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Combating Inequalities through Innovative Social Practices of and for
Young People in Cities across Europe

WP4 Comparative Report of “Fieldwork II”

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1 Introduction

This phase of research sought to build on earlier ones that investigated the macro level causes and symptoms of inequalities (WP2) and meso-level dynamics in the form of infrastructural causes and manifestations of inequalities in specified areas of the city (WP3) identified as case study areas for this research.

This phase (WP4) of further qualitative investigation involved trying to capture young people's sentiments toward issues uncovered in both the WP2 and WP3 phases, through broadening out the methodology to include participant observation and depth-interviews through multiple encounters with young people. The objectives were to capture more about the lived effects of inequalities and how young people might traverse these in their day-to-day social, cultural and economic activities.

Young people expressed a range of positions with regard to their neighbourhoods and the city as a whole; belonging to minority ethnic communities; treatment by statutory agencies and employers and the role played by different public and private infrastructures in shaping their life chances.

Despite distinctive contextual variables that result in very different economic impacts and political forms of restructuring, what emerges is a picture of young people who are isolated by the shifts in the economy as a result of the economic crisis and subsequent neo-liberal restructuring of the welfare state. A significant feature has been the shrinking economy, which incorporates young people in limited and undesirable ways, or which 'expels' (Sassen 2014) them, leading them to innovate despite significant constraints in a number of ways.

The innovations we uncovered, however, are in turn marked by their precarious nature which respectively provides a useful starting point for discussions with stakeholders in future work packages of this project. The precariousness of young people's innovations heightened in a context of austerity, leads to the key question of what local forms of (political) intervention might alleviate the precariousness, leading to more robust and enduring forms of innovation.

2 Methods

This comparative report draws on ten country reports following fieldwork phase two (WP4) carried out in each of the cities of the CITISPYCE project between February and June 2014. The primary objective of the fieldwork was to investigate young people's perceptions, experiences and social practices in relation to social inequalities as they manifest themselves, and to obtain insights into socially innovative practices

young people were engaged in or that were operating in the cities/neighbourhoods of the CITISPYCE project.

To this end, a detailed fieldwork strategy was elaborated by the Work Package (WP4) coordinator, Aston University. The strategy included common guidelines on selecting a sample of young people as well as for conducting interviews and participant observation. All fieldwork instruments were informed by the findings of the preceding Work Packages. This fieldwork strategy was shared, discussed, modified and then adopted by all partners.

As the fieldwork progressed, partners were encouraged to share experiences based on recruitment and access to the sample as well as following up reflections from initial interviews and observations. As a result, the guide for interviews, which had been arranged along the lines of themes emerging from fieldwork phase 1¹, were modified slightly in order to make it less structured, shorter and aligned more explicitly to questions about the neighbourhood, city, social inequalities and social innovations. In addition, partners also reported other adaptations they undertook in light of their own contexts. These included: extended observations at NGOs or community centres and drawing on fieldwork notes, conversations with civic actors working closely with young people on innovative projects, and attendance at social and commercial events aimed at young people.

National specific adaptations to the fieldwork strategy related more to the sampling. As a result, there is some variation in the age ranges, spread of young people from the case study neighbourhoods and socio-economic profiles. For example: in Krakow the sample is representative more of the younger end of the 16-24 age spectrum; in Brno and Sofia the sample is exclusively focused on Roma communities concentrated in the two case study areas; in Rotterdam, Barcelona and Hamburg the sample consists heavily of migrants and, in some cases, their children who are still officially identified as such; in Venice, Malmo and Athens the sample is a contrast between two case study areas drawing in a range of ethnic groups and socio economic profiles; while in Birmingham the sample draws on young people from different socio economic backgrounds, albeit almost all from minority ethnic backgrounds in the case study areas as well as from around the city.

Key features of the sample:



¹ This in turn had been informed by key themes emerging from WP2 national background reports namely the seven prospects for innovation (see Appendix 1)



3 Young people and the City

This section of the report draws on young people’s responses in relation to the case study areas in which they lived. It also registers young people’s sentiments and experiences of being citizens of the city too. This line of investigation follows on from WP3 concerns with understanding the “interplay of different attributes of the neighbourhood and their role in (re)producing, mitigating or counteracting inequalities (Güntner et al 2014:11).

The analysis continues with the adoption of Lefebvre’s ideas about the production of space (Lefebvre 1974/1991). It recognises that social space is produced by techniques of order including locality, layout and materiality, and these spatial effects impact not only on how space is perceived and lived, but also on how inhabitants perceive themselves. Hall refers to this in her ethnographic study ‘City, Street and Citizen’ as “symbolic spatial order” (2012:40). This section also reveals young people’s awareness of sentiments in broader society toward them as a social group categorised by age (youth). This can be seen particularly in how their social practices are represented and apprehended symbolically by statutory agencies as a cause and symptom of inequalities.

Urban Imaginations

Young people articulated much about social relations in their areas, between different groups resident there, as well as how these relations were structured by policy and politics. These revealed complex and paradoxical relationships toward their localities. For example: ambivalent feelings of fear and happiness to live in an area that was officially known as one with high levels of multiple deprivation:

“People think bad things about this neighbourhood and it is the contrary. Until you don’t live here and you are not within, you don’t know what it is. [...] As there is much immigration, they think there are just robberies. Also because there are prostitutes, but it does not have anything to do. Bad fame”.
[ES-IV-NH2-Y4]

‘Rzaka is a poor district, even a pathological one. (...) I think that people don’t want to have jobs. There are quite a few pathological families of alcoholics.’ [PO-IV-NH2-Y5]

Sometimes referring to the physicality of their area:

"I feel that the whole of Sofielund is very clearly enclosed by major roads. /.../ If you are experiencing social barriers against society in terms of getting jobs or an education, I believe that physical barriers can reinforce that feeling " (SE-IV-NS-Y20).

"We are not isolated, but we do not have all the conveniences of Athens...All we have are buses, not even the suburban railway passes through...In order to go to Athens you need your own means of transportation, on the other hand gas is expensive. Aren't all these limitations?" (GR-IV-NH2-Y1)

Some young people also defended their areas with a sense of pride:

A person that born in Marghera, since an early age, he or she used to hear: "Do you live in Marghera!? What a nerve! How do you feel there? – and faces as if to say – How can you feel fine in Marghera guys!?" [...] Being from of Marghera means being alternative, being "other", being something else [...] People used to say: "Ah, Marghera!? There is only the lane with the whores". That is, you know? They think like that about us. Or "Marghera? Full of immigrants, full of Bangladeshi" Or once again: "When I take the bus number six or number three to go to Marghera always feel stinks!" Got it? If you are from Marghera you should be ashamed of that, [instead] in Marghera there's the pride of being from Marghera. We, as people from Marghera, have the pride that makes you say: "I'm not like everyone, I'm not like all the rest, I am the rebel of society" (IT-IV-NH2-Y15)

Associations with areas marked as negative (i.e. ghettos, street) were converted into positives by young people through garnering notoriety and respect as a result of living there and building reputations based on the 'character' of those areas. These became key forms of social capital, particularly when other forms of capital were denied or unavailable to them (Anderson 1990: 66-77).

