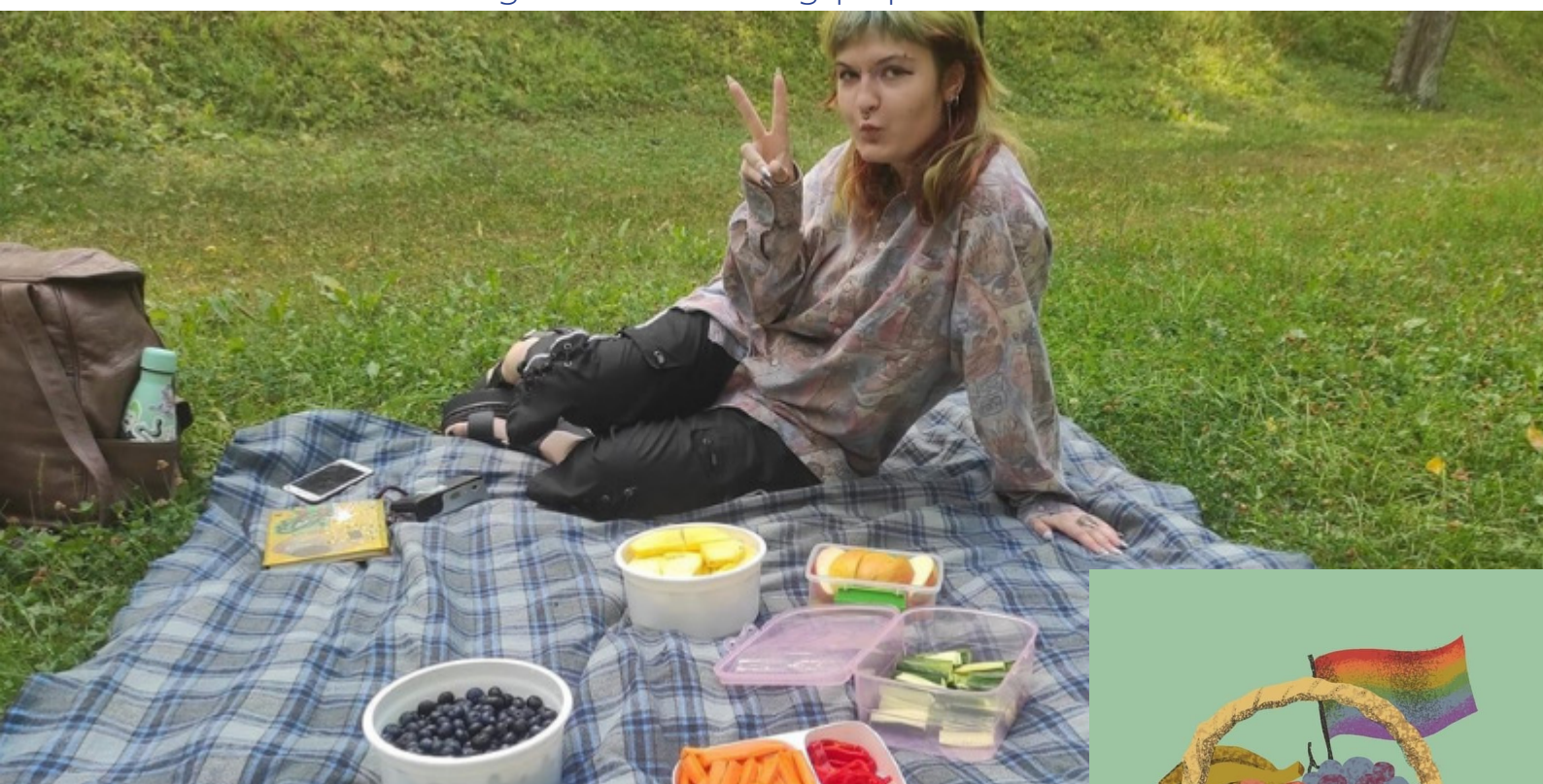


Multimodal research: Youth becoming digital citizens

DigiGen - working paper series





The impact of technological transformations on the Digital Generation

870548

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Abstract: This report showcases co-researching with twelve young people between the ages of 15-18, using the technique of digital storytelling workshops conducted between September 2021 and January 2022 in Estonia, Greece and the United Kingdom: The aim was to compare the visual, discursive content produced by the participants and their interactions, on the topic of what inspires and challenges their civic participation when they use digital technologies.

