



YouCount
Youth Citizen Science

D1.5

Webinar Report:

Inclusive & transformative Citizen Social Science with young people

ecsa

European
Citizen Science
Association

Working
Group

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Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| D5.1 WEBINAR REPORT: INCLUSIVE & TRANSFORMATIVE CITIZEN SOCIAL SCIENCE WITH YOUNG PEOPLE | 5 |
| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | 6 |
| 1. INTRODUCTION | 7 |
| 1.1 General idea of the webinars | 7 |
| 2. SUMMARY OF THE WEBINARS | 9 |
| 2.1 Webinar 1: Inclusive co-creation in Y-CSS: How to open up research & innovation to young people? | 9 |
| 2.2 Webinar 2: Setting up Y-CSS: How to work in inclusive ways? | 16 |
| 2.3 Webinar 3: Transformative & innovative impact of Y-CSS: How to make social change? | 21 |
| 3. REFLECTIONS ON THE WEBINARS | 27 |
| 3.1 Options to follow up | 27 |
| 3.2 Learnings from co-creating webinars | 27 |
| 4. APPENDIX | 32 |
| 4.1 Agenda of first webinar | 32 |
| 4.2 Agenda of second webinar | 33 |
| 4.3 Agenda of third webinar | 34 |

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D5.1 Webinar Report: Inclusive & transformative Citizen Social Science with young people

This report is a summary report from the first session of webinars by EIE WG and YouCount held in autumn 2021 that will continue in autumn 2023. The webinars were initially planned as one workshop with youths and stakeholders but were changed to digital webinars due to the pandemic. A final report will be submitted in 2023. Claudia Göbel, co-chair of the Working group on Empowerment, inclusion, and equity (EIE WG) jointly hosted by the European Citizen Science Association (ECSA) and the Living Knowledge Network (LKN) was responsible for organising the webinars in collaboration with YouCount partners. Claudia Göbel has also prepared the report, which was then reviewed and commented on by webinar participants, YouCount partners and EIE WG members.

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.

Executive Summary

In fall 2021, we conducted three webinars on “Citizen Social Science with young people”. Co-creation, inclusiveness and transformative impacts were guiding topics.

Young people in Europe are facing many challenges with regard to social inclusion (e.g. social participation, employment, social belonging). There is a pressing need to develop more knowledge and innovation to create more inclusive and youth-friendly societies. One way to contribute to this is through Citizen Social Science with young people - Youth Citizen Social Science (Y-CSS). The YouCount EU project aims at developing Y-CSS. To exchange knowledge for that purpose, the Working Group on Empowerment, Inclusiveness & Equity (EIE WG)¹ worked together with the YouCount project. The EIE WG brings together practitioners of Citizen Science, community-based research and youth engagement and is supported by the European Citizen Science Association (ECSA) and the Living Knowledge Network (LKN). Together, we co-organised a series of webinars to create space for discussing important questions of Y-CSS, mobilise feedback on the YouCount framework & start building a community of interest around Y-CSS. Webinar topics and formats were co-created with CSS practitioners and young researchers on a case-by-case basis.

This documentation summarises learnings from the events to be available as resources to the many people who contributed to realising the webinars. This includes insights in the work of practitioners active in Y-CSS, for instance their reflections, experiences, recommendations for YouCount and further resources; the presentation and discussion of co-created webinar topics as issues of concern to people active in the field and starting points for future joint work; our reflections on co-creating and running the webinars as part of Y-CSS in an EU project in cooperation with young people from different contexts and countries and the ECSA & LKN working group.

¹ The EIE working group is a voluntary and self-organised format for exchange. It is run by practitioners of Citizen Science and Community-Based Research.

1. Introduction

In fall 2021, we conducted three webinars on “Citizen Social Science with young people”. Inclusiveness and transformative impacts were guiding topics. The webinars were co-created by researchers aiming to work with youth in an EU project, practitioners of participatory research - younger and older - some of them coming together in a working group. This documentation summarises some of the learnings from the events to be available as resources to the many people who contributed to realising the webinars. More specifically, the lessons learned shall be available as resources for participants and others who wish to be active in this space. In particular, they shall provide inputs to the work of the EU project YouCount as well as the activities of the working group. Names of the young people involved are included here if they were mentioned in the agendas of the webinars (see Appendix) and beyond that only if we got explicit consent.

1.1 General idea of the webinars

Young people in Europe are facing many challenges with regard to social inclusion (e.g. social participation, employment, social belonging). There is a pressing need to develop more knowledge and innovation to create more inclusive and youth-friendly societies. One way to contribute to this is through Citizen Social Science with young people - **Youth Citizen Social Science (Y-CSS)**.

The [YouCount](#) EU project aims at developing Y-CSS. To exchange knowledge for that purpose, the [Working Group on Empowerment, Inclusiveness & Equity](#) (EIE WG) worked together with the YouCount project. The EIE WG brings together practitioners of Citizen Science, community-based research and youth engagement and is supported by the European Citizen Science Association (ECSA) and the Living Knowledge Network (LKN).

We co-organised a series of webinars to **create space for discussing important questions of Y-CSS**, mobilise feedback on the YouCount framework & start building a community of interest around Y-CSS. Webinar topics and formats were co-created with CSS practitioners and young researchers on a case-by-case basis.

- **Webinar 1: Inclusive co-creation in Y-CSS: How to open up research & innovation to young people?** 24th September 2021, 68 participants
- **Webinar 2: Setting up Y-CSS: How to work in inclusive ways?** 21st October 2021, 60 participants
- **Webinar 3: Transformative & innovative impact of Y-CSS: How to make social change?** 4th November 2021, 40 participants

Participation in the webinars was open to everybody and free of charge. Invitations were shared through the mailing lists of the EIE working group, ECSA and other CSS projects as well as through YouCount channels and organisers' social media.

Thanks to everybody involved!

The three webinars were only made possible by the people who invested their trust, knowledge, energy, time, critical questions and proactive solutions into the organisation of these events. **A huge thank you to everybody!!!**

Presenting: Aina Landsverk Hagen, Abdulaziz Alismail, Barbara Mihók, Bozenka Demeterova, Cath Larkins, Claire Murray, Finn, Fortuna Procentese, Glenn, Isabelle Freiling, Janine Adams, Jörg Matthes, Julie Ridley, Oliver Moores, Patricia Canto, Philipp Hummer, Rick Hall, Sara Berge Lorenzen, Sumaya Ali Isse, Suzanne Wilson, Usue Lorenz | **Breakout-room facilitating and note-taking:** Aina Landsverk Hagen, Alexandra Czeglédi, Baiba Pruse, Fredrik Brouneus, Gillian Holt, Julia Lorke, Julie Ridley, Reidun Norvoll, Sara Berge Lorenzen | **Youth experts commenting:** Katlego Nawa & 8 more experts | **Webinar co-moderating:** Baiba Pruse, Claire Murray, Claudia Göbel, Julia Lorke | **Webinar note-taking:** Sara Noemie Plassnig | **Technical support:** Rasmus Durban Jahr | **Webinar hosting and co-organising:** Claudia Göbel, Egle Butkeviciene, Reidun Norvoll

2. Summary of the webinars

This section provides a summary on all three webinars on inclusive and transformative Citizen Social Science with young people, organised by YouCount and EIE WG in autumn 2021.