This trend was more apparent where individuals had access to strong personal and social networks. Personal networks can be described as family connections, whereas social networks refer to extended networks of friends and associates. Young people seemed to be aware of the social capital created by networks as it helped them to achieve status, prestige and generate an income or find employment, for example.

"I grew up here, I know the people, it is calm. I can go everywhere, I know everyone." (BG-IV-NH2-YP30)

As noted from the WP3 phase of fieldwork, the case study areas (with exception of Poland) were significant for their diversity of population. This ethnic diversity was simultaneously valued and loathed:

"The area is diverse and multicultural, it's what I consider to be Malmö's best part to live in /.../ People move around here which I see as a positive security aspect" (SE-IV-NS-Y20).

“I don’t know where these settlers came from. They should just make them a ghetto and separate them from us.” (BG-IV-NH2-YP28)

“[T]his is a difficult Land, at the same time it’s one of the world’s best areas, because I was born here, but also because I see a lot of positive things as, for example, the so-called ‘resilience’ factor that is when you are in the s[hit].... you can bring out a lot, for example, the interculturality that we have been able to achieve. (IT -15- NH2 - Y15)

Some areas and spaces were marked as belonging to specific social groups. In Malmo, Hamburg, Rotterdam and Birmingham there were organisations and networks associated with Muslims, a minority group particularly maligned and hyper-visible as a result of state regimes of surveillance and debates around integration in these countries. Spaces associated with this minority group appeared to be obscure to people who did not belong or identify with those communities, while they were a key source of support and meeting for young Muslims. For young people of Muslim background, such organisations that appeared specifically to serve this faith group were perceived as filling the gap in services which they believed the local authority should be responsible for:

” [...]Norra Grängesbergsgatan... it's loaded with NGOs. There is one called Kontrapunkt, then there are yoga centres, arcades, clubs and a place that serves free food every Tuesday. I feel welcome there but I do not know about the guys on the street feels /.../ There's a place down in Norra Grängesbergsgatan where guys usually hang out, it's quite 'trashy'. They just hang there as it is a venue in some way and there is even a mosque in the basement” (SE-IV-OTH-Y3).

The concentration of particular ethnic groups and communities in our case study areas was reported as leading to territoriality, which often manifested in conflict or violence between different neighbourhoods and areas. This was expressed through ‘postcode wars’ and neighbourhood rivalries. While this trend of neighbourhood nationalism (Back 1996) was apparent in almost all countries in this study, it was not always something that young people got involved in:

“I am with the people of my neighbourhood. [...] I don’t feel comfortable here with them [people from outside], you know? [...] I don’t feel like making a joke.. I like slapping people [for fun] and I cannot slap them because they are not my friends...” [ES-FG1-P2]

‘there’s certain people that obviously I don’t get on with because of where I’m from so it’s one of them ones’ ‘it’s postcodes’ (UK-FG1 participant)

In all countries young people suggested there were dominant narratives about their areas, which involved crime, litter, over population, newcomers to the area, drugs and disorder. These also led to simplistic impressions of ‘community’, ghetto or survival and squalor, and which were sometimes even glamorised.

Local narratives, as espoused by young people, often differed from localizing governmental practices. This was evident when young people complained about the way agencies and service providers addressed their areas (see also below 4.1):

“Handsworth’s ok but if I had kids I wouldn’t want them to grow up in Handsworth. Because of the people that are in it ‘the council have moved a certain stereotype of people into a certain area, for example, if you go into Sparkbrook or Alum Rock you see bare Asians... so it’s like they’ve moved the crack heads and ex-cons and people that can’t get no jobs into Handsworth making mans look like we live on James Turner Street” (UK-FG2 participant)

Young people suggested that policy decisions and actions impacting their areas were shaped by a combination of factors (historical and contemporary) and actors, and therefore, could not straightforwardly be reduced to a few characteristics of their areas. This was similar to the ‘narrative web’ in which “places are invoked and reinvented through the interface of practice, regulation, and rumour” (Back & Keith 2004: 68). A key example was the issue of what types of services local authorities believed were needed in deprived neighbourhoods or that communities in those areas ‘deserved’.

For example, as noted in the WP3 comparative report (Güntner et al 2013), urban density was viewed as a concern amongst planners, policy makers and practitioners concerned about the sustainability of services in areas of multiple deprivation represented by the case study areas. Yet in the contexts of our neighbourhoods young people also saw density as conducive to cultural vitality, diversity and ‘community’. Tonkiss discusses this in terms of good and bad density (Tonkiss, 2013:37-39). Young people’s sentiments in relation to their neighbourhoods, i.e. how people lived and perceived them as a result of the different things density offered (excitement, danger, congestion, loneliness) resembles what Tonkiss refers to as ‘affective density’ (2013: 40-50).

Thinking in affective terms, young people pointed to high levels of income and wealth in *other* parts of the city or concentrated among certain classes of people as symbolising inequality. Young people referred to development taking place in other parts of the city as symbolising where wealth and opportunity were concentrated, in contrast to their own neighbourhoods. This also pointed to awareness about certain causes of inequalities as emanating from shifts in the global economy and how this impacted the distribution of wealth and availability of work for young people (see below 4.1).

Relationships with other areas/centre

The familiarity and closeness to others, however, resulting from the density of their neighbourhoods could also be off-putting for some young people:

“...I will talk to you about Piraeus, because I refrain from going to my neighbourhood, Agia Sophia. I do not like the area, where I live, I never did. There is a certain perception that does not match mine. It is a ghettoized area,

there are cliques in which I do not participate for several reasons and therefore, I prefer the centre of Piraeus..." (GR-IV-NH1-Y7)

"The fact that there are so many of my countrymen here, many Bangladeshis. I do not see it as a nuisance in itself, but is not the best, let's say. In the sense that whatever you do will attract a lot of attention of your countrymen who may speak, I do not know how it happens... if I went around with a girl in Marghera, it would be a problem, it is a small community and people would talk a lot. Especially for my fellow countrymen. Talk to each other and.. the community is small and, therefore, all come to know everything. People know me, I don't know how they can know me, but they know me, they know who my parents are, what I usually do, what I don't usually to do...It's a bit annoying. So I try to go away from the neighbourhood." (IT-2-NH2-Y2)

Urban theorists have discussed density as the intensity of occupation, interaction and mobility that characterise the social life of urban form (Tonkiss, 2013: 49). In all the country reports young people spoke of the limits of living in deprived areas and the monoculture that encapsulates them. Some sought to manage this through interlinked patterns of fixity (with like-minded others) and mobility (navigating across different areas of the city) where they made strategic moves across the city (most notably the city centre or places of consumption and leisure), gathering social and cultural resources to help mitigate the effects of social inequalities (see below 4.2 for more detail). Thus intra-city density provided access to resources; employment, services and choices that could help ameliorate certain effects of inequality (Tonkiss, 2013: 40):

'The city centre is neutral – all of us have a more-or-less similar distance to cover. Therefore, we meet in our district very rarely.' [PO-IV-NH1-Y21]

Fostering links with people of similar ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds *in other parts of the city* was a key way that young people acquired dense networks of familiarity, where, in their terms, more than one local area widens the network and the social resources available to them.

