living standard are among the relative strengths of Stockholm County compared to the rest of the country. Among the relative weaknesses are civil society engagement, overcrowding (housing), health and diseases, and income inequality.[57]

Socio-cultural issues

The city of Stockholm was founded in 1252 and has since 1436 been the capital of Sweden. Stockholm is the cultural hub of Sweden and hosts many of the major state-owned museums, cultural institutions, and universities in the country. Most national media also have their headquarters in Stockholm. The city is the home of the biggest university in Sweden, Stockholm University, which had 32,942 registered students the spring semester of 2018. The country's biggest technological university, the Royal Institute of Technology, is also located in the city. Moreover, Stockholm hosts several small to medium-sized universities, such as Södertörn University, the Karolinska Institute, and Stockholm School of Economics.[58] However, as most big cities, Stockholm is not a pronounced student city. 72 percent of all the people between ages 15-74 in Stockholm County are working, 4.2 percent are unemployed, and the rest are not in the labour force (e.g. students, retired people).[59]

Stockholm has a rich cultural life with many museums, art galleries, and theatres. Cultural spending accounted for around 2.3 percent of Stockholm Municipality's budget for 2019.[60] Stockholm was named the European Capital of Culture in 1998 and was awarded the European Green Capital Award in 2010, when the award was given for the first time. The city is the home of people from a broad set of backgrounds – from both within and outside of Sweden. Its diversity has left an impression on the city, offering a large variety of different cultural experiences as well as a diverse restaurant and art scene. Stockholm is a major tourist destination in Europe: the city had north of 14 million commercial establishment overnight stays in 2017.[61]

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[56] https://tillvaxtverket.se/download/18.4b7aaef116361fb46d92136b/1526542519636/Rapport0251.pdf
[57] https://tillvaxtverket.se/download/18.4f25c81636c7e330b92478/1527237078999/BRP+%2001%20Stockholms%20l%C3%A4n%20bilaga.pdf
[58] https://www.uka.se/statistik--analys/statistikdatabas-hogskolan-i-siffror/statistikomrade.html?statq=https://statistik-api.uka.se/api/totals/1
[59] http://statistik.stockholm.se/images/stories/excel/b214.htm
[60] https://stad.stockholm/sa-anvands-dina-skattepengar/
[61] https://www.stockholmbusinessregion.com/globalassets/about-us/facts-and-figures/facts-about-tourism/annually/arsrapport-20180906.pdf

Socio-political issues

Since 2006, Stockholm County Council has been governed by different right-wing coalitions. The most central political tasks at the county level is health care and public transportation, but they also have responsibilities in regards to regional planning and culture. The municipality of Stockholm – the biggest in the region – saw a shift in political majority after the municipal election in September 2018. After four years of a central-left majority, led by the Swedish Social Democratic Party, the four major right-wing parties, together with the Green Party, won majority.

Stockholm has a widespread and diverse civil society, with active political parties as well as other political and social organisations. Most civil society organisations with a national or international scope are located in the city or the county. A study from 2014 showed that about 53 percent of the Swedish population between 16 and 74 years of age did some form of voluntary work.[62] Youth are participating in everything from political, to religious and humanitarian organisations. Although a majority of the larger organisations in the region are located in Stockholm city, many organisations are also present in other municipalities and in the suburbs – especially political parties. Some municipalities also have local youth councils.

There is a housing shortage in Stockholm, which is greatly affecting many young people and students in the region, and especially in Stockholm municipality. Only about 41 percent of the people between 20 and 27 years of age in the region have their own place (which they own or with a protection of tenancy). Thirty-one percent still live with their parents, 11 percent are living in a sublet, and 10 percent are renting a room in someone else's apartment or house. The municipalities in the region report that it is increasingly more difficult for young people to move from their parents' home.[63]

2. Sample socio-demographic issues

Our sample consists of 28 young people aged between 18 and 35 years old, all interviewed in Stockholm county during the period of May to October 2018. Table 1 summarizes the main socio-

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[62] http://esh.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:808859/FULLTEXT01.pdf

[63] https://www.hyresgastforeningen.se/contentassets/82ebeae16d554694a31a4397a6c86043/unga-vuxna-2017/stockholm-2017---unga-vuxnas-boende.pdf

demographic attributes of the local sample. The largest age cohort in the sample is 26-30 years old (13 respondents), and there is a relatively equal gender balance in the sample.

Table 1. Background statistics of the 28 people interviewed in Sweden

Age range	Gender	Geographical provenience	Qualification	Current occupation	Partner	Children
18-20: 6 21-25: 7 26-30: 13 31-35: 3	Female: 15 Male: 13	Outside Sweden: 4 East of Sweden: 18 Central Sweden: 2 Southern Sweden: 2 Western Sweden: 2	High school: 7 High school + (profession or undergrad.): 10 Bachelor: 7 Master: 4	Student: 1 PhD student: 2 Working Student: 6 Full time work: 18 On leave: 1	Yes: 17 No: 11	Yes: 1 No: 27

The majority of the respondents are from Stockholm and other parts of eastern Sweden. In the sample, there are also 11 interviewees with a foreign background (four born outside Sweden and an additional seven with parents born outside Sweden), which demonstrates the heterogeneous background of Swedish youth. Another important aspect is that many of the respondents in the sample recently moved to Stockholm – often after finished university studies – which demonstrates the aforementioned growth of the region.

Considering that Stockholm is the economic hub of Sweden, and that it is the location of the majority of the state and international organisations' offices, the high rate of respondents in full-time employment (18 of 28) is not surprising. Many of the respondents work for the organisation they represent or in other positions related to their activism, while others have very varying jobs, including social worker, communication strategist, primary school teacher, elderly caretaker, military personnel, museum worker, and landscape architect. Nine respondents are currently studying towards a doctoral, master, or bachelor degree and one is on parental leave (being previously unemployed). The fact that only one of the active young respondent is a parent probably refers to the relatively high average age of first-time parents in Stockholm (32.3),[64] and our sample has an average age much lower than that.

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[64] https://www.scb.se/hitta-statistik/statistik-efter-amne/befolkning/befolkningens-sammansattning/befolkningsstatistik/pong/tabell-och-diagram/topplistor-kommuner/medelalder-for-forstagangsforaldrar/

3. Life before participation

The primary socialization of most respondents started at home, learning about "rights and wrongs" from their parents. In a couple of cases, grandparents also played a big role in this process. *The similarities of the primary socialization period heavily outweigh the differences when comparing the different groups in our sample*; the differences we find are more related to socio-economic factors and family background, rather than group membership. The majority of the respondents come from middle- or upper-middle class families, where education was considered an important asset. For many respondents, school and education were daily discussion topics at home. Similarly, education was also emphasized – sometimes even more so – by working-class parents who wanted their children to reap the benefits of higher education. Almost all respondents thought that they did well at school – only a few noted that they could have studied a bit more and done even better.

Many (40%) of our respondents come from families where the parents divorced either when the respondents were very young or teenagers. This is, however, nothing specific to our sample, but rather the examined age-group, as their parents belong to the generation where divorces became much more common in Sweden. Several of these respondents still note that the process of divorce influenced their lives and might have been important for their future socialization.

Most respondents noted that they had a supportive family and good friends while growing up. However, a couple of respondents mentioned that they preferred to be alone, avoiding friends, during this period. Several interviewees, whose parents were born outside Sweden described how they had experienced discrimination and racism due to their foreign background. Many of these respondents were members of left-wing political parties, and these experiences can be seen as an important feature for their later political activism. Interestingly, the experience of racism or other major discriminations or inequalities were in contrast not mentioned by respondents from right-wing political parties.

Almost half of the interviewees (13 of 28) emphasized the (good) values they learned from their parents. Others mentioned the closeness to some of their siblings or a parent – often their mother, but close ties to extended family members such as uncles and grandparents were also mentioned as important by a couple of respondents. Family connections and skills learnt during their childhood and teenage years were described by many respondents as very important for the future. Only one respondent mentioned a somewhat troubled childhood in terms of physical abuse at home, although a few more experienced troubles due to mental health problems or absent parents. It should be kept

in mind that due to the delicacy of the topic some respondents might have chosen to avoid talking about their mental health concerns or different forms of abuse in the interview.

A couple of respondents also mentioned their early participation in the scout movement, as boy or girl scouts, or participation in specific camps, as important for their socialization. Most of these respondents mentioned learning useful skills for later political activism.

In respect of the early socialization, there *were no significant differences between respondents from different organisations in the sample* – (A) Left libertarian organisation/group; (B) Informal citizens/grassroots solidarity; (C) Feminist organisation/group; (D) Student organisation, (E) Right-wing political party (mainstream) or its youth branch; (F) Left-wing political party (mainstream) or its youth branch or (G) environmental organisation (Greenpeace).

4. Political socialization process (before joining the group)

Confirming the results of prior studies and theories of early political socialization, the majority of our respondents had some political interest or societal involvement in their family prior to their own participation (only two – one active in an informal citizen/grassroots solidarity organisation (C) and one in an environmental organisation (G) – did not). While 10 of 28 mentioned active political discussions at home, often about current event and daily news, there were only five who came from strongly politically involved families. Two of them were from a left-wing political party (F), others from an environmental organisation (G), right-wing political party (E) and a student organisation (D). There is also a clear difference in terms of background, as activists with parents born in another country were clearly socialized into politics via discussions related to their parents' home country (non-democratic developments in the Middle East or South America) or discrimination in Sweden relating to their foreign background.

The family socialization in terms of ideological leaning also played a role, as respondents usually, but not always, followed the same direction of their parents. A few respondents noted that their siblings were active in the (ideologically) opposite political party/organisation long before their activism. Even though only a few parents were active in non-electoral forms of politics, many discussed at home which party they voted for and were also very supportive of respondents' political activism. Only a few mentioned that their parents had some opposition to their activism. This was especially the case when the parents had experienced a non-democratic regime and worried for their children because of their engagement in politics in Sweden. *Interestingly, the majority of respondents*

from the right-wing political party (E) emphasized that their parents encouraged them to form their own political opinions and that the parents did not steer their political socialization in any direction. No respondents from the left-wing political party mentioned the importance of such an individual choice. On the contrary, some of them took pride in their family's political history and that their parents, grandparents or extended family had been involved in different left-wing parties and organisations.

There are also two tendencies which differ a bit from the traditional understanding of family-driven political socialization. First, about one third of the young activists noted that their family only started to discuss politics *after* they had become active, even though some note that their grandparents had been interested in the topic before. There is, however, no difference across organisations here. Second, the role of **grandparents**. Although there is some prior research from Sweden that emphasizes the role of grandparents for individuals' increased human and social capital,[65] the usual focus on studies for intergenerational effects on political activism have focused parents. In our sample of 28 young activists, five mention the political activism of their grandparents and some also note that it was crucial to their own activism. It should also be noted that in all these cases, the young activists' grandparents were politically active in another country than Sweden.

Additionally, friends, social media, and the opportunity to be active via school and student councils were very important for young activist' political socialization. Here the secondary (i.e. not childhood) political socialization and recruitment process overlap. Several respondents became interested in a specific issue or form of engagement, joined an organisation and had their initial political socialization *after* they had joined. This was more often the case with respondents from organisations that are not political parties.

