



YouCount
Youth Citizen Science

D5.3

Final Project Conference

Reidun Norvoll ¹, Sara Plassnig ²

- 1 Work Research Institute, Oslo Metropolitan University, Oslo, Norway
- 2 Work Research Institute, Oslo Metropolitan University/Norwegian Institute for Water Research, Oslo, Norway



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D5.3 Final Project Conference

This deliverable includes the planning, conduction and reporting from the end conference of the H2020 EU YouCount Project that was held from December 4- 5 2023, in Brussels (hybrid).

The vision of YouCount is twofold, addressing and combining both the scientific and societal needs of our time. The scientific *vision* of YouCount is to strengthen the transformative and participatory aspects of CS and social science, by enabling citizen participation in all facets, reaching out for a more egalitarian way of conducting science. The societal vision of YouCount is to contribute to create inclusive and innovative societies for European youths and to empower them in promoting active citizenship and a just and equitable future, particularly for youths with disadvantages.

Table 1: Revision history

VERSION	DATE	CREATED BY	COMMENTS
1.0	20 / 12 / 2023	Partner No.1, OsloMet	Version 1
1.1	22/10/2023	Author group	Review and refinements
1.2	22 / 12 / 2023	Partner 1, Reidun Norvoll	Final version submitted

Table 2: Terms and Abbreviations

ABBREVIATION	FULL TERM
AB	Advisory board
CM	Consortium meeting
CS	Citizen science
CSS	Citizen social science
C-YCS	Young citizen scientists from the local community or targeted organisation or population (lower level of participation)
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
DEC Plan	Dissemination- Exploitation, and Communication Plan
EB	Executive Board
LL	Living lab
NGO	Non-governmental organisations
ORE	Oslo Region Europe Office
PAR	Participatory action research
PC	Project coordinator
RRI	Responsible research and innovation
RT	Research team
R-YCS	Young citizen scientists participating in the research team
Y-CSS	Youth citizen social science
YCS	Young citizen scientist
YouCount App	'YouCount CSS app' on the SPOTTERON CS platform
SEB	Safety- and ethics board
SwafS	Science with and for society programme under Horizon 2020
WP	Work Package

Executive Summary

YouCount is an EU project funded under Horizon 2020, the Science with and for Society (SwafS) programme. The overarching objective of the YouCount project is to generate new knowledge and innovations to increase the social inclusion of youth through co-creative youth citizen social science (Y-CSS), where young people contribute as citizen scientists (YCS) and to provide evidence of the actual outcomes of citizen science (CS).

The final conference for the YouCount project was held in Brussels from Monday 4 to Tuesday 5th of December 2023 and included in total a mixed group of about 115 participants onsite and online. The audience comprised participants from the YouCount consortium and its main stakeholder-groups. Several YCS from the local cases participated in the conference as part of YouCount's co-creative design. The conference days included a pre-conference workshop focusing on conducting hands-on youth citizen social science (Y-CSS); an exhibition showcasing the work in the local cases; a welcome reception; and then a full conference day including the exhibition. All parts (except from the welcome reception) were hybrid and the links to the streaming and virtual exhibition is provided in the document. The evaluation of the conference provided directly to the Project Coordinator (PC) and from a smaller group of participants (N= 26) was generally positive, with a few critical comments to the dense programme and a too long and academic meeting for the young citizen scientists (YCS) on the second conference day.

This deliverable elaborates on the goals and organisation of the final conference, its programme and participants, and evaluation from participants.

1 Introduction

YouCount is an EU project funded under Horizon 2020, the Science with and for Society (SwafS) programme. Its key objective is to generate new knowledge and innovations to increase the social inclusion of youth through co-creative youth citizen social science (Y-CSS), where young people (aged 13- 29 years) contribute as citizen scientists and to provide evidence of the actual outcomes of Y-CSS.

As seen from Figure 1, the project includes several sub-objectives and sub-studies:



Figure 1. Sub-objectives YouCount project

A transdisciplinary Advisory Board (AB) and Safety and Ethics Board (SEB) have followed the project closely during the project period.

The implementation of the multiple case study lasted for 1.5 to 2 years and focused on different aspects of social inclusion, youth groups and social innovations. Young people participated as YCS in the local case in the research team or in project activities in the wider community or targeted organisations. Local stakeholders were often part of the local living labs (LL). The multiple case study was followed by a process and outcome evaluation, impact, and costs- and benefit analysis. All substudies were presented and discussed at the conference.

The YouCount project seeks high level of co-creation by striving for youth participation in all aspects of the research design, data collection, data analysis, writing up and scientific communication. Following the co-creative approach, the final conference aimed to incorporate the YCS and local stakeholders’ voices and experiences from each local case. The AB members were actively involved to link the knowledge generation from the YouCount project to a wider scientific and societal context in Europe and internationally, and to maximise impact.

2. Aims for the conference

The final conference targeted all main stakeholder groups included in the YouCount Dissemination- Exploitation, and Communication (DEC) Plan¹, and included several goals based in the overarching objective for the project, its conceptual framework and sub-objectives described above. These are:

1. Contribute to building the scientific knowledge base of CSS and Y-CSS (theory and practice)
To increase knowledge of Y-CSS by presenting and discussing the conducted research and findings in the YouCount project. This included a conceptual and methodological framework for Y-CSS, process- and outcome evaluation of the outcomes, and impact and costs and benefits of CSS assessments.
2. Contribute to the knowledge base of social inclusion in the social sciences
To increase knowledge of young people's views and experiences with social inclusion and social inclusion opportunities, and to present a model for positive drivers based in the multiple case study and cross- case analysis. The YCS should also take active part in the presentations.
3. Inform policy: Key policymakers and stakeholders.
To discuss the implications of the project results for:
 - Social inclusion policy
 - Science policy

To maximise impact, the policy discussions included all levels from local, national, EU, and internationally as well as the young peoples' perspectives.

4. Skill- building opportunities
This goal addresses skill-building in conducting hands-on Y-CSS for the scientific community, CS practitioners or other interested in conducting similar projects. In addition, the conference should provide skill- building opportunities for the YCS, Early Career Researchers (ECR) and researchers through presentations and moderator tasks, and by learning more about dissemination of an EU project, and how this works.
5. Networking and connection opportunities for those interested in (Y-)CSS
This goal included all targeted stakeholder groups and should encourage science- society collaboration.

¹ Canto-Farachala P., Lorenz, U., Franco, S., Brounéus, F., Norvoll, R. and Hummer, P (2021). *YouCount. D.5.7 Continuous, updated DEC and stakeholder engagement plan, and report on DEC activities*. Zenodo. doi.10.5281/zenodo.4812107

6. Inclusion and accessibility

The conference should have an inclusive design and provide accessible ways to participation for those with special needs (e.g., due to disability). The final conference should also aim for a youth-friendly meeting, such as having a more informal style, flexible and varied programme, and participation, and using a non-assuming language (defining concepts etc.) as far as possible.²

7. Virtual and in-person conference synergy

To allow for more participants, the conference should use a combination of onsite and online participation and streaming link provided on the YouCount homepage afterwards.

8. Co-creative science communication

The conference should showcase the views and experiences of YCS through youth-involved science communication (presentations, participation, and exhibition). However, the goal of co-communication should be balanced with facilitating for voluntary and flexible participation adapted to the single YCS to secure safety.

² See e.g., Murray, C., Göbel, C. & Butkevičienė, E (2023). *D1.5 Practices to Empower Young Co-Researchers in Citizen Social Science*. 10.5281/zenodo.10052911

3. Organisation of the conference work

3.1 Organisation process

The planning of the conference started early, from January 2023 onwards to ensure that the Executive Board (EB), consortium partners and YCS were included in the planning process from the beginning and to make appointments with external speakers at an early stage.

The organisation process started with making a workplan and set out the main frames for the conference. The EB was actively involved in the discussions of type of conference, time, duration, focus, agenda development, speakers etc. Then the first outlines were presented in consortium meetings or WP2/3 meetings for feedback from the consortium.

The consortium chose a hybrid meeting as several EU projects during this time period (influenced by the pandemic), were online. However, the consortium also wanted an interactive in-person meeting to support knowledge generation, engagement, and networking in Y-CSS. An important finding in the project is travel as an important motivation and engagement factor for young people. An in-person meeting in Brussels could thus support participation of YCS and the networking between YCS across borders. In addition, the consortium chose to include an exhibition as this is experienced as a powerful tool for documenting and communicating local case work and for making a more inclusive meeting for lay young people.

Further, the consortium chose two days- conference because it would be difficult to communicate all the lessons learned in the project in one day. It would also be harder to engage possible participants for only a one-day meeting. It was then decided to have one pre-meeting focusing on how to conduct hands- on Y-CSS in practice while the other day should have a more traditional conference-programme focusing on main results and policy discussions, and impact generation. The programme was later considered as too dense and focused on presentations. More interactives sessions and use of video/exhibition were then incorporated. Yet, it was hard to re-organise more substantially shortly before the conference as many people from different institutions and levels were involved.

Simultaneously, OsloMet as coordinator assessed the budget and resources needed for carrying out the conference. The travel and meetings & events company Berg-Hansen³ was hired to assist with tasks related to the conference day because project coordinator (PC) needed more practical organisational and technical support. The latter was important due to the streaming of the conference.

³ Meetings & Events, www.berg-hansen.no

Organisational teams were decided and established, and the PC also worked closely with the WP5 leader and DEC team to ensure consistency and media coverage up to the day of the conference.

The choice of venues was based on desk research from other EU meetings (especially at OsloMet). We then chose to use facilities to the Oslo Region Europe Office (ORE) on Monday and then NH Berlaymount hotel on Tuesday which is more expensive but has more space and technical support (see Chapter 4). Other possible facilities were already booked or non-suitable for streaming. In the next months, we had meetings with ORE to book the rooms, establish collaboration and get advises to navigate in the EU – settings, and booked the hotel venue through Berg-Hansen.