Displacement of young people

Feelings of neglect and isolation were, however, more prominent among our sample; most evident in Hamburg, Krakow, Malmo, Sofia and Venice (although the subject was alluded to in different ways in all cities). Feelings of neglect and isolation could be linked to experiences of abandonment by municipalities, the state and institutions young people assumed were traditional outlets of social support. Whether real or imagined, there was a general perception that due to the lack of health care, education, public space, housing, jobs or support services, young people and their neighbourhoods were left to their own devices:

"There is no park, no benches where you could sit, there is nothing apart from the school. That is why everyone gathers there, because there is just nowhere else to go." (BG-IV-NH2-YP35)

“Since there are no spaces for young people, it increases the people in the street. Then the police suspects of so many young people in the streets, they must be smoking joints, [but] it is not always so, in some cases yes. But it is not their fault if they do not have a space, they won’t stay the whole day at home, overwhelmed between four walls”. [ES-FG2]

The area effects flowing from overcrowded and densely populated neighbourhoods, poor or desperate living conditions were a concern for young people; expressed as having particularly negative effects on those in education or studying.

Many young people overtly expressed that their neighbourhoods had been neglected and cited examples of squalor in their areas. Across all the cities, participants complained that limited public and open space and availability of leisure activities often meant that young people would congregate on street corners and parks (if available) or in places of leisure and consumption. This in turn would place young people in the public eye as a nuisance by older generations and the police.

Many young people drew a link between the lack of activities, amenities and the absence of public space and idleness and boredom, which in turn would lead to illicit activities and even criminality.

Young people expressed hyper localised negative sentiments, sometimes in relation to not wanting to work in their own areas, because jobs there were seen as dead end or of no ‘prestige’. In other cases, mainly in cities where youth unemployment was particularly high, young people expressed this in their desires to emigrate or to leave the locality or city for another permanently:

“...I have already taken the first steps for migrating to the USA or Australia. I will find a Greek school to teach there. I have one goal. I struggled to enter higher education and I am struggling to graduate. I will not allow anyone to take this away from me. I will exercise my profession either in Greece or abroad...” (GR-IV-NH1-Y10)

The next section of this comparative report focuses on how the above area effects combine with structural and macro factors (Stigendal 2013) to compound social inequalities. These appear to play out in nuanced ways in everyday aspects of young people’s lives.

4 On Social Inequalities and Social Innovations

4.1 Social Inequalities

Retreat

Young people narrated a sense of how the economic crisis had prompted a retreat into a limited rather than expansive set of available options and prospects, as well as a retreat into themselves or things familiar and local to them. In addition to their areas

or neighbourhoods, family was the most pertinent example but some young people also suggested other phenomena such as ‘money men’, drug dealers, pimps and racketeers.²

“We have a very high rate of unemployment, much inactivity, then kids don’t study or don’t want to finish the lower secondary school, some do it. But what we see is much school absenteeism. This creates that the kids do not do anything and remain the whole day in the streets, with all what this involves. When you are 20 something, you want to have a certain independence from your parents, have some money to do your own things. This results in shady deals. I don’t want to create a social alarm, but shady deals are the everyday in Roquetes”. [ES-IV-OTH-Y2]

‘you’re asking me if I can’t work, how am I gonna make money? I ain’t gonna lie to you I would go out there and sell drugs to people... and I will give fake £50 notes to people, sometimes you have to do certain things to live enit. I see it as if I can’t get no money from nowhere and the only way I can get money is to sell drugs to people then that’s what I’m gonna do to eat, no one else is gonna put food on my table’ (UK-FG2 participant)

“Before I started this VET I was selling drugs. That was a proper alternative for me that really paid off. But now, school became more important.” [DE-FG2-Y2]

Engagement

Respondents across all cities suggested that ‘problems’ to do with young people were interpreted through a local lens and then translated into policy largely while young people were absent or through controlled means. For example: staged one-off meetings between young people and decision makers or individuals in positions of authority who they did not identify with.

Young people were forthright in their opinions about the way official institutions operated:

“They [the municipal officials] are not interested, they don’t care. Who does what, who is idle, who works, who does not. They just do nothing.” (BG-IV-NH1-YP16)

“I don’t use any local services. There is nothing happening that would be attractive for me in terms of the services offered. (...) Actually, I find it difficult to say what should happen for the services to be attractive for me.” [PO-IV-NH1-YP3]

Not surprisingly language was a key barrier for those from migrant backgrounds. The country reports reveal that multiple sites of inequality, barriers to participation and engagement are enforced for young people as a result of poor language skills. This

² Statistical data relating to the increase in unemployment and levels of educational attainment for younger groups was compared in the WP2 comparative report.

trend of language as a barrier was more notable in Hamburg, Malmö, Rotterdam and Venice, where young people whose parents had little or no knowledge of European languages felt disadvantaged in terms of guidance and support to access education and employment opportunities.

“It was hard for my parents. My father had nearly no education in Turkey and my mother has higher secondary but couldn’t really help me either in for example German, so I didn’t really get help from home.” DE-NH1-IV-Y6

Limited language skills or awareness of technical jargon also restricted access to public services for young people as they complained they were unable to understand and complete complex applications or communicate clearly. This also resulted in discrimination and racism (see below). It is important to note that a significant proportion of young people interviewed from migrant backgrounds were also increasingly *self-reliant*. They made use of information and communication technology to improve their understanding of processes and language to support their families too.

Sociality/collectivity

Limited by the lack of public resources, young people also resorted to social mediums such as local NGOs and social media for support to access opportunities. Some made constructive use of these while others remained sceptical.

Shopping and consumption were seen as among the few outlets for sociality, because of the comparative ‘neutral’ quality in shopping spaces; spaces that readily absorb varieties of people from wide-ranging areas.

Closely linked to this was the issue of ‘safety’, which was particularly pertinent in Sofia, Birmingham, Venice, Brno and Krakow. Many young people expressed their hesitation to venture out of their own areas; leading to a retreat into ‘community’.

A deep sense of individualism was also cited as working against the forming of collectives and thinking socially in all cities.