Joining a group (party or organisation) with **friends** and discussing politics with friends was more frequently among female respondents. Friends could either be vegetarian/vegan or very politically active and this has, according to respondents, influenced them as well. **Social media** and internet (blogs, informative websites of organisations and political parties), were really important for socialization and later the organizing of many (9 of 28) young activists. The internet sources often worked together with some significant event or adult as a role model, especially in the case of activists from the feminist organisation.

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[65] Adermon, Adrian and Lindahl, Mikael and Palme, Marten, Dynastic Human Capital, Inequality and Intergenerational Mobility (2019). CESifo Working Paper No. 7615. Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=3384306

School and civics education, where pupils get to learn about ideologies and elections, was important for many respondents' political socialization. Likewise, the opportunity to participate in the school-governance via various **student councils** both contributed to their political socialization, an understanding of how democratic organisation work, and was a gateway into civil society engagement – not only to respondents who later continued as activists in student organisations, but also respondents from many other of the organisations in the sample.

About half (15 of 28) of the respondents mentioned some transformative event which was important to their political socialization process. These were sometimes political events such as the national election (2010) or the EU Parliament elections in 2014, or more personal events such as a threat to close a school or a theatre. Some environmental activists mentioned movies about animal rights or climate change, or the process of becoming vegetarian, while left libertarian activists mentioned personal experiences of perceived injustice (e.g., threat of deportation of a family member, discrimination). It also appeared that some young people were very systematic in their search for an organisation to join, and thus started their political socialization by reading up a lot on different issues and organisations.

In sum, one could say that the lack of family political socialization was often compensated by friends, specific events and the structural opportunity to test participation in school.

5. Mobilization and recruitment process

Our respondents claim, in general, to have been active subjects in their own recruitment process: the selection of the organisation/group to join seems to have come naturally from either previous socio-political experiences (in high school or in university groups) or previous socio-political inclinations (family, special events). It seems that many young activists were very purpose minded, as they looked up the "right" people or organisations, and knew what cause they wanted to work for. On the contrary, however, three respondents mentioned the organisation/website volontarbyran.se, which lists opportunities for civil society engagement, as important for their search of an organisations to join. These people knew that they wanted to get involved, but not how and in what organisation. Only a few times, respondents mentioned that they got recruited via an advertisement in the digital or physical world, or by political party activists before elections. For example, one respondent discussed party programs with representatives from all political parties who had come to present at their school (this often happens before the elections to recruit the first-time voters), and was finally recruited by

the left-wing party. There were really no clear differences between activists from the different groups in this respect.

However, the most important aspect of mobilization seems to have been social connections – mostly friends. Respondents across all types of organisations mention friends, classmates or acquaintances as either an inspiration to their own mobilization, or as companions in joining an organisation. Some respondents were also asked by friends or (university) classmates to take on a role in an organisation without previously having expressed any desire to do so. This speaks to the difficulties sometimes experienced by civil society organisation to find people interested in becoming involved or active on the board. To respondents from the student organisation, social connections seem to have been especially important for their mobilization. Many of them describe how they felt socially excluded or that they did not fit in before joining their school's student council and later also the student organisation in our sample.

One activist from the environmental organisation described seeing information on social media about an upcoming demonstration/action for animal rights, and decided to show up and ask if they needed help with anything – without knowing anyone else who would participate. In general, respondents from environmental and feminist organisations were more driven to mobilization by the desire to achieve change in their respective specific issue, rather than a general wish to "do good" or "get involved". Their previous political socialization played a bigger role for their mobilization than for many respondents from the other organisations.

Joining an organisation was sometimes described as an emotional act, driven by feelings to achieve change in society in general or in a specific issue. People joining the left-wing political party described how they wanted a platform for their opinions and to channel emotions stirred up by politics, discrimination or other injustices. In contrast, the young people joining the right-wing political party more often had a general interest in politics and social issues, and were not as driven by emotions in their mobilization. They joined out of curiosity and as an opportunity to learn things and develop. A few of them also mentioned that they wanted to make a difference, that is achieve some social or political change. One respondent from a political party noted the clear dislike of politics among siblings as something they had to consider before joining the (youth branch) of the party.

An interesting aspect in relation to early mobilization processes is the insecurity a few respondents felt with respect to the organisations they joined. Some tried out different organisations before finding

the one that worked, and one was still not fully sure that they strongly identified with the organisation they are active in.

6. Practices / Sustained participation / Multiple participation

The practices used by the activists vary and the same applies for the ways they sustain their mobilization. The major difference is between the so called "paid activists" (employed by the organisation) and voluntary activists, although some employed activists also used the "usual" activist repertoire as well.

Those working for organisations usually do administrative tasks, project leadership, coaching and attending (board) meetings, but also more outside world targeting repertoires like fundraising, distributing information about the organisation and recruitment of new members. Certainly, being elected as a board member is not a "paid job" but rather the voluntary activism, but tasks like project leadership and educating other members or people outside the organisation might often be a paid job. As a few of the respondents are or have been in some important position in the organisation, they also mention leadership activities (e.g., representing organisation, leading other members). Repertoires that are more classic activist activities involves acts of civil disobedience (environmental organisation) and demonstrations, but also other organisation-specific repertoires such as collective gardening (informal citizens/grassroots initiative) or counselling/helping (often on-line chatting) other young people who seek help from the organisation (feminist organisation). The activities by activists involved in political parties were expectedly related to political campaigning (for national elections), and activities aimed at influencing public opinion (writing articles in the media). Typical to young activists, many of them visited schools during their information distribution and recruitment campaigns. Some employed activists, regardless of the organisation, noted that the classic activist repertoire is still something they prefer over the employee repertoire – it is more fun and important (as one respondent noted).

When looking at the reasons for sustained participation, it sometimes seems that activists do not reflect over it much and that activism and civil society participation have become a common and natural practice in their lives. There does not seem to be any clear differences between the activists across organisations or other factors. The respondents seem to have rather different reasons: Some see activism as something important to them and their self-image and identity, to have a commitment and a personal sense of purpose. Others put more emphasis on the cause their working for, mentioning they do it for a greater good and to achieve change in an issue that is important to them. This was

more often the case with the activists from the environmental organisation than other organisations. Furthermore, several respondents also pointed to the more social aspects of their participation; finding new friends, having fun, maintaining friendships within the organisation – feeling a sense of belongingness. On this point, several respondents mention that a big part of their social circle is made up of people from the organisation. Interestingly, numerous respondents also mentioned that they do not want to rely on their activism and civil society participation for their social life, and rather try to keep the two separated. Other reasons were also given: two respondents emphasized personal development – the opportunity to learn more about society and gain knowledge and skills. A female respondent mentioned that her sustained participation was partly due to the feeling of being more listened to in the political organisation than in society at large.

Out of the 28 interviewed young people, eight mention multiple participation, that is, they are active on more than one organisation. Moreover, a couple of others are also passive members of other organisations than the one they are active in. Here, respondents active in organisations with a more grassroots-based approach and structure seem to have multiple engagements more often than respondents from top-down organisations, such as political parties. However, this might be due to the fact that political party engagement is more time-consuming – especially if you hold a high-level position or if you are employed by the party, which several of the respondents were. However, one of the respondents from the left-wing political party had multiple engagements, although the majority of his activism time was dedicated to the party.

7. Evolution (inside organisation / change of participation outside organisation / disengagement)

Respondents' participation can be summarized in three main types of activism trajectories. The first, and most common one, is an evolution of their engagement, eventually leading them to their current organisation: 16 of 28 respondents started their social and political engagement in another organisation than their current one (and a couple more have also joined other organisations after joining the one they represented for the interview). These people's trajectories to their current, and most often main, engagement however vary; some have been active in up to ten different organisations, while others ended up in their current organisation rather quickly after getting involved in an organisation for the first time. Their levels of engagement throughout their lives also vary and often coincide with how much time they have had to dedicate to studies and work. People from this first category are found in all different types of organisations, except the right-wing political party.

This leads to the second main type of activism trajectory, which is employment in a social or political organisation, following either voluntary (non-paid) activism in the same organisation or the lack of any previous activism. This group is made up of people from the right-wing political party and the environmental organisation. The right-wing political party activists all started in one of the party's local youth branches, and a couple of them eventually started to work for the party. All of them have however experienced some form of evolution in their participation in terms of roles and time spent. Two people from the environmental organisations can joined the organisation as employees without any previous activism. The nature of the work – recruiting members and fundraising, for which no previous experience but only an interest and passion is needed – may be a factor here. It is also worth noting that most of the other organisations have limited or no resources at all to hire staff, which may be a factor that this second main trajectory is rather limited, albeit a noteworthy one.

The third and final main trajectory is going from being a passive to an active member. This category also often overlaps with the previous two. It was common among people from political parties, also those with previous activism experience, to join the party as a passive member, and after a while becoming active. This also reflects the kind of work the different organisations do and the forms of membership they offer. In political parties, it is possible to be a member without participating in activities and activism, whereas most of the other organisations in the sample do not offer the same form of passive membership and are more focused on direct action throughout their organisation.

As these three main trajectories tell a general story of young peoples' activism and evolution, there were no other clear patterns in evolution across organisations, except the tendency that in the student organisation and the youth branches of political parties (both left and right), "regular" members often took a leadership position after a while – either after being elected to the board or starting a local (regional) branch of the organisation. The general line of evolution for the majority of respondents was the same – passive or small-scale to active, involved, and sometimes to leadership positions – often via other organisations. The informal citizen/grassroots organisation was a bit different: these activists joined the organisation, were part of the everyday activities of the organisation and were committed but did not (try to) "advance" to any leadership position.

Some respondents have also decreased their level of engagement over time, and three are completely disengaged from social and political organisations. Many more, however, have shifted from one organisation to another as a part of their activism evolution. Reasons for choosing another organisation to participate in are many – from disapproval of the family, to moving, getting a job, and becoming too old for the organisation. Often, the shift involved some disappointment in the organisation; some respondents mentioned leadership problems, problems with the attitude of other activists or that they actually never felt especially close to the organisation (identity problem). There was also the issue of biographical availability and setting priorities – several respondents noted that they stopped their involvement in an organisation because they could not find time for it between studies, work, and, in one case, wanting to have more time for having fun and partying.

Among the three people completely disengaged, time-related issues, difficulties managing both work and voluntary participation, dissatisfaction with the organisation, and a lack of interest for voluntary engagement was mentioned. Considering the small number of people, there is no possibility to detect any patterns of varying organisations.

8. Biographical impact / Future

The respondents mentioned many different important experiences and impacts of their engagement in their self-reflection. The majority note the traditional outcomes and impacts like professional skills, awareness, and knowledge. This suggests that when Verba et al. (1995) argued that political participation requires skills, these could also be learned during participation, and that skills are probably more important for sustained activism than mobilization. There are no clear differences between organisations, nor between employees and activists, although the former mention more often than the latter the need and wish to separate their work (in the organisation) and family/personal lives.

A growing awareness about politics, specific issues and society at large has in some cases cause an ideological change among respondents. Young people from several organisations noted a greater awareness about gender equality and feminism, which points to the steps youth organisations are taking with regards to this. One respondent from the left-wing political party says that some of her opinions have become more radical, and others less. A respondent from the environmental organisation noted that he has become bolder in expressing his opinions. More people, however, say that their engagement has made them more pragmatic. This is especially true for the young people engaged in political parties – most of them reflected upon pragmatism. Many people across most

organisations have also broadened their horizon and become interested in more social and political issues due to their activism.

