



DigiGen

The Digital Generation's Political Voices

WP6 ICT and Civic Participation
DigiGen - The impact of technological
transformations on the digital generation -
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Report can be downloaded here:
<https://www.digigen.eu/results/online-political-behaviour-and-ideological-production-by-young-people/>

26 May 2021
Webinar

Webinar: The Digital Generation's Political Voices



- netnographic research (online observation, content and 65 interviews in total)
- conducted between September 2020 and April 2021 in Estonia, Greece and the United Kingdom
- compares the reasons and the means by which youth engaged in online civic participation, focusing on online movements mobilising for racial, social and environmental justice.

Research Questions

- Research Questions Set 1:
 - Why do participants engage in civil participation on digital networks in the three countries?
 - What are the similarities and differences by comparison (i.e., ideology, identity and community, framing - socioeconomic and gender factors)?
- Research Questions Set 2:
 - How do participants engage in civil participation on digital networks in the three countries?
 - What are the similarities and differences by comparison (i.e., digital affordances, problems of surveillance, censorship, organisation, mobilisation - online and offline behaviour)?



Case studies: ICT and Civic Participation for Racial, Social, Environmental – Intersectional Justice

- Greece: Primary data youth activism mobilising for against gender-based violence, anti-police brutality
- Estonia: Primary data youth activism mobilising for LGBTQ+ and Black Lives Matter (BLM)
- UK: Primary data for BLM and environmental civic participation Extinction Rebellion (XR and XR Youth)

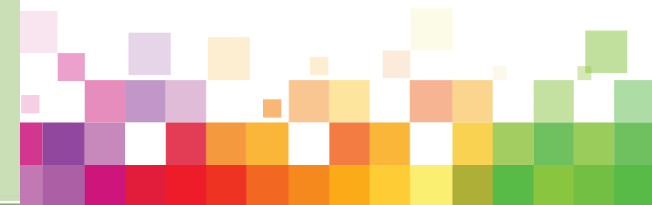


WP6 Contribution

- **digital citizenship** (e.g. access, commerce, communication, literacy, etiquette, rights and responsibilities, health and well-being, security/safety, data justice, digital inequalities).
- **digital media use by adolescents** (and specific problems relating to adolescence).
- **digital activism scholarship** (with specific focus on youth participation in social movements, everyday activism, new participatory repertoires, and leadership emergence theories in social movements).
- **youth political culture** and digital activism/citizenship **specific to each country** and the identification of cross-cultural continuities and discontinuities that may emerge in comparison.



	WHY	HOW	COMPARISON
ESTONIA LGBTQ BLM GENERAL	<p>Speaking out for the marginalised as a matter of responsibility and an only way forward to a better society.</p> <p>Leading to other people becoming more informed and changing their minds.</p> <p>Linked to personal experience of discrimination that informs a person's capacity for empathy, as well as cultural discourses surrounding social justice</p>	<p>Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Reddit, VKontakte and Tiktok</p> <p>Not preoccupied with questions of surveillance and took no extra steps to protect themselves</p> <p>International (English speaking) accounts were much better for informational purposes than local Estonian ones, that were often accused of being ill informed, narrow minded, even racist and homophobic.</p>	<p>Estonia to Greece and UK</p> <p>Differences: Speaking out for the marginalised Less worried about issues of privacy and surveillance</p> <p>Similarities: Linked to personal experience of discrimination an injustice Some use of similar platforms</p>
GREECE ANTI-POLICE VIOLENCE ANTI-GENDER VIOLENCE GENERAL	<p>Mistrust of political parties and organisations</p> <p>Interest to do some things, not to change the world, but first to change our everyday life;</p> <p>Activation and politicisation are triggered by personal experiences linked to the ways (multiple) gender identities are treated in a specific social context, but also in society at large</p>	<p>Facebook, Instagram, YouTubeMessaging apps as well as video conferencing platforms</p> <p>Reluctance, distrust and criticism towards platforms and apps – preference for open source</p> <p>A means of (counter)information diffusion and less as a meaningful space where political strategies can be deployed.</p>	<p>Greece to Estonia and UK</p> <p>Differences: More distrust to political parties and commercial platforms ICT less a space for organisation and strategy</p> <p>Similarities: Politicisation are triggered by personal experiences Some use of similar platforms</p>
UK XR local national global BLM Leicester GENERAL	<p>Adopting new more affective approach to environmental activism</p> <p>Anger about police brutality and fight for equal rights</p> <p>Inequality: people relying on handouts to feed their children in a rich country</p>	<p>Innovation in organisation and communication in XR (holacracy model, carbon neutral cloud, glassfrog, basecamp, mattermost)</p> <p>BLM Leicester: pre-existing networks supporting very social media savvy young people</p> <p>Adolescents don't use Facebook but use Twitter and Instagram a lot for their political participation.</p>	<p>UK to Greece and Estonia</p> <p>Differences: In XR there is organisational and communication innovation In BLM there is reliance on pre-existing networks There is mentoring for the younger activists</p> <p>Similarities: With Estonia: Anger about inequality, racial, social injustice. With Greece: Distrust of police and government</p>