“They do something if they get something back, something that benefits them, that they see it clear not in the long term, they want it now, the immediacy is also very important. [...] I think that at a social level everything is slower, but they want everything now and as they don’t see an immediate reciprocity, they get bored or they get fed up with it, as there is not this perseverance, [...] they are very volatile”. [ES-IV-OTH-Y1]

‘It depends on what I would be supposed to do, on how much effort it would require. I could help to organize some stuff. Obviously not for free.’ [PO-IV-NH2-YP7]

‘Considering the social problems (regarding social contacts) in our district and many others in Kraków, I have an impression that they are linked to architecture. Bleak apartment buildings do not encourage people to form

closer relationships within the neighbourhood. The society is atomized – everyone lives just for himself and neighbours are treated as strangers or, under the best circumstances, neutrally. We do not visit each other. Actually, we do not even know each other.’ PO-NH2-IV-YP21

“Why should I work and do something for this neighbourhood? Nonsense! What for?” (BG-IV-NH2-YP29)

In cities suffering from higher levels of youth unemployment, young people’s collectivity and cooperation was negatively affected by competition over scarce resources too:

“Now, those who find a good job hide this and don’t tell anyone that they work. The trust is gone. To bring someone [where you work] and trust him that he would not embarrass you. There are many such cases, that is why people became colder to one another.” (BG-IV-NH1-YP20)

A deep sense of fatalism could be seen as pervading young people’s lives and outlooks as a result of the economic crisis. This was exacerbated by the myriad forms of discrimination young people claimed they suffered.

Discrimination

All the country reports revealed numerous ways that young people experienced discrimination. This manifested along different axes of race, ethnicity, gender and age (in addition to association with area as already noted above) and impacted opportunities to access services and employment:

“It is really hard and I recognize that we are migrants right now because we just cannot find a flat. There can be no other reason because we always get a refusal and the next day the flat is online again.” DE-NH2-IV-Y18

“There is a lot of racial discrimination in Bulgaria. You have to be white, to speak nicely and intelligently. When our people go [to ask for a job] and are recognised to be Gypsies, they get insulted. They treat them very bad.” (BG-IV-NH2-YP33)

“My brother is 25. For five years, he has been unable to find work and lives on our parents’ back. Nobody hires him because of his colour – he is very dark. They have told him directly many times: Yes, we are looking for people, but we don’t hire Gypsies.” (BG-IV-NH2-YP45)

“There is racism [...] if, however, you’re an immigrant and you come here, most of the people frown at you wrong because “you’re stealing our jobs” and, especially for many employers there is an excellent opportunity because often happens that the employer assumes that these immigrants that are paid less because maybe they’re moonlighting, I mean irregular work, without contract, or because they simply are paid less because it’s okay to pay less an immigrant and maybe they do not say anything and they work twenty hours a day.” [IT-IV-NH1-YP1]

By law enforcement agencies:

'The police are pitiful. They drive around, you're sitting at a tram stop and they have you empty your pockets. And you're doing nothing, just sitting there. In my opinion the police are not necessary here.' [PO-IV-NH2-YP1]

"At first the officer was really unfriendly. Then he realized that we were talking German and he became nicer. He said: "you are talking good German." Yes, I was born here." DE-FG1-NH2

'The municipal police are not needed. They cost money, but they do nothing. They are paid for fining other people.' [PO-IV-NH2-YP4]

"This happened to me, walking in the street and they did a raid, and they were just stopping many Moroccan young people [...] I was walking and the police tells me 'you go there', suspecting. When I saw what was happening I said 'I am from here', and he [the policeman] tells me 'your face is not really that Spanish', and I say 'I swear it, I live just here', I was just standing in front of the door and in the end he says 'ok, go away' and I was like 'fuck!'" [ES-FG2-P1]

By gender:

"To find a job maybe [the girls] have some more advantages. Although it is paradoxical. Consider Venice or here in Marghera area, most of the activities are ... bar! In the bar the employers want girls as workers. A lot of them, a lot of girl, work in Venice, in the touristic sector." [IT-15-NH2-Y15]

"In my opinion, the only one thing is that, in Mestre, the job places are more accessible to the girls... in Mestre. Why? The bartender, the waitress... What do they look so much? The good looking, you know? Therefore... For a boy... to find a job in Mestre maybe it is harder, maybe a girl asks in a few shops, maybe in the centre, and get something... While maybe a guy has more difficulties because the demand is always... "good looking"!" [IT-18-NH1-Y17]

For many women, disadvantage was also compounded by employer's attitudes toward their responsibilities to care for children or family members. In Athens and Barcelona particularly young women narrated that the economic crisis and resultant deregulation of the employment sector and 'flexibilization' of working conditions in the name of competitiveness and growth, increased the obstacles faced by women with children, single parent families and other socially vulnerable groups when entering the labour market.

"...I went to an interview 5 months ago, for a job position at a Super Market. I didn't get the job because I have a child and despite my previous experience. Furthermore, my child is at nursery school. They thought I wouldn't be devoted to my job and I will need days off when my child gets sick..." (GR-IV-NH1-Y2)

In Krakow, Rotterdam and Barcelona particularly, young people also felt pathologised by elders or what they perceived as mainstream ‘community’ and society. Importantly, some young people in these cities also referred to law enforcement agencies as particularly responsible and perceived them as non-representative of young people.

‘Quite often during holidays, when young people stay outside, older people are just waiting for a mistake to criticize the youth. They often call the police (...) and ‘anesthetize’ it. (...) As for the older people, I haven’t said earlier that they increase our group sense of security, because they monitor the area.’
[PO-IV-NH2-YP1]

Welfare/services

The deficiency in services as outlined in WP3, which generated the theme of ‘Piecemeal and authoritative approaches to youth and social services (Güntner et al 2013) was commented upon by young people in all cities. As already noted, a common complaint young people had was that services were scarce or being withdrawn. Concern about the retrenchment of welfare services was expressed mostly in relation to access to benefits (social income in some countries) education and training provision and housing. Some young people commented on the divide that was resulting in society between the rich and poor or the ‘haves and have-nots’.

“This last government... Without being partial I can tell you it is commonly known that the gaps have widened. /.../ No measures have been taken to lessen this gap. If you work you should have a better living standard, but now the gaps have become too wide. The difference is also incredible in what you earn if you work, compared to those who don’t work” [SE-IV-SS-Y4].

Many of these sentiments reflected on young people’s sense of their own neighbourhoods becoming polarised (Malmo) or ghettoised (Birmingham, Brno, Hamburg, Netherlands, Sofia). Young people referred to the lack of suitable housing or the dense and over population of their areas, which played into them becoming less desirable areas to live in and be associated with. As noted above, this trend was prevalent in all cities where the research was carried out.

Importantly, young people also commented on the difficulty they experienced finding out about services:

“In this ‘information age’ are people expected to know or find out everything themselves?!” [UK-IV-OTH-YP23]

“People might be very dependent on exactly the contributions they receive, so if the rent would be increased due to changes in the property maybe people cannot live there. It also feels like they focus more on the areas where highly educated people live” (SE-IV-OTH-Y11).