During the next months we further developed the agenda and made an “invitation-list” of possible stakeholders from local to international level to be invited based on the DEC-plan and web-search. The list included sister projects in the EU/SwafS context and main stakeholder groups such as EU, academia, research councils and international/European CS- associations and end- user organisations. A “Save the date”- poster were sent out in June and launched in our media channels and then followed up with several invitations during autumn (see 3.5). Consortium partners and AB/SEB members were asked to distribute the invitations to their networks.

In August, the PC made a more detailed work plan and time schedule to secure necessary progression, and appointed the following teams, roles and responsibilities as outlined in 3.2. These teams then worked actively up to the conference.

The external speakers and panellists were recruited during spring and autumn, starting with the key-note speaker Alan Irwin as an important inspirator for the YouCount project and then AB members and other key stakeholders. Project officer (PO) assisted in identifying potential representatives from the EU setting and invited these on behalf of the PC. This was a very valuable support. The PC then sent out relevant information to presenters on e-mail. It was also conducted planning meetings with the PC and or session moderators for the panellists individually or in group meetings. For involvement of YCS, see 3.4.

3.2 Infrastructures

The organisation work of the conference was based on the following infrastructure:

1. Overall coordination:

Reidun Norvoll, Project coordinator YouCount, Oslo Metropolitan University (OsloMet)

2. Organization committee

Coordination and practical organisation:

- Reidun Norvoll (OsloMet, Norway)
- Sara Plassnig, (OsloMet/NIVA, Norway)
- Beate Hardeep Kaur Chandra (Berg-Hansen, Norway)
- Amalie Øyesvold Rasmussen (Berg-Hansen, Norway)

3. Communications

Coordinator: Patricia Canto- Farachala (Orkestra Basque Institute of Competitiveness, Deusto Foundation, Spain)

- Nagore Valle (Orkestra Basque Institute of Competitiveness, Deusto Foundation, Spain)
- Sara Plassnig (OsloMet/NIVA, Norway)
- Philipp Hummer (SPOTTERON, Austria)
- Dominik Essletzichler (SPOTTERON, Austria)
- Communication advisors at consortium partner institutions

4. Technical support and streaming

- Rasmus Durban Jahr (OsloMet, Norway)
- Lena Hjelmås (Berg- Hansen, Norway)
- Technical support at the venue

5. Communities' engagement:

- Reidun Norvoll and communication team
- All consortium partners

6. Program committee (PC)

Consisting of:

- Reidun N, Project Coordinator
- Patricia C, Coordinator Communications
- Team leaders for organisation teams (see below): TBD

Technical and organisational support to be included as necessary:

- Technical support, Rasmus Durban Jahr (OsloMet)
- Organisational support, Beate CH and Amalie ØR from BH

7. Organisation teams (consortium)

Organisation teams consisted of members from the YouCount team and these were responsible for the agenda and practical organisation of the pre- conference workshop or session on the conference day including:

- Refine and detail agenda and content of the session
- Involve and follow up contributors, researchers and YCS
- Setting up and tidying up as needed at both venues
- Secure necessary technical support and equipment

8. Team leader (-s):

Responsible for:

- Organising the internal planning work of the session and secure progress according to the deadlines provided in the YouCount Action Plan.
- Be contact person for PC and coordinate with her and the communication/technical support teams.

9. Moderators for the conference and roundtable discussions

During autumn, two moderators (or master of the ceremony) for the conference day and two moderators for the roundtable discussions were appointed. The moderators came from several partners to showcase the consortium. The moderators participated actively in the planning process with the programme committee and PC.

Moderators conference day:

- Aina Landsverk Hagen (OsloMet)
- Eglė Butkevičienė (KTU)

Moderators roundtable discussions:

- Patricia Canto- Farachala (Orkestra, FD)
- Suzanne Wilson (UCLan)

Through these infrastructures, the organisation work was distributed to many consortium partners. The roles and responsibilities were appointed through consortium meetings, e-mail, or personal invitations according to interest and expertise. Many expressed retrospectively that this way of organising the conference was supportive and encouraged teamwork.

3.3 Registration

The registration form was developed by Berg-Hansen after inputs from OsloMet and the programme committee, and then uploaded on the YouCount homepage. The registration form included the standard disclaimer for EU projects and data procession information with a tick off box for consent according to GDPR. Berg-Hansen sent constant updates to PC during the autumn to inform about participation status and needs for more recruitment work.

Registered participants regularly received information after registration and then regularly updates about one month, two weeks and a few days before the conference. The use of updates was inspired by the information procedures undertaken by the EU COESO and ProEthics joint conference during autumn 2023. The participants were also in these e-mails asked to promote the conference to their network.

3.4 Involvement of the YCS

The YCS were gradually involved as their participation was decided. The joint ECSA & YouCount webinar in September ⁴ focusing on the YCS's experiences with participation in the project across the case partners were important for laying a foundation for the final conference. In the post-meeting after the webinar, the YCS provided inputs to the final conference programme. The active inclusion of YCS in the final conference was thus based on a longer process where they got to know each other across the countries and be more confident in their role as YCS over time. During the conference, the many YCS participated actively in creating the local case exhibition together with the case researchers and in presenting the local case exhibition.



⁴ Stories from the YouCount Youth: on new perspectives, being heard more deeply and belonging - Blog, News & Events - YouCount - Social Citizen Science (youcountproject.eu)



The participation in the exhibition should contribute to integrate and bring forward the YCS’s perspectives and participation in the local cases. Further, as elaborated in Chapter 4, the short documentary movie from the Norwegian case made by local young social entrepreneurs served as an example of how the young people and stakeholders were involved on local level and demonstrated the richness of each of the ten cases as the core part of the YouCount project. Some YCS from the UK case together with a local stakeholder in Preston and one YCS from the Spanish case took part in the social inclusion roundtable discussion. This participation was based in their own choice of preferable roundtable discussions and reflected their interest in social inclusion issues and possibilities for engaging with policymakers and community stakeholders.

Dissemination of project results in terms of an exhibition was found to be a safe setting for many YCS and thus prioritised. The actual presenters and panellists from the YCS group were decided late and partly during the first day of the conference to ensure enough time for the YCS to decide whether they would like to share their views in a roundtable discussion. We also organised at a late stage for an additional “movie- time” (see programme, pre-conference workshop) from the Hungary case B team. This flexibility in the planning processes (as in Y-CSS more overall) was important to secure youth participation.

3.5 Media coverage and invitations

The final conference was promoted in an extensive way and for a long period of time to key stakeholder groups and in many different settings.

In addition to the invitations described above, information about the final conference and invitations to participate was promoted on all key media channels in the YouCount project (project homepage, X/Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn).

Moreover, information and invitations were sent out to the CS community several times through the ECSA and ECS newsletters, mailing lists for ECSA, the ECS meeting group, ECSA Working group for inclusion, empowerment, and equity (WG EIE) and uploaded on the EU Citizen-science platform. Invitations were also sent to CS organisations and initiatives on European, global, and international level.

Further, the final conference was promoted by the PO/REA and through the DG RTD corporate account Horizon EuropeEU (@HorizonEU) / X (twitter.com) and by the case partners institutions own social media platforms, intranet, and networks of possible interested on national and local levels. The AB and SEB members were also asked to promote the conference in their settings.

In branding the conference we used the different pictures chosen for the final conference on the YouCount homepage, specially made illustrations and then the illustrative graphics provided by Ruth Graham from the youth webinar. Then SPOTTERON assisted with designing YouCount slides suitable for the final conference and streaming.

4. Programme and presentations

YouCount invited to its final conference⁵ in early December 2023 in Brussels. As mentioned, the two-day hybrid event with the title *Youth Citizen Social Science Contributing to Social Inclusion* was designed for key stakeholder groups such as academics, citizen science practitioners, youth and stakeholder organizations as well as policymakers interested in social inclusion of young people. The conference was free and open to the public, with required registration.

During the conference, YouCount's researchers and young citizen scientists thus presented and discussed key insights and findings from the project with a wide array of stakeholders and policymakers working with science policy or social inclusion. Partners from other EU projects aiming to develop participatory citizen science in the social sciences were also present. The Final Conference had a dynamic format with interactive sessions, presentations, and round-tables discussions. It also featured a traveling exhibition co-created with young citizen scientists.

While targeting several goals as outlined in Chapter 2, the key overall aim was to inspire knowledge and skills necessary for conducting hands-on CSS. Participants also had the opportunity to learn about actual outcomes, costs- and benefits of co-creative citizen science, following YouCount's aim of supporting citizen social science in research and innovation institutions and enhancing collaboration between science and society. Moreover, the research team showcased how Y-CSS can contribute to new knowledge about drivers for social inclusion and discuss their implications, together with different approaches for working with local stakeholders to foster social innovation and inclusive policymaking.

The following sub-chapters summarise the structure, program, speakers and discussions of the event.

4. 1 Overall structure of the final conference

As mentioned, the conference programme⁶ consisted of two days including a pre-conference workshop, a welcome reception, a hybrid conference and a traveling exhibition with virtual elements.

⁵ <https://www.youcountproject.eu/about-the-project/youcount-conference>

⁶ <https://www.youcountproject.eu/about-the-project/youcount-conference/youcount-final-conference-youth-citizen-social-science-contributing-to-social-inclusion/conference-program-youcount>

On the first event day, the 4th of December 2023, YouCount organised a pre-conference day at ORE (the Oslo Region European Office)⁷. ORE hosted YouCount in their main office in Brussels, centrally located in the Nordic house in the middle of the EU quarter.