2.1 Webinar 1: Inclusive co-creation in Y-CSS: How to open up research & innovation to young people?

We decided to **start from the experiences, knowledge and ideas of young people who are engaged in research, innovation or social contexts**. Through a working group member and YouCount partners and supporters, we got in touch with resourceful young people, willing to share their perspectives. Three local groups were formed by people who had previously worked together in **Nottingham** (Bozenka Demeterova, Finn Stevenson, Rick Hall), **Lancashire** (Oliver Moores, Cath Larkins) and **Oslo** (Sumaya Ali Isse, Abdulaziz Alismail, Glenn, Sara Berge Lorenzen, Aina Landsverk Hagen). The local teams prepared the webinar by **choosing questions they found essential and wanted other participants to address**. Then they prepared input presentations with experiences from their work on these topics. The questions also led the breakout room discussions. We use these questions as signposts to present the lessons learned from this first webinar ([agenda here](#)).

Signpost from Nottingham: Harder to reach, or easier to ignore - How to work with young people in marginalised communities?

Rick Hall, Bozenka Demeterova and Finn Stevenson presented their experiences from working with young people in **Nottingham**, where they have collaborated. On the question - How to open up research and innovation to young people? - they reminded us to ask if groups of young people in marginalised situations were really “**harder to reach**” or actually “**easier to ignore**”? Starting from such a critical perspective fundamentally changes how joint activities are conceptualised and realised.

Bozenka, 20, youth worker, elaborated on **working with young people from Roma communities**, of which she herself is a part. When it comes to the Roma community and youth, she often sees prejudices and misunderstandings at work. There is a Roma community with roots in Eastern Europe

in Nottingham as well as the wider UK since 1998. Members of this community face stigmas, such as being “hard to talk to / work with / control” or being “loud”. They often self-identify as “Czech” or “Polish”, rather than as Roma, because of the prejudice. Members of this Roma community foster traditions to create a sense of pride. These facts should be known, appreciated and acted upon as a basis for doing something together. It is key to Bozenka’s work to let the kids decide what to do when working with young members of the Roma community.

Finn, 17, is part of the **skateboarding community** and interested in maths and science. He has skateboarded since 2011. Back then, the community was like a closed net, you had to know someone to get in. He volunteered to skateboard with kids and is now part of organising an event for 50-60 people who don't know each other but skateboard together in Nottingham. The community has a strong commitment to consent and inclusiveness. This, along with other principles of democracy and civic action, will be discussed in a panel discussion on “radical places”, which will be part of the event.

Rick Hall, 72, has ample experience in working with young people, for instance as part of the charity ignite! which he has been leading for many years. He shares key points of his experience in the form of a **set of critical questions** that researchers or other people who want to work with young people should ask themselves: Why do you want to do projects with young people? Are your motives and intent the same as those of young people? Who do you want to engage with? How will you reach out to them? Where will you work with young people?

In the discussion, more important aspects of working with young people in marginalised communities were gathered:

- **Listen** to young people, **understand** what they want, figure out which approach to take.
- Engage young people in **topics that matter to them**.
- How to **access groups** – be visible, take part, involve yourself with the group, otherwise it can be intimidating for young people to become involved in projects.
- **Build trust**, address young people’s needs – this happens over time, so investment is needed to build up a network of connections.
- Ensure **events / activities** with young people are/have:
 - Informal,

- Safe spaces,
 - Fun/engaging activities on offer,
 - Food,
 - Music,
 - Lots of open and accessible activities.
- For particular 'hard to reach' groups, **involving whole families** (e.g. refugee families) can help to develop relationships. Invite people specifically to events.
- For engaging young people **beyond the local area** – adverts on social media can be a very effective way.
- In discussions of **rewards / incentives** – it can be good when young people have a say – what do they want or need? Give young people specific roles / titles. We are gaining young people's intelligence, time and valuable experiences.
- The question of (getting) **funding first or** (co-designing the) **project first** can be tricky – building the relationships first is generally better, but how do you then get funding to match?
- Other work to look at as **good examples** of how young people have (been) engaged:
 - Tiny Forests project in Nottingham,
 - Nottingham Festival of Science and Curiosity (<https://nottsfosac.co.uk>).

Signpost from Lancaster: What needs to happen for young people you are working with to be able to contribute to the UCan website and join our journey?

Oliver Moores is part of a **group of young researchers** called **UCan**. The group consists of 10- to 25-year-olds and they collaborate with The **Centre for Children and Young People's Participation** at the University of Central Lancashire, where **Cath Larkins** works. The UCan group does research by and with children and young people. In particular, the group invited participants to do **research that is relevant to participants' disabilities and lives**. Recently, the group and the centre developed an **online platform**. The aim is to **bring young researchers together, share learnings and offer information** on research by and with young people and children: <https://ucanmakechange2.org/ucmc2/> Working hard on the website, they were particularly interested in learning how to link to other groups of children and young people to open up research and innovation.

When the group started, co-researchers were aged 12-17. Many of them later wanted to continue in research. They challenged the idea that adults know better; If only their perspectives were considered and those of the young people left out, many things would get lost. So **young people should be able to lead their own research.**

The group has done a range of research projects. They produced texts, films, stories, did lobbying for the rights of children, organised conferences and presented at some, inspired many and lately started to develop tools for others. One example of the diverse activities of the UCan group is a **cooperation project with youth co-researchers from Japan**. The project asked, „How can Japanese society be more inclusive? “. UCan young researchers trained young people in Japan and conducted focus groups and interviews together in Japan as well as in the UK. From this project, **results were included in a report to the UN** Convention of the Rights of the Child. It called for action by the Japanese government to provide training and increase the number of professional staff working with children with disabilities; develop integrated classes and more.

Long-term collaboration is key to the work of the group. Collaborative research makes you feel a part of a team, helps to gain social skills and facilitates collaborative (not just one-sided) learning. All these processes require time. They rely on trustful relations among young researchers and with adult collaborators. This is true for content - working with each other on what is at the heart of their concerns and how to change something - as well as for the development of the group. Becoming a researcher, you benefit from building and extending experiences step by step, e.g. developing methodologies, writing publications, and storytelling. And when new children, young people or adults join the group, more longstanding young members can mentor them.