“I arranged everything with the authorities and sometimes I heard from them ‘these people think that Germany is paradise and they come here and want

everything for free'. The employees are unfriendly and embittered. It's hard and I never had someone giving helpful advice were to apply for this and that. I had to inquire myself." DE-NH2-IV-Y18

'I do not know what I want to do. I think about it all the time, but can't make up my mind. I do not know which university to choose, which secondary school. I do not have an idea where I want to work when I am older, because I know that even if I come up with an idea, it's nearly impossible that I will be working there. I won't get that job, it's very difficult to get a job nowadays, especially without useful connections. I have no idea what my future will look like.' PO-NH1-INV-YP3

"But I don't know where to go or how to start things. I know it would work if I took my responsibility and got something started, but I don't know how" (SE-IV-SS-Y13).

Signposts

These sentiments revealed a further trend negatively impacting young people and reinforcing inequalities, which we characterise as the loss of signposts. Young people who expressed despair about their conditions in terms of services and opportunities, revealed there to be a falling out of key layers of support that was expected to help the transition from child to adulthood. Given the significant shrinking of welfare services such as careers advice and the burgeoning distance between young people and statutory agencies, there was less availability of information and guidance about things in a young person's emerging landscape that might enable them to experiment or innovate.

"The problem here is that the majority of young people have no access to the same resources we (two staff members of a youth centre) had and I guess that the replacement becomes difficult". [ES-IV-OTH-Y12]

"It seems to me that they are good talkers. And then they do this brainwashing and they put you somewhere and later you are thinking, well that was nothing that I ever wanted at it was agreed otherwise." [DE-OTH-IV-Y5]

"If I want to find out what has happened at school, we have, for example, a Facebook group. I join in and have all the information at hand. I don't need to wander from door to door. (...) the idea came from the students themselves, to put all the information in a single place.' [PO-IV-NH2-YP3]

"Back then, I didn't know what I was supposed to choose. I didn't know what I wanted to do in the future. I just chose the education that seemed easiest /.../ after graduating I understood, and was not very happy" (SE-FG-SS-Y30).

Young people recognised that inefficacy of existing policies and actions contributed to their plight:

“90% of the staff at the Y. is incompetent. They gave me mainly job offers for VET as store man, but I really did not wanted that. Then, I have to admit, I have turned to Jan [from the homework help place in NH2]. Because you recognize that the staff is only helping you because they have to not because they want to. It always feels much imposed. With Jan, he is doing it really good and really puts much effort in it. He doesn't forget and always asks. And therefore this is much better. I only went there because of the children's allowance, I have to admit. [DE-NH2-IV-Y7+Y15]

“Theoretically, there is a counsellor and she should be organizing visits to other schools [at higher secondary level], but she is not doing it. There were one or two trips, but it's not enough. The headmaster doesn't agree to more.” [PO-IV-NH1-YP3]

“...we always talk about eighteen-plus but actually we need to look at younger than that, because by eighteen-plus they know what they want, if they're stuck in a rut and hating on everyone that's what they're going to do, you're kind of a bit late to change their minds in that sense. We hear it every day, kids are so much more advanced these days, no they're not, they've just got more tools and that's all it is. And you know what if they've got more tools then you need to up your game as well and do a little bit more early on” [UK-IV-NH1-YP12]

Education

Discrimination impacts the quality of education available to young people from minority ethnic backgrounds living in deprived areas. Young people in Brno and Sofia specifically spoke about experiences of segregation in education and poor access to quality education beginning in pre-school. Some even recognised that the poor quality of education they received was due to the way provision was funded based on head counts, for example. Because Roma populations were relatively small in the case study neighbourhoods within Brno and Sofia they were allocated less funding for education compared to other areas.

Young people also narrated worrying ideas about the *value* of education, particularly what they perceived and experienced as the inability of university education to result in desirable employment:

“... I would never rely on my University degree to find a job. It's one thing to be a plumber and another to be a political scientist! If your faucet gets broken you will call the plumber, but who will call me? There are so many political scientists who are nothing, just thin air” [GR-IV-NH1-Y7]

“I had to pass difficult tests although I just wanted to work. And then they put me into disability level although I am able to work and told me I had to take a lower secondary degree before I could start to work.” [DE-FG2-Y1]

“I wanted to make money, not be in debt, that’s why I decided not to go to university” [UK-IV-OTH-YP5]

Education alone was not sufficient in the current economic climate. Support around this was key too:

‘Generally speaking, education gives you better opportunities for a better job, undoubtedly. But for someone with less education, connections become most important.’ [PO-NH2-IV-YP13]

“It’s hard for people who interrupted their education [at high-school level] to find employment or gain experience. (...). Actually, the only chance for them to find a job is by using connections. I went to the employment agency, but the place is always crowded, often even the tickets run out, so and you have to arrive very early.’ [PO-IV-NH2-YP13]

These experiences in relation to education when considered alongside what young people narrated about the importance of signposts (above), resonate with findings of a recent study conducted by researchers at the London School of Economics (LSE) entitled *“Black and minority ethnic access to higher education: a reassessment”*³. A key finding of this study was that young people from lower social class backgrounds and some ethnic minority groups were less likely to attend schools that are geared towards getting pupils into higher education or to come from families who are familiar with the application process. The report also underlined the importance of good advice from teachers to help students choose the right qualifications and to assist them with the application process. These factors are considered to have a major impact on young people from disadvantaged backgrounds being able to access higher education.

Employment

The above issues collectively worked to compound young people’s employment prospects. Young people revealed levels of fatalism toward worsening employment conditions and high levels of unemployment (especially in the south of Europe) that limited their work prospects and hampered their broader life chances too:

“... The financial situation for young people in Greece is very difficult, the salaries are quite low nowadays and basically, there are no jobs. Anyone who works nowadays is very lucky. I feel very lucky I work...” [GR-IV-NH2-Y1]

“At the moment I see more people who have given up, because it is not leading anywhere. At a certain point they think: all the effort doesn’t pay back, so I might as well quit” [NL-IV-OTH-Y44].

“I do not know what I want to do. I think about it all the time, but can’t make up my mind. I do not know which university to choose, which secondary school. I do not have an idea where I want to work when I am older, because I

³ <http://www.lse.ac.uk/newsAndMedia/PDF/NuffieldBriefing.pdf>

know that even if I come up with an idea, it's nearly impossible that I will be working there. I won't get that job; it's very difficult to get a job nowadays, especially without useful connections. I have no idea what my future will look like. [PO-IV-NH2-YP3]

"We worked all day long, 10 days and then the boss just disappeared. Can't find him anywhere. He also changed his phone number. We were ten people, each was supposed to take 350 leva (180 EUR), but nobody got even one cent." [BG-IV-NH1-YP11]

"I am a delivery driver at Joey's Pizza and earn 450€. I have to work two times a week, mainly Saturday and Sunday." [DE-NH1-IV-Y2]

"I work in three different places: in two different transport companies in Venice and in a pizza place in Marghera and I study in a evening school course because I had a bit of "accidents". [...] Should I go to school every evening, but, because of the work schedules and all things, it is impossible...however, it is a bit hard to be able to be always present, both for work schedules and for the fatigue... it's tough. [...] My parents worked until last year, now, unfortunately, because of the crisis they have been fired, they have to stay at home. Both of them. My father worked in a restaurant in Venice and my mother had always in an office in Venice." (IT-FG1-5P)

Young people's employability was impacted by more factors:

"It's hard to get a job, that's why I'm in school. But then you also need contacts to get a job. You've got to be specialised in something" (SE-IV-SS-Y13).