In the morning, YouCount project partners prepared the onsite exhibition with young citizen social scientists. Followed by a joint lunch break, facilitated by ORE.



From the early afternoon onwards, the partly hybrid⁸ pre-conference workshop took place. The workshop consisted of a short introduction to the YouCount project and its conceptual framework for youth citizen social science. This was followed by a short overview of key aspects of hands-on youth citizen social science.

The exhibition was opened, and participants were invited to “travel” through the ten case studies located in nine countries, before meeting again in plenum to discuss what inclusion means for them.

Shortly after, participants engaged in a group effort to “connect” the cases by taking each other’s hand and making one big circle around the exhibition stands.

The Hungary case B⁹ took the stage and presented a sci-fi movie "What is social innovation? A mystery-documentary".

⁷ The Oslo Region European Office is a member organization serving 17 members; counties, municipalities and universities in the capital region of Norway. ORE’s mission is to create and develop new opportunities for their members by increasing knowledge, participation and visibility in European processes. ORE provides a platform for contact and brings ideas to its members from the European policy making cycle. For more information, visit <https://osloregion.org/en>

⁸ The recorded session can be found here: YouCount Conference - YouCount - Social Citizen Science (youcountproject.eu)

⁹ <https://www.youcountproject.eu/about-the-project/case-studies/case-studies/hungary-case-b>

Finally, a formal welcome reception closed the pre-conference workshop, accompanied by snacks and drinks – again organised by ORE.

The final, although informal, agenda point of the day was a pizza place close to the Nordic House where consortium members, YCS and speakers met to network and discuss impressions from the day over a consortium dinner.

On the second event day, the 5th of December 2023, YouCount’s final conference kicked off at the NH Berlaymont Hotel¹⁰, Brussels. The entire conference was live streamed¹¹ and participants who joined digitally had the opportunity to raise questions in the chat.

The final conference focused on presenting and discussing the main learnings from the YouCount project together with participants and key stakeholders from Europe and globally concerning the project’s main strands of inquiry. First, to develop and validate a conceptual and methodological framework for hands-on youth citizen social science. Second, to use this framework to empower young people and co-create new knowledge of social inclusion and social innovations with policymakers and other stakeholders. Third, to increase knowledge of the actual outcomes and costs- and benefits of youth citizen social science, broadly understood.

The exhibition that had been installed in the Nordic House the previous day, was moved to Hotel Berlaymont, allowing conference participants visit the stands and explore the cases. Participants who took part in the conference virtually had the opportunity to get a glimpse of the digital exhibition¹².

The next sub-chapters provide a more comprehensive summary of each part of the two-day event.

4. 2 Pre- conference workshop

The pre-conference workshop and exhibition was targeted for those interested in learning more about how to conduct CSS in practice, in general and with a special focus on young people. The workshop was based on the multiple case study which includes ten local case projects in nine countries across Europe, and the exhibition provided more concrete descriptions from the cases.

¹⁰ <https://www.nh-hotels.com/en/hotel/nh-brussels-eu-berlaymont/meetings-events>

¹¹ <https://vimeo.com/891384865>

¹² https://miro.com/app/board/uXjVNRkFnbk=?share_link_id=680278430138

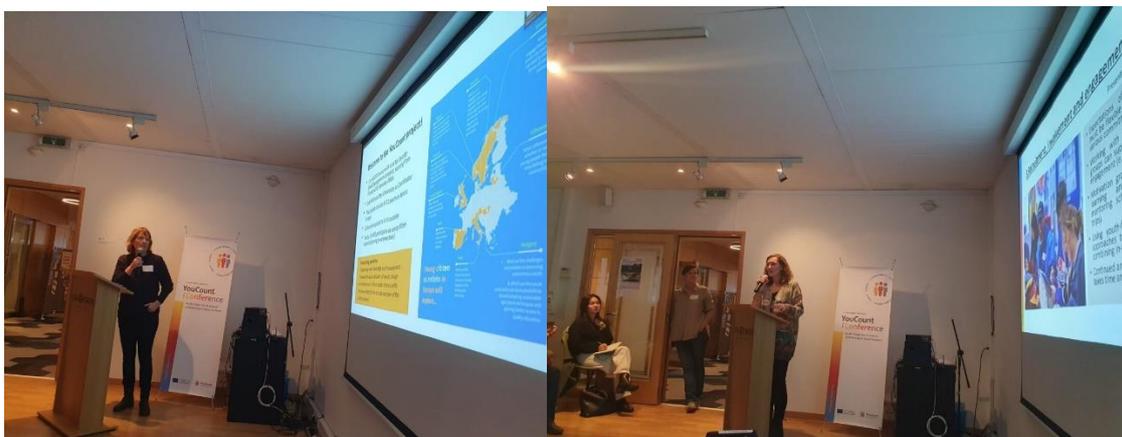
Time	What	Topic	Presenters
Coffee and croissants			
14.00 – 14.15	Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welcome - Brief overview of the project - Conceptual framework 	Project Coordinator Reidun Norvoll, OsloMet
14.15 – 14.45	Presentations	How to conduct hands-on citizen social science with youth and local stakeholders in practice? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Co-creative and inclusive approaches - Establish and manage a project - Recruitment, involvement and engagement - Training and support - Methods - Communication - Going beyond results: Evaluation - Maximizing and measuring impact 	Authors from the handbook
14.45 – 15.00	Introducing the Europe Café & Exhibition		Aina Landsverk Hagen, Sara Berge Lorenzen & Cathrine Winther
15.00 – 15.30	Coffee break	Walk, talk, and snack in the lounge/exhibition area	
15.30 – 16.45	The Europe Café: Interactive session	Aha & Oops moments from 10 cases in YouCount	
16.45 – 17.00	Summing up		Workshop moderators
17.10 – 17.40	Movie-time with some beverages before the welcome reception!	The Hungary B case team shows their sci-fi movie: <i>"What is social innovation? A mystery-documentary"</i> (2023) (25 minutes) with a short presentation	Gina Barta, Dominka Ágoiston, Ágnes Bozsó, Márton Oblath

The partly hybrid¹³ workshop kicked off with an introductory and welcoming speech by the project coordinator Reidun Norvoll. How to conduct hands-on citizen social science with youth and local stakeholders in practice? To elaborate on this question and lay the groundwork for YouCount’s handbook, key take aways from the case studies were presented by team- and case leaders Aina Landsverk Hagen (Norway case) and Barbara Mihók (Hungary case A).

¹³ The recorded session can be watched here:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/19Ftbj7XSqrl6y6lE1PkzI72ufHudo7mf/view?usp=sharing>



Co-creative and inclusive approaches, project management, recruitment, involvement, training support and methods were among the topics that were presented. Then, lessons learned about communication (Cathrine Winther, Sara Berge Lorenzen), evaluation (Melanie Saumer) and impact (Usue Lorenz) were shared.



Among the key take aways mentioned were that preparation and common definitions are important. The attitude of involved researchers counts, who need to be both focused and flexible while preparing for uncertainties and being committed to learning. Researchers need to master physical as well as digital work when engaging with youth. Organising for co-creation and visualisation of findings are crucial. Researchers would need to plan for drop-in of young co-researchers as well as for drop-outs. One of the key learnings due to the relational and collaborative nature of citizen social science was to “mind the zero work”. Including the context of the daily lives of youth – keeping in mind that youth are busy – while balancing structure and necessary flexibility was another main insight. What was more was that communication needs to be integrated from the beginning of the case work and documentation needs to be understood in

a broad sense. It takes time to find the right motivated young people and effort to keep them engaged. Youth-friendly channels, network-building and avoiding assumptions such as all youth would have the same motivations can help in this endeavour. Creating a ground floor is equally important as building relationships and learning by doing new things. Time and suitable methods are needed to be able to create a fun and safe space for youth in an engaging environment. When it comes to supporting co-researchers, individual decisions need to be made on how much support each of them wants and needs. In general, it is important to understand youth in order to be able to work with them. An evolving approach can help hereby as well as choosing suitable methods and tools – both analogue and digital – and adapt them along the way. Competitions are fun; however, adult researchers should not always join the YCS when visiting a youth club!

One main lesson on communication was that it needs to start right away. Something that can be facilitated by identifying colleagues that are good at social media. Most importantly, don't take communication for granted and be aware that digital fatigue can also happen among youth.

Regarding evaluation, resources across the case studies were a big issue, thus researchers needed to be flexible. "Stay calm" was the key message when data was missing as this was usually outweighed by other data. Staying focused was also important, in particular due to a lack of time for digging into all aspects that were interesting. Food was mentioned as an important factor by several cases during the evaluation and shouldn't be underestimated as equalizer. Not only facilitating but also hampering elements were addressed such as distractions and lack of concentration among young co-researchers. Such potential barriers need to be accounted for. Last but not least, it was stressed that perspectivity is key because what matters depends on whom you ask.

Concerning impact, it is important to define what the latter means to the project. Impact is about measuring and maximising results. Impact often comes at the end, sometimes even after a project ends. However, all researchers need to be involved from the beginning onwards when impact is defined.

Towards the end of the workshop, the Hungary case B¹⁴ took the stage and presented a sci-fi movie "What is social innovation? A mystery-documentary", produced in the rural town Siklósbodony. Young citizen social scientists Gina Barta, Dominka Ágoiston, Ágnes Bozsó as well as case leader Márton Oblath were available to answer questions from the audience.

¹⁴ <https://www.youcountproject.eu/about-the-project/case-studies/case-studies/hungary-case-b>



4. 3 Welcome reception

A formal welcome reception closed the pre-conference workshop. Participants listened to greeting speeches by Gunnar Selvik (Director of ORE), Geir Arnulf (the Counsellor for research at the Mission of Norway to the EU) introducing the work of ORE in a European context, and Reidun Norvoll (YouCount Project Coordinator, OsloMet), accompanied by snacks and drinks. ORE has a key role in linking Norway to the EU settings and to support Norwegian research and innovation projects to navigate in this landscape. They also played an important role in the proposal phase of the YouCount project, a positive synergy which was appreciated by all speakers.