In terms of personal lives, the most important change for the activists is the significantly increased number of friends, which is seen as mostly positive. One respondent has also found their partner via activism. A couple of activists – more from hierarchical organisations like parties, but without any clear patterns – also reflected upon the fatigue caused by activism and how tiring it can be. Employees of the environmental organisation, on the other hand, seem to be very enthusiastic over their involvement. Here, the fact that interviews were done during the campaigns for the national election in the fall of 2018 might be an important contributing factor.

In this context, the majority is in favor of future activism as well. However, those who have been employed in the organisation (not party) are clearly less enthusiastic about future work in the organisation. Several employees say that if they are staying involved in the future, it will be as a volunteer. Some of them also mention that they want to study so as not to be dependent on assignments and work in the organisation in the future. Others note that their time as an activist is starting to pass – that they have outgrown it, become too old.

The informal citizens/grassroots organisation and the left-libertarian activists, primarily, seem to have a clear willingness to continue their activism in the same capacity in the future – or maybe even become more involved. This might partially be related to the fact that these organisations are more narrow in their focus and work with a singe issue, rather than have a broader agenda, like political parties.

Still, *almost none of our respondents could consider a future life completely without activism and civil society participation*. Many say that if they would not have been involved in their current organisation, they would have spent the time participating in other parts of society. Here, the activists from political parties are the most certain in the sample that they would have been involved in another social or political organisation if they had not been active in their current organisation. Informal citizen/grassroots and environmental activists, on the other hand, often mention culture-related activities as a potential alternative, would they not have been active in their current organisation.

9. Conclusions

In sum, civil society engagement of young activists in Sweden seems to be motivated by rather similar things, and for those who were not socialized into activism via family, the school (opportunity to

participate, student councils) and social networks (also via social media) seemed to compensate for this lack of socialization.

The level of activity varies a lot among the examined young activists, but the ones that are the most active are very active and often participate in multiple organisations, using multiple repertoires, and with a willingness to learn more. On the other hand, there is also a group of activists who perceive their activism as an obligation or a job (they also have a salary), and who over time perceive activism as a routine and have gotten tired of it.

Moving, family life, lack of time, and disappointment relates to shift in participation and disengagement, although the majority still think they will continue their social activism in one way or another. Very few say that they think they will disengage completely in the future.

While one might have expected that activists from different organisations have very diverse motivations and repertoires as well as experiences and outcomes of their activism, it rather seems that in Sweden the biggest difference of becoming and being a young political activist is not between types of organisations, but between employed and voluntary activists or between activists in political parties and other organisations. Hence, rather than ideology or the main issue of concern for the organisation, differences in youth activism in Sweden are more related to the organisational characteristics. With the caveat that this study does not include any activists of radical political parties or organisations (neither left nor right), it is noteworthy that there are not very diverge trajectories into and within political activism of young people in Sweden.

SWISS REPORT

EVA FERNANDEZ, ANIK FISCHBACH AND VALENTINA HOLECZ

1. City context

The city Canton of Geneva has a population of 493,706 people and at least 41% of these are immigrants.[66] The Canton of Geneva is by far the canton with the highest share of immigrant population in Switzerland, counting 184 different nationalities. The city houses headquarters to the UN, several other international organisations and international companies, which give to the city a relevant international profile. Besides, the Canton of Geneva is considered a canton-city due to its high densification combined with a relevant socio-economic basin, which surpasses the canton's green belt (agriculture zone). Accordingly, the Canton-city of Geneva is the central core of the grand Genève; the map below clearly shows how the Grand Genève goes beyond the city agglomeration and international frontiers with a highly densified inner corona. Consequently, the international profile of the city is also territorially represented.

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[66] Statistical office of the Canton of Geneva, retrieved data 2018 (*Office Cantonal de la Statistique* - OCSTAT)

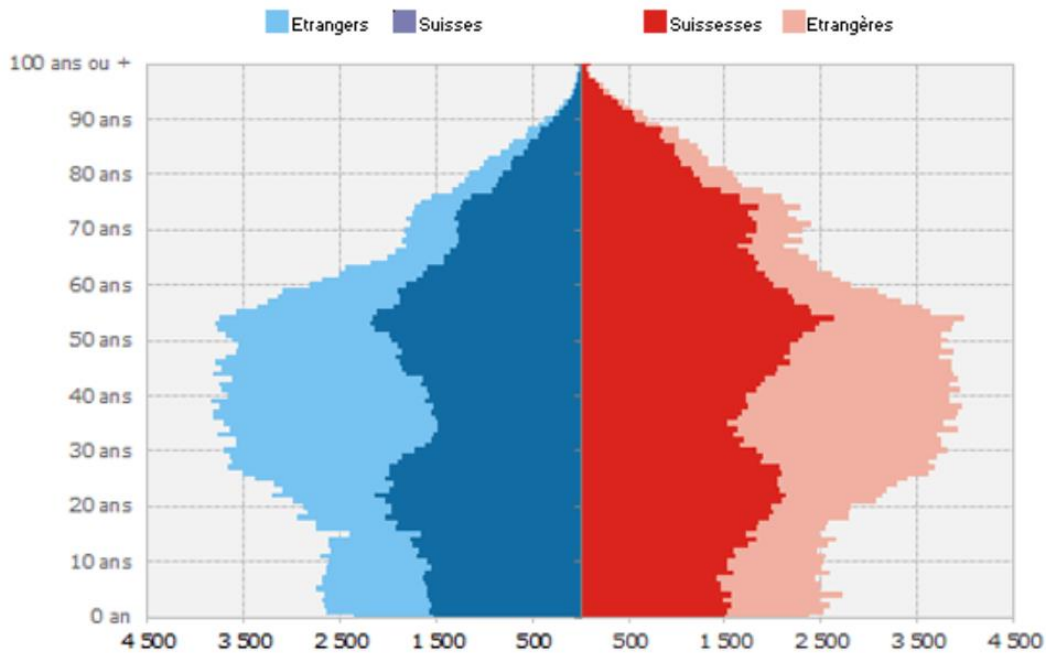**Figure 1. Canton of Geneva Agglomeration and Perimeters: Transborder Area of the Grand Genève 2019**
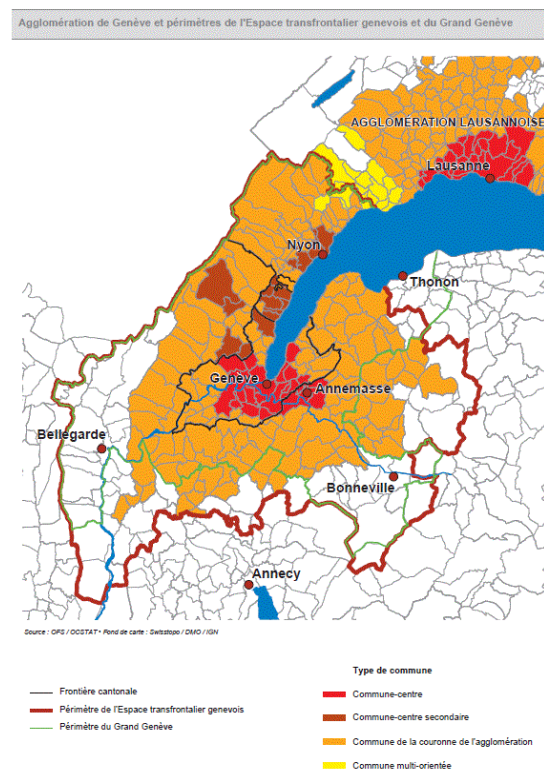
Source: Statistical office of the Canton of Geneva (Office Cantonal de la Statistique - OCSTAT)

Socio-demographic characteristics

With respect to our target population, the young people, it is almost self-evident to consider that this group is also strongly characterised by the city's international profile. The young population (14-34 years old) represents approximately 26% of the canton's population, while young people aged 18 to 34 years old correspond to 21% of the cantonal population. That said, we find some relevant differences between the various group ages with respect to socio-demographic characteristics. The Canton's residents with a migratory background are strongly represented in infant, young and working cohorts, with a similar share of immigrant population and Swiss population (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Age Pyramid of Resident Population in the Canton of Geneva 2018

Source: Statistical office of the Canton of Geneva (Office Cantonal de la Statistique - OCSTAT)

Likewise, the latest published data of the Swiss Statistical Bureau (SSB) shows that 90.9% of the Swiss population aged 25-year-old have completed a primary school degree and/or an apprenticeship, however, Geneva has the highest cantonal rate of young people aged 25-year-old with no post-compulsory certification 16.9%. Additionally, this rate increases among young men (20.9%) and among young men with a foreign origin (21.8%). Whereas, on average young women are most likely to continue a secondary and tertiary education degree. With respect to the differences between cantons, the SSB also highlights that compared to French-speaking cantons the German-speaking cantons have a higher rate of post-compulsory certification. Still, it is mostly related to a higher rate of professional apprenticeship in German cantons. That said French-speaking cantons and in particularly the Canton of Geneva, have higher shares of young people with secondary education degrees (college). More than half of the Canton's young population between 15-24 years old with post-compulsory certification studies chose to continue with secondary education degree (54%).

Socio-political issues

For a long time, the City-Canton of Geneva has been considered a political, social and cultural progressive canton (e.g., maternity leave periods are the longest in Switzerland: 16 weeks). Likewise, similarly to other French-speaking cantons as Lausanne and Neuchatel, the voting behaviour of Geneva's citizens tend to be more progressive on issues related to migration and fiscal policy.

Moreover, culture and cultural practices have being a salient issue at the Canton and City levels. For instance, since the late 90s squats which were seen at the City level as alternative cultural sites started to be dismantled. This battle was strongly symbolised with the closure of the Rhino and Artamis (2007-2008), considered one of the last bastions of the city's self-managed alternative cultural spaces. Cultural issues have strongly mobilised the canton's citizens through conventional and non-conventional forms of political participation. Currently, there is a popular initiative (2019) to support and enhance cultural practices and collectives at the cantonal and municipal levels.

Furthermore, the City-Canton of Geneva has an important inner source of political conflict. The political representation at the cantonal level has counted with a relevant share of liberal-economic parties and traditionalist-leaning parties, while at the municipality level "the City" left-leaning parties have been the largest majority. For instance, the current executive power of the canton (*Conseil d'État*) counts with a majority of right-leaning party members while at the municipality level the city administrative executive power (Conseil administrative) has a majority of left-leaning party members. That said, in the latest elections, the right has obtained a slightly higher number of seats at the city level council but at the cantonal level the populist right parties have lost an important number of seats benefiting the liberal and green parties.

Concerning the political participation of young people, the Canton of Geneva offers several opportunities for young people to participate in the political arena. As part of the eight Swiss cantons that have a youth parliament, the Canton of Geneva holds an institutional space to discuss political issues focused on themes concerning young people. In this space, young people actively participate and are called to advise at the cantonal parliament. Beyond, more formal institutional channels, there is a relevant interest of the cantonal and local authorities with respect to the political participation of young people. In the City, we find initiatives like the "Democracy Week" where young people in schools and academic institutions discuss politics, democratic principles and procedures. Moreover, at the University of Geneva, students are elected per faculty to participate on the Participatory Council of the University, the institutional organ where changes and modifications of the university programmes are made. Likewise, students in the canton benefit from a plethora of organisations concerning cultural, political or social issues thanks to the easiness of procedures to create associations and be recognised by the university.