"... They work at any available position with very little money; regardless of their plans and their studies...You are subject to this kind of pressure, you have to like your job, you have to accept anything because there is so high demand from people who want to find employment and this builds up pressure. So, either you like it or not, you must submit to it and psychologically, that is the worst that can happen..." (GR-FG3-P1)

"...The most regular problem we saw in job advertisements was taverns asking for cleaning ladies with University degree, because OAED (the Manpower Employment Organization-governmental organization) had proclaimed a subsidized program for hiring University graduates..." (GR-FG3-P2)

These experiences revealed much about young people's sentiments toward structural shifts taking place in the economy that resulted in limited opportunities for highly skilled workers or in areas of the economy servicing shrinking and highly specialised sectors of finance and service industries (Sassen 2014). They also revealed the importance of making connections to help navigate the displacement young people faced in the economy.

Where young people did make use of contacts or connections, these were generally friends and family leading to more informal outcomes. One consequence of this is 'social closure' - limited access to the labour market. Across all cities of the study,

young people, particularly those who felt resigned to their neighbourhoods, were closed in the low end of the secondary labour market or informal economy. In many cases (Rotterdam, Brno, Sofia, Birmingham) this even led to a pull toward the shadow or illicit economy.

The WP4 country reports were rich in their revelations of the inequalities faced by young people, many of which have explicit implications for policy. These can be summarised as:

- A severe limiting of available options and prospects for young people; leading to a retreat into themselves, their localities and family as the only available sources of support
- Disengagement of young people with official/statutory structures; caused by poor language and interpersonal skills possessed by young people and abandonment by service providers
- The loosening of social ties; caused by pathologisation and over-policing of young people and deprived neighbourhoods as well as competition in the economy
- Myriad forms of discrimination; based on gender, ethnicity, age and area
- Shrinking welfare services
- The loss of signposts; less availability of information and guidance about things in a young person's emerging landscape
- Diminishing quality and value of education
- Significant structural shifts in the availability and type of employment available to young people

4.2 Social innovations

"...First of all, I would like to mention that it (innovation) is a totally utopian term to me, because nothing is innovative...I believe that everything is based on something else. I do not think that there is something innovative by definition. Someone sees something somewhere, combines it with something else and this is how innovation comes up..." (GR-IV-NH1-Y7)

The ten country reports provide information about social innovations that operate at different levels (top-down, bottom-up), involve a range of actors (young people, NGO's, municipalities) and have impact at different scales (individual, neighbourhood, ethnic group/community, family).

From the interviews and social practices observed it is possible, however, to discern three definite trends relating to social innovations. These are: the importance of technology and social media; the use of networks and being 'mobile'; and the expansion of zones of familiarity (i.e. de-ghettoisation) through uses of alternative spaces. A further important aspect noticeable was that social innovations young people spoke about, or encountered, relied in varying degrees on external support. This support could be financial or a policy action. What is clear across the cities was that social innovations were not independent of some sort of external resource/support for their validation or sustainability.

Appendix 1 is a detailed example from Rotterdam of a way to address the need for a mix of macro-, meso- and micro-level solutions to tackle inequalities and support innovations.

This was apparent in young people's explicit efforts to engage with structures of power, and more practically/ directly, to be involved in a process of transformation:

“We would like to get involved in change. We actually have an entire plan ready and a campaign vision. We know how many votes we can count on, how many people from particular lists can be elected. We are thinking of participating in the municipal elections (in November).” [PO-IV-NH1-YP18]

And also from examining individual innovative social practices to consider what were critical resources for them. For young people who were involved in innovative activities, the provisions of other actors such as the state, funding agencies, NGOs or older generations were of key importance to them, particularly for their sustainability. Amin describes this as “the political economy of urban infrastructural distribution” (Amin, 2013: 24).

Technology and Social Media

A key trend apparent in all countries was young people's use of technology and social media as both a form of empowerment and activation, as well as tools that enabled them to detach themselves (albeit momentarily) from the realities they described of their neighbourhoods. Here they are able to access other localities (even if virtually), and extend their networks of familiarity.

We use the term technology here to refer to computers, smartphones and the Internet, while social media specifically refers to websites and applications such as WhatsApp, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and AskFM. There were numerous examples from the fieldwork of young people devising innovative ways to learn, study, communicate and organise social networks together. Technology and Social Media were also cited as key to some young people's entrepreneurial activities.

Although technology was widely adopted where and when it was affordable, there did appear to be a marked difference in usage between young people at the early end of the 16-24 age spectrum than those at the older end. The former tended to spend a larger amount of time online in virtual space and the latter in physical public or private spaces. Technology was, however, also used to transform weak online ties into strong offline ties, and in addition, virtual space allowed younger people to engage without the need for public spaces.

An example was the ‘Educational Demos’ programme in Barcelona. This project was run by a youth organisation and aimed to create a meeting point for different kinds of young people; to organise leisure and educational activities; to develop tools to facilitate access to the labour market and training courses with a special emphasis on new technologies; to become a laboratory of citizen innovation, where participants can test the different uses of technology and find answers to their social needs; to undertake educational work of social awareness and solidarity by engaging participants in the improvement of the neighbourhood from a positive and critical

approach; to promote and practice sport activities; and to develop projects of cooperation. The specific programme of 'Educational Demos' is focused on the elaboration of rap and hip-hop compositions related to the defence of human rights. Youngsters are involved from the beginning by choosing the topic through to the end results, composing the rhymes and lyrics, recording and producing videos, and performing in concerts.

Networks/mobility

Networks are about interactions, which when carried out face-to-face enable better exchanges of tacit knowledge (Elliot & Urry 2010: 45-64). Young people made use of networks in a number of ways. These were often organic networks of like-minded individuals based in their neighbourhoods as discussed above, but also networks set up by government agencies or NGOs to bring young people together around different activities targeting their personal development.

"Because of the economic climate people have changed their priorities to getting involved in volunteering and other opportunities to get experience. There are a lot of schemes around to help us such as City Youth, Beatfreaks, Envision, University of the First Age and youth Ambassadors". (UK-IV-NH2-YP40)

Some young people had set up their own 'self-help' type organisations even targeting children at a younger age:

"Currently we go into schools and work with young girls looking at transformational learning, it's not informational learning where you give them information, we give them tools and things to kind of spark in their brains and awaken them to different processes and thoughts, and possibilities in their life and purposes." (UK-IV-NH1-YP37)

Sometimes working together was altruistic or just a necessity:

"I have a group of friends, we do everyday stuff, borrow something, and get opinions on various aspects of life... I know I can turn to them at any time and get help and it works both ways. I have quite a problem to get such assistance. It is not at all formal, we do things out of kindness to help others." [PO-IV-NH2-YP22]

At other times it was strategic:

"These contacts come into play where they relay their contacts onto you and you relay your contacts onto them and it's like a shared network" [UK-IV-NH2-YP21]

"When I have to study for math classes, I watch YouTube tutorials a lot. Most teachers don't know about them but we have a WhatsApp group with the whole class and if you have problems you can ask there and you get hints from the group and someone will send a tutorial link and also share funny stuff. There are boys and girls in this group". [DE-NH2-IV-Y10]

There was a clear contrast between the importance made of strong and weak ties. In cases where austerity and inequality were most felt; strong ties seem to be more important. Where young people innovated, however, they employed weak ties through 'knowing' people using social media and mobile telecommunications (Elliot & Urry 2010: 49-50). Other people were relied on or utilised in limited respects i.e. to know about where and when an important event may be happening; or posting information about an opportunity.