4. 4 Final conference day

The final conference took place at the NH Berlaymount Hotel. Presentations, panel discussions, a movie and a hybrid exhibition were among the various formats. The conference was divided into four sessions, starting with an introduction to the YouCount project and a documentary movie¹⁵ produced by the Norway case. The next session focused on key findings and experiences related to the development, practices, and evaluation of youth citizen social science, followed by findings on social inclusion and innovation as well as their implications for social sciences and social and youth policymaking. Finally, YouCount's overall impact and way forward in the European and international context was explored in the last session. The entire conference was live streamed¹⁶ and participants who joined digitally had the opportunity to raise questions in the chat. Key messages from each session are summarised below.

08.30 – 09.00	Registration Visit our exhibition and meet YouCount’s young citizen scientists during the day!	
09.00 – 10.00	Session 1: Introduction Moderator: Aina Landsverk Hagen, OsloMet	
09.00 – 09.10	Welcome	Aina Landsverk Hagen, OsloMet
09.10 – 09.15	Sneak peak of the documentary film from the Oslo-case. Made by the local youth social entrepreneurship «Ildfluene» (Fireflies)	Dichino Nguyen, part of the youth editorial team
09.15 – 09.25	A brief introduction to the YouCount project	Project Coordinator, Reidun Norvoll, OsloMet
09.25 – 09.40	How can YouCount contribute to supporting citizen science within the EU and as part of the Science with and for Society - program?	PO Katharina Buse, REA, EU
09.40 – 10.00	The history and future of citizen social science	Professor Alan Irwin, Copenhagen Business School (online)
10.00 – 13.00	Session 2: Youth citizen social science Moderator: Aina Landsverk Hagen, OsloMet	
10.00 – 10:25	Conceptual framework for youth citizen social science (WP1) A Participatory Approach to Communication	Professor Eglė Butkevičienė, KTU Researcher Patricia Canto Farachala, Orkestra, FD
10.25 – 10.45	Coffee break	
10.45 – 11.00	Youth citizen social science in practice - key experiences and insights from the multiple case study	Professor Julie Ridley, UCLan
11.00 – 11.15	Experiences with the YouCount App Toolkit	Researcher Ingar Brattbakk, OsloMet
11.15 – 11.30	What are the outcomes of Y-CSS? Key findings from the evaluation study (WP4)	PreDoc Melanie Saumer, Professor Jörg Matthes UNIVIE
11.30 – 12.00	Travel through Europe in the onsite and virtual exhibition: what are the key potentials and challenges when it comes to (youth) citizen social science? Mentimeter exercise 1	All participants
12.00 – 13.00	Roundtable discussion 1: How to strengthen co-creative/participatory citizen social science with young people in policy and practice? - Implications of the identified key issues, and the learnings from the YouCount project, for citizen	<u>Participants:</u> Gabriella Leo. Policy Officer, DG R&I, Unit A4, EC Professor Dick Kasperowski, Gothenburg University Asya Salnikova, ESF/ Scientific Adviser Time4CS project

¹⁵ <https://vimeo.com/891384865>

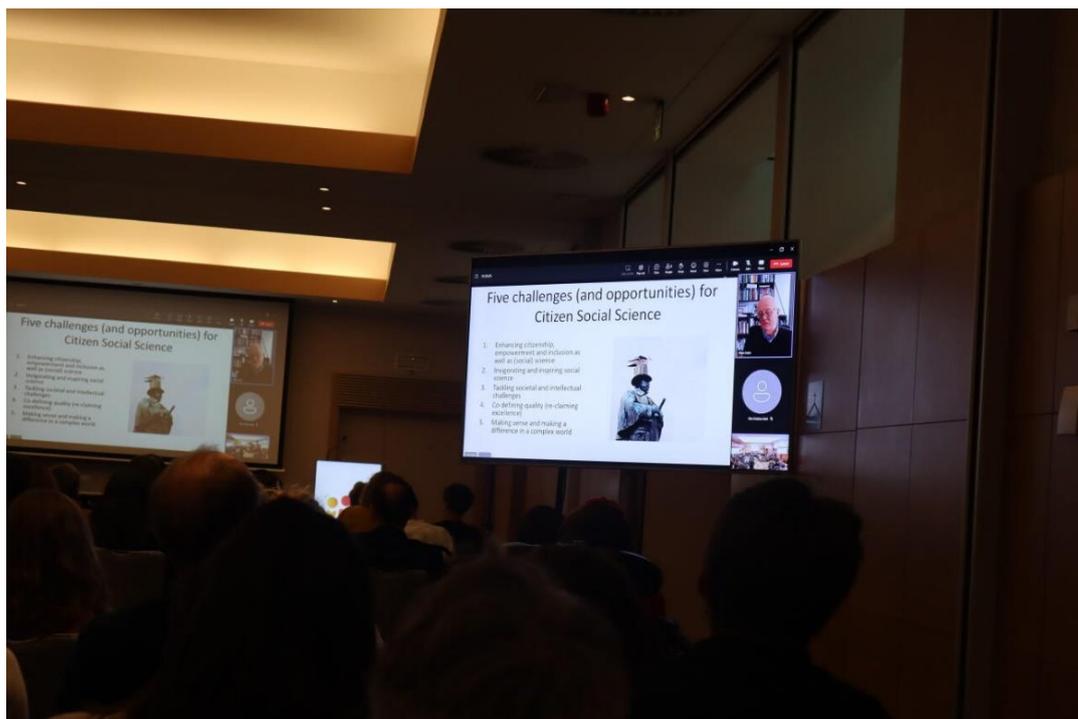
¹⁶ <https://vimeo.com/891384865>

	science, science policy and institutional changes. - Discussions with key stakeholder together with moderator Patricia Canto Farachala, Orkestra, FD from the YouCount project	Alessia Smaniotto, (EHES/OPERAS), Project Coordinator COESO project
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch / Visit the exhibition	
14.00 – 16.00	Session 3: Youth citizen social science contributing to social inclusion and innovation Moderator: Eglė Butkevičienė, KTU	
14.00 – 14.15	To what extent can Y-CSS contribute to social change and how? The role of CSS in social innovation	György Pataki, senior research fellow/ Alexandra Czeglédi, research fellow
14.15 – 14.35	New knowledge of young people's views on and experiences with social inclusion, and positive drivers to social inclusion	Professor Fortuna Procentese and PostDoc Flora Gatti, UNINA Suzanne Wilson, Researcher, UCLan
14.35 – 15.35	Roundtable 2: Implications of social inclusion and innovation findings for (citizen) social science research and for future youth/social policy - Which findings are important takeaways for future innovation and policymaking to increase social inclusion? - How can Y-CSS be utilized to create citizen engagement, social innovation, and informed policymaking for increased social inclusion? - Discussions with key stakeholders and youths together with Suzanne Wilson from UCLan and the YouCount project. - Q & A session with the audience	Ms. Mina STAREVA, Deputy Head of Unit, RTD.D3, Fair Societies & Cultural Heritage, EC Boshko Stankovski, European Youth Forum and Senior Programme Officer, Governance Section/ Democratization Department, OSCE Mission in Kosovo Paola Alvarez, Regional Office for the EEA, EU, and NATO. International Organization for Migration, Brussels Tomas De Groote, Sociale InnovatieFabriek, Brussels Marc Dunne, Preston City Council Josep Perelló, OpenSystems-UB research leader and CoAct project coordinator, University of Barcelona & UBICS
15.35 – 16.00 “Grab a coffee and some snacks” on the way	“Walk- and talk”: What do you find as the most interesting and important findings for future social innovation and policymaking to increase social inclusion? Mentimeter Exercise 2	All participants
16.00 – 17.00	Session 4: Closing up and way forward Moderator: Eglė Butkevičienė, KTU	
16:00 – 16:45	What are the impacts of YouCount and how can we enhance the benefits and impact of citizen social science? Short presentations of ECSA & the ECS project, and of YALDA, before discussing: Key takeaways and next steps forward to strengthen CSS with and for youth, and its contribution to social inclusion in Europe and internationally.	Usue Lorenz, Researcher, Orkestra, FD/ Susana Franco, Researcher Orkestra, FD Claudia Fabó Cartas, Scientific advisor ECSA and Project Manager ECS project Laone Bukamu Hulela, Director, Youth Alliance for Leadership and Development in Africa (YALDA)
16:45 – 17.00	Closing up and thank you	Reidun Norvoll, Project Coordinator, OsloMet And members of the YouCount project team
17:00 – 18:00	Visit our Exhibition!	

4.4.1 Session 1: Introduction

The first session was dedicated to welcoming participants and introducing them to the YouCount project as well as setting the scene for citizen (social) science within and beyond Europe. Research Professor and Norway case leader Aina Landsverk Hagen (OsloMet) welcomed all participants and presented a snapshot of the documentary film produced by the social entrepreneurs from the youth media office «Ildfluene» (Fireflies) as part of the Oslo-case. A brief introduction to the YouCount project by PC Reidun Norvoll (OsloMet) followed. Katharina Buse, Project adviser at the

European Research Executive Agency (REA), discussed how YouCount can contribute to supporting CS within the EU and as part of the SwafS programme. Buse explained CS and societal engagement in European Research & Innovation policy – from the Horizon 2020, SwafS programme to Horizon Europe. In this context, Buse listed good practices from the YouCount project. Finally, Alan Irwin, Professor in the Department of Organisation at the Copenhagen Business School, held a virtual lesson on the history and future of citizen social science. Irwin covered, among other topics, CS networks, common CS topics, a typology of CS, definitions of the concept, seven CS virtues before elaborating on the challenges and opportunities for CSS.