Resources for further detail of the group's work:

- Larkins, C., Thomas, N., Judd, D., et al (2013) "We want to help people see things our way": A rights-based analysis of disabled children's experience living with low income. London: Office of the Children's Commissioner for England
- Larkins et al (2018) 'Is it a right?': Disabled children and young people's rights to education, leisure, mobility and travel, and work in Japan. Preston: University of Central Lancashire
<https://msucan.ac->

my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/clarkins_uclan_ac_uk/EVbmNvKcsMVPIQ-1Jm8fu-wBwlsWws6nzKseJOWQVnq0TQ?e=WNctsf

- For fictionalised stories and films that were used by the group to convey personal histories and their emotional depth without exposing individuals: www.Stories2Connect.org
- Chapter: Larkins, C. and Young Researchers (2014) 'Essential ingredients in child and young person led research' in Westwood, J., Larkins, C., Moxon, D., Perry, Y., Thomas, N. (eds) (2014) Participation, Citizenship and Intergenerational Relations in Children and Young People's Lives: Children and Adults in Conversation

In the discussion, we looked closer at the question: **What needs to happen for young people you are working with to be able to contribute to our website and join our journey?**

- **Please be invited to join the platform** <https://ucanmakechange2.org/ucmc2/>
- We want the platform to be a **library or information tool on what (young) researchers found out**. Mainly this concerns **what works and what doesn't**, but also **impact**, because people inspire each other. People don't know about each other and what they have worked with, we want to **bring them together, create more innovative research, open doors**. We use **storytelling** to show examples of what we did and how we ended up with it. Experiences do not need to be successful.
- At the moment, we can't bring young people together for conferences in these times... but all the more it is interesting to **network!**
- To **support the platform**, you could also reach out to young or disabled people who can benefit from joining up via social media or via organisations, go through networks of adults, or reach out through (inter)national citizen science web pages and portals.

Signposts from Oslo: What contributes to making young people feel a sense of belonging? What are the challenges that young people face in relation to social belonging? How can we give room for composite identities and not enforce stereotypes? How can we work towards inclusion of minorities and other groups of difference through social entrepreneurship and citizen social science?

The group from Oslo involved young people, co-researchers, university researchers and practitioners from a local organisation concerned with supporting social innovation in a part of the

city. They brought together a range of intersecting experiences for opening up research and innovation in this context.

Aina Landsverk Hagen from Oslo Metropolitan University started out sharing experiences from her work. Youth participation within urban transformation is a potential but also has **pitfalls, like fatigue, especially if youth are not taken seriously**. They learned a lot from making mistakes in working with youth. In this way, they established a foundation on best practices when it comes to participation processes with youth. **Self-awareness, community awareness and knowledge creation** are essential. To give an example of how to **start conversations in a considerate way**: young people with a history that involves migration face prejudice on a daily basis that are exemplified in the question “Where do you really come from?”. It is important not to reinforce but counter such discriminating experiences. Instead, one could ask, for instance, “**Where do you feel good?**” to start a conversation about identity.

Sumaya Ali Isse, a young researcher working with Oslo Metropolitan University, shared her motivation to do research and important issues of concern for YouCount. The area she comes from had a bad reputation. But in the last few years, it got better because people realised how many great organisations are active there. She wants to do **research about minority groups**. This is motivated because she experiences that people see her differently after she tells them where she is originally from. Being **confronted with stereotypes** intensified during the **pandemic**. Differences are emphasised. She observes a change in Norwegian society, a realisation that we are not as progressive as we thought we were. YouCount can be a chance for teenagers and social entrepreneurs to have a real place.

Abdulaziz Alismail, a young co-researcher, emphasised that his perspective is different, because he came from Syria 10 years ago. For him it was hard to feel a sense of belonging. Music was very important for him and his identity. At some times, music facilitated connections and a sense of belonging, at other times it led other people to confront him with their stereotypes. He experiences that others often reduce his identity to simplified and unfounded stereotypes. It is not appreciated or supported in its uniqueness as an individual nor in its composite nature including parts of the culture he came from as well as his life in Norway. Activities with young people should take this into account.

In the discussion, points from the presentations on factors supporting and challenging a sense of belonging, giving room for composite identities and not reinforcing stereotypes were taken up again.

For the question “How can we work towards inclusion of minorities and other groups of difference through social entrepreneurship and citizen social science?”, several points were collected:

- **Instead of creating solutions for minorities and other groups, it is better to work with them.** Sumaya points out that making a room in science for youth is important. Maybe they miss a room to raise their voice.
- It is important to **have a place where we mix**. How can groups meet? It is important to create a place where we work together. In a project in Portugal children and young people facilitate themselves, can that be a solution?
- **Create opportunities and ownership**. If something is going to make a difference, you have to feel ownership, it has to make sense in your life.
- **Building trust and safer spaces**. When we recruit young people, they have to be able to have trust and know that the project is not done only for its own purpose. An example from Copenhagen shows how to use rooms that can exist after the project.

Altogether, the experiences and questions from these three groups, building on the research and activism of the young people, set the bar for ambitious discussions. They **flipped the common pattern of who is speaking and who is listening** in a room with researchers and young adults. Based on the knowledge and skills of those who work on topics that affect and involve their own lived realities, these questions also **pushed on the limits of the comfort zone of regular academic meetings**, which are usually about such people without their presence or involvement. This setting led us to **question habits and normativities**, like where to start when conceptualising what Y-CSS can and should do and how it shall happen, including the adequacy of our event format itself. This made a splendid start for our exploration of what Y-CSS can be, and for whom.

2.2 Webinar 2: Setting up Y-CSS: How to work in inclusive ways?

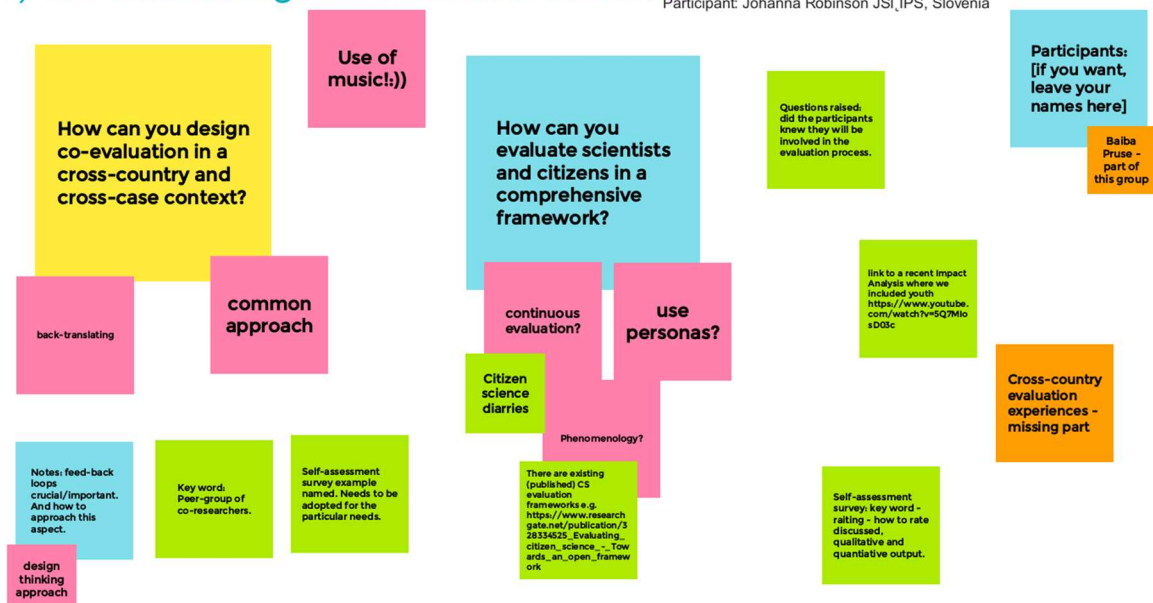
The second webinar ([agenda here](#)) started with inspiration and calls for caution from an experienced and dedicated practitioner. In her keynote, **Claire Murray** from ECSA shared key insights from her previous work and current involvement in the SEEDs EU project. Don't miss [the recording of her keynote on youtube](#) - we'll just summarise some key messages: break traditional structures of power & empower youth; they have experience; language is power; focus ideas down quickly and get youth involved from start; don't assume, ask; be open to different opportunities for connecting to youth, reach out to non-traditional target groups. One of several tools recommended was the YESTEM resource, equity compass: yestem.org/tools/.