Young people living in the Canton-city of Geneva are particularly active and use multiple forms of expression, thanks to institutional and non-institutional channels for their claims making. The City of

Geneva is particularly interesting to our study because we observe important socio-demographic differences between young people. The richness and diversity of the city also influence the concerns and attitudes of the young cohorts and given the plethora of organisations and institutions, we find a very dense network of organisations and practices for young people to engage in organisational politics.

2. Sample socio-demographic issues

The youth sample is composed of 28 young people (18-35 years old). All the interviews took place in Geneva, within a time period from February to October 2018. Table 1 summarises the main socio-demographic attributes of the local sample.

Table 1: Socio-demographic sample

Age range	Gender	Geographical provenience	Qualification	Current occupation	Partner	Children
18-20: 5 21-25: 6 26-30: 9 31-35: 8	Female: 17 Male: 11	Geneva: 20 Lausanne:1 Ticino:1 Freiburg:1 Colombia:1 Bern:1 Grissons:1 France: 1 Solothurn:1	High school: 2 Technical degree/ certificate:4 Bachelor: 8 Master: 11 PhD: 0	Student: 18 Working Student: 2 Unemployed: 1 Part-time work: 4 Full time work: 3	Yes: 11 No: 17	Yes: 3 No: 25

As shown in the table, the majority of youth in our sample have an age range between 26 and 30 years old. In addition, the majority of young people in the sample have a higher education level, either Bachelor or Masters level, and are currently students at various universities in Switzerland, in different disciplines. Almost half of the respondents work part-time and full-time. That said, the socio-demographics clearly suggest that our major pool of activists are students. Nevertheless, an interesting feature of the respondents is that even though they are few, in our sample we also encountered young people with commercial and technical degrees. These individuals were also very active in more institutionalised organisational groups (e.g. unions and youth party branches). Additionally, we observe independently of age (intra-generational cohort) some older respondents enrolled at the university, since they had decided to change career paths or re-enrol in more professionalised courses. Likewise, political activism in our sample is not only a university student feature. Students correspond to a big share of our sample; however, the heterogeneity between the

sample organisations seems to be also translated at the individual level, where we also found unemployed people, technical workers and part or full-time employees.

Beyond previous socio-demographic features, most of the respondents' class background corresponds to the middle class. The majority come from the canton of Geneva; however, some also come from other cantons and countries. This is particularly relevant because the city of Geneva pulls a large number of individuals with diverse backgrounds, and most of our activists share a large degree of cosmopolitan attitudes, either because they have lived and travelled abroad or because their family has an immigration background. As we will see in the following sections, a large share of our respondents started their process of political socialisation within family and school environments, primary focusing on the local context.

3. Life before participation

With respect to the interviewees' life experiences before their current political and social engagement, we cannot discern a common pattern in their primary socialisation experiences. We encountered a heterogeneous group of young individuals. Some of them dealt with a relevant political primary socialisation, in which their parents, grandparents and teachers encouraged political discussion and interest since early childhood. Some others were scarcely exposed to political discussions in their early life experiences, and when asked about these, the interviewees primarily focused on the social and civic aspects with respect to their parents' interests and value orientations. Despite being very active in different socio-political organisations and groups, across our interviewees we miss a common early life history narrative.

Respondents' early socialisation and social activities were very diverse. These embraced a plethora of social and political activities, some interviewees described attending with their parents to manifestations, protests, political meetings, associational encounters, volunteering and even living in contexts of extreme political violence. In general, respondents do not describe a generational conflict within their families, even more; in some cases, they suggested an intergenerational (grandparents, parents and sons/daughters) solidarity as a political driver. The interviewees referred to the relationship with their parents as mostly respectful, based in interpersonal dispositions of trust and tolerance. Among the families of the respondents, values lean toward more libertarian orientations, nevertheless, we encountered few respondents whose families were more authoritarian oriented. Additionally, a large share of respondents shares an international background, some of them are first

or second-generation immigrants and have had the opportunity to study and travel abroad, suggesting a common cosmopolitan linkage in their critical attitudes toward the world. A small share of respondents' families had a religious background, however, most of them expressed a relevant disposition to help and assist, through volunteering and activism at the local level and/or abroad.

The schooling years of the interviewees were characterised by travelling experiences and sports activities. Sports (volley, judo, football, riding, athletics, etc.) were presented by the respondents, as hobbies complementing their daily activities, within stimulating school, family and local environments. Additionally, travels represented as well an important source of early political socialisation to our respondents, suggesting some kind of otherness awareness. Schooling years for most of the interviewees were points of transition to a further political commitment due to the curricula activities and civic engagement at schools.

For some of the respondents, the most relevant political drivers in their early life history situates the nuclear family and, in some cases, the extended one (including grandparents) as the primary source of political socialisation. Additionally, in some cases the school and educational environments were also a source of political interest. That said, when focusing on the friends' role, very few respondents stressed the importance of friendship ties in their brought about political engagement. Nevertheless, those stating a more isolated social brought about, experienced moments of crisis and anxiety due to the mismatching of their views with their social environment.

4. Political socialisation process

If we could find commonality across our sample of interviewed activists, we could advance that for most of the respondents, political interest more than a latent dimension in the respondents' concerns; it was already an active attitude. Nevertheless, late adolescence and early adulthood (ages between 15-21 years old) seemed to be periods of transition in their political involvement. From this period onwards, we start observing their first organisational commitments and differentiation from the worldviews of their family political and social commitments.

The majority of our respondents share, regardless of their political leanings, social and geographical origins, exchanges and discussions about politics and current events (i.e. listening to the news or reading newspapers) as routinised everyday family practices. However, if we focused on the group of activists, which are currently, members of political organisations (parties, unions and grassroots)

left or right leaning, these tend to stress their parents brought about political engagement. For the vast majority of these activists, the political life engagements of parents and grandparents became the starting point to their political engagement storytelling. These diverse political accounts highlight families brought about in dictatorships, communist regimes, guerrilla participation, unionising, alternative political press, squats and violent political environments. At the same time, for the activists engaged into more social and cultural oriented groups, their political narrative starts with their family concerns about specific local issues, beliefs and expression of values such as social justice, solidarity, and equality through their volunteering commitment and practices.

It is worth noticing that with respect to interviewees' confrontation with the political views of their families; we observe very few contrasting perspectives. Somehow, most of the participants still share their relatives' political standings. However, in only minor occasions, we encountered narratives of political oppositions to early political socialisations institutions (family and schools). As pointed out in the previous section on primary socialisation, the generational conflict seems very low or almost absent for most of the respondents.

Even though very few of the respondents engaged in issue revolving around education and politics, most of the respondents pictured as relevant for their political formation the schooling years. More specifically, high school context represented for several respondents the place in which they first expressed and affirmed their political standings as individuals. Various described the Geneva city schooling system as encouraging to engage in politics and social issues. In some cases, educational figures like professors were mentioned as having a key role in their political socialisation, as they could reach young people and encourage them to stand by their political views. Additionally, professors also appeared as a relevant socio-demographic characteristic of the professional background of the families of the respondents.

Moreover, as observed from our sample across activists, intra-cohort differences are relevant. Taking into account age differences between participants (18-35 years old) and differences in geographical origins, the first political memories of the respondents differ considerably. While some highlight the initiative against minarets (2009) as a key political moment in their process of political socialisation, others referred to the election of Ruth Dreifuss, as the first woman elected to Swiss national Council (1993), or to the September 2011 attacks in NY as key momentums in their political awareness. Despite interviewees sharing various socio-economic characteristics with respect to language,

mobility and level of studies, the first political memories across the respondents revealed significant differences in the early stages of their political narrative.

5. Mobilisation and recruitment process

The individual mobilisation and recruitment process into the various groups, movements and parties branches studied, suggest a common pattern across all the interviewed activists. Respondents assume an active role in their recruitment process, most of them tend to underline their capacity agency and the quasi-natural selection process driven their mobilisation and associational engagement. The recruitment process is clearly linked to the activist stated worldviews and ideology, and in some few cases, it relates to transformative life experiences. The activists' narratives advance some sort of continuity between previous socio-political experiences at high school or university and their recruitment into organisations.

With respect to the respondents' active political engagement, as elucidated before, the last schooling years were the platform by which activists started engaging in public assemblies and other socio-political activities. Several interviewees agreed that their individual political engagement started in high school; however, they did not view themselves as activists during that period. What respondents describe as their first incursion into organisational politics, supposes a later stage in their storytelling. Most of them describe getting involved in organisational politics once arriving at the University, or after finishing their mandatory schooling years. This mobilisation into organisational politics was mainly driven by the interviewees' active search of groups and similar-mind individuals to contribute to what they considered a better society.

For most of our interviewees, political mobilisation was not a random account dependant to their involvement to informal groups (e.g. student, grassroots, feminist or left-libertarian groups) without premeditation or political reference points. On the contrary, interviewees suggest that their early political engagement was related to strong political attitudes and interest. Active membership within organisations, more than some kind of political awakening it was more a further stage in their life politics. At the same time, their organisational engagement also produced other narratives, in which social ties independently from family ties became more prominent. The friends' discourse enters strongly into the storytelling of the activists to describe changing social relationships or bounding social experiences. In relation to the differences between activists, it is worth mentioning that individuals engaged in environmental and solidarity issues, first perceived these issues as not political

but more related to social concerns. However, as they mobilised, they started constructing politically their issue-driven commitment and started engaging in lifestyle politics.

Public events and places were important arenas for recruitment for groups, movements and organisations. Organic markets, squats, alternative social centres were the meeting point for activist earlier political practices. These social gatherings also took form in demonstrations or public assemblies, which often represented a turning point in the recruitment process either by individuals' self-engagement or through direct recruitment by group members and friends. At the same time, the internet and social media were mainly described as providing an informational role in their recruitment process. Still, for some activists' social media was a means for individual forms of engagement in their early militant path, by opening up social media pages and forums where they discuss political issues. Additionally, most of the respondents share a similar initial form of engagement into organisations. They describe volunteering and putting his or her skills at the disposition of the organisations, as their first core organisational practice. In most of the cases, request and recruitment to organisation preceded and mostly depended on their single individual decision. Even when activists mainly join organisations individually, some refer to have already known (or to have had previous contacts with) some activists within. In this sense, pre-existing networks and connections play a significant role in the recruitment process: this phenomenon emerges across groups. Besides, it is prevalent in student groups and left-oriented organisations, as well as in grassroots groups.

For the majority of interviewees, starting to participate in assemblies and occasionally volunteering in organisations was the first and concrete step to their engagement in organisational politics. Through this 'observation' phase activists made themselves acquainted with the organisation's structure, mechanisms, dynamics, and constituency while developing their commitment to the organisation.

6. Practices / Sustained participation / Multiple participation

For most of the respondents, we obverse a multiplicity of issues concerns that they defined and target through political voicing actions or that they assume in their daily lifestyles. In this sense, we could draw a broad distinction between practices constructed as political and practices constructed as social.