Comparison

- **Estonian participants** are active for equal rights for the BLM movement and against discrimination for the LGBTQ, but they are **less worried about issues of privacy and surveillance in comparison to participants in Greece and the UK**. Perhaps this is because the media and political system are far more polarised due to EU related crisis of recent years.
- **Greek participants** have far more distrust to political parties and commercial platforms than the Estonians and **see ICTs less a space for organisation and strategy than the UK participants**.
- **UK participants** differ in that there is organisational, communication innovation and more widespread mentoring for the younger activists.
- The three countries exhibit **similarities** however. **Politicisation is triggered by personal life experiences and specific events especially anger surrounding inequality, racial, social and environmental injustice**.
- There is also some use of **similar platforms**, but the **ways these are used varies** in the three countries (i.e., young people use less Facebook in Estonia and UK, but still do use it for publicization UK to reach parents or older people, Estonians and UK participants use more Instagram and Tik Tok than Greek participants, and all follow debates on Twitter in particular.

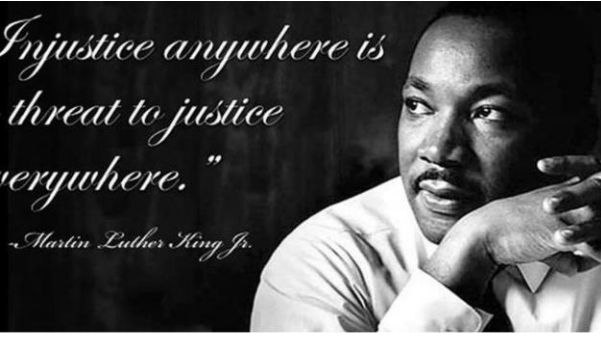


United Kingdom: ICT - Antiracist & Environmentalist civic participation

- Case study 1: ICT and anti-racist civic participation – **Black Lives Matter** UK (BLM)
- Case study 2: ICT and environmental civic participation **Extinction Rebellion** (XR and XR Youth)
- The intersectional participation of youth between BLM and XR in the UK



BLM example Facebook organisation



 **Black Lives Matter UK**
Non-profit organisation 

Black Lives Matter UK - Stand Up For Black Lives! >
PRIVATE GROUP · 1.9K MEMBERS

Black Lives Matter Bristol >
PRIVATE GROUP · 701 MEMBERS



SUN, 17 JUL 2016 AT 14:00 - 16:00
Black Lives Matter UK Nottingham Activists Protest
Nottingham, England

Interested Going Ignore More

 Public · Hosted by **Black Lives Matter UK - Nottingham Activists**





Black Lives Matter! UK >
PRIVATE GROUP · 4.7K MEMBERS

SAT, 6 JUN 2020 AT 13:00
Leicester Black Lives Matter Protest
Clock Tower, Leicester City Centre


 **Black Lives Matter - London**
Community organisation 




2 OCT - 8 OCT
Black Lives Matter At School 2020
Online event

Interested Going Share More

 Public · Hosted by **Visibly Black**

 2 Oct, 09:00 – 8 Oct, 12:00
GMT-4 time zone · Happening Now

BLACK LIVES MATTER

Black Lives Matter - Scotland!  >
PUBLIC GROUP · 2.5K MEMBERS

BLM

- Designates itself as a “leaderfull” organisation (not “leadersless” meaning it has many leaders).
- In juxtaposition to the male, charismatic, heterosexual of the black liberation movement
- each chapter has “chapter leads” making decisions about their own chapter but also the larger network.
- Decentralized leadership “more process is necessary to get things done”.
- ”Misapplication of decentralized leadership, has meant that we’ve had to let go of many opportunities to make important interventions because we relied so heavily on not making centralized decisions”
Alicia Garza.