This webinar was particularly aimed at mobilising feedback and inputs for the YouCount project. The project is developing a framework for Y-CSS, i.e. to translate Y-CSS into practical research and innovations. As an introduction to this work, **Julie Ridley** from the University of Central Lancashire presented the **multiple case study approach** that the project is using. Ten case studies on Y-CSS will be set up in nine countries. They involve youth with different backgrounds, e.g. young migrants, employment, becoming autonomous adults, belonging in their own community. **Researchers from YouCount member organisations** then took up different aspects of the framework in breakout room discussions. They presented the concepts and methodologies they plan to use in the project, asking for feedback, inputs and more generally exchange of experiences. We present the concept board notes to give an overview of the points discussed.

Isabelle Freiling and **Jörg Matthes** from the University Vienna unpacked their ideas for and challenges with [Co-Evaluating citizen social science – across cases and countries and across citizens and professional scientists](#). The discussion was moderated by **Baiba Pruse** from Ca'Foscari University of Venice.

(1) Co-Evaluating citizen social science

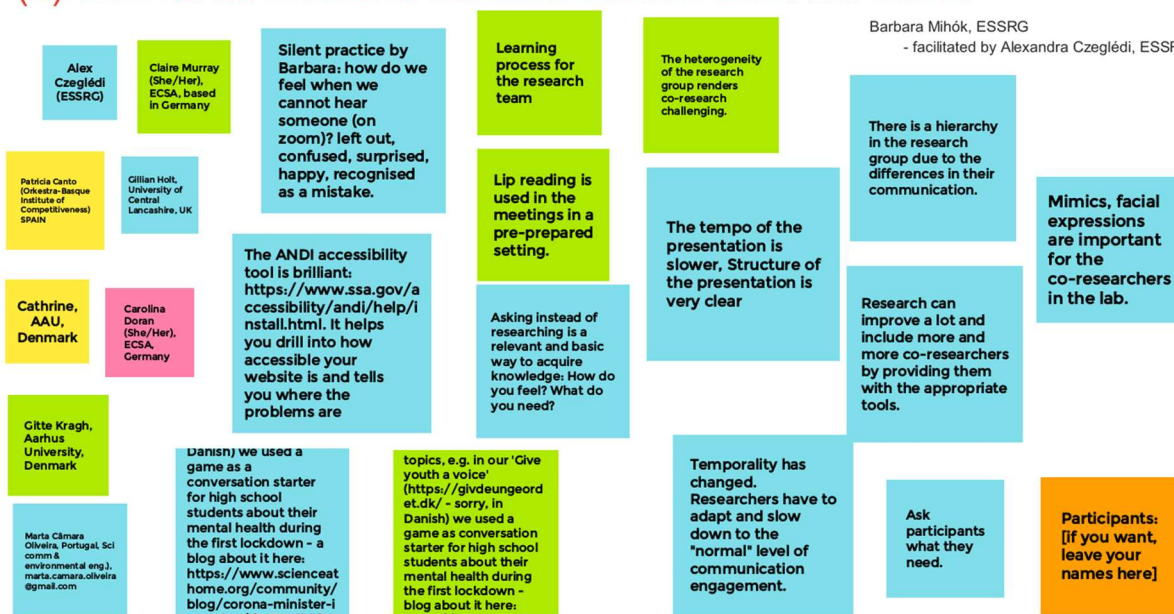
Isabelle Freiling & Jörg Matthes, University Vienna
- facilitated by Baiba Pruse, Ca' Foscari University of Venice
Participant: Johanna Robinson JSI IPS, Slovenia



Barbara Mihók from the Environmental Social Science Research Group ESSRG in Hungary asked **How to do inclusive communication from the start?** Alexandra Czeplédi, researcher at ESSRG moderated the exchange.

(2) How to do inclusive communication from the start?

Barbara Mihók, ESSRG
- facilitated by Alexandra Czeplédi, ESSRG



Fortuna Procentese from the University of Naples shared her explorations on [How to create inclusive spaces and relations for young people from diverse backgrounds?](#) **Julie Ridley** from UCLan moderated.

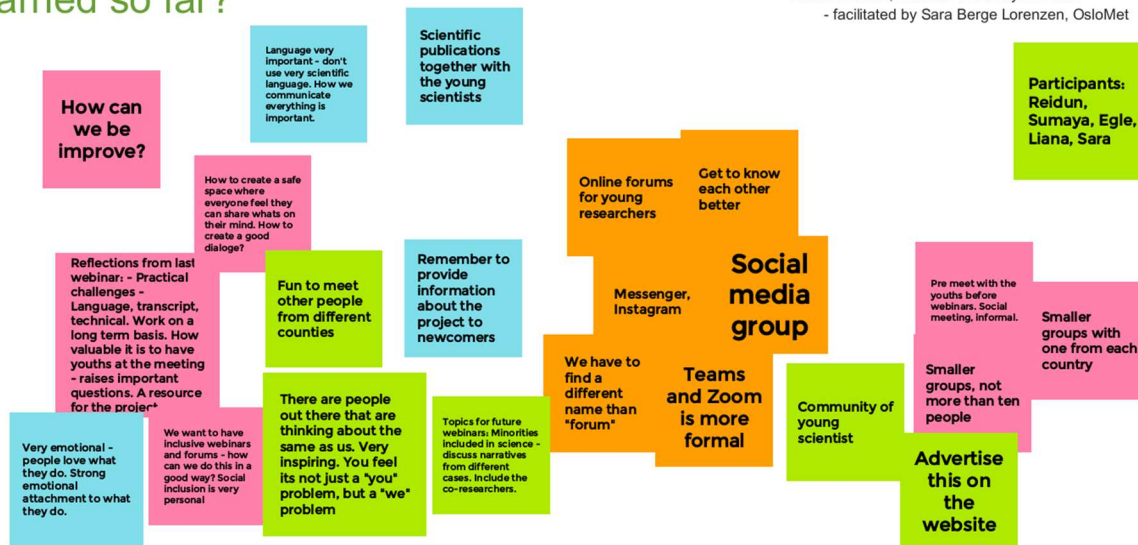
(3) How to create inclusive spaces and relations for young people from diverse backgrounds?