Respondents active in left-oriented groups (e.g. grassroots, communist groups), unions and youth party branches, suggested a wide spectrum of political practices related to more traditional political

repertoires. The individuals engaged in these organisation forms, usually discuss in collective spaces, assembles and discussion groups. They developed through these practices democratic decision-making procedures sharing and building collective identities. Respondents in these organisations also were very keen in expressing the engagement in these practices as means to collective reasoning and performance. Along with this, respondents claim that the repertoire of action of these groups includes a mixture of conventional and unconventional activities such as sit-ins, petitions, public debates and assemblies, protest as well as lobbying, among others, which involve all members in almost the same way. At the same time, individuals involved in right-wing political oriented organisations suggested as well a continuity between previous individual political practices and organisational practices. They underscored the engagement in institutional political practices, specially voting behaviour as a sustained political practice relevant in their organisational engagement as well. Additionally, most of the respondents suggested engaging in online political practices, forums, chats, online petitions, Facebook groups, twitter information exchange and online political campaigning.

Conversely, for the respondents in informal citizens' initiatives and grassroots solidarity groups, (e.g. social justice groups, alternative cultural collectives and feminist groups) political engagement was also understood through their individuality. These respondents emphasised their engagement in daily and routinised political practices. These individuals clearly expressed their political concerns as lifestyle politics, in which their individual agency was a key output of their political action. These practices were particularly relevant for interviewees within the field of environmental politics (Greenpeace) and grassroots solidarity groups, individual lifestyle practices were presented as key forms of political engagement (e.g. flexitarian, vegetarian eating modes i.e. "to cure themselves through what they eat"). Yet apart from the differences we might encounter within these groups practices, what we observe is that for these groups, political action is strongly understood also on individual terms, where biking to work, eating locally (in social dinners), local bio-farming practices and political consumerism (specially buycott) were all described as political acts. These forms of political practices intertwine personal and cultural goals with political ones. Additionally, these more individualised practices also convey a strong pragmatism and lack of political trust (understood in institutional terms). Lifestyle politics, as daily actions were described as concrete, bottom-up practices that directly affected aspects of people's everyday life choices.

Additionally, with respect to innovative political practices, we observe that cultural informal citizens groups and student groups sustained mixed forms of political participation. These groups were particularly innovative in their political practices mixing individual and collective forms of

participation. Some of these practices were focused on nightlife soirées attentive to unequal public spaces access, dancing demonstrations, growing their own organic food and rethinking streets against sexual harassment. Political participation for these groups was particularly tied to the local level. For these individuals, the city is a political place and for this reason, it needs to account for diverse political meanings and understandings.

With respect to ideological concerns, individuals stating strong ideological positions engaged in conventional politics and contentious political behaviour more frequently. For members of youth branches of right-wing and left-wing political parties, ideology still plays an important role, as members, they recognise themselves in traditional political views (from the left-communist to the social-democrats youth political party branches and from conservative to the liberals for the right-wing ones). However, for individuals in environmental groups, we find some sort of reaction to ideological positioning; values were most frequently presented as the key drivers of their political action. These respondents commonly suggested acting politically was as well expressing their values, social concerns, and not an ideological commitment.

When considering respondent engagement in various organisations, we observe that multiple participation was a common practice across young people. It was much related to the first years of their organisational engagement and it was a means to respond to broader social concerns (e.g. environmental concerns). That said, respondents who were the most engaged in a multiplicity of organisations understand activism in intersectional terms, these organisations were mainly student organisations, left-oriented grassroots groups and feminist groups. As mentioned in the previous section, this often comes from previous activism experience/political socialisation, which is then maintained at the university level. Respondents in grassroots solidarity groups were also very active in other organisations. However, these organisational practices were less formalised (e.g. citizens' action calls at the local level and environmental action calls).

Overall, these experiences suggest that activists' political practices are not only dependant to structural organisational practices, but that these are dependent on activists' world-views and concerns. More precisely, during the early years of their activism respondents showed a relevant number of political commitments, which further crystallised into organisational forms and/or lifestyle politics. That said, it was also more observable that intersectional concerns embodied in multiple participation practices were prevalent in more informal organisational forms. These organisational types were described as a network of collective actors which goes beyond sharing common political

goals. These networks were highly dependent to the commonality of human resources between groups. In different ways, the human relationships shared between organisations also advanced that organisational commitments entail relational ties of friendship. These ties are also relevant to understand multiple organisational practices across individuals, and the individual transitioning from passive organisational practices to more active organisational engagement. For most of the activists' organisational acts and ties shaped a collective political project and a collective identity.

7. Evolution (inside organisation / change of participation outside organisation / disengagement)
The participants' evolution within most of the organisations advances a common starting point; most of the respondents were passive members and joined the organisation on a volunteering basis. Besides, most of them acquired more working responsibilities once their organisational involvement became more active.

With respect to the youth political party branches, we observed that none of the interviewees received any economic remuneration for their work. Still, for these organisational forms, participants shift to more institutionalised representative functions very rapidly. Through time, their organisational engagement situated them in the core structures of the organisations as a party section's spokesperson, committee members, vice-president and president. Additionally, even though these participants share a similarly high level of commitment in the organisations, they consider their organisational activism not as time-consuming. In the youth branches of the political parties, the possibility to increase activists' responsibilities and to advance in their role as 'committee members' or 'leaders' of neighbourhood sections was a common trend across these types of organisations. Many of them move fast from being rank-and-file militants to be responsible for entire groups, circles, sections, etc.

In the other hand, people engaged in student groups and other formal syndicate structures, all receive part-time or full-time remuneration for their organisational tasks. Thus, even though these respondents also share an initially non-economic remunerated volunteering practice the formalisation of the daily activities and responsibilities acquired in the organisation are accompanied by some sort of economic remuneration. More precisely, these responsibilities correspond to administrative and secretarial tasks. That said we observe that strongly politically oriented activists tend to acquire relevant representational and administrative roles in formalised organisational structures, but they are only remunerated in unions forms.

Conversely, activists' experiences in feminist and grassroots solidarity groups depend mostly on the individuals' availability of time. Additionally, their availability may vary over periods, following an oscillating trend. Nevertheless, these group types share un-formalised structures in which activists engaged in a non-remunerated volunteering basis. Besides, the differences between activists' practices in these groups are often related to the number of members in the groups and seniority/average organisational age of the group. We found that respondents involved in these groups tend to share active roles since the early stages in the organisational involvement. However, responsibilities will vary considerably as some will have an informative and recruitment role while others will engage in more representative actions and group visibility. Likewise, since the early stages in their organisational involvement, activists engaged in alternative cultural oriented organisations also share a relevant number of responsibilities. However, they differentiate from previous groups because they benefit from part-time remunerated volunteering practices. This part-time remuneration is mainly meant to cover their administrative and secretarial tasks. That said most of these activists also started in a non-economic remunerated volunteer practice.

With respect to activists engaging in environmental and grassroots solidarity groups, we observe that the evolution of the activists' roles in these organisations also shares a more passive non-remunerated initial engagement as in previous groups. Nevertheless, depending on funding opportunities, activities in more formalised NGOs (e.g. environmentally oriented) might benefit from economic remuneration when engaging more actively in the organisation and ensuring administrative tasks. In these groups, we found two major categories of activists, individuals more centred in communication and recruitment who are mainly in a volunteering basis; and individuals involved in the local market, farming and sustainable projects that might benefit from remunerative schemes within the organisation. For these organisations, being a 'volunteer' is a specific status within the organisation, which comes with different degrees of responsibilities depending on expertise and experience.

As a common denominator in all our interviewees, we observe that the duration of their activism within an organisational setting also impact the level of commitment and the roles in which the individuals engage in. Long-standing activists showed a relevant sense of commitment not only to the political values that she or he might express but also to the organisational structure they are part of. These respondents share increasing responsibilities and representative roles. Their greater experience is tied to increasing contacts inside and outside the group. In general, receiving recognition from the organisation corresponds to higher engagement, political visibility, greater public and political responsibility (such as: becoming a spokesperson or a contact person between the group and

other groups or sectors). That said this increasing visibility also enhances communication skills, strategical thinking and attitudes to manage or avoid direct confrontation between members. Generally, more intense moments of activism alternate with others less demanding: in any case, a large share of respondents involved in long-standing roles of responsibility affirm they needed to lower the level of activism in order to be able to take care of other activities with respect to their personal life and other interests. This was mainly the case in highly formalised unions and grassroots groups.

With respect to the respondents who have completely disengaged from organisational politics, we observe that disengagement is not a common feature among the young activists interviewed in the city of Geneva. With regards to the reasons, we might argue that young individuals organisational engagement it is still centred in some sort of novelty action and building of networks, in which the lack of resources and time increases individuals' engagement costs once life histories increase in complexity because of working, studying and family activities (as previous research has shown). Beyond full organisational disengagement, changes in the participants' organisational engagement suggest that at least a third of the respondents have shifted or changed from an organisation and/or political issue. Likewise, the chances of shifting or changing of groups of engagement, it is less likely to happen across individuals engaging in political-oriented youth groups either in institutionalised or less institutionalised politics (e.g. parties, unions and students' syndicates). Besides, changes or shifts of organisations across activists, it is also less evident in political organisations with strong collective identities where activities such as sit-ins, petitions, public debates and assemblies, protest as well as lobbying, among others, involve all members in almost the same way. Nevertheless, we observed that multiple organisational participation and multi-organisational shifting was a common feature in the early stages of young activists' organisational involvement that crystallises through time into one issue or network of collaboration between groups.

With respect to the share of activists who have shifted or changed from organisational settings, we advance that most of the activists were part of informal citizens groups and grassroots solidarity groups, in which political engagement was also understood as a form of values expression and individuality. As for the reasons stated among these respondents, the organisational experience revealed itself unsatisfactory and less stimulating. In addition, organisational shifting was also attributed to disenchantment with the group itself, confronting points of views, which were in several times considered by the activists as traditionalists (with respect to actions and debates). Some of these activists mentioned how the group's activities did not match their expectations anymore, particularly

in terms of political aims. Besides, few people also stated that they remained for a long period passive members in the group without contributing actively, just absorbing acknowledge, listening and learning because of personal life choices.

8. Biographical impact / Future

According to all our respondents, political participation seems to produce a real change in their circle of friends and lifestyle choices. However, if only a few have stated that their organisational engagement has been an obstacle for their social acceptance in his/her previous group of friends and family (e.g. people in right-oriented youth party branches). Most of the participants considered that their activisms have affected their circle of close friends. Friendship ties shifted toward more like-minded individuals, enhancing a sense of commonality within the groups. With respect to their organisational involvement, most of them share an enriching perspective. Organisational activisms was also a means by which they learned new perspectives and learned to cope with a diversity of views and people. Additionally, some of these individuals highlighted how organisational practices were also a source of knowledge transfer between generations, how their organisational involvement also enhanced their communication skills. Beyond the increase of awareness in particular political issues, many respondents acquired through activism behavioural changes in their daily life routines (e.g. practices like biking to work, eating locally (in social dinners), local bio-farming practices and political consumerism/buycott). Among respondents, they also suggested that activism had a positive effect on their self-esteem and the ability to become more pragmatic mostly in relationship with their political standings in order to achieve major outcomes. These learning skills were also reflected in their communication skills and the ways to approach other people (friends, family, or the public). All along this learning process, activism was also a source of professional skills development. Some of the respondents that were engaged in administrative tasks (e.g. representative and secretarial) were also trained in more professionalised communication and writing skills, related to party politics and programmes, management of budgets and funding initiatives.