BLM Leicester. ULEICS hosted online workshop with BLM activists, UK national and local politicians, and academics



CAMEo Research Institute

September 9 at 12:32 PM · 🌐

One week to go! Join us for a much needed discussion on the Leicester lockdown and Leicester protests. A broad range of speakers including activists and MPs will meet academics at the University of Leicester to share perspectives on the current situation in Leicester and beyond. This 4 hour event will be split into two panels, with breaks in between, to allow time for discussion and joint reflection.



WED, SEP 16

Leicester in Protest - Leicester in Lockdown



CAMEo Research Institute

September 16 at 4:04 PM · 🌐

We are live! 'Leicester in Protest, Leicester in Lockdown'



Athina Karatzogianni was live.

September 16 at 4:03 PM · 🌐

BLM Leicester participants

- The BLM participants we interviewed were involved in three BLM political actions in June 2020 in Leicester prompted by the global protests in reaction to the murder of George Floyd in the United States.
- ‘One of the most inspiring aspects of the Black Lives Matter movement has been the **leadership, energy and contribution of young people**’.
- Black Bloom youth organisation in their late teens and early 20s, which were **supported by older activists** who contacted the city council to ensure that pandemic rules were enforced.
- ‘**And all we did was put, you know, put the boat in the legs on that. They knew what they wanted to do.** They were amazing. Got it. I don't think they had any idea of how big this was going to be’ (UK P6, 4 February 2021).
- We might we are able to communicate that to people our age. **I strongly believe only young people can speak soul to soul to young people** and can wake them up (UK P5, 21 January 2021).
- ‘I have **my two my cousins are mixed race** and they were, you know, incredibly angry about what had happened to them when they were in their teenage years. **And they were regularly stopped and searched and profiled by the police...** And, you know, I did support much of what the BLM movement did, at least in this country (UK P10, March 2021).



XR Facebook



Extinction Rebellion in support of

REPARATIONS REBELLION

AFRIKAN EMANCIPATION DAY

Windrush Square, Brixton

9AM SATURDAY 1ST AUGUST

XR Internationalist Solidarity Network Cause

INTRODUCTION TO XR

WEEKLY SESSIONS

Learn about who we are, our demands and our principles and values

4 times · 24 SEP - 15 OCT

Welcome to Extinction Rebellion (Tues & Thur, 7pm)

Online- register below

Extinction Rebellion Cambridge Youth
Community group

Liked

Worldwide Extinction Rebellion
Cause

Liked

Extinction Rebellion - Warwick District
Non-profit organisation

Liked



Extinction Rebellion Youth UK
Cause

Liked

Extinction Rebellion London
Environmental conservation organisation

Liked

Extinction Rebellion Midlands
Environmental conservation organisation

Liked

XR Livestreaming



XR Communication

- Media and messaging group (external) – Tech later called digital group (Internal comm)
- Self-organising: **Glassfrog.com** – commercial app to support holacracy (complaints that there is need for development)
- **Basecamp** had to be rethought after 8,000 couldn't scale
- Germany meeting using server in Switzerland carbon neutral -& law enforcement issue
- **Mattermost** open-source version of slack for project management
- Publicizing and coordinating **WhatsApp** –April 2019 up to mid-September 2020 then change to Telegram, Signal
- Telegram broadcast groups October Rebellion 2019 examples: Mass mobilization, Hunger Strikers, Youth Rebellion
- Pandemic – zoom meetings and **RESTRUCTURING**
- Mass audience publicity: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube



XR Participants

- ‘there are **disagreements in relation to strategy or tactics** and also disagreements about what is considered non-violent, for instance. And these traditionally and ideological disagreements are traditionally why the left fails. This is why all movements fail. **This is why the labour left in socialism fails.**’ (UK P7 25 February 2021)
- An XR Youth activist explained categorically that XR Youth is autonomous from (main/central/national) XR: ‘So, we tend to be significantly more radical and more focused on working with other communities and supporting things like racial justice... but I think recently we very much try to improve our relations with main XR.... **There's a rather different culture within the two different groups and I mean, officially, XR youth is not part of XR**’ (UK P11, 19 March 2021).
- ‘I think on things like social justice, I tend to be an environmentalist and more radical, whereas I think on things such as many social issues or cultural issues I tend to lean to the right. **I was a member of the Tories, but I ended up leaving because of the recent developments with the anti-protest bill**’ (UK P11, 19 March 2021).



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DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL POLICY

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de Girona

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LEICESTER

PADERBORN UNIVERSITY
The University for the Information Society

TALLINN UNIVERSITY
School of Governance,
Law and Society

Österreichisches Institut für Familienforschung
Austrian Institute for Family Studies

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