4.4.2 Session 2: Youth citizen social science

Session two focused on key findings and experiences related to the development, practices and evaluation of *Youth Citizen Social Science* and was moderated by Aina Landsverk Hagen again. Professor Eglė Butkevičienė from Kaunas University of Technology (KTU) in Lithuania and work package lead presented a conceptual framework for youth citizen social science. Eglė Butkevičienė started by explaining the why, what, and how of the framework. Key findings concerning concepts, methodological approaches, evaluation, and ethics were also discussed. A Participatory Approach to Communication was presented by work package lead and researcher Patricia Canto from Orkestra FD in Spain. Patricia Canto defined participatory communication and narrowed it down to the YouCount’s approach as well as elaborated its implications.

Ingar Brattbakk (OsloMet), researcher at in the Norway case and leader of the app work, reflected about the value of an App in youth citizen social science. In his presentation, Ingar Brattbakk covered the development of inclusive and user-friendly ICT-tools for youth citizen social science and talked about the YouCount App Toolkit. Processes to co-create development and design as well as main experiences and recommendations were summarised. Brattbakk further mentioned findings and app-related publications. Melanie Saumer, PhD candidate at UNIVIE in Austria and co-work package lead presented “Seven Lessons Learned from an Evaluation Perspective”. Melanie Saumer introduced by explaining why YouCount needs evaluation and showing how the work package evaluated this multi-case citizen science EU project. Saumer continued by summarising each of these lessons: There is a clear empowerment of YCS (1); There is a mismatch regarding perceptions of motivation (2); There is a risk of overburdening on both sides 3); There is a need to adapt existing ethics guidelines (4); There is a challenge of maintaining data quality (5); There is a need for feasible co-creational approaches (6); and finally there is a need for a more nuanced understanding of CSS (7). Work package leader and Professor Julie Ridley from the Centre for Citizenship, Community and Cooperation at UCLan in the UK gave a presentation on Key Experiences and Insights from YouCount’s Multiple Case Study and Youth Citizen Social Science in Practice. After providing background information about YouCount, Julie Ridley dived into case topics, research designs as well as local and cross-case research questions. Recruitment including strategies and challenges as well as training and support of young citizen scientists were also covered in her presentation. Ridley further mentioned motivating factors in the cases and what it means to be co-creative in practice.

The presentations of session two were followed by an invitation to travel through Europe in the onsite and virtual exhibition and reflect on key potentials and challenges when it comes to (youth) citizen social science. The activity was presented as a train ride and inputs were gathered in a mentimeter.



After all conference guests had travelled through the YouCount cases, they met for the first round-table discussion of the day, moderated by Patricia Canto. The panellists discussed how to strengthen co-creative/participatory citizen social science with young people in policy and practice as well as implications of identified key issues, and learnings from the YouCount project, for citizen science, science policy and institutional changes.



The first question “Why has the European commission (EC) the ambition to promote Citizen Science?” was addressed to Gabriella Leo, Policy Officer at the EC. Gabriella Leo replied by stating that the commission aims to increase excellence of research and trust into science. It would further aim to enlarge the scope of research and innovation. These endeavours need an environment that enables and sustains CS and related initiatives. CS is embedded in the commission’s policy with citizens as priorities. EC is working with national institutions on incentives to receive recognition of participative approach. Gabriella Leo further said that knowledge valorisation is important for policy through equity, inclusion and the support of multi-disciplinary beyond technical areas but also includes social sciences and art. This type of research requires trust and safe spaces which takes time, something referred to as “slow science” by the recently published scientific article on heard-of-hearing youth¹⁷. Thus, the follow-up question was how funding institutions support slow science and Alessia Smaniotto from EHESS/OPERAS and COESO Project Coordinator started her response by joking that scientists are often accused of working too slow. Alessia Smaniotto went on to introduce COESCO that consists of 10 pilots - all different in terms of type of data gathered, questions asked etc. COESCO supports several research cases such as those from YouCount because it believes that small-scale collaboration is

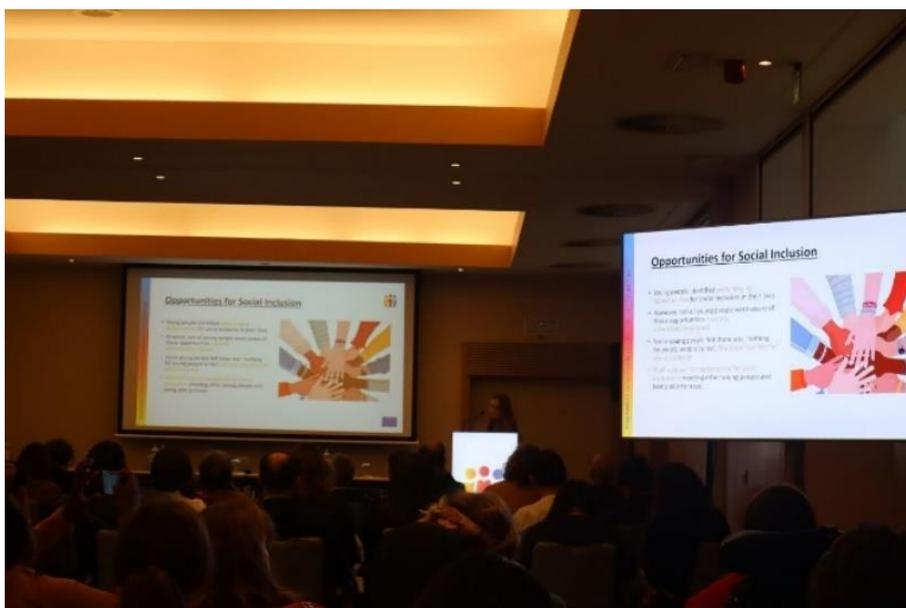
¹⁷ Slow science and “caring” research – the transformative power of collaborative research with hard of hearing youths | Mihók | IJAR – International Journal of Action Research (budrich-journals.de).

important, stressed Smaniotto. To slow down some of the science processes to reach collaboration and understand epistemic cultures of (non-) scientists provides opportunities to innovate. Smaniotto told that the idea of slow science was originally coined in Italy in the 1980s connected to the slow food movement. However, she also highlighted that “slow” is about finding a good pace to do things the right way, so they grow organically. Asya Salnikova from ESF and Scientific Adviser for the Time4CS project was the next speaker at the roundtable. Salnikova introduced Time4CS, a project that aims to create sustainable institutional change across different geographic areas and fields. It is important to develop a strategy and ask institutions to reflect how sustainable their roles are. This kind of sustainability is related to slow science. If institutions don’t show any support or motivation for CS, this might be due to a lack of strategy for the government or public to engage in the latter. Asya Salnikova mentioned that the YouCount App was appealing among youth and shows that gamification is important to keep up motivation and that creativity is needed for awareness raising. She highlighted the necessity to have Citizen Scientists involved from the very beginning of a project. The level of engagement needs to be taken into account as it has the potential to make institutional change, according to Salnikova. Give small projects more visibility and apply more pressure was her final remark. Professor Dick Kasperowski from Gothenburg University, final speaker at session two, pointed out that CS activism is quite common in the field of biodiversity in Sweden. As a result, infrastructure was developed to collect good quality data. He elaborated on an example of legal litigation and by using CS data, being able to win cases in the court. Dick Kasperowski raised the question if the YouCount app could be appropriated for CS activism. When social and democratic institutions can’t solve problems for the future, can we leak data showing these shortages? Kasperowski said that epistemic representation by CS activism can be produced through either new infrastructure or by using existing one. He stressed that data quality is important for science output and societal change. Biodiversity CS is currently more than CSS but its epistemic culture is also about flexibility, engagement and productive uncertainty, like in YouCount. Dick Kasperowski said that YouCount is much more ambitious when it comes to social change than other CS projects. If we want activism and CS – both elements are already there in YouCount, according to Kasperowski who concluded by stating that the anthropocene is there because we center humans in our research, however, CS has the potential to decenter it again.

4.4.3 Session 3: Youth citizen social science contributing to social inclusion and innovation

The third session consisted of findings from YouCount on how Youth Citizen Social Science can contribute to social inclusion and innovation as well as their implications for social sciences and social and youth policymaking, moderated by Eglė Butkevičienė. Alexandra Czeglédi, research fellow and co-work package lead from ESSRG in Hungary addressed the extent to which Y-CSS can contribute to social change and the role CSS has in social innovation. Alexandra Czeglédi stressed

the power of digital tools that can help to better understand intergenerational perspectives through visualisation, for example with a documentary or an app. As power relations are changing when youth is taking on new roles, the traditional way of CS changes, explained Czeglédi, adding that it would not be possible to do CS without learning new skills. Alexandra Czeglédi further stated that time is significant for researchers and, when working together, one needs to find a common rhythm. A relational research approach was also mentioned in the sense that the caring processes became important as well as emotional aspects such as body language, especially for hard-of-hearing youth in the Hungary case, according to Czeglédi. Concerning limits and challenges, she stated that technology has a double role: it works because youth is familiar with it but it is difficult to get certain kind of stakeholders into gamification and digitalisation and thus bears a risk of exclusion. As co-researchers are volunteering, we would constantly need to consider whether we ask for too much. Alexandra Czeglédi also invited listeners to reflect on CSS and how we can create a social inclusive space within YouCount. If we are interested in social inclusion, we might only do research on youth, but with CSS both adults and youth who are part of it, are learning and youth have an influence. Social inclusion is a process that creates new social relationships and innovation is what can help us to repair relations, at least on the micro-level.