Reidun Norvoll, YouCount coordinator and researcher at OsloMet and **Sumaya Ali Isse**, young researcher, co-chaired a discussion with reflections from the first webinar on the question: [Engaging with young people for YouCount webinars - how to build on what we have learned so far?](#) The discussion was facilitated by Sara Berge Lorenzen from OsloMet.

(4) Engaging with young people for YouCount webinars/ meetings/the project - how to build on what we have learned so far?

Reidun Norvoll, OsloMet & Sumaya Ali Isse
- facilitated by Sara Berge Lorenzen, OsloMet



Young people engaged in research and activism were invited to the webinar through contact from the first webinar and YouCount partners to share their perspectives, experiences, ideas and critique on the YouCount plans. 6 of them joined. In addition, **Sumaya Ali Isse**, a young researcher who had presented on her work and suggestions for research questions in the first webinar, co-chaired a breakout room discussion with Reidun Norvoll. Together with participants they reflected on how experiences from working together for the first event could be generalised and adapted to the project as a whole. **Katlego Nawa** from the Youth Alliance for Leadership and Development in Africa (YALDA) and member of the YouCount advisory board also provided invaluable inputs and advice. We share some reflections both on the contents as well as the webinar organisation itself that the youth experts provided after the event (in some cases comments have been translated to English and edited slightly). They highlight key aspects of working together in inclusive ways: safe spaces, reaching out, language, power, time needed and the value of cross-country exchange.

*“When we were discussing the Inclusion space, I didn't get the chance to share my experience with creating that online. It is important **when doing online meetings** that the **youth get a feeling of comfort**. As mentioned, it could be that the adults would leave the room, but it could also be an option to socialize with the youth a little more personally. Oftentimes when you share info about yourself to young people, they get more comfortable*

*with you (even might share back), but this again will create that **safe space**. I don't think the platform [zoom] is a problem, but to avoid having "school like classes" at zoom, it really is open and depends on the host. **A too professional atmosphere will often lead to a less active group.**"*

*"I think one important aspect that we **haven't spoken enough about**, is **how to reach out to the youths**. This is a very great challenge that we should have spent more time on."*

*"When it comes to creating inclusive Spaces and relationships with young people from diverse backgrounds, I think that using **thoughtful language** should be central. The fact is that using Words like slang can cause misunderstandings and exclude some people. Because this really shows that you belong to a certain group of people or that you are a part of a crowd. Slang can also be a secret language, which makes other people feel excluded. Therefore, a thoughtful language is important, **to make everyone feel included.**"*

*" Since they talked about the dynamics between adults and youth, then it might have been smart to speak about the **domination techniques that some adults use towards young people**. What you (as youth?) should look for and **how not to be used by the adults that are part of that environment** (then I think about those arranging the seminars and those conducting research and look for young people).*

*"The Webinar 2 on setting up Y-CSS: How to work in inclusive ways? Was very useful and inspiring to me and this was my first time here and I liked it. I was in the break room (3) How to create inclusive spaces and relations for young people from diverse backgrounds? I was inspired by how **other countries were creating spaces for young people with diverse backgrounds** and it inspired me to do the same. I learned quite a lot from a short period of time. The thing that I think was lacking was the **lack of time in our group**. There were 20 people and what took most of our time was the introduction part, where we had to introduce ourselves and say a bit about what we do and enjoy. So, I hope that next time we could have a bit more time where everyone has time to say what they are interested in and give feedback."*

Other participants also expressed how they valued the exchange on the topic, especially that other people are thinking about the same problems, e.g. how hard it is to connect to youth. The shared care for inclusion also provided hope. **For YouCount**, a number of direct recommendations could be collected:

- To include youth, it is important to find out what really interests them and that can be used to draw inclusion, such as Music and games. The dry academic analysis would not interest youths. Creative methodologies are needed.
- Ask participants what they need.
- Involve youth in evaluation.
- Make sure people feel included as individuals, not only as representatives of a certain demographic group.
- Music is important! As one example, there is the impact analysis from Felixstowe's Citizen Science Group which features music. They would greatly appreciate feedback:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Q7MlosD03c>
- But how about participants who can't hear? d/Deaf and hard-of-hearing groups working in a slower time frame, with a different experience or no experience of sound.
- Emotions and experiences can be scary, and dialogues cannot always be controlled. But we need to be open to non-traditional research methods for youth participation. Therefore, we need to reflect further on how we can support youth to meet with each other.
- Facilitate social meetings with youth across the countries.

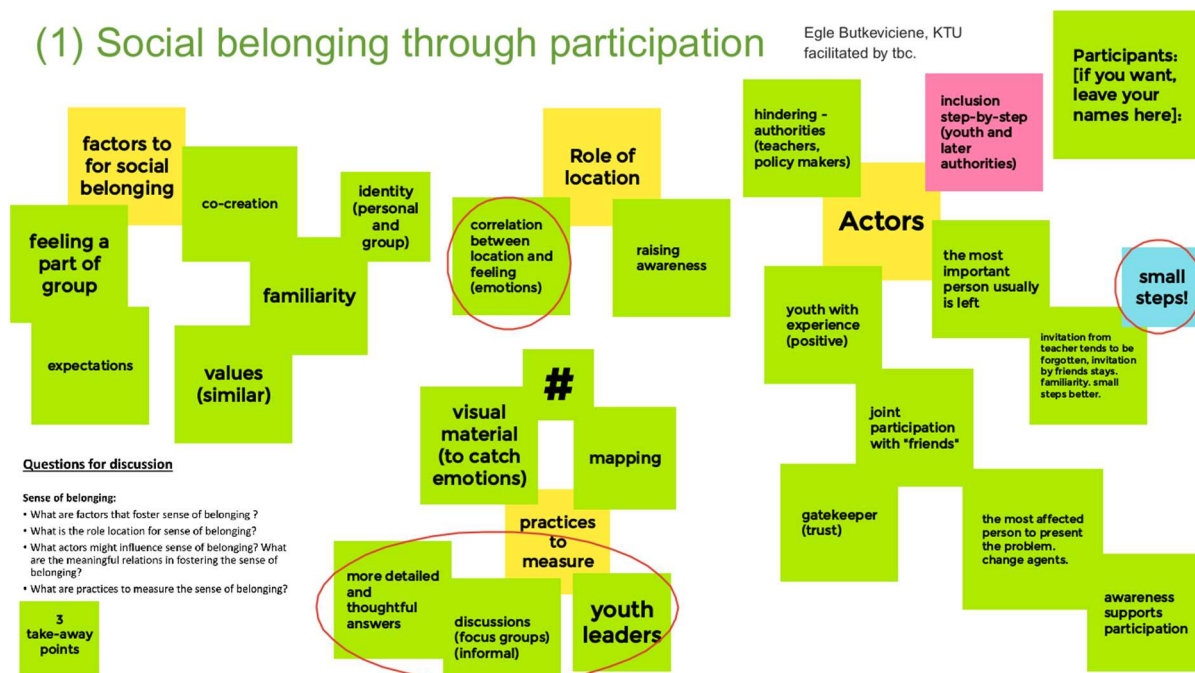
For the **organisation of the webinars**, we also learned that **peer support for young people** is important and were recommended to **evaluate the webinar**.