Nevertheless, clear-cutting points across our respondent storytelling suggest that most of the young student activists see their continuous organisational engagement as dependent on their study choices, Erasmus programme or travelling experiences. Older individuals consider their organisational engagement, not as a side project but a clear political and life path. Most of the individuals in formalised unions and organisations conceived their future within the same organisation engaging in

a variety of tasks. Activism for the majority of individuals involved in party politics follows some sort of continuity within groups and across issues.

With respect to personal life experiences and impact on their close relationships, only a few number of the respondents suggested that their activism could negatively impact their personal relationships pushing them to change or freeze their organisational engagement. Moreover, only two of the interviewees (both women) suggested that their shift or future reduction in their militancy would be related to life choices with regard to family and kids. They consider that these life choices will affect their organisational commitment, suggesting that personal family related decisions particularly affect women's organisational commitment.

9. Conclusions

Across organisations forms, we find a very heterogeneous group of individuals with respect to their early politically socialisation history. We could state that there are not specific types of early socialisation processes that lead to some sort of organisational engagement. However, as time passes by, in the activists' political narrative we start observing important convergences and revelling similarities across individuals. We advance that during early adulthood and late high school years, activists start stating strongly their political voicing, reaffirming their ideas and commitment. It is from this point onwards that we observe that the networks of friends and ties established upon political similarities are key drivers for their organisational engagement. Additionally, it seems that across individuals the biographical impact of organisational participation is similar with respect to skills and social capital resources development.

Moreover, in our case, the mobilisation process, practices and sustained organisational engagement differ mostly between individuals in highly vs low structured organisations and across the political ideologies underpinning the political issues mobilised by the organisations. This latter difference suggests some sort of comprise between activism and values, where organisational settings are now evolving to multi-issue stakes, in which activists display individualised and collective means for political action.
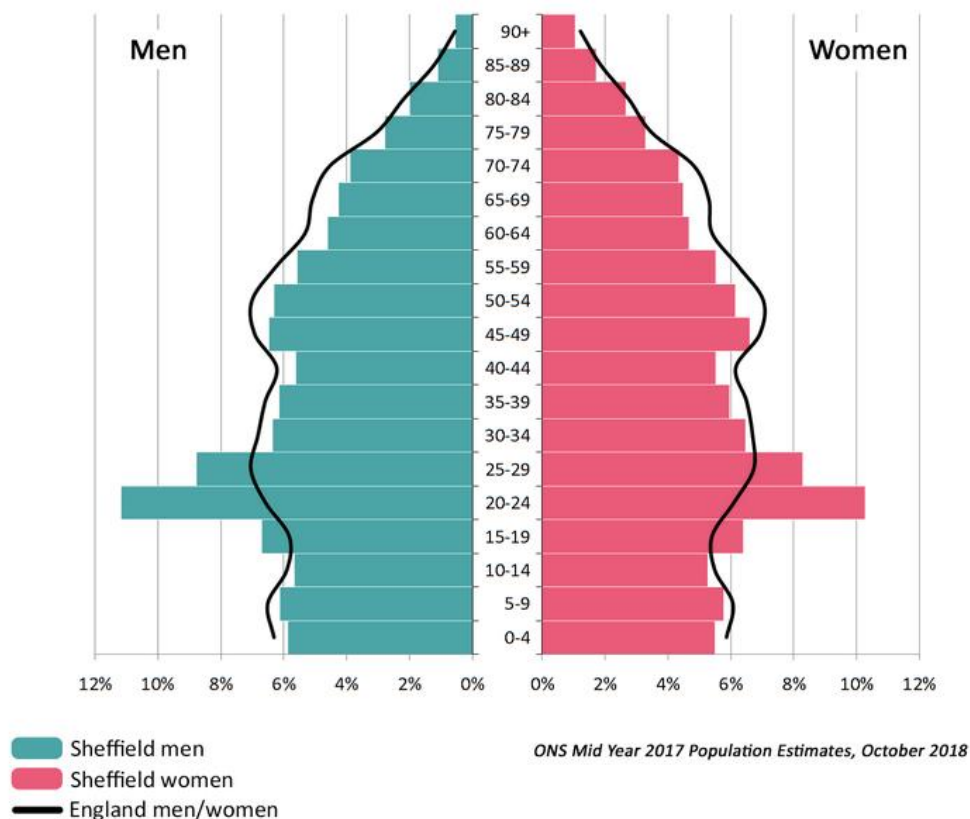
KATHERINE A. SMITH

1. City Context

Population

Sheffield is a city in the Yorkshire and Humberside region of the UK. It is located in the north of England and has a population of 575,400 (mid 2016).[67] It is the sixth largest city in the UK.[68] Sheffield has an average age of 38 years old.[69] As a student city with two universities, there is a 'bulge' in the population for people aged 20-24 years old, which has expanded since the government lifted its previous cap on university places in 2015.

Figure 1: Distribution of age groups of total population. 2017 mid- year estimates (Sheffield City Council JSNA, using ONS data)[70]

ONS Mid Year 2017 Population Estimates, October 2018

Other factors linked to

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[67] https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/your-city-council/population-in-sheffield.html
[68] https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/adhocs/008264midyearpopulationestimatesformajortownsandcities2016
[69] 2011 census
[70] https://sheffieldcc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=7b2a6bd47a4645d4a67d8a6c62328f44

Sheffield's growing population include greater rates of birth than death as well as international migration to Sheffield from a number of countries. While 88% of Sheffield's residents were born in the UK, Sheffield is a diverse city with residents from wide ranging nationalities. While nationality data is to a less extent available, data on ethnic groups from the 2011 census shows that the biggest ethnic group is White British (80.8%) followed by Pakistani (4%).[71]

While Sheffield attracts a significant proportion of students from within the region (Yorkshire and Humberside),[72] it also attracts students from across the UK and internationally. The University of Sheffield alone had 8,225 students from outside the UK in the 2016/17 academic year.[73] Sheffield's international student population has grown in line with national trends of rising enrolments over the past 10 years.[74]

Socio-economic issues

Known for centuries as a centre for cutlery and tableware, the city of Sheffield experienced fast paced expansion during the industrial revolution. It became known internationally as a producer of steel, and in particular cutlery. Sheffield city and regional employment focused on manufacturing and manual industries, most significantly the steel industry. Sheffield suffered significantly from the 'modernisation process' on British industry enacted by the Thatcher government in the 1980s, culminating in the steel strikes of 1980 and the year-long miner's strike beginning in 1984. After the strikes failed to maintain the future of industrial employment, steel and mining employment declined significantly, leading to high rates of (male) unemployment in the city and region.

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[71] https://sheffieldcc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=73885c6943cf47648ca5af9c49caa110
[72] Sheffield City Region
[73] https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Research--Policy/Statistics/International-student-statistics-UK-higher-education
[74] https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Documents/International/International_Facts_and_Figures_2017.pdf

Figure 2. Male Unemployment in Sheffield compared to wider Great Britain[75] shows peak male unemployment rates in 1980s.

In the present day, the largest employment sectors in Sheffield are wholesale and retail followed by health and social care. This employment focus on retail service sector staff, and its contrast to Sheffield's former manufacturing focus, is best demonstrated by the large Meadowhall out of town shopping centre, built on former industrial brown field land, which is the largest shopping centre in the region. However, most businesses in Sheffield are small sized with 0-9 employees.[76] A report in 2017 by the Resolution Foundation found that Sheffield has a low wage economy due to a high concentration of low paid sectors and lower than average hourly pay.[77] Despite the low wage economy, the cost of living is on average lower than UK cities of equivalent size.

Income per capita is 27,000 Euro according to Eurostat[78] and income inequality as described by the gini coefficient (for the Sheffield and Rotherham area) was 0.276 in 2010, lower than the UK average.

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[75] GB Historical GIS / University of Portsmouth, Sheffield through time | Historical Statistics on Work and Poverty for the District/Unitary Authority | Rate: Male Unemployment, *A Vision of Britain through Time*. Accessed 8 March 2019
[76] https://sheffieldcityregion.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/2016_LMI_Report_v1.2_20170209_FINAL-1.pdf
[77] https://www.resolutionfoundation.org/app/uploads/2017/01/Forging-ahead-or-falling-behind.pdf
[78] http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do

According to data from Sheffield City Region the level of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) is 2,800 but is steadily decreasing.[79] The city's Average Point Score for 16-18 education falls below the UK average in almost all measures and the local city region authority has highlighted evidence of a skills gap in local employment sectors.[80] However, SCR data shows that Sheffield and the wider region retains a high proportion of its university graduates, with over 40% of Sheffield graduates finding employment in Yorkshire and Humber.[81]

While overall, there are inequalities in public transport investment in the region, Sheffield benefits economically from having a direct two-hour train service to London.[82] Housing in Sheffield is dominated by Victorian terrace housing stock from its industrial population boom. The proportion of housing which is owner-occupied in Sheffield is 58.7%; 16.5% of housing is privately rented and 24.8% is socially rented.[83]

Socio-cultural issues

Despite its size as the sixth largest city in the UK, Sheffield has been referred to as 'the biggest village in Britain'.[84] This is due to a high proportion of green spaces, tree-lined streets and hilly terrain at the edge of the Peak District national park.

Some elements of Sheffield's culture link to its industrial past. It is known as the 'city of makers' with many small-scale craftspeople operating in the area. A growing number of people work in the creative and digital industries (approximately 21,000[85]), Furthermore, it has a strong music scene and the largest theatre complex in the UK outside of London.

Socio-political issues

Politically, the city of Sheffield has strong levels of support for the Labour party. The make-up of its city council is Labour 53, Liberal Democrat 22, Green 6, UKIP 3. In the 2017 election, all 6 parliamentary constituencies within Sheffield elected a Labour MP. In the 2016 referendum on the

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[79] ibid

[80] https://sheffieldcityregion.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/2016_LMI_Report_v1.2_20170209_FINAL-1.pdf

[81] https://sheffieldcityregion.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Sheffield-City-Region-Labour-Market-Review.pdf

[82] East Midlands Trains

[83] https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/content/dam/sheffield/docs/your-city-council/facts-figures/Sheffield%20Factsheet%20v1.pdf

[84] https://www.thestar.co.uk/whats-on/out-and-about/it-s-true-sheffield-is-the-biggest-village-in-britain-1-322429

[85] https://www.designweek.co.uk/issues/26-june-2-july-2017/sheffields-creative-digital-industries-underestimated-report-reveals/

UK's membership of the EU, 51.0% of the city voted 'leave'[86] which is roughly equivalent to, albeit slightly lower than the national average.

Electoral turnout rates in Sheffield in the 2017 election across six Sheffield constituencies were 62%, 63%, 60%, 78%, 65%, 70%,[87] which show areas of lower turnout to the national average of 69%, with contrastingly high turnout of 78% in Sheffield Hallam, a marginal seat with a high student population. Sheffield Central constituency and Sheffield Hallam constituency have high student populations; Sheffield Central in particular has a high proportion of electorate turnover each year and student vote makes up 38.1% of the electorate.[88] The national government in 2015 created a Sheffield City Regional Authority as part of a 'devolution deal', which included budgetary powers to the city and in 2018 it elected for the first time a city-region Mayor.