Findings on new knowledge of young people's views on, experiences with social inclusion, and positive drivers to social inclusion were presented by Suzanne Wilson, Researcher at UCLan in the UK and work package lead and Professor Fortuna Procentese and Postdoc Flora Gatti from UNINA in Italy. Suzanne Wilson kicked off the joined presentation by asking what social inclusion means for youth. She reminded the audience to keep in mind that YouCount cases are linked but distinct. Despite these differences, social inclusion seemed to be an unpopular term among youth across several case studies. They referred to it as opportunities to participate, social networks and

connections, legal and human rights or simply called it a process. According to Suzanne Wilson, belonging is defined by youth as being accepted and connected, cooperating with others, it feels “like home” and “warm”. Six critical issues for social inclusion of young people were identified including the importance of place-based bonding ties (1), safety (2), prevalence of racial discrimination, prejudice, and exclusion (3), negative stereotyping of youth (4), financial and economic circumstances (5) as well as lack of opportunities for local democratic engagement (6). Three key areas for means for change could also be defined such as increasing collaboration between youth and stakeholders, creating more and better youth-friendly opportunities and supporting youth participation in local democratic processes. Wilson stressed that even if there were opportunities for social inclusion, they weren’t always known.

PhD candidate Flora Gatti and Professor and work package lead Fortuna Procentese from the University of Naples Federico II in Italy shared new knowledge of positive drivers for social inclusion of young people in the form of a complex and multi-levelled psychosocial model. Flora Gatti explained that data was gathered through a cross-case analysis aiming to unpack social inclusion processes and drivers according to European youths’ perspectives and experiences and gender issues within them. Procentese presented an overview of the results and talked conference guests through important themes that came up as key features of social inclusion, contextual threats to social inclusion, psychosocial aspects of social inclusion, the role of socialization processes in community building, local relationships as proxies for social inclusion, youths’ advocacy, empowerment, or “horizontal citizenship” to foster social inclusion. A psycho-social model of youth social inclusion considering social inclusion as a two-way process on different levels was presented. In terms of gender aspects, Gatti and Procentese could observe that the compositions of groups – that is, whether there were more girls or boys – influenced the choice of the activities to be proposed during the local case development, as well as the context in which the activities were supposed to take place – based on local (that is, cultural) and individual gendered prejudices.

Roundtable 2: Implications of social inclusion and innovation findings for (citizen) social science research and for future youth/social policy – Part 1

The main question of both roundtables in session three, moderated by Suzanne Wilson, was “What are implications of social inclusion and innovation findings for citizen social science research and for future youth and social policy?” Panellists consisting of key stakeholders and young co-researchers discussed findings that are important takeaways for future innovation and policymaking to increase social inclusion. They tried to find ways how Y-CSS can be utilized to create citizen engagement, social innovation, and informed policymaking for increased social inclusion.

The first speaker Mina Stareva, Deputy Head of Unit, RTD.D3, Fair Societies & Cultural Heritage, from the European Commission (EC) is working on health and societal transitions looking at

different aspects of social inclusion and inequalities, well-being, mental health etc. Mina Stareva joined digitally, explaining that there is a youth perspective in the mandate of the current European Commission and Horizon Europe and that they would make an effort to increase this effort. Stareva believes that young people should be heard in policy-making processes that concerns them. Through listening to youth, they can be supported to reach their full potential. She said that more can be done here and that is why they fund projects like YouCount. Stareva shared four insights from Horizon Europe (HE): HE supports young researchers and innovators by investing in (non)formal education and equality. Their focus is on social inclusion, participation and active citizenship. They have a cross-cutting approach and include youth perspectives across different sectors. The Horizon Europe Youth 2022 initiative aimed to promote perspectives of European youth and contribute to the broader CS goal of involving citizens, including young people in scientific endeavours – something aligned with YouCount’s CSS concept. The EC’s goal is to achieve real and effective CS engagement of youth where youth is part of the co-design and the main beneficiary.



Next, YCS El Mustapha Lemrabatt from the Spain case together with Evie Ball, Arishel Dowie, Andrew Dirzu and Khaleel Mamsa – all from the UK case – shared their reflections. All of them described the most interesting findings of their research with YouCount. Evie said that the highlight in her research was to hear different point of views. Through YouCount, she mixed with people she wouldn’t normally come across. Evie loved this kind of networking and being able to discuss issues with stakeholders. Mustapha thanked everyone who was involved in YouCount. He found the connections he made with policymakers very valuable. Through direct communication between young migrants and politicians, they could talk about problems they have in society, added Mustapha. Andrew saw value in small changes they achieved such as installing traffic lights after finding out that there were no streetlights on a road youth would often walk. Khaleel added

that he could observe problems on the micro- and macro-level and that they were interlinked within the research. He stressed that it was positive to be able to reach out to certain areas of gentrification where people didn't feel included. When they were doing networking, they had contact with social workers and charities as well as members of the council, for example the mayor of Preston. Khaleel clarified that this wasn't just an opportunity for themselves to network with stakeholders but also for stakeholders to network with each other and talk about future work and projects. A concrete example that came out of this common effort was the instalment of CCTV cameras in areas that young people perceived as insecure on their way to school. Arishel stated that the biggest problem she could observe was that there were no physical buildings to hang out for young people. If there were spaces, they were only for younger generations, but there was nothing for 13–19-year-olds. To solve this, a dedicated youth board has started the process to develop a "youth zone" in Preston. Arishel is part of the board and will co-decide among other things how to advertise it to young people.

What needs to happen to make spaces more inclusive for young people? How do we use YouCount's research? These were the next questions discussed by young citizen scientists. Arishel highlighted the need to open up resources and make them accessible for everyone's needs so people can meet each other and have a voice. Khaleel thinks that there is not just one solution because everyone has their own perspectives. Networking with stakeholders from different backgrounds seemed to be crucial. Khaleel found that personal communication was more fruitful instead of having schemes that invite young people to send emails to politicians. Andrew advocated for doing proper research and talk to actual people with diversity. Mustapha stressed that the relationship between policymakers and stakeholders and young people is very important – something they managed to build through YouCount. However, he also stated that new tools for our society are needed as we still have a lot to improve. Evie addressed the importance of accessible spaces. She claimed that certain things are always overlooked, often because they do not get support for adaptation. But every adaptation makes a difference, elaborated Evie.

Marc Dunne, a stakeholder in the UK case working for the Preston City Council, joined the debate to reflect on how being involved in YouCount has changed his perspectives on social inclusion, how the research was useful for the council and what they have planned for the future. For Marc Dunne, meeting face to face with young people made all the difference. Dunne is positive to be able to increase the feeling of belonging among youth in Preston by engaging in projects like this. Young people are residents of the city and council members are interested in making them feel safe and secure, said Dunne. After attending the Living Labs (LL), it was obvious for him that youth wanted to have more dialogues, positive opportunities, leisure and work, feeling safe and more places for them. During the YouCount conference, Dunne learned that young people face similar challenges in Oslo and that these might be Europe-wide problems. Even though Marc Dunne has a background in youth work, he would often hear from professionals and not the young people themselves. He said that the research was useful as it added real stories and real live experiences from youth. When meeting youth, it would be important to speak openly and in words that

everyone understands. Dunne learned that young women felt unsafe walking from college to the city centre, so the council installed a CCTV camera and organised street patrols. In a LL, he received feedback that these measures had worked and increased the feeling of safety among youth. As a next step, Marc Dunne and his colleagues are developing a youth strategy for the city through a youth forum, youth involvement, and digital and analogue consultations. Different organisations and a youth steering group are involved in this effort. Dunne further mentioned that the city develops a work experience package to involve schools so pupils can get experience working at the council, something crucial as many missed out during the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis due to Brexit. A big youth centre is also coming up in Preston.

Roundtable 2: Implications of social inclusion and innovation findings for (citizen) social science research and for future youth/social policy – Part 2



Speakers Marc Dunne, Boshko Stankovski, Tomas De Groote and Josep Perelló were asked to pick one social inclusion finding from YouCount and explain why these finding is particularly relevant. In a second round, they were invited to identify main barriers to create inclusive and safe spaces for young people and elaborate how these can be overcome with research and policy.

Marc Dunne mentioned findings on safety and stereotyping as important factors for social inclusion. He stressed the importance of promoting young people in a positive way and stopping negative stereotyping – something the Preston city council works on through a communications campaign featuring achievements of young people. Boshko Stankovski is advisory member in YouCount, and a previous member of the European Youth Forum’s pool of experts as well as Senior Programme Officer in the Governance Section of the OSCE Democratization Department in

Kosovo. YouCount impressed Boshko Stankovski as a former member of the youth civil society sector but now working for an international organisation, due to the fact that YouCount covers this triangular of youth work, youth participation and youth mainstreaming. He highlighted the importance that findings on involving youth into participatory social science can have for large international umbrella organisations. This involvement can be a powerful advocacy tool when they approach stakeholders and funders since it bases its evidence on extensive research process. For OSCE, any kind of guidelines and toolkits on ethical aspects to involve youth in co-creation is very relevant, clarified Stankovski. He added the necessity to not understand youth as a monolithic group on the meta-level but rather see their diversity. There is a significant number of youths that isn't liberal but very conservative. Boshko Stankovski concluded by stating that in every activity working with or for youth, it is important to work pluralistically to not turn into echo chambers. Tomas De Groote works for Sociale InnovatieFabriek in Brussels and has experience from the youth sector in Flanders, meaning that he previously worked with policymaking but is now more active in the field of social innovation. He explained that the Flemish government has the youth council as an official advisory board. What Tomas De Groote finds inspiring with YouCount is that youth is coming together and are getting involved in critical processes that are supported by academia and being included in societal problem solving. This is crucial as some young people will always be excluded, even in a country with a well- developed youth sector, stated De Groote. He gave an example by talking about a group of young people in Bruges that literally made a hole in the ground in 2017 in order to make space for themselves. Tomas De Groote stated that inclusion needs to be the core value when doing social innovation and it needs a link to academic, policy and civil society. YouCount would have this strong combination of putting youth into research position and giving them the support they need. Josep Perelló, OpenSystems-UB research leader and CoAct project coordinator from the University of Barcelona & UBICS, compared YouCount and CoAct, mentioning that those are the only two projects using CSS in call in Europe. The CSS project CoAct (co-designing CS for collective action) finished last year. Josep Perelló believes that YouCount is an important start to shape the social dimensions within CS. What do we understand as CSS? For Perelló, this type of research starts with shared social concerns. He pointed out that in the YouCount cases it becomes apparent that concerns of young people are common even if youth in general is diverse. This is why he thinks that it is important to find out how science can become more pluralistic and diverse.