Examples included: the complex approach to employment of Roma (NGO IQ Roma services) project in Brno, which was a 'triangle' of mutually reinforcing employment projects/activities aimed at a particular ethnic group; the ESF funded preparatory project in Malmo that aims to create better conditions for multisectoral collaboration in order to prevent exclusion and try to create a socially sustainable society.

Expanding zones of familiarity - creating spaces for meeting/networking

As noted in sections 3 and 4.1 above, place in terms of neighbourhoods to which young people's lives were confined, were reported as having limiting effects on them. It is not surprising, then, that young people would also attempt to de-ghettoise, breakout of and expand zones of familiarity in the city. There were numerous examples of young people seeking out public spaces such as youth centres, libraries and NGOs in alternative parts of the city. Young people attributed different languages to those spaces. These became spaces that allow young people to experiment and interact with new peoples and ideas.

"For me one [the most important thing] is a space to work from, a lot of us tend to work from our bedrooms or coffee shops, which is nice but sometimes we want to be surrounded by other creative and like-minded people and don't want to be in a coffee shop all the time. So we developed a studio space that is a co-working creative work space for creative people, artist and designers and we've a got great collection of people from fashion designers, illustrators, writers, poets, when we talk about supporting the creative industries we're talking about all aspects of it." (UK-IV-NH1-YP33)

Unofficial and private/commercial spaces were instrumental in nurturing togetherness of young people. These were also spaces where young people sought out people who might be influential.

"Sometimes we participate in various events at the meeting place. Sometimes they have festivities for children and young people. I often meet different officers there. They help with everything, if you need specific papers or other help. But as I said more recently, I have not seen so many young people in our community because most are in jail. Or they have married, I don't know" (SE-IV-SS-Y6).

"It's great if you could get a job in the future. The meeting place helps with that. I usually meet the preventive workers there; we exercise and go fishing

together. I didn't know them before, I came in contact with them since I live here in Seved, and we met at the gym" (SE-IV-SS-Y7).

Although sceptical of state sponsored initiatives, sometimes young people gave things a try and were surprised. Spaces or initiatives that were open and reflective of diverse ideas and people were valued:

"[...] We were hanging out there and saw all the NGOs and thought it's just fucking "Svennar" (slang for Swedish natives) who do not understand anything. So I thought at first. Well, It's kind of only Swedes at these NGOs, but there was obviously some Arabs and Serbs as well" (SE-IV-NS-Y2).

An example was 'The Loft' in Birmingham: a pop-up arts space in the city centre. This had been set up by a recent graduate from university who negotiated free use of a vacant commercial unit from a private landlord for a fixed six-month period. The space had become a success in attracting young creatives to hire desk space on flexible and cheap(er) terms than available elsewhere around the city.

'Communing' of the sort young people practised through their networking, use of public spaces such as coffee shops to work in and social media, constituted what Tonkiss (2014) refers to as 'many small designs on the city...that recede behind the exigencies of private and the standard scripts of public life' to form an 'infrastructure of common life that provides sites of autonomy, creativity and collectivity in the making and re-making of cities and subjects' (Tonkiss, 2013: 176).

A similar trend of making alternative use of public and private spaces was noted in the WP3 Comparative Report (in the second dimension of social innovation). It was connected to the reclaiming or making new use of spaces which may be neglected within the same neighbourhood and as contributing to the urban regeneration process of the city. This has been popularised in recent narratives of 'The right to the city' (Brenner et al 2012; Harvey 2013). CITISPYCE partners cited examples from a number of cities (e.g. urban gardening, skate parks in abandoned squares, spaces of co-creation in old factories)⁴.

This section has revealed some key resources that are required for innovation by young people. Against a context of segregation, stigmatisation and resource constraints elaborated in 4.1 above, the following appear to be key techniques and mechanisms for initiating innovations:

- Use of technology and social media; to supplement and buttress conventional forms of social contact
- Innovative use of networking; being mobile across the city and among groups of people unlike themselves to discover new opportunities
- Expanding zones of familiarity; breaking out of their own neighbourhoods (perceived as 'ghettos') and familiarising themselves with NGOs and civic buildings/spaces in other parts of the city

⁴ See <http://bcncomuns.net/es/> as an example.

- New forms of ‘togetherness’ or ‘communing’; that help to regenerate vacated and under-used parts of the city as well as making young people visible in a constructive light.

5 Conclusions

This phase of fieldwork with young people involved listening to their experiences in relation to the effects of the economic crisis impacts which resonate on them and their prospects and participation, as well as in the constrained resources within their local neighbourhoods. It also involved observing young people’s social and cultural practices as they sought to mitigate against the area effects identified in WP3 and those of a shrunken economy and shifting macro political climate of welfare retrenchment outlined in WP2.

The fieldwork reveals that there seems to be promise in young people being connected with alternative life worlds, such as things going on across the country or around the world, with young people being able to imagine and live a world beyond their neighbourhoods.

What limited young people’s sense of an outside (beyond their localities or limited frames of ‘community’ based on area or ethnicity) were their perceptions about statutory agencies and, more specifically, experiences of treatment at the hands of statutory agencies, such as the Police, educational establishments, careers services as well as macro-economic forces that had resulted in reduced opportunities for young people. The combined effect of these forces tended to reinforce pathologies about young people, minority ethnic groups and deprived areas and ultimately new forms of inequality. In addition, the symbolic relegation imposed on highly segregated local neighbourhoods, has an explicit connection with how young people are perceived and how they perceive themselves. Improvements to resources and spaces within local neighbourhoods are part of their narrative, as well as the need to find ways to engage in society beyond the local area.

Young people were able to break away from limiting factors when connections were brokered *across* generations, spaces and ethnic groups and also *within* the constituency of young people as well. While young people themselves could initiate some of these, as illuminated in examples above of networks and innovative uses of social capital and space beyond their own neighbourhoods, the sustainability of innovations is a key next question.

The innovative practices we encountered were in their infancy but are nonetheless remarkable in a context of segregation, stigmatisation and resource constraints. Primary techniques and mechanisms for initiating innovations include: new forms of networking and movement around the city as well as the expansion of zones of familiarity for young people who might be condemned to lives in deprived neighbourhoods. The ability to sustain innovations beyond initiation remains a challenge.