There are a wide range of activist groups in the city. One high profile example is the Sheffield Tree Action Group (STAG) campaign which began in 2015 after the City Council's externally commissioned road maintenance company began the process of felling trees on residential streets across the city. The Student Union of the University of Sheffield has won awards over a number of years and is a hub for a strong activist culture within the university. In 2007 Sheffield was named the first UK 'City of Sanctuary', which involves a series of third sector and public-sector initiatives to provide support and in assistance to asylum seekers and refugees in the city.

2. The Sample

The sample of participants is made up of 28 young people aged 18-35. All interviews took place in Sheffield between April 2018 and October 2018. The main demographic attributes of the sample are summarised in Table 1.

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[86] https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-36616028
[87] https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/our-work/our-research/electoral-data/2017-uk-general-election-results
[88] https://www.hepi.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Do-students-swing-elections.pdf

Table 1: Socio-demographic sample

Age	Gender	Place of Birth	Highest Educational Qualification	Current occupation	Partner	Children
18-20: 5 21-25: 9 26-30: 10 31-35: 4	F: 11 M: 16 NB: 1	Sheffield (case study city): 5 Rest of North of England: 8 Rest of UK: 10 Rest of Europe: 3 Rest of World: 2	A-levels (high school) or equivalent: 9 Undergraduate degree: 8 Masters degree: 11 PhD: 0	Student: 11 Student also working part time: 4 Unemployed: 2 Part-time work: 0 Full time work: 10 Self-employed: 1	Yes: 16 No: 12	Yes: 1 No: 27

Table 1 shows that across the wider 18-35 age range, the largest number of participants fall into the age range 26-30 (10), followed shortly by the 21-25 age range (9). There is roughly half this number of participants at either end of the wider 18-35 range with five participants aged 18-20 and four participants aged 31-35. This reflects the importance of students and recent graduates to the sample. As outlined in the city profile of Sheffield, it has a population 'bulge' between the ages of 20-24 and (to a lesser extent) between 25-29 years old. This is due to the high student population of the city, its postgraduate population, and its high propensity to retain students after they have graduated. The high proportion of the sample who are enrolled in higher education institutions in Sheffield, or have been in the past, indicate an education bias in the sample. This is also reflected in the highest educational qualification noted in table one. While the sample does include students who have not undertaken higher education, this nevertheless reveals the importance of University of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam University to the youth population of the city.

Our sample shows a small imbalance in gender, with a higher proportion of male participants, despite efforts on the part of the researcher to actively seek female activists as interviewees to redress this. While it would be unfair to state that young men dominate youth activism within the city, accounts of female interviewees who explain issues of accessibility, including with regards to gender, within political organisations goes some way to explaining this imbalance.

The distribution of participants from Sheffield, cities in the region and wider north of England, from the rest of the UK, Europe and the world reflects the fact reflects the fact that the both universities are able to attract a high number of students from the city and wider region. In particular the

University of Sheffield, but also Sheffield Hallam University attract a high number of EU, as well as international students, which is also reflected in the sample.

Over half of the sample state they have a partner, whereas only one participant has a child. The average age to have a first child in the city is 27 years old; however, this is typically higher for University educated students. Therefore, our sample not only reflects the growing trend of having children at an older age, but also the biographical availability and hence lower likelihood of those involved in political activism to have children.

Our sample shows that of the participants who are students, a low proportion also work part time. This could be due to the fact that those who do work part time are less likely to have the availability to participate in political activism. Nevertheless, a large proportion of the sample work full time and balance this with their political activism.

3. Life Before Participation

Participants came from wide ranging family contexts from differing social class backgrounds. Of the UK-born participants in the sample, the large majority came from lower-middle class or working-class backgrounds. The majority of participants had open and positive relationships with family while growing up. Very few participants make explicit reference to religion in their upbringing; for the majority this was secular or not strongly religious. One notable exception to this were Catholic participants for whom Catholicism played a central part to the narrative of their upbringing. This difference may well reflect the division of state schooling in the UK between largely non-religious secondary schools and a smaller minority of religious (mostly Catholic) secondary schools.

Participants' experiences of school often formed a central theme to their narrative of their life before participation. A significant proportion of the sample described school as a difficult experience that they did not enjoy, for a variety of reasons, but centring around feeling an 'outsider' and feeling uncomfortable in the environment. In some cases, memories recalled include struggling with the high expectations of the school or conversely not being 'challenged' enough as a bright or talented student. Some participants describe creating disruption in response to this. For all participants with a negative experience of school, leaving school and entering a new environment (usually university) provided a turning point for them to have more positive experiences and indeed eventually mobilise politically. Among the cases where participants had a more positive experience of school, there appears to be a

greater level of involvement in activities, hobbies and extra-curricular activities within the school context.

In their childhood and teen years, participants had differing accounts of their forms of friendships and friendship groups. However, most describe friends with general or popular interests and most did not have highly political friendship groups; in most cases, they had no friends with expressly 'political' viewpoints. In some cases this even extended to anti-political views among their peers, or a distinct lack of interest. For these participants, leaving school, usually for university, was a turning point as it allowed them to seek out opportunities and friendships, which were more political.

Where participants describe having grown up, either in the UK or abroad, into contexts of high inequality, this is cited as important to their socialisation, either standing out in their memories as informing their view of the world or in informing conversations with family. In a couple of cases where a participant recalls conversations with their parents about experiences of racism, both reflect that this was not framed in a way that was 'political' or which promoted discussion on the topic.

4. Political Socialisation Process

Across the sample of respondents, there are vastly different accounts relating to the political views, or lack thereof, of their parents in their family home. While the vast majority of participants report there was some level of political discussion in the household, usually stemming from the news, with one or more than one family member, there are small but not insignificant number of participants whose parents held anti-political viewpoints or who in their view purposefully chose to withhold their political viewpoints from their children. Nevertheless, most of the participants who describe their family as 'not political', at the same time have a general inkling, developed over time, as to their parents' positions on the left-right spectrum, with only a very small number of exceptions. Furthermore, there appears to be a lack of conflict between the development of participants' own political views and those of their parents; most of the young people interviewed developed political views that were similar or if not located 'nearby' on the left-right political spectrum to their parents, or declared that they were influenced by the moral values taught by their parents to some degree. Indeed, to those who reflected upon the similarity of their political viewpoints to their parents, there were many who could not untangle the development of their own views from their parents' as they believed their views to form an integral part to this. Notably, young people who are members of the right-wing political party (mainstream)/ youth branch are an exception to this; half of the participants

from this group reported conflict with family members regarding their conservative values. Despite the great majority of participants having some degree of political conversations with their families during their childhood and teen years, the overwhelming majority did not have a family member who was active in a political organisation. In the small number of cases where participants did have politically active relatives, common political memories from their childhood or teen years involve helping out at events of the organisation or helping them campaign, in particular when this is a political party.

For the (albeit not small) minority of students who did declare to have political interactions with peers in their childhood and teen years, these appear to have given participants' positive experiences of engaging with politics or political ideas that influenced their later participation. In some cases, this took the form of friendship groups with similar or opposing views, who would discuss politics. In a small number of cases these groups developed into semi-formalised youth political groups created and led by young people themselves. Political interaction with peers was not restricted to groups of friends and sometimes took the form of an individual, usually politically engaged to a greater extent than the participant themselves, who they admired. In a small number of cases, respondents pointed to a male individual who they were in a relationship with, whose views they looked up to, although later came to question when they became older.

For participants who viewed their interest in politics or political ideas as stemming from early childhood, milestones and juncture points such as beginning sixth form (16-18 education), university, the workplace or even a later stage of university within a different friendship or study context provided the relevant political opportunities to match their existing interest. For others who had a looser interest in politics in their childhood or teen years, these junctures provided different experiences and opened up opportunities and personal connections that acted as a catalyst for their political participation.

As outlined, participants came from wide-ranging family contexts and in only a few cases were family members politically active. Nevertheless, the role of parents is visible in a number of accounts of early political memories, including early memories of parents' reactions to the 1997 election involving the election of Tony Blair as Prime Minister for participants at the older end of the age spectrum, and in a few cases the election of David Cameron and the Coalition government in 2010. While elections were a common political memory declared by the participants, other events from the news formed the basis for political conversations with parents, where these took place. A common

theme for these conversations across the whole sample, was the economic crisis and the subsequent programme of austerity enacted in the UK, as well as the Iraq war (for the older end of the age range). In all but a small group of exceptions, most participants make reference to national political events when describing political events during their primary socialisation, although in a few cases reference to a local campaign was made. A few parents took conversations with their children further and in a small number of cases taught their children about political ideas and philosophy. In the small number of cases where participants who did not discuss politics with their family at all, often intentionally on the part of the parent, it was only after their mobilisation into a political organisation that some participants learned the political views and affiliations of their family members. In contrast, for the small number of cases in which participants grew up with a politically active family member, there is a distinct moment in their personal history where they begin to take ownership of their own political affiliations and forge their own political identities.

As previously outlined, for most school was not the site of significant political socialisation, in particular not for those with bad experiences of school. In a smaller number of cases however, participants cite a teacher who had a positive political influence upon them, and who in some cases encouraged them to mobilise politically. Furthermore, there are is a small sample of participants who were involved in formative political organisations such as the school council, school-based political groups or the local youth council. These provided early experiences (both positive and negative) of political processes and impacted upon the route taken by the participant afterwards; in more than one case a negative experience within a 'youth voice' organisation led to a shift in the repertoire and sphere of political participation following this, away from formalised politics.

5. Mobilisation and Recruitment Process

Early events in participants' mobilisation and recruitment into organisations often include, especially for those participants who later became high-intensity activists, a period of involvement in a protest movement during their teen years or early on during university. For participants in their late 20s or early 30s, the anti-Iraq war protests were often cited as key to this. Later protests movements following the UK government's austerity programme post 2010 are also prominent among the sample of participants, such as the anti-tuition fee march, or more generalised anti-cuts marches. Some participants engaged with the same issues in the university context also participated in occupations of university buildings relating to the tuition fee rises. For the left-wing political party (mainstream)/ youth branch in particular, and the student organisation to a lesser extent, there are strong crossovers

in their recruitment with another significant social protest group on campus, for who many students had formative experiences of protest and occupation. Another common type of student-organisation that left-wing participants (regardless of the sampled organisation that they later joined) often had experience of during early university is Palestinian solidarity groups, which are relatively active groups on UK university campuses, with two students in the sample also spending an extended period of time in Palestine during their activism.

Social media did not play a significant role in most participants' understanding of their mobilisation. To older participants within the wider 18-35 age range, social media was often rarely used or very seldom used for activism at the time of their political mobilisation. For younger participants, social media was viewed at a site of useful information about an organisation rather than a mobilisation tool.

When describing the process by which they became mobilised to their organisation, over half of the participants point to an individual with who they had a conversation with who either made a suggestion that they participate or who invited them to participate with this particular group. This was a similarity across all sampled groups with no distinct pattern of cross-group variation. The relationship of this individual to the participant varied; in some cases, it was a parent or teacher, while in others a friend or acquaintance who they had met at some point often during their studies. Individuals are often cited as important to the mobilisation process and it is rare that participants mobilise with a group of existing friends, with the exception of workplace or school friends in the case of a workplace or school strike. This may be attributed to political mobilisation as a somewhat individual process or it may reflect that mobilisation often occurs at juncture points within their timeline where young people are likely to experience a reorganising of their friendship circles, such as starting university, sixth form or a workplace. While university 'fresher's fairs' are cited as spaces to obtain information on organisations, and sometimes to meet other young people involved, social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter are viewed as routes to relevant information on an organisation or movement, and it is rare that participants view this sites as a core feature of their narrative surrounding their political mobilisation.