2.3 Webinar 3: Transformative & innovative impact of Y-CSS: How to make social change?

In the final webinar ([agenda here](#)), we focussed on questions of impact. From the feedback on previous webinars, we got that the participants particularly value the phases of exchange and

interaction. So, we took more time for discussions, brought in more methods for interaction and made fewer breakout rooms. **Usue Lorenz** and **Patricia Canto** from the Orkestra - Deusto Foundation took the challenge to introduce the mammut topic of making change and measuring impact. Patricia shared a proposal of how to think about impact in general and how they conceptualise impact at their home institution, particularly in participatory action research projects. Usue took us through the basics of how impact will be captured for the YouCount EU project. We discussed how other people view this and what methods they apply. In breakout rooms, three specific aspects of the YouCount framework on impact were then elaborated.

Egle Butkeviciene from Kaunas University of Technology set out to discuss **Social belonging through participation**, a key topic to her upcoming work with youth in rural Lithuania. The three main take-away's highlighted by the group in the final presentation were: the importance of the correlation between location and feeling as one aspect of social belonging, 2) that work can only be done in small steps, and 3) to invite youth "leaders" instead of authorities.



Philipp Hummer from the Citizen Science App Platform SPOTTERON (www.spotteron.net) gave insights into their philosophy and practice of **How to build an app for impact in Citizen Social Science?** Reidun Norvoll from OsloMet facilitated the discussion on what should be considered in

this regard for the YouCount App. From the vivid discussion the group picked three interesting features to share with other participants: having the possibility for users to have activities connected to locations, i.e. where is it safe for migrants to do sports, being able to capture moments that mean something, and making research ethics considerations a part of the app. They also highlighted the importance of co-creation for the app and having features, which foster inclusion, community building and communication. The group also dwelled a little bit into the topic of digital privacy ethics and how digital Citizen Science can respect the privacy of participants and not have users to be monetized by ad and surveillance-based platforms.



Collaborators **Suzanne Wilson** from the University of Central Lancashire and **Janine Adams** from the Furness Multicultural Community Forum shared insights on their impressive work on **Designing children-youth involved research for making a social change in the community**. Julia Lorke from IPN Kiel moderated the group. To summarise the discussion during the breakout room session, the group identified the following three key aspects: creating space and supporting youth ownership, how to make sure the changes are sustainable and ensure the long-term success of initiated structures, being aware and prepared for shifting power relations between researchers and participants.

(3) Designing children-youth involved research for making a social change in the community

Suzanne Wilson, UCLan
Janine Adams, Furness Multicultural Community Forum
Facilitated by Julia Lorke, IPN Kiel



Mentimeter by participants on take-aways from 3rd webinar

We asked participants to share what they took home from this webinar and made it visible for others to see and comment. Like for the previous webinar, **young people engaged in research and activism** were invited to share their perspectives, experiences, ideas and critique on YouCount plans:

*"I liked the project a lot, I feel the whole experience was really nice. I don't think there was much we didn't talk about, but if I had to add something, it would probably be that you **need to create an intermediary between young people and adults**. I will emphasize again the **importance of small steps and to go all in on the first step**. The most difficult part of getting young people involved is the very first time you meet, after that it is still relatively*

difficult but easier to get them to continue. Personally, I liked the whole concept of the webinar and would have contributed again if needed. The only thing was maybe that we didn't have enough time for discussion, maybe 15 or 30 minutes more would have been perfect."

*"Hi! I am xx from Tøyen Unlimited and participated in the webinar "how to make a change" on November 4th. I found the meeting very rewarding, and I brought with me several interesting insights. I found it particularly interesting to hear about **how young people today feel a sense of belonging on a societal basis**, through participation in everyday activities and larger organized job offers. All in all, I thought most of it was relevant and I currently have nothing to complain about."*

*"By being a part of YouCount I get to voice my opinion on different youth-related aspects of this project, which is directed towards the youth. As a young participant in this project, I might **sometimes feel like I'm not qualified**, or competent enough to speak and share my thoughts, especially during zoom meetings with many people that are older and probably have a degree in this field. When it comes to social inclusion, **YouCount should create a safe space for the youth** to feel confident to contribute and share their opinions, which they already do to the best of their abilities. Webinar 3: How to make social change was the webinar in which I participated and really liked because of the topic. Because I believe **it's an important topic that is very relevant**, because it's one of the challenges we as young people face in this world. ... I was really happy that I got to participate in this webinar because I **gained a lot of knowledge**, especially the breakout room about social belonging."*

We finished the webinar with a **look back on learnings from the three webinars**. Reidun Norvoll, YouCount lead coordinator and webinar co-organiser, stressed that doing the webinars together with the working group was very exciting but also a challenge because the YouCount project was just starting. It would have been much safer to do the webinar when findings were already there. On youth participation and involvement there is a lot to learn from youth, i.e. on safe places, language, youth to meet across countries, the reminder that co-creation is hard work and the importance to allocate enough resources, but good that it is about small steps. What happens next in YouCount: Implementation of case studies starts after Christmas, more local work in the next few

years, followed by a presentation of findings to get inputs. **Sumaya Ali Isse**, a young researcher who has been actively shaping the webinars from the first onwards, emphasised the importance of language for inclusiveness. Citizen Science can be an important opportunity for youth to get more involved with research.

3. Reflections on the webinars

In the final section, we present options on how to follow up with the webinar activities as well as conclude by discussing some of the lessons learnt from the events.

3.1 Options to follow up

If you were engaged in a webinar or are also working on the topic, there are several ways to follow up with webinar activities.

- For **YouCount activities**, the project has a lot in planning - you can contact local organisations or project coordination at Oslo Met. More information is here: <https://www.youcountproject.eu/>
- The **EIE working group** can also be a good place to go - for getting in contact with other practitioners of citizen science and community-based research interested in the topics of empowerment, inclusiveness & equity, giving a presentation based on your work, doing something together... You find more information on our monthly meetings and mailing list here: <https://ecsa.citizen-science.net/working-groups/empowerment-inclusiveness-equity/>
- Finally, we're planning another **joint workshop** towards the end of the YouCount project in 2023. If this is of interest to you or you have any ideas, please contact [Reidun Norvoll](#) or [Claudia Göbel](#).