Concerning the main barriers to create inclusive safe spaces for young people and how to overcome them with research and policy, Josep Perelló thinks that ways how to structure this effort are well on the way. He pointed out that while we talked a lot about co-researchers, civil society organisations need to be here as well and enter into direct conversations with academic institutions to set up a common agenda. Perelló believes that a cultural shift is needed by changing the agenda of scientific research. Training possibilities for academic researchers would be as important as for co-researchers. Josep Perelló added that that a lot of learnings needed are not available in academia yet. He insisted on the idea of togetherness and the need for more common places. Boshko Stankovski started by saying that he comes from a region where youth

CSOs depend on grants and funding from national governments and that involvement of international organisations is key there. Projects like YouCount would make an important shift to include youth in the design not only the evaluation. With this regard, Stankovski mentioned Southeast Europe as a very relevant region. He highlighted the importance to use data and train young people to refine nuances that data brings. Participation of young people in politics might look high in some countries if you look superficially, but often these are highly politically polarised societies, Stankovski said. In this context, young people would often join parties because they need jobs and thus would echo leaders instead of voices of the youth. Effectively, this contributes to shrinking spaces for youth. Diving into these aspects is why such research projects are so important. Tomas De Groote stated that barriers have to do with where opportunities such as funding are. Social innovation can get institutionalised without providing enough space for new elements, thus money might be a barrier, according to De Groote. People would tend to think in silos and technology can be lacking which are both further barriers. The latter would be particular important for impact measuring and data collection, said De Groote. Moderator Suzanne Wilson summarised the final part of the roundtable by mentioning the importance of ensuring sufficient resources are accessible and then making sure people collaborate.

“Walk- and talk”: What do you find as the most interesting and important findings for future social innovation and policymaking to increase social inclusion? Mentimeter Exercise 2

Session three closed with another interactive group activity, a so-called “Walk- and talk”. Conference participants were invited to elaborate on what they find as the most interesting and important findings for future social innovation and policymaking to increase social inclusion.

4.4.4 Session 4: Closing up and way forward

During session four, YouCount’s overall impact and way forward in the European and international context was discussed with Eglė Butkevičienė from KTU in Lithuania as moderator. Presenters reflected on the impacts of YouCount and how we can enhance the benefits and impact of citizen social science. Followed by a short presentation by ECSA and YALDA, before key takeaways and next steps forward to strengthen CSS with and for youth, and its contribution to social inclusion in Europe and internationally, were discussed.

Usue Lorenz, Researcher at Orkestra FD, gave a talk on what the impacts of YouCount are and how we can enhance benefits and impacts of CSS overall. Lorenz highlights that it needs to be acknowledged that changes due to project activities can occur over different timescales, affect different types of actors, and different dimension. Within YouCount, both intended achievements were analysed but also unplanned (unpredictable) impacts were discovered. Usue Lorenz explained that impact was measured following the three steps including a logic impact framework,

an analytical tool and a reflexive process. She concluded by mentioning that findings covered scientific, participant, socio-ecological and economic dimensions.

Claudia Fabó Cartas, Scientific advisor at ECSA and Project Manager of the ECS project, started her slot by describing the mission and vision of the European Citizen Science Association (ECSA) that is involved in about 20 projects relevant for CS. Fabó Cartas continued by telling about the Horizon project ECS that aims to support CS in Europe by strengthening networks that already exist and by developing an European CS academy. She stressed that if we say that we aim to democratise science, we really have to live up to this. Even though if citizens can be involved differently, it always needs to be meaningful. Claudia Fabó Cartas mentions as example that YouCount's co-researchers have a meaningful role. Putting citizens before science by not only involving them but changing how we think about science is crucial, according to Fabó Cartas. She also added the need to honour the processes and do science in way it needs to be done referring back to "slow science". When working on bigger EU-funded projects, Claudia Fabó Cartas would often speak with stakeholders. In this process, she believes it is important to give a voice to those that matters such as the young co-researcher Mustapha from Spain or Marc who is part of the youth council in Preston – something that ECSA can do as an intermediary, according to her.

Laone Bukamu Hulela is Director of the Youth Alliance for Leadership and Development in Africa (YALDA) and an infrastructure investor in equity. Bukamu Hulela described YALDA as a network of youth that wants to connect African youth with the diaspora. The activism organisation is run by volunteers, self-funded and recognised by UN Ecosoc. It covers over 19 countries in Africa and is based at universities because young people can meet there inclusively. YALDA aims to champion the African youth agenda which is important as Africa is the youngest continent and faces many challenges such as youth unemployment. Laone Bukamu Hulela talked about the Umoja Africa Campaign to facilitate youth inclusion in trade and to create jobs as well as a boot camp on entrepreneurs in 2024 at the University of Pretoria in South Africa. In Africa, there was an effort to include young people through the African youth charter in 2006 and the African Union youth envoy. Laone Bukamu Hulela reflected on what Y-CS would mean if applicable on the African continent. For volunteer organisations, incentives are an important topic. She stressed the need to reflect how we would motivate young Africans to continue to participate in organisations. YALDA would hand out devices and data because data is very expensive in Africa and devices not that accessible. But food, trips and vouchers for courses would also be good incentives. How do we go about mainstreaming youth participation? Bukamu Hulela highlighted the importance of the gender lens for social inclusion of youth as they would often lump women and youth together on the African continent, leading to older women speaking on behalf of youth. Thus, YALDA appreciates a separation and advocates for this, also to strengthen young women. She elaborated that people in Africa often think about the African Union and national governments as important levels but not about local councils, adding that the Preston case resonated with her. Something Bukamu Hulela observed was that it was mentioned several times during the conference how to get youth to talk to stakeholders in order to make changes but asked what would be done to

empower youth to make some of these changes themselves? Another observation she made at the conference was that young people would sit in the back, raising the question why they are not spread among adult participants. Finally, she highlighted the need for continuous learning and asked how this will occur and be measured in YouCount. Will there be a mindset change over time of stakeholders and young people?



Finally, PC Reidun Norvoll closed the session by thanking the participating YCS, consortium partners, presenters, and policy officer Katharina Buse for all their great contributions to the project, before a group of some consortium members and speakers joined for a last picture.



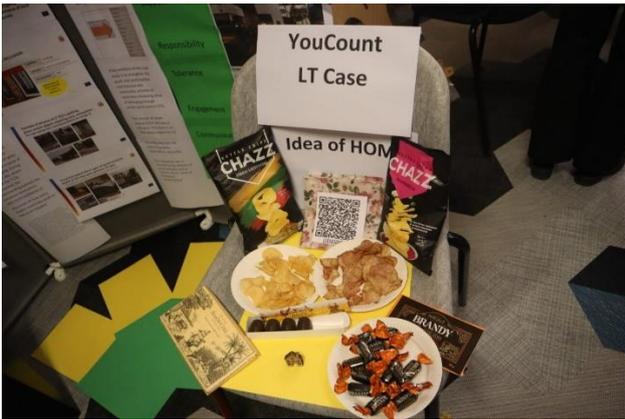
4.5 Exhibition

Link to the virtual exhibition:

https://miro.com/app/board/uXjVNRkFnbk=?share_link_id=680278430138

The designing and production of the exhibition was led by team leaders Cathrine Skovbo Winther (AAU) and Sara Berge Lorenzen (OsloMet) in collaboration with the ten case partners.

Participants were invited to “take a journey throughout Europe”, select the places they would like to explore, and then visit the café tables with researchers and young citizen scientists from the ten cases, focusing on special aspects of doing citizen social science in practice.



The café tables featured posters from the cases, including our many Oops and Aha moments to trigger sharing of experiences and discussions.





5. Participants

In total 150 participants registered for the conference, and about 115 actual participants in total are confirmed. See tables for more details about the participation and participants below.

As the online streaming not included identified participants, we are only able to provide numbers and broad estimations of participants from different sectors and targeted stakeholder groups. Still, this may give an overall picture of the outreach.

Table 3: Numbers of participants YouCount final conference

Part	Registered participants	Actual participants
In total	150	
Pre- conference workshop	77	76
- onsite		66
- online		10
Welcome Reception	63	60
Conference day:	143	105
- Onsite	76	75
- Online	67	About 30 before lunch About 20 after lunch

A few participated just in parts of the day. There were a mix of full or partly participation online.

The participants came from several sectors, meaning that the final conference partly managed to reach out to main stakeholder groups even if the scientific and CS communities were the largest. The conference also included a relatively large group of young people, mainly from the YouCount consortium.

Table 4: Sector as defined by registered participants.

Sector	Approx. numbers registered participants
Scientific community (Higher education and researchers)	74
CS project or initiative	14

Young people	20
Policymaker, stakeholder, or end-user organisation	20
Science Communication	1
Research Council	1
Industry	5
General Public	3
Others/Unknown	13

In table 5, we can see more details about the registered participants.