When narrating their experience of their political mobilisation into organisations, other participants point to political ideas and ideologies as central to their mobilisation. For those mobilised into either the left-wing political party (mainstream)/ youth branch or the right-wing political party (mainstream)/ youth branch, political ideologies paired with an event such as an election or leadership election are common mobilisation narratives, such as opposing Ed Miliband's politics or the shift of

the left-wing political party further to the left. Participants outside of political parties were less likely to cite events in combination with their political ideas and beliefs, but did in some instances make links between these mobilising political beliefs and important personal experiences in their life course.

As outlined, joining university is a common point within participants' timelines for their political mobilisation, while other participants mobilised at an earlier or later stage or outside of the university context. In a few cases mobilisation was a smooth process. However, in a significant number of cases there was a process of adjustment or searching to find the organisation in which the participant felt comfortable, before they settled on any organisation or accepted the first one chosen; sometimes attempts to join and participate in a group, either prolonged or short lived, were experienced before the participant found 'their group'. When asked further about the issues experienced within organisations early on in their participation, young people experiencing this within the university context (student organisation as well as other party and issue groups organised by student-led groups in the university context) referred to 'cliques' and externally excluding friendship groups existing within these organisations. In some cases, participants expressed that organisations lacked an understanding of how to be inclusive as an organisation leading to participants feeling excluded or less able to participate due to their gender, age or ethnicity. There was however, no common path following on from such experiences, with some participants remaining within these organisations and suffering as a result of these accessibility issues, while other participants made a concerted decision, for which they took ownership over, to find a more accessible organisation.

6. Practices / Sustained Participation / Multiple Participation

Most participants, with some exceptions, had engaged in multiple political organisations at different points over time, if not simultaneously. Consequently, they had engaged in a wide range of political action repertoires over time, from election campaigning to demonstrations and direct actions. As outlined in relation to mobilisation, there is a strong degree of crossover between the centre left political party and other left-wing groups in Sheffield, such as the grassroots solidarity organisation and the left libertarian organisation. Nevertheless, participation in multiple organisations over time occurs also outside of the university context. Nearly all respondents where they have the right to vote reported that they are habitual voters in general elections, although a significant minority pointed to believing the electoral system or indeed the democratic system to have flaws which render the process

less impactful and less meaningful to them as a form of participation. However, most would vote despite reservations.

Notable exceptions to the pattern of having participated in multiple organisations over time include the right-wing political party (mainstream)/ youth branch, whose participants appear not to intersect with other organisations on campus at the University of Sheffield to the same degree as left-wing organisations. Where participants within the left-wing political party (mainstream)/ youth branch have had no trajectory of organisational change over their life course they also have a narrower set of practices restricted to party and electoral politics.

Central to many accounts of their practices and sustained participation are organisational meetings. Meetings, when discussed within the interviews, were commonly criticised. This applied in particular, although not exclusively to, young people attending party meetings. Many participants experienced organisational meetings as uninteresting events lacking in political discussion. Hierarchies were perceived to dominate meetings and particularly when participants describe their experience of all-age rather than youth-led spaces, hierarchies according to age. It was noted by one participant that meetings were demotivating if they could not have a voice in the discussions; a common comment made in the experiences of young people overall in the sample, and in particular by young women.

The role of social media to the sampled participants' activism was not significant. While sites such as Facebook and Twitter were used by a small number of participants for debates or discussion groups online which related to their membership organisation, for most young people its purpose within their activism was for information gathering, with most posting informally on these sites rather than strategically as part of their political activism. A notable exception to this pattern was the informal citizens/grassroots solidarity organisation/group, for which all interviewed members had been used social media or online tools for communication or organising within this group.

In the case of young people who sustain a medium to high intensity of participation, which occurs more commonly for activists from the left-wing political party (mainstream)/youth branch, union and left-wing political party (mainstream)/youth branch, there is a sense in which participants understand their participation to blend with their everyday activities, and become the main focus of their time and routine (around which other friends, relationships and work adjust). Of the participants who reported to have had such intense periods of participation, there were numerous cases of participants who maintained this for a couple of years before eventually 'burning out'. In these cases, participants

chose to take a period of time, ranging from several months to more than a year, away from political activism before returning. Returning most often resulted in a shift in their choice of activist organisation and in a rethinking of the division of their life and activism.

Motivations for continued and sustained participation in political organisations fall roughly into three categories, which are not cited exclusively by participants. Rather, most participants cite a combination of all three. The first is ideology and political values. This was more common in the case of the right-wing political party (mainstream)/youth branch and the left-wing political party (mainstream)/youth branch. Ideology and values, and the closeness of their own ideas and ideology to that of the party were motivating factor for continuing one's participation, especially since some participants describe finding an organisation who is well aligned in ideas or ideologies as a part of a long process. Others cited the ability to put political ideas into action as a motivating factor, in an abstract sense or relating to the ability to fight injustices. Secondly, friendships and personal connections within the organisation are strong motivating factors for their continued and sustained participation. For participants who have experienced a process of searching to find an organisation that has a friendly and inclusive environment, the importance of personal connections within their organisation is higher. Finally, participants make reference to the meaning that participation brings to their life. A smaller subsection of participants refer to the potential cost of leaving an organisation with which they had put so much time and effort into activism; given this time and effort they would not want to stop, indicating the potential 'sunk costs' of not continuing their participation that are perceived by the young activists.

7. Evolution (inside organisation / change of participation outside organisation / disengagement)
Where occurring within the initial organisation, participant evolution often follows a trajectory whereby the participant follows a seemingly natural progression from an ordinary member to gaining more positions of responsibility. For those organisations who were situated in the student sphere, this often took the form of a committee membership. For those who sustain this organisational participation, young activists commonly experience an increase in participation intensity over time.

As outlined in relation to sustained participation, participation evolution outside of the initial organisation is a common process among the sample; with the exception of young people who have recently begun their activism, it is common for activists to experience an evolution of their participation between one organisation and another, in some cases multiple times. Analysing variation

across the sample, this is more the case for participants within the left libertarian organisation/group, informal citizens/grassroots solidarity group and trade union organisations than with political parties. There are multiple features of the participants' biographies which participants associated with their evolving participation. A significant feature, especially for students with experience of living abroad or whose career was more developed and taken them to multiple locations, is the geographic mobility of the sample. Even when participants were members of national-level organisations, removal from their local group when moving for work or study led to changes in the organisations of participation as well as the rate of participation. To some extent, this also occurred for most of the sample at the juncture of moving to university, since many moved away from their hometowns for their studies. Secondly, movement between jobs (whether in the same or different city) was a catalyst for participant evolution, especially in the case of the trade union. In a wider sense, students moving away from the student-sphere of politics into full time work affects their occupation and hence participation in one sense, while simultaneously removing some of their availability they experienced as a student. The evolution of participants' political ideas, philosophy or 'theory of change' are important drivers to the evolution of activists' participation between organisations, while in some cases the process appears to work in an opposite direction with changes in political organisation eventually impacting upon changes in their political views, philosophy or theory of change. Regardless of direction, the dealignment of the views of an individual with the organisation is a dynamic of disengagement cited by a number of participants. In the case of parties, this is linked to party policy as well as the impact of high profile scandals on the activists' impressions of the organisation. For some, it was a lack of voice they had in an organisation which contributed to disengagement; a reflection which highlights the importance of processes to ensure youth voices are heard in political organisations. Finally, although previously referred to, a feature of disengagement common to far-left organisations (which while not purposefully sampled, some participants had also engaged with at one point in their life history) as well as to left-wing student organisations is the concept of 'burnout' whereby high intensity activism, whether occurring through personal choice or the high expectations of the organisation leads to the activist disengaging from their organisations of choice and temporarily from politics in general in order to have a period of recovery or to make way for other biographical pressures.

8. Biographical Impact and Future

Across all types of organisations, where a participant has undertaken medium to high level intensity activism, activists' report that this has taken a great deal of time from other potential activities. It is common for respondents to indicate a lack of time for hobbies.

A small but significant number of activists from across different organisations report in different cases that activism has had both a positive and a negative impact on their personal physical and mental health. Interestingly, in both cases where a positive impact was described the participant was male, whereas in the vast majority of cases where the impact was negative, the participant was female. Where the impacts were positive, activists highlight how it improved their levels of anxiety by allowing them to have a greater control and impact on social issues. Negative health implications include increased stress and pressure. One activist reflected on the need to achieve activist life-balance in order to sustain her activism into the future. In another case, a participant also considered the potential mental health on any future children they may have. In some cases, biographical events have an impact upon participation (rather than the other way around). For the one participant who does already have a child, the impact of having a girl has given her motivation to campaign more for the feminist organisation/group and feminist causes in general, despite the immediate biographical impact of having a young baby.

Among the sample, political activism has also had impacts upon present and future work and study choices. Many young people who were students at the time of interview reflect upon the change that leaving their studies and looking for full time work will bring. A small number of participants also mentioned the legal consequences of their activism on work prospects, such as industry blacklists, but this remained a distant concern. For most participants, when weighing up the future pressure of employment and activism, an assumption was made that work would be prioritised in this trade off. To a smaller number of participants, the link between industry and politics is intertwined and therefore not viewed by participants as separate, although this association was not expressed widely outside of the right-wing political party (mainstream)/ youth branch. However, for a sizeable minority of participants, employment or future employment was viewed as something that would in their future fit around activism. Additionally, some activists have expressed an interest in professions that adopt some of the values that have influenced their activism, while accepting that overall activism would decrease as a result of this. Teaching is a profession whose values were referenced by activists on more than one occasion. This viewpoint was expressed mostly by participants from the left-wing

political party (mainstream)/ youth branch, informal citizens/grassroots solidarity organisation and left libertarian organisations/groups.

Skills development is a feature of activism that is prevalent in most activists' description of their activism's impact. In particular, the impact of activism upon personal confidence and communication skills was a common theme across all organisations, with some young people indicating a positive impact upon their professional life.

The vast majority of participants state that they will or hope to participate in politics in the future. Furthermore, others remain uncertain or open-minded to the future. Although some who have expressed previous experiences of burnout are among the cautious respondents to this question, the cautious also include participants who express uncertainty relating to their current political organisation, which is reflected in their response to this question. Furthermore, those who hold wide definitions of what is political are also more likely to respond positively, holding the belief that it would be impossible to give up political action entirely when 'politics is everything'.

9. Conclusion

We find varying accounts of participants' primary socialisation and political background. With regard to activities and action repertoires, the difference between formalised party organisations and non-party organisations accounts for most differences. However, due to the high degree of crossover including multiple participation between left-wing organisations in Sheffield (in particular in student activism), there remains a great deal of crossover and hence variety of repertoire on the left between the informal citizens/grassroots solidarity organisation/group, left libertarian organisation/groups and left-wing political parties (mainstream)/youth branches.

While the role of the Sheffield context determined some commonalities in mobilisation and sustained participation experiences, it is notable that for most life stages, the differences between different types of political organisations are often smaller than the difference between different cases within the same organisation.

Most participants perceive their activism to have had a positive impact upon their life course and commonalities are clear across all organisations of the more negative impacts where this is the case.