3.2 Learnings from co-creating webinars

168 people participated in all three webinars together. With between 40 and 68 participants per webinar, the events were significantly bigger than the monthly working group events. What was also remarkable is that a very high rate (about 90%) of people who registered to participate also showed up. This indicates, at least, that there is a large interest in the topic of Y-CSS.

The webinars were realised as a **conscious co-created effort** by a co-chair of a working group (Claudia Göbel), a coordinator (Reidun Norvoll) and a work package leader (Egle Butkeviciene) of an

EU project, and the many people involved in realising the webinars - speakers, co-moderators, facilitators and technical support. The diverse sources of expertise and experience these people brought together made the rich and inspiring events possible. Naturally, it was also a challenge to bring them together in fruitful ways. From the many aspects that could be mentioned here, we pick those most central to working with young people engaged in research and activism. We hope others might benefit from these experiences and we're always happy to get more feedback and tips for resources.

Already when presenting the first draft of the webinar concept in the working group, feedback was very clear: **If you want to do webinars on Citizen Science with young people - you need to involve young people into shaping these events right from the start.** So we did, although the working group did not include young researchers yet, which meant that our contacts and experiences in this regard were very limited. It was the most exciting, but also the most **challenging part** of organising the events. Because academia, that included YouCount funding and funding for these webinars, is not well adapted to doing co-creation. A lot of **extra work** is needed to make this work, and it **takes time** as well as **knowledgeable and resourceful people**. For instance, most of the preparation and infrastructural material for the webinars, e.g. careful zoom settings, safe space policy, presentation of how we aspire to work together, preparatory notes to people, needed to be created from scratch, since the YouCount project was only at its beginning. Beyond that, we did our part in co-creating the webinar content, especially for the first one, with young people. However it is up to attendees to judge how far we managed to also make room for alternative experiences, aims and knowledge practices in the very **strong pre-formatting from the academic side** of the whole endeavour. After all, it is an EU project that the initiative comes from and (groups of) young researchers were only engaged later on. This is where we started from.

Rick Hall, longstanding EIE WG member, suggested letting the young people choose questions of interest to them for sending the researchers (and everybody) into breakout rooms to discuss. From this, we reached out to practitioners and young people / co-researchers who had worked together in the past and **co-created the agenda of the first webinar with them**. We had several preparatory meetings with each local group, getting to know each other a bit, finding out what we wanted to talk about, how to adapt the format and how to create something useful for the ones who put their time in. Doing this used more than the **time we had planned** for all three webinars. For this reason

the last two ones needed to come out with less preparation time and were focussed on co-creation with members of the YouCount project, inviting young people engaged in research and activism to give feedback and share the experiences during the webinar. We also wondered if through these local groups we put too big a focus on the UK and Norway. However, we were also limited to working stepwise from connections that were already built. **Reaching out more broadly to existing youth activist and research groups** would be something we would do next time.

From preparatory meetings with young researchers, we took the suggestion to work with groups of young people so there is some **peer support**, both in the preparation and the actual webinar. They mentioned that this would be better to feel less exposed and safer when being a representative/co-researcher since the large group of researchers might be foreign or intimidating in the beginning. Although we worked on this, the comments from young people on the last two webinars show that there is more work to do here. They also reminded us that it is **essential to listen to what people actually have to say, rather than treating them as representatives of a too generalised category**, such as “youth” or “young people”. Although we discussed this early on and were careful how to introduce people, we doubt we did fully live up to this. The clumsy phrase “young people engaged in research and activism” is testimony to this work in progress. From the discussions on impact in the second webinar we learned that projects or **information shared with young researchers cannot be too simple**, if the activity is to make sense. Co-researchers need to get enough information to participate meaningfully. However, scientists sometimes struggle with finding the right balance here, when they communicate what they do to new audiences or co-researchers, sometimes it becomes too simple.

Emphasis on **methods, preparation and training** time was key - **especially for researchers and discussion facilitators**. The aim was to sensitise us to operate in an open group not assuming other researchers as interlocutors, people familiar with how EU research projects work or what Citizen Science is. We spoke and wrote to everybody involved before the events about whom they might expect as fellow webinar participants and to make sure to put extra efforts into **listening to what young people have to say** and **not privileging researchers**. To learn from each other albeit everybody’s full calendar, we offered facilitators and speakers to meet one hour before the webinar to **exchange on facilitation techniques**. We also adapted our infrastructure for each webinar based on comments and critiques. For instance, it was remarked that starting a conversation in a room full

of strangers is not easy. We needed to put more emphasis on facilitating these in the breakout rooms and **note taking tools** like Jamboard could be helpful, but only if used with a fitting **introduction and ice-breaker**.

As part of the work of the working group on empowerment, inclusiveness and equity, we also wanted to **make the webinars as inclusive as we could**. Building on previous voluntary work of the EIE WG with the ECSA conference in 2020, we adapted our [safe space policy](#). However, something more comprehensive and value-based would be more adequate to do the job and the YouCount project should probably have its own policy in place. When co-moderating the first webinar, Claire Murray suggested a couple of additional measures. One being the **use of closed captions** (“subtitles”) for presentations and activities in the webinar. Captions make it possible or easier to follow for people from hard of hearing and D/deaf communities as well as those whose mother tongues are not English. We worked from the first webinar on to implement these and our awesome tech support at OsloMet put in much more than than planned, unfortunately without success. Zoom offers the functionality of automatically generating such captions (with all its flaws), but some inconsistent data protection regulation settings did not permit it for us. By the time we managed to get that information, we did not want to change the webinar platform anymore, nor were we successful in getting somebody to manually write captions.

We also decided to compensate young people for their engagement with the webinars, as we did with other speakers and moderators (when not working as part of YouCount). This brought a small **conundrum of money dynamics** that we’re glad we opened but also wish we had dealt with better. How to navigate amidst the relations between co-researchers and intermediary organisations with whom we were in touch better, how to adapt how much is paid to what is locally common and how to make financial compensation a more meaningful exchange for contributions are issues we take with us for next time and exchange with others.

During the second webinar it was asked if we could evaluate the webinar. From the **small evaluation** that we conducted after the last webinar, we learned that the most common take-aways were: (1) getting to know the perspectives of the young people involved, (2) learning about similar youth-focussed activities across Europe, and (3) time for thematic discussion with others. We’re happy that almost everybody who gave feedback found the webinars valuable and the measures to create

a more open, inclusive and safer space adequate. Luckily, we can also take away some things to improve on - more time for presentations and discussions, less presenters and topics; more inclusive language; more independent spaces for young people; make using closed captions (“subtitles”) the standard, and definitely use more humour!