Table 5: More details about the registered participants

Role	Approx. numbers – of 150 registered
YouCount	
- Researchers	37
- YCS	19
- Advisory board members	5
Speaker /panellist (external)	6
Students	11
Others:	
- Scientific community and education	23
- CS community/practitioners	10
- Youth organisations/initiatives etc.	5

- Community/ stakeholder organisations/social entrepreneurs/NGOs etc.	15
- EU/Policymakers	3-4
- General public/youth	5
- Others/unknown	12

About 56 of the confirmed 115 (including the hybrid pre- conference workshop) participants were from the YouCount project and 5 from the advisory board, thus about 59 external participants.

This means that most participants were connected to the project either as researchers, young citizen scientists, AB members, industry, or technical support. Some of the young people had overlaps to other categories by being students or defining themselves as part of the CS community sector. This means that the YCS participation both represented the community and the integration of CSS in mainstream university and higher education.

The speakers and advisory board members represented a wide range of key stakeholders in the scientific community, and social/youth stakeholders organisation on European level with links to international organisations, and from the African continent. Several confirmed that they have disseminated the YouCount project and findings internally to their own organisation before and after the conference.

The largest group were interested researchers from the scientific community (universities or research institutes) and young people in terms of students or community YCS. We can also see that the final conference reached out to and made synergies with the CS community including ECSA and other EU CS projects (CoAct, COESO, Time4CS). Further, the tables 4 and 5 show that the conference was of interest for many stakeholders in the field, especially for advisers, organisations and social entrepreneurship organisations/NGOs working with young people. Some of these participants also participated in the pre- conference workshop to learn more about how to use Y-CSS in practice.

Most participants came from Europe. In addition, there were a few registered participants from CS initiatives and stakeholder/youth organisations from Australia and African continent. One participated onsite as a speaker.

In sum, the actual numbers of participants are uncertain. Still, as seen from the tables, the final conference managed to reach out to a mixed audience including key targeted stakeholder groups in the DEC – plan contributing to the SO6 of maximising scientific and social impact.

6. Evaluation

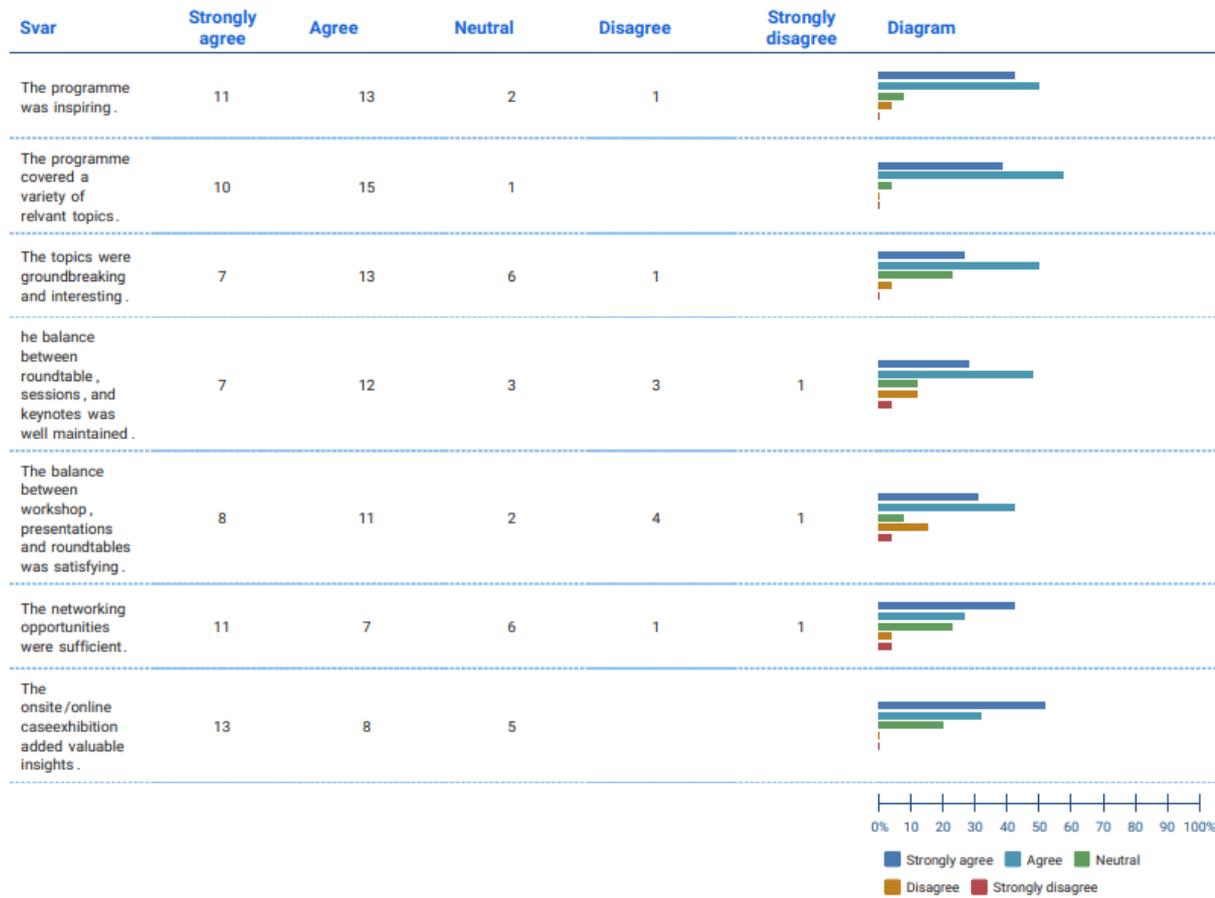
In addition to feedback to the PC orally or by e-mail, there was sent out an anonymous evaluation form with closed and open answer options some days after the conference with a deadline about one week.

26 participants responded, 40 percent were from the YouCount consortium or externals, 20 percent from the YCS. Most of the respondents had an active role during the conference. 100 percent participated in the final conference, and 76,9 percent in the pre- conference workshop. Given the low respondent rate, we will just summarise some key take aways from the evaluation.

There was an overall positive rating of the conference organisation and atmosphere regarding information and experiencing the atmosphere as friendly and welcoming. The organisers were rated as supportive. As seen from Table 6, the overall rating of the conference was positive. Only a few persons expressed dissatisfaction on certain issues. The dissatisfaction was mostly related to the balance between workshop, presentations, and roundtable discussions. The different views on the programme are seen in the following comments: “Workshop was awesome, second day, too condensed and academic in some ways.” Or: “The conference and workshop were really insightful, and I learned very much by engaging with the different projects and networking. The sessions were fun and interactive.”

Table 6: Rating of the overall programme

Rate the overall programme for Dec 4 (workshop) and 5 (conference day)?



The participants showed interest in most topics. There was overall a special interest in youth focused CSS. The social inclusion and innovation aspects, together with impact and social policy, were also of highest interest.

Table 7: Topics rated as the most interesting

Which topic was most interesting?

Antall svar: 26

Svar	Antall	% av svar	
Presentations about citizen social science	12	46.2%	 46.2%
Presentations project findings	14	53.8%	 53.8%
Roundtable science policy	6	23.1%	 23.1%
Hands-on citizen social science with young people	13	50%	 50%
Young citizen scientists' experiences	15	57.7%	 57.7%
Exhibition	13	50%	 50%
Roundtable social inclusion	10	38.5%	 38.5%
How to boost inclusion and diversity	8	30.8%	 30.8%
Citizen social science in a European and global perspective	8	30.8%	 30.8%

Networking opportunities and the exhibition were also found as some of the most positive parts of the conference programme.

There were more mixed views and experiences concerning the youth- friendliness of the meeting, ranking over all answer options and with a few respondents disagreeing. One comment given was that *“there should be more programmes for the youth. A sight-seeing in the city for them could have been nice. The second day was too academic for them.”*

Handbook and toolkit:

Those answering suggested overall that the handbook should be addressed to practitioners. One stated that policymakers should be informed in a different way.

Examples of possible practitioner groups were: Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), social workers, pedagogical social organisations broadly and other civil society actors.

7. Conclusion

The final conference for the YouCount project aimed to maximise scientific and social impact (cf. WP5) and targeted several goals and main stakeholder groups for the project.

It was two intense days with a mix of 115 participants, with a lot of activities and engaging presentations and interactive discussions. All contributed to a nice atmosphere.

The final conference was successful in many ways, fulfilling its main goals and reaching out to main stakeholder groups. YCS participated actively in the programme. The research exchange supported networking and created research and innovation synergies. Many key participants have disseminated the project and the final conference afterwards. The final conference and its streaming links will also be promoted on the homepage, last newsletter and social media channels in the next month.

The evaluation form as well as other feedback were generally positive. Still, the second day was partly experienced as dense and considered as too academic for the young people. This means, while succeeding in including several YCS in the meeting, the youth friendliness of the second conference day could have been improved. This feedback partly points to the challenge of reaching out to such a broad targeted audience, and to balance scientific advancement goals with public involvement goals in CSS.

Despite considerable efforts to promote the conference, there was limited online participants. The streaming of the final conference can be used for later dissemination purposes. Still, retrospectively, a more extensive physical conference with support for travelling may have been more suitable than a hybrid meeting. This may thus be a consideration for future similar projects.

8. Acknowledgements

The YouCount consortium will take the opportunity to thank the EU H2020 SwafS programme for support to the project and to the many contributors who have made the project and final conference possible. We will give a special greeting to our supportive Project Officer Katharina Buse, the staff at ORE for the fantastic assistance with the pre-conference workshop and welcome reception, and to all our presenters and panellists during the conference. We will also express our deep appreciation to the YCS and local stakeholders for participating in the project and its final conference. The project would not have been possible without you!



YouCount

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