Key words: Co-researching, digital storytelling, civic participation, digital technology, young people

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Table of contents

Executive Summary	4
1. Introduction	8
2. Methodological and Analytical Framework	9
2.1. DST Design: Recruitment and Reflections	10
3. Digital Storytelling in Estonia	12
3.1. Activist and Non-Activist Stories	13
3.2. Patterns across non-activist and activist stories	18
4. Digital Storytelling in Greece.....	21
4.1. Story 1: The Golden Dawn Trial, 7 October 2020.....	22
4.2. Story 2: The assassination of Pavlos Fyssas.....	24
4.3. Story 3: The history of the Golden Dawn: from political party to prison.....	25
4.4. Story 4: Zak Kostopoulos/Zackie Oh	27
5. Digital Storytelling in the UK.....	29
5.1. Story 1: The Wedding of Megan Merkle and Prince Harry (The Voice of Participant 1)	29
5.2. Story 2: The Killing of George Nkencho (Participant 2)	32
5.3. Story 3: Anti-Police Brutality Protests in Nigeria (Participant 3).....	35
6. Comparisons and Concluding Thoughts	39
References	40
7. Appendix A Table of Participants.....	42
8. Appendix B Digital Storytelling Protocol.....	43
9. Appendix C Information Sheet and Consent Forms.....	44




Executive Summary

This report showcases co-researching with 12 young people between the ages of 15-18, using the technique of digital storytelling workshops conducted between September 2021 and January 2022 in Estonia, Greece and the United Kingdom: The aim was to compare the visual, discursive content produced by the participants and their interactions, on the topic of what inspires and challenges their civic participation when they use digital technologies.





In Estonia, the participants that self-identified as activists had a much clearer vision from the start on what they want to focus their stories on, while the youth who were interested in politics and considered activism important tended to stick more strictly to the two suggested themes of inspirations/motivators vs challenges. A participant who was involved in an LGBTQ+ organisation talked about her inner need to do something about the inequalities in the world, using images that were either photographs taken by the participant or illustrations from the organization's Facebook page. In contrast, the stories from the other young people were less coherent narratives and more presentations of things that make them want to be politically active and things that deter them from doing so or make political engagement challenging. The overarching rhetoric was that of positioning political participation as very important, even morally imperative, then confessing to not being as active as one would like, and offering reasons and justification for what was presented as 'not enough' participation. Participants spoke of the feeling that one has a choice to support local initiatives that one holds dear and to 'speak with' others about important problems such as climate change. All of the non-activist participants listed the lack of time as their predominant challenge when it comes to political participation, whilst fear of judgement or politics as such and lack of self-confidence were also mentioned as challenges to their civic participation. Motivation for political participation was also linked to self-improvement, 'being knowledgeable of the political situation and feeling as if I am included', and the need to 'do something about it'. In terms of similarities across activist and non-activist stories, they spoke



of the desire for a better world and political participation as something that is edifying. They all talked about digital technologies as enabling their civic participation, being able to speak up and make their voice heard as motivating, however, one of the participants in their story placed importance to doing so anonymously, preferring to speak up as part of a crowd and not being among the few in the foreground.

In Greece, all participants chose issues that marked Greek society during the last decade, issues that revolved around violence: three of the participants chose the topic of fascist violence as it was manifested by the neo-Nazi political party Golden Dawn, while one built his story on sexist violence that occurred in the killing of the LGBTQ activist Zak Kostopoulos/Zackie Oh, by two men and several policemen. In all the stories, the role of mainstream media was discussed in a critical way, while coverage of the facts in social media was also part of each story presented by the participants. The first story focused on the Golden Dawn trial that lasted five years. Details were provided through the narrative on the investigation whether Golden Dawn constituted a criminal organisation, and the three specific crimes that members of the organisation were accused of. The second story focused on one of the crimes of the Golden Dawn: the assassination of Pavlos Fyssas, a rapper with an anti-racist and activist background. The participant insisted on the immediate coverage by the mass media, which was significantly slow in presenting the assassination as a political assassination and underestimated it by portraying it as a fight around football. The third story focused on history of the Golden Dawn since the early 1980s. The participant showed the Neo-Nazi roots of the organisation and its gradual steps towards its consolidation as a parliamentary party in 2012. The fourth story focused on the killing of the gay activist Zak Kostopoulos/Zackie Oh and particularly on the media coverage, together with reactions of the LGBTQ community and other citizens who have been protesting against homophobic reactions by socio-political and media actors in Greece. These story choices do not seem to follow theoretical or abstract ideological interest, but they seem to be based on extraordinary events that have marked the collective memory in the Greek society and for these young people. Their stories reflect on the quality of democracy and its institutions in a society scattered by social







and political unrest, where young people grow up encountering severe cases of racist and sexist violence and their political participation is clearly influenced by the resulting polarised political culture.


In the United Kingdom, the three stories focused on racism, hate speech and police violence. The first story was about the wedding of Megan Markle and Prince Harry, where the participant narrated how important was that a person that looked like her would become a princess, but also pointed out examples of racist posts attacking Megan Markle by a well-known journalist, and included in her story a picture depicting the royal offspring as a monkey on social media. In this first story the participant pointed to comments on social media being made about the royal family and references to how dark the baby would be and she also talked about a later Oprah Winfrey interview with the royal couple. Other participants also reflected on what they saw as widespread racism across society in the UK and in the media environment. The second story was about the tragic killing of a young person, George Nkencho in Ireland, the protests after his death, as well as false information circulating about him on social media. The participant identified that event as was 'the key factor in me speaking about the rights of black people and what really got me engaging within the online community and talking about problems within our community'. He also pointed to the false information 'spread by people who wanted to justify his killing, which caused me to speak out and speak against all of this information'. The third story was about the #EndSARS protests in Nigeria, which triggered the participant's political engagement due to photos of casualties of police brutality on Twitter and Instagram. She also talked about Aisha Yusuf, a co-founder of the BringBackOurGirls movement, as one of the main reasons of inspiration. She pointed out that the event was not visible in UK media or talked about by the UK government. She also felt that there was misinformation, and nevertheless that this event helped her connect to her homeland, as well as other people from the Nigerian diaspora. 'I didn't feel that a lot was being done on this side of the world. I felt like a lot of the education of the situation had to be done by myself'.

There are clearly common political concerns by the 12 young people





who participated in the digital storytelling workshops. These concerns include political polarisation, violence, and securitisation be it racist (UK and Greece), gender-related (Greece and Estonia), or emerging environmental consciousness (Estonia). These issues echo the topics discussed during the previous research phase (see Karatzogianni et al., 2021, report on task 6.1). The Estonian participants identified challenges such as time constraints, fear, and lack of confidence, focusing more on themselves and their motivations and having their voice heard to improve society in the fight for more justice and against LGBT and racial discrimination, while in Greece and the UK, they chose to speak about violent events involving structural, institutional racism, gender-based violence and problems relating to media visibility, misinformation and police violence. This is in continuation with findings from tasks 6.1, where Estonian participants were less mistrustful of government and the media establishment in general, in comparison to the Greek and UK participants, who perceive that they live in a much more polarized political environment, where misinformation, hate speech and securitisation is more widespread.



1. Introduction

The DigiGen work package 6 was originally designed to address the question: What are the socio-economic, gendered, and political culture-related issues influencing the digital political engagement of young people? WP 6 aims to: a) research and analyse the context within which the political behaviour of young people is manifested online, b) assess the extent to which it affects offline political practices. In the first task, task 6.1, in work package 6, we produced netnographic research (online observation, content and 65 interviews in total) conducted between September 2020 and April 2021 in Estonia, Greece and the United Kingdom, comparing the reasons and the means by which youth engaged in online civic participation, focusing on online movements mobilising for racial, social and environmental justice (see Karatzogianni et al., 2021).

This present deliverable report is based on Task 6.2: Focus group discussions organised as digital storytelling workshops with young people involved in the production of online political discourse with the aim of identifying how they are affected by the online environment of their choice and key strands in youth ideological online production. Within the workshops, a digital tool (PowerPoint) is used for the co-production of relevant material (photos, screenshots of relevant online content) to inform on the motivations, causes and means that young people find appropriate and meaningful for what they perceive as civic participation (as digital citizens). In each of the three countries, researchers held online workshops with 2 to 5 participants in each workshop between September 2021 and January 2022. Four digital storytelling workshops were held online via Zoom¹ lasting two to three hours each. The workshops engaged in total 12 young people between the ages of 16-18, each of whom produced 2-5 minutes videos narrating themselves about events which inspired and challenged their civic participation. Twelve digital stories and their visual contents produced by the participants and discussed during their presentation to their respective groups were subsequently analysed by the research teams using critical multimodal discourse analysis (including visual discourse analysis as proposed by Gillian Rose (2001, p. 135 -163), additionally comparatively identifying common themes and discontinuities in the three countries. We analysed the data contextually, exploring the videos comparatively, each video as a whole, and then the used images, text and the accompanying voiceover as intertextually relational to determine key visual and textual elements that repeat across stories and explore the rhetoric of pairing certain visuals with certain text.

Overview of D6.2: This report offers insights and comparative analysis of the stories young people produced during the digital storytelling workshops in the three countries. **Section 2** offers a discussion of both theoretical and methodological issues on the use of digital storytelling as a research technique, its strengths and limitations, as well as an explanation of recruitment and reflections on the implementation of this technique by the researchers involved. **Section 3** uses findings from the Estonian workshops to discuss factors which the participants themselves identified as facilitating or hindering their civic participation, whilst **Section 4** analyses the stories produced by Greek young people, with **Section 5** analysing the stories produced in the UK. In **Section 6**, we identify commonalities and differences in the visual content and narratives relating to political events and structural environments which inspired the use of ICT for civic participation, and concluding thoughts also on how this second phase or the research relates to the first and what it means for the final phase (Task 6.3), which investigates digital citizenship policy in the three countries. In the final sections, **Appendix A** offers three tables for research participants in each country and **Appendix B** includes the protocol for the digital storytelling

¹ The workshops were originally planned as face-to-face workshops but were changed to online workshops due to COVID-19 restrictions.



workshop that we used. Lastly, **Appendix C** includes the information sheets and consent forms used for this study.

2. Methodological and Analytical Framework

Developed in the 1990s by arts practitioners — most notably the San Francisco Digital Media Center, now called Storycenter (de Jager et al., 2017; Barber, 2016) — Digital Storytelling (DST) is the practice of producing personal narratives through Information and Communications Technology (ICT). Designed to improve community access to artistic expression through emerging digital technology (StoryCenter, n.d.); DST was also built on a philosophy of social activism, most typified by Storycenter's belief that 'When we listen deeply and tell stories, we build a just and healthy world' (de Jager et al., 2017). DST has from these social activist roots further found a foothold in research (de Jager et al., 2017; Sitter et al., 2020; Oliveira, 2016), community activism (Gearty, 2015), and as a pedagogical tool (Sandars & Murray, 2009; Niemi & Multisilta, 2015). DST as a research method benefits primarily from three interlinked features; its participatory background, its effectiveness as a tool of knowledge translation, and as a source of 'counter-narratives' (de Jager et al., 2017).

As a participatory research method through audio-visual productions, DST relies on elevating the role of participants' experiences and reflections through a collaborative storytelling process of meaning-making (Oliveira, 2016). This elevation of research participants as not merely storytellers but also experts of their narratives is a fundamental aspect of DST as a research method (Niemi & Multisilta, 2015; Oliveira, 2016). The benefit of this method is its capacity to call attention to issues previously ignored through the perspectives of participants (Greene et al., 2018). DST has also shown increased awareness for the participant storytellers, driving further engagement with the research topic (Chan, 2019). Despite these benefits, there are limitations to DST's participatory method, the most serious found in the availability, access, and skill regarding ICT (Stewart & Gachago, 2016; Niemi & Multisilta, 2015; Barber, 2016). An imbalance of power is most apparent when the technology necessary for any DST project is sourced and managed solely by researchers, with little input from storytellers (Sitter et al., 2020). However, cameras, microphones, and editing software have become more accessible and normalized, with mobile phones and their ubiquity as a perfect example of the imbalance between researcher and participant shrinking due to technological advancement (Sitter et al., 2020). Also, it means that devices are more affordable, which makes audio-visual practice as a research technique more accessible for non-academic participants. Additionally, the improved capacity of ICT to develop a finalized DST product has, in turn, improved the knowledge translation of DST.

DST as a knowledge translation product is tied directly to its medium. While traditional narrative research methods rely on transcription and translation, DST overcomes much of these limitations by designing a ready-made product (de Jager et al., 2017). This furthers the relationship between the original purpose of DST in community engagement and social activism, as well as removing much of the skill gap inherent to production and growing audience access (McCall et al., 2019). However, DST research applications as a method run the risk of either ignoring the potential value of DST's knowledge translation capacity by focusing on traditional avenues of distribution, or are incapable of using it, due to requirements of formal research publications (de Jager et al., 2017). For instance, *The Videographic Essay*² and the *Video Essay Podcast*³ deal with ethical and legal aspects of copywritten images and sounds, because distribution remains still a topic widely discussed. Although the term 'fair-use' is used in academic audio-

2 See <http://videographicessay.org/works/videographic-essay/contents>

3 See <https://thevideoessay.com/work>

visual work a lot, it is still a grey area. For example, YouTube has its own ground rules published which imposes restrictions.⁴

Furthermore, the effectiveness of DST as a research method and the following end-of-project knowledge translation activities have yet to experience any deep investigation into its effectiveness on an audience (de Jager et al., 2017). Despite limitations placed upon research using DST, the final product of DST has seen evidence of its effectiveness through the creation of counter-narratives (Greene et al., 2018; Sitter et al., 2020; de Jager et al., 2017); expanding audience access through knowledge translation efforts suggests only a more significant impact for any research project using DST to its fullest potential.

Counter-narratives as a concept grow out from the philosophy that DST and narratives, in general, are not merely enjoyed or offered educational value but are an avenue for reinterpretations of reality (de Jager et al., 2017). DST allows for dominant and pre-existing narratives to be elucidated or challenged by the storytellers, which is deeply valuable for marginalized and oppressed communities (de Jager et al., 2017). Through ICT, DST further capitalizes on this ability to develop counter-narratives by placing control of the production and dissemination into storytellers' hands. Particular examples are the studies on global citizenship and other transnational inquiries that are historically and materially more difficult for participants to interact with (Stewart & Gachago, 2016; de Jager et al., 2017). DST products and advancements in ICT have far less strenuous physical requirements than historical narrative research methods that acted as barriers to the development of counter-narratives. Despite these benefits, DST use has risks associated with its ability to produce counter-narratives. Global citizenship studies, as an example, run the risk of developing 'us versus them' mentalities if careful consideration is not taken when developing a research project using DST (Stewart & Gachago, 2016; Truong-White & McLean, 2015). Additionally, while the opportunity to deliver therapeutic benefits through participants' expressions and consideration of their counter-narratives (de Jager et al., 2017; Sitter et al., 2020) — DST is not essentially therapeutic, and caution is to be considered a part of any program using DST as a method (de Jager et al., 2017). Despite these risks, DST does take this concept of counter-narratives and improve on previous limitations inherent in storytelling through currently available ICT advances.

DST's potential benefits for producing new knowledge and as a beneficial method for those participating in research are difficult to ignore. Altogether, the features of counter-narratives, knowledge translation and participatory research have created an effective research method in any researcher's toolbox. The literature on this method, while still new, shows that there will be further developments and uses of DST as technological advancements lower the threshold for access and improve the distribution of new digital narratives.

2.1. DST Design: Recruitment and Reflections

The digital storytelling workshops (DSWs) were designed with a clear protocol to be implemented (See Appendix B), as well as the appropriate information sheets and consent forms (See Appendix C). After introductions of the organisers and participants in the DSW, the researchers explained the ground rules (respect, confidentiality, consideration, focus on the session, silence is ok), and then proceeded to explain the process (providing a video of how to technically create the story using PowerPoint, story planning, story making, and story sharing). In what follows, we explain how participants were recruited, and how this protocol was implemented in each country.

In **Estonia**, we had three people working on recruiting participants (the people we interviewed in the first phase of the research, online observation, recommendations) all summer 2021 (from

⁴ See https://www.youtube.com/intl/ALL_uk/howyoutubeworks/policies/community-guidelines/

15.06.2021 – 6.09.2021), we had online flyers that we shared on Facebook and Instagram in post and story format and that the Estonian LGBTQ Union also shared for us via their accounts. We also reached out, in August, to a variety of youth and children's organizations (Estonian Union for Child Welfare, Estonian Association of Youth Workers, Estonian National Youth Council, Estonian Education and Youth Board), who circulated the call for participation in their emailing lists. We ended up with only three tentative agreements, but with a lot of caveats on what times suit them. From August we had started contemplating the need to offer cards to people for participation, so we started the administrative processes to make that possible. When that was approved, we reached out to about ten different schools, including schools we had gone to or taught at. Finally, through the researcher's former school and a promise of talks in return, her old high-school teachers managed to get the research team in touch with people, nine of whom agreed, and we had three more from other sources, so we had a list of twelve participants lined up for two workshops. Most of them however did not eventually participate. They either just did not show up and did not answer emails and calls, or said they are sick or could not come on the day. Overall, this methodology, especially via Zoom on year three of a pandemic seems very ill suited for European contexts, where high-schoolers are incredibly overcommitted in terms of schoolwork and extracurriculars and fatigued of Zoom activities. The Estonian team does not recommend including this into research design in future H2020 projects, unless they are conducted as part of classroom activities.

In **Greece**, we chose to address to individuals who did not participate in WP6 fieldwork in early 2021. We opted to contact and recruit high-school students that we were not sure if they were politically active or not. Given the difficulties we faced either because of the pandemic and the reluctance of parents, teachers and students to come to face-to-face encounters with the research team, or because of a kind of digital fatigue we have come across in DigiGen fieldwork in other areas in general, recruitment proved to be a challenging procedure. Finally, we managed to find four participants – two more who were initially eager to participate but dropped out – through teachers in two different schools in the largest cities of the country: one private high school in Athens and one public model (*peiramatiko*) high school in Thessaloniki. Although this was not posed as a criterion by the research team, the participants seemed to be sensitive about social and political issues. This might have led their teachers to select and contact these specific students, even though this was not a prerequisite. After two attempts to organise the workshop before the Christmas break (18 December 2021) or during the Christmas break (28 December 2021), it was finally held online on the Zoom platform, on Saturday 15 January 2022. After a short presentation of the project, its main objectives and areas of research by the two senior researchers, a collaborator of the research team, who is a faculty member of the School of Drama at the Faculty of Fine Arts of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and specialized in Creative Writing and Pedagogy, provided theoretical and practical instructions on how to build a story. She described the process as a narrative building exercise, and she provided relevant tips and examples following the agreed storytelling protocol. To further help the participants we shared with them two videos from the Digital Storytelling Workshop in Leicester.

In the **United Kingdom**, between May 2021 to December 2021, we initiated contact with over forty individuals in more than twenty organisations, such as the education leaders and relevant subject teachers of several colleges and schools in the South and East of the UK, as well as national organisations, such as the National Teacher Union. However, we were only successful though utilising informal networks, and we eventually succeeded in conducting a digital storytelling workshop with three participants, and with the help of three researchers. Although we had significant challenges in recruiting our participants, the actual workshop was very much worth the effort, and we felt that the individuals that participated, which were all 18-year-old university students, were motivated, and had a sophisticated understanding of what challenged and inspired their civic participation whilst using ICT. We would argue that given different circumstances more favourable situation would be to have face-to-face workshops, digital storytelling workshops may be bring a richer and co-researching opportunity with young

people that is genuinely conducive to understanding their civic participation while using digital technologies.

3. Digital Storytelling in Estonia

The participants that self-identified as activists had a much clearer vision from the start on what they want to focus their stories on, while the youth who were interested in politics and considered activism important tended to stick more strictly to the two suggested themes of inspirations/motivators vs challenges, positioning their persona, their life experiences and current thoughts as the starting point for the narrative. Thus, Participant 5 said:

It's easy for me to choose, my path has been very clear and has been very clearly defined by me finding a call for volunteers that Tartu LGBT group shared on Facebook in 2019 ... This shaped my journey in relation to political participation, before that I was not so directly involved with politics, I didn't have personal relationships with politicians, and now I do, this has been a very interesting journey. And this past election was the first election I could participate in, and I made my choice based on whose vision best supports my work.

Whereas Participant 6 shared that she has never been very active politically, but really wanted to vote in the last election due to an engaging Society class she took at school. Back then she couldn't vote as she was too young. Oddly, she said, in this election she could vote, but would have to do so in another city, where she is registered, and she says she 'don't even know who is running there, or what they are promising, and I have no time to figure it out. Plus, I am realizing that I absolutely hate election campaign ads, so I guess I will start my story from that.'

Other participants were much less clear initially. Participant 3, for example, said he only has some vague thoughts that he declined sharing in the story circle, opting to listen to others. 'I guess yeah, I will focus on some things that motivate me to participate and some things that make it difficult to be politically active', he said.

All of the participants stuck to the story idea shared in the initial circle, with more detail being added in the story planning phase, no one changed their mind or pivoted as creating the story. Participant 3, for example, shared that he has settled on 4 things that keep him from participating politically and 3 things that motivate him to participate. When asked about what images they were planning to use, the participants remained vague, saying: 'I am still thinking about it,' and rather itching to get started, reluctant to share images before they have found a home within their story. Clearly the images were not the conceptual starting point for any of the Estonian stories, rather found, made and inserted as instrumental illustrations in the process of developing the story.

Some of the participants kept their cameras on while making their stories, while others did not, we did not force the issue. While we had suggested everyone use PowerPoint, some people did not have access to it, and opted to use Google slides, with one participant using Paint for her illustrations. Everyone got their story done in the 40 minutes, but some people had technical difficulties with recording it as a video, or sharing the video. However, we found that sharing the slides on Zoom while giving a spoken presentation works fairly well as an alternative, as the video recordings of the workshop can later be trimmed to create videos of individual stories. Story sharing was perhaps the most seamless, least awkward part of the experience, the participants are all clearly used to presenting at school, they were relaxed, well timed, eloquent and had gotten used to the idea of sharing their story with strangers. While this data in no way allows generalizing to populations, a very clear pattern emerged, where the stories of the young people who are not activists are similar to each other and quite different from the story by the young person who is an activist.

3.1. Activist and Non-Activist Stories

The activist story (Participant 5) was centered on the narrator's experience over the course of a year. It follows a classic 'hero's journey' narrative arc, the participant says that they having always wanted to be an activist, moves on to a key 'meant to be' moment of seeing a call for volunteers, and then narrates the experience of joining in and managing to accomplish something big and important – being elected the managing head of the LGBT+ organization and having to work on a daily basis with established politicians like the mayor in the mere span of a year. In this narrative, the source of inspiration is the participants' inner need to do something about the inequalities in the world, and a sense of mission that emerged from the first event they helped organize – a queer picnic. As they said:

It was very, very successful, we had about 30 people, who came from all over Estonia, and this is when we realized that there are so many under 18-year-old people, 13- to 15-year-olds, who need a safe space, who need a place where they can go, and this became our mission, and we became much more active.

Suitably for the personal focus and structure of the digital story, most of the images were either photographs taken by the participant (see Image 1) or illustrations from the organization's Facebook page.



Image 1: Still from Participant 5's story, where they are waiting for people to show up for the queer picnic

Similar to the experiences of the politically active Estonian respondents studied in the previous stage (cf WP6.1 report), this story too reflects the finding that those youths who are active, tend to be so across topics, usually LGBT+ rights, racial justice and climate justice. Thus Participant 5 pointed out that the organization's communication manager is active in Fridays for Future and their second event was a 'camp garbage hunt,' where the community cleaned up the shores of the river in the town. All food shared at the events of the organization is sourced via dumpster diving (See Image 2). The story thus, in addition to narrating the speaker's own journey, rhetorically links different kinds of activism and different concerns (ecological sustainability, queer activism) both in visual material used and in the narration.

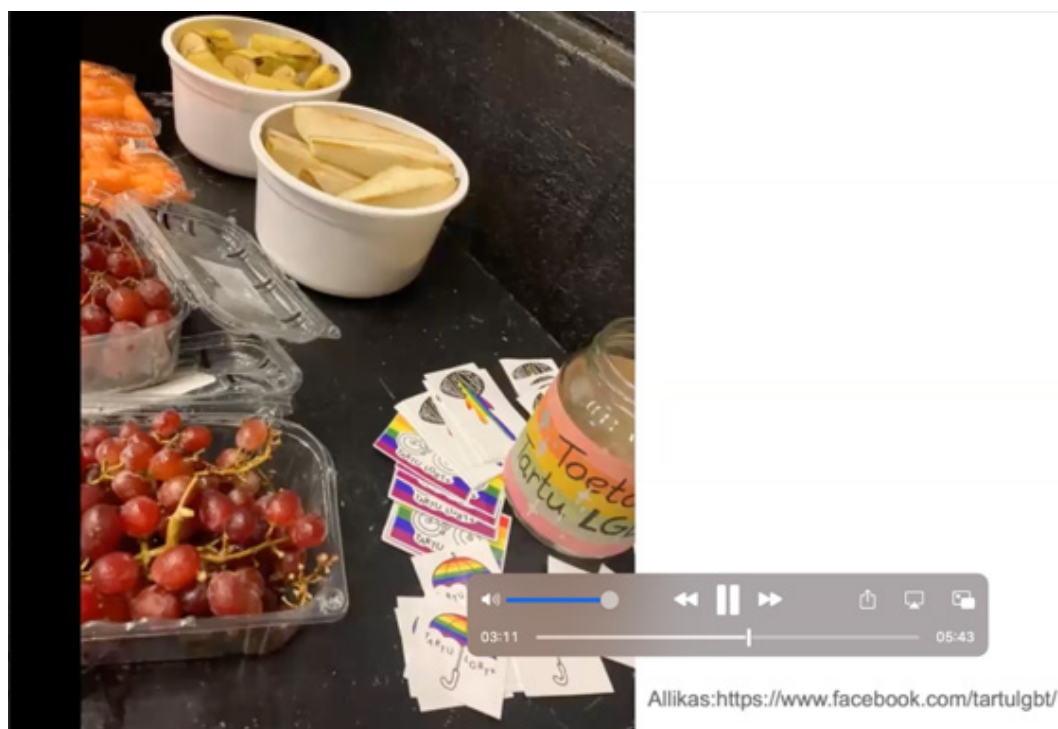


Image 2: Still from Participant 5 video where they talked about cross over mission with sustainability and dumpster diving for event snacks

By the end of the story a new motivating factor is added to the participant's repertoire of things that incite them to participate politically – being able to see how professional politics at the level of local government is conducted and to work closely with city officials and the mayor. The activist story mentioned no challenges, beyond a brief comment that 'it has been difficult too, but it is interesting and important.'

In contrast, the other youths' stories were less coherent narratives and more presentations of things that make them want to be politically active and things that deter them from doing so or make political engagement challenging. The overarching rhetoric was that of positioning political participation as very important, even morally imperative, then confessing to not being as active as one would like and offering reasons and justification for what was presented as "not enough" participation. This too was quite similar to our findings for the youth who did not see themselves as politically active in WP6.1.

These stories used no personal photographs (beyond a screenshot of a teacher's blackboard as seen – or rather not seen – on Zoom to illustrate how badly distance learning was organized during the first wave of pandemic related lockdowns), rather generic stock images, rarely memes and in one case self-made memes and self-made illustrations were used. One motivator – the desire to speak up, use one's voice, and two challenges – lack of time, and fear / lack of confidence repeated across all four of the youth's stories with other motivators and challenges varying.

Most of the non-activist participants listed the capacity to be heard, to use one's voice, to participate (in Estonian the word used would literally translate as "speak with") as a motivator for participation, often as the most important motivator (see Image 3). This was linked to the feeling that one has a choice (P4), to the ability to support local initiatives that one holds dear through, for example participatory budgeting (P2), or to 'speak with' others about 'important big problems in our society, like, for example, climate change, you can voice your opinion and hopefully through that contribute to solving such problems' (P3).

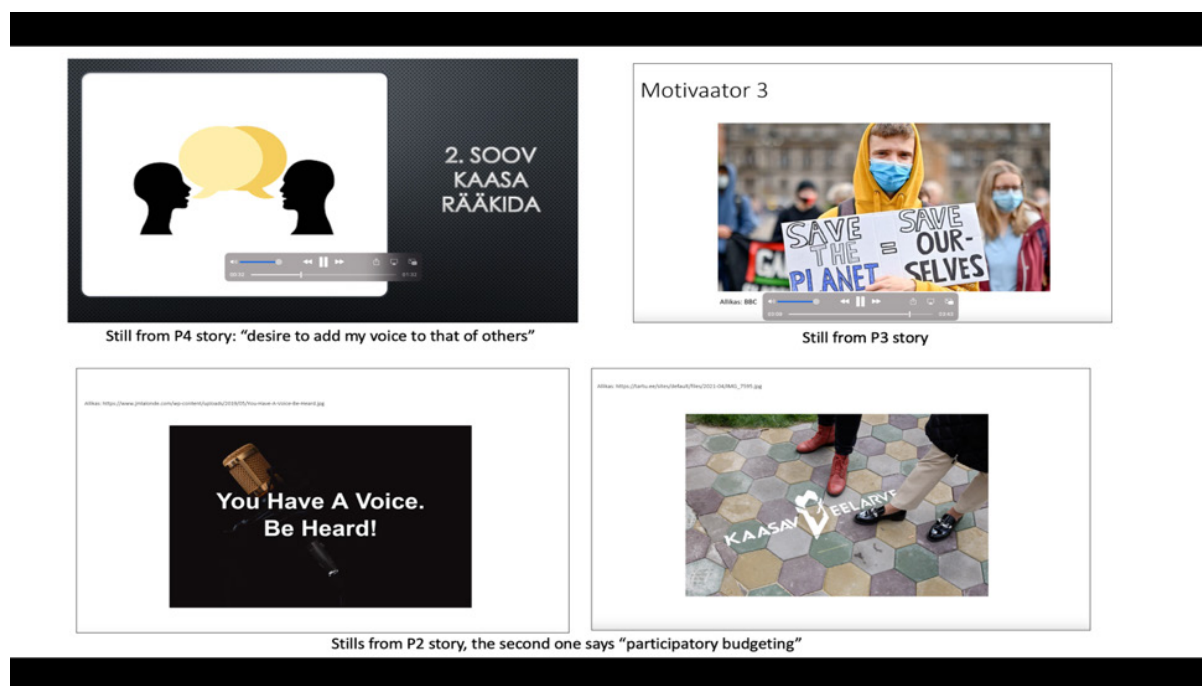
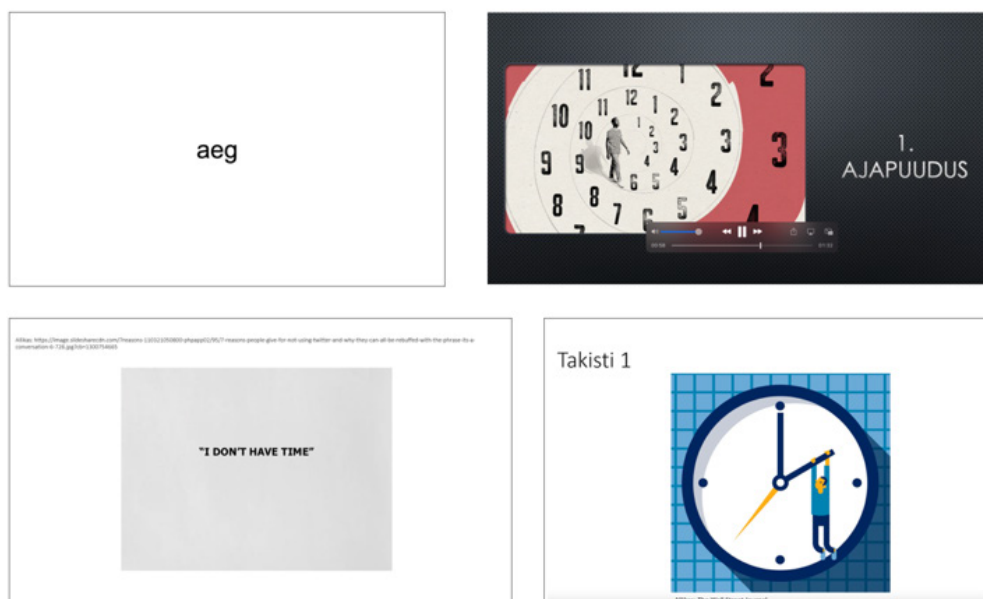


Image 3: Stills about using one's voice from stories by Participant 2, 3 and 4

This emphasis on having and using a voice was offered with a certain level of pathos, for example Participant 2 spoke, with conviction: 'I too have a voice! I too can participate politically, because I am a member of the society and this is my right!' Yet, in the context of their stories, where the challenges and detractors outweighed the motivators, and while political participation was positioned as important, they still did not seem to participate very actively, an interesting ambivalence emerges. For example, Participant 2, who said that he likes his city's participatory budgeting, because it makes him feel like he can support causes he finds important did not elaborate on what causes he finds important, and when asked later, offered a fairly vague gesture towards 'things that have to do with environmental protection.' None of the statements about using one's voice seemed to be concerned with having a strong opinion or an ideological stance that would propel the use of and constitute the contents of the utterances that should be carried on that voice. This highlighting of the voice seemed almost abstract and its listing as a motivation perhaps something internalized from the educational discourse rather than deeply felt and experienced.

All of the non-activist participants listed the lack of time as their predominant challenge when it comes to political participation (See Image 4).



Still frames from stories by P1, P2, P3, P4, "aeg" means "time" in Estonian, and "ajapuudus" means "lack of time"

Image 4: Stills about time

Being informed enough to participate actively in politics, or informed enough by their own subjective standards (including informed enough to make 'the right choice' at elections) was presented as an almost insurmountable task in terms of how much time it would take. Participants linked their lack of time to many commitments, especially given that they are high-school seniors, but some self-awareness regarding the choice to make time for some things and not others was evident. In Particular, Participant 2 had created two slides on time, during the first one she just said that she doesn't have time for politics, but on the second one (see Image 5), she has created a Venn diagram meme of her own time use, the circle on the left says 'things I have time for' and the circle on the right 'politics'.



Image 5: a Venn diagram meme created by Participant 1

Participant one said: 'Here is a Venn diagram of things I have time for, and politics is part of it, kind of, because I am an active debater, I have other things to do. So I think if I really wanted to, I could fit for example student government into my schedule, and things like that, but as I have more important stuff to do then I just never get to that. Of course, I generally vote, when I can vote, because as a member of a democracy that is my duty, but I don't think I would have time to really become a politician.'

Fear of judgement or politics as such and lack of self-confidence was also mentioned by the non-activists across their stories. Here the rhetorical nuances, words used and choice of images paints an interesting picture that suggests insights into what young people worry about and why in the context of political participation (see Image 6).