A further set of questions to explore now would be how city authorities can work with young people to cultivate and enhance their social innovations. This may include: considering what actors are successfully engaging with young people with positive effects and finding ways of supporting these; nurturing spaces (public and private) that promote contact between young people to discover, experiment and innovate; brokering dialogue between bureaucracies and social/civic platforms serving young people; and providing signposts that help young people successfully transition from childhood to adulthood and, which register the new vocabularies and risks that are heart of young people's lives.

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7 Appendix 1 - Seven prospects for innovation identified in WP2 Comparative Report

Firstly, the WP2 comparative report has presented another understanding of Europe than the usual one. It is an understanding, which underlines the dependence between the countries, to the advantage of some and to the disadvantage of others. Patterns of inequity are growing, certainly within cities but also between countries. Social innovations that aim to change causes need to take this into consideration. Indeed, the development and dissemination of such an understanding should be regarded as an important category of social innovations.

Secondly, such an understanding clarifies the needs for solutions that do not restrict themselves to individual neighbourhoods or even cities. There is a need for young people to get to know each other across Europe and address the causes of inequality collectively. The problems may express themselves in a particular neighbourhood or city but they depend to a high extent on a fundamentally flawed integration of Europe. Therefore, the solutions have to be European. Thus, initiatives that show how young people can work jointly to combat the inequalities on a European scale should certainly be regarded as social innovations.

Thirdly, the WP2 comparative report has used a range of indicators, displaying several symptoms of inequality. Comparisons on the basis of these indicators show that young people are affected in different ways, across Europe. These differences become even more pronounced when the underlying causes are considered. The same symptom may have different causes. If all these symptoms of inequality have something in general, it is uncertainty. Young people in general across Europe are exposed to a growing uncertainty. Thus, social innovations that counteract this uncertainty should be given a high priority. As the Malmö report states, building social relations with mutual trust is a key for change.

Fourthly, the report has shown how financialisation has penetrated almost every aspect of European societies, also to the detriment of the productive sector and productive potential. There is a strong need for developing the productive sector and even to re-industrialize parts of Europe (Becker, Frieder Otto Wolf). What social innovations developed by and with young people can contribute to spread the work organization of discretionary learning? How can financialisation be revealed, dealt with in a competent way and even counteracted? Social innovations that respond to such questions should be more than welcome. WP2-baseline study45 (54)

Fifthly, as Novy (2011: 249) has underlined, the welfare state has proved to be one of the most important social innovations of the 20th century. As quoted in the previous chapter, it has been recently praised by the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, himself. The practice too often contradicts the rhetoric, however, and the welfare state is being dismantled across Europe. For example, why has the European Commission put pressure on Sweden to abandon its Universalist housing system when it plays such an important role in one of these “most effective social protection systems” that President Barroso praises? The Netherlands has already abandoned its universalist housing system due to a similar pressure from the EC. There is an urgent need of social innovations that contribute to maintaining the successful aspects of the welfare state and show how to improve it, instead of substituting it.

Sixthly, besides the uncertainty mentioned above, another general characteristic among young people across Europe is the lack of rights. The *EU Youth Strategy* addresses this and the second of its two overall objectives is to “promote the active citizenship, social inclusion and solidarity of all young people”. This is too often promoted, however, at arenas and in contexts where it does not mean much. In contrast, there is an urgent need of social innovations that show how young people can gain an influence where it means something, for example in the class room regarding the approach to knowledge and what to learn. How could trade unions become more open to the needs of young people and collective agreements be developed in order to secure the rights of young people?

Seventhly, we should welcome warmly social innovations that show how to take advantage of, support and actualise young people’s positive potential. The Athens report (Avatangelou et al., 2013: 21) finds it important to emphasise, “that youth, have not yet resigned, but rather fight for their rights and all kinds of inequalities they are experiencing, through their calls for democracy and end of austerity measures on the streets and through various solidarity actions.” The Barcelona report (Roiha et al., 2013: 22) expresses a similar belief in young people, underlining that “one of the traits that characterise many young people in the city is their active stand against injustice”. The Malmö report (Grander, 2013: 21) urges us not to forget that “young people have a lot of competences, potential and often show creativity in dealing with their own situation”.

8 Appendix 2 – Individual situations and tailoring - Rotterdam

Both the analysis of inequalities and the ideas for support bring out the need for a mix of macro-, meso- and micro-level solutions. An implicit innovation that respondents would like to see is better individual tailoring of support. From their stories it is clear that they need different things to become self-sufficient. Below we use a typology to catch this diversity of ‘types’ of young people and their type of needs. We can use this typology to match the different types to diverse approaches, and to identify areas where there is a need for social innovation.

The two analytical dimensions we use, ‘ability’ and ‘ambition’, are central to social policies, and reflect different ways of looking at people, different ways to define problems, and different solutions. On the ‘ability’ dimension we placed respondents according to their estimated self-sufficiency (low to high) – their ability to cope independently, on the basis of their competences and the support from their social network. On the ‘ambition’ dimension we placed respondents according to the direction in which they are moving to improve their situation: integration into mainstream society by going along with the direction the social welfare regime tries to move them, that is a (low-skilled) job, versus alternative solutions by ‘going their own way’ into, for example, entrepreneurship, alternative economy, subcultural lifestyles or criminality.

The typology can also be used for classifying types of support: empowerment, learning and counselling, building social capital, matching (e.g. individual job hunting), offering opportunities (jobs), enabling entrepreneurship and co-creation.

Italic: analytical dimensions

Bold: policies and interventions

Standard: type of person

Ambition: integration into mainstream society through school/job

<p>Learning and counselling; social capital; matching</p>	<p>Motivated to integrate into mainstream society, but in need of support</p>	<p>Motivated and ready for a job without further support</p>	<p>Offering opportunities</p>
<p><i>Low ability and support</i></p>	<p>Living day by day, opportunistically.</p>	<p>Aiming for ‘alternative’ ways to get ahead, with sufficient competences and/or social support</p>	<p><i>High ability and support</i></p>
<p>Empowerment: developing ambition, competences and social network</p>	<p>Given up hope and lacking competences, social support and motivation to change</p>	<p>Aiming for ‘alternative’ ways to get ahead, with sufficient competences and/or social support</p>	<p>Stimulating and enabling entrepreneurship; co-creation</p>

Resignation or aiming for ‘alternative’ integration
law enforcement

The aim of this typology is not to classify respondents, but to use this as a heuristic tool to identify different coping strategies to which different policies are, or could be, linked. This includes areas for social innovation. The typology should of course be looked at dynamically. The road to self-sufficiency would require ambition, developing competences and a supportive (not pampering) social network. Other young people in this type who do not have the same family support could also engage in criminal activities, although it is quite possible that they are not the most competent in this either. Young people who fit into the lower right type can be considered to be the most innovative in their individual strategies. They aim to do things their own way, even if social assistance does not support them in doing so.