4. Appendix

4.1 Agenda of first webinar

**Webinar 1 on inclusive co-creation in Y-CSS:
How to open up research & innovation to young people?
Friday 24th September 2021, 13:00-15:00 CEST**

Agenda

13:00 Welcome by YouCount & EIE WG, idea of webinar, safe space, introduction

Reidun Norvoll, YouCount coordinator at OsloMet

Claudia Göbel, EIE WG co-chair

Claire Murray, ECSA

13:15 What is important for working together?

Experiences from Nottingham

Rick Hall, ignite! education charity in Nottingham

Bozenka Demeterova, youth worker in Sneinton, Nottingham

Finn, SKATE Nottingham group

Experiences from Oslo

Sumaya Ali Isse, young researcher

Aziz Alismail, young researcher

Glenn, Tøyen Unlimited, Oslo

Sara Berge Lorenzen, OsloMet

Experiences from Lancaster

Oliver Moores, UCan research group

Cath Larkins, The Centre for Children and Young People's Participation at
UCLan

Questions & Answers after each input

14:10 Breakout groups on questions by young researchers

14:40 Round of reflections on presentations & breakout groups by participants in plenary

15:00 Farewell

Young people in Europe are facing many challenges with regard to social inclusion (e.g. social participation, employment, social belonging). There is a pressing need to develop more knowledge and innovation to create more inclusive and youth-friendly societies. One way to contribute to this is through Citizen Social Science with young people - **Youth Citizen Social Science (Y-CSS)**.

As practitioners of Citizen Science, community-based research and youth engagement, we seek to use this [series of webinars](#) to **create space for discussing important questions of Y-CSS**, mobilise feedback on the YouCount framework & start building a community of interest around Y-CSS. **Participation is open to everybody and free of charge.** The webinars are organised by the [Working Group on Empowerment, Inclusiveness & Equity](#) at the European Citizen Science Association (ECSA) and the Living Knowledge Network (LKN) together with the [YouCount](#) EU project.

4.2 Agenda of second webinar

Webinar 2 on setting up Y-CSS: How to work in inclusive ways?

Thursday 21th October 2021, 13:00-15:00 CEST

Agenda

13:00 Welcome by YouCount & EIE WG, idea of webinar, safe space, introduction

Reidun Norvoll, YouCount coordinator at OsloMet

Claudia Göbel, EIE WG co-chair

Baiba Pruse, Ca'Foscari University of Venice, co-moderation

13:15 Practically Preparing for Youth Participation, Claire Murray, ECSA SEEDs project, 15mins + 5mins Q&A

13:35 From proposal to implementation: Introducing the YouCount multiple case study approach, Julie Ridley, UCLan, 10mins + 5mins Q&A

13:50 Breakout groups for discussion of specific aspects of the YouCount framework

10 mins input by YouCount partner on the question that they seek to address;

35 mins discussion in group

(1) Co-Evaluating citizen social science – across cases and countries and across citizens and professional scientists

Isabelle Freiling & Jörg Matthes, University Vienna

Facilitator: Baiba Pruse, Ca'Foscari University of Venice

(2) How to do inclusive communication from the start?

Barbara Mihók, ESSRG

Facilitator: Alexandra Czeglédi, ESSRG

(3) How to create inclusive spaces and relations for young people from diverse backgrounds?

Suzanne Wilson, UCLan

Fortuna Procentese, UNINA

Facilitator: Julie Ridley, UCLan

(4) Engaging with young people for YouCount webinars - how to build on what we have learned so far?

Reidun Norvoll, YouCount coordinator, OsloMet & Sumaya Ali Isse
Facilitator: Sara Berge Lorenzen, OsloMet

14:40 What do you take home? Round of impressions from discussions in plenary

15:00 Farewell

Young people in Europe are facing many challenges with regard to social inclusion (e.g. social participation, employment, social belonging). There is a pressing need to develop more knowledge and innovation to create more inclusive and youth-friendly societies. One way to contribute to this is through Citizen Social Science with young people - **Youth Citizen Social Science (Y-CSS)**.

This webinar seeks to **mobilise feedback and inputs for setting up the YouCount project**. Members of the project are developing a framework for Y-CSS for setting up case studies in several countries in a good way, i.e. to translate Y-CSS into practical research and innovations. They will present their concepts and seek your feedback on how the local projects can be designed including: How to **work in inclusive ways with youths and local stakeholders**? What are **dos and don'ts** based on your experiences? How to **co-evaluate outcomes and impact** of local projects?

As practitioners of Citizen Science, community-based research and youth engagement, we seek to use this [series of webinars](#) to **create space for discussing important questions of Y-CSS**, mobilise feedback on the YouCount framework & start building a community of interest around Y-CSS. **Participation is open to everybody and free of charge**. The webinars are organised by the [Working Group on Empowerment, Inclusiveness & Equity](#) at the European Citizen Science Association (ECSA) and the Living Knowledge Network (LKN) together with the [YouCount](#) EU project.

4.3 Agenda of third webinar

Webinar 3 on transformative & innovative impact of Y-CSS:

How to make social change?

Thursday 4th November 2021, 13:00-15:00 CET

Agenda (regularly updated)

13:00 Welcome by YouCount & EIE WG, idea of webinar, safe space, introduction

Egle Butkeviciene, KTU, YouCount

Claudia Göbel, EIE WG co-chair (moderation)

Julia Lorke, IPN Kiel (co-moderation)

13:15 Making change and measuring impact in YouCount, Usue Lorenz & Patricia Canto, Orkestra - Deusto Foundation, YouCount, 20mins + 20mins Q&A

14:00 Breakout groups for discussion of specific aspects of the YouCount framework

(1) Social belonging through participation

Egle Butkeviciene, KTU
facilitated by tbc.

(2) How to build an app for impact in Citizen Social Science?

Philipp Hummer, SPOTTERON
facilitated by Reidun Norvoll, OsloMet

(3) Designing children-youth involved research for making a social change in the community

Suzanne Wilson, UCLan
Janine Adams, Furness Multicultural Community Forum
facilitated by Julia Lorke, IPN Kiel

14:40 Round of reflections on discussions by participants in plenary
with comments by Sumaya Ali Isse & Reidun Norvoll

15:00 Farewell

Young people in Europe are facing many challenges with regard to social inclusion (e.g. social participation, employment, social belonging). There is a pressing need to develop more knowledge and innovation to create more inclusive and youth-friendly societies. One way to contribute to this is through Citizen Social Science with young people - **Youth Citizen Social Science (Y-CSS)**. This webinar looks at **Y-CSS, innovation and increasing its transformative potential**: How to create innovations and positive social change? How should we work to be transformative? What is needed?

As practitioners of Citizen Science, community-based research and youth engagement, we seek to use this [series of webinars](#) to **create space for discussing important questions of Y-CSS**, mobilise feedback on the YouCount framework & start building a community of interest around Y-CSS. **Participation is open to everybody and free of charge.** The webinars are organised by the [Working Group on Empowerment, Inclusiveness & Equity](#) at the European Citizen Science Association (ECSA) and the Living Knowledge Network (LKN) together with the [YouCount](#) EU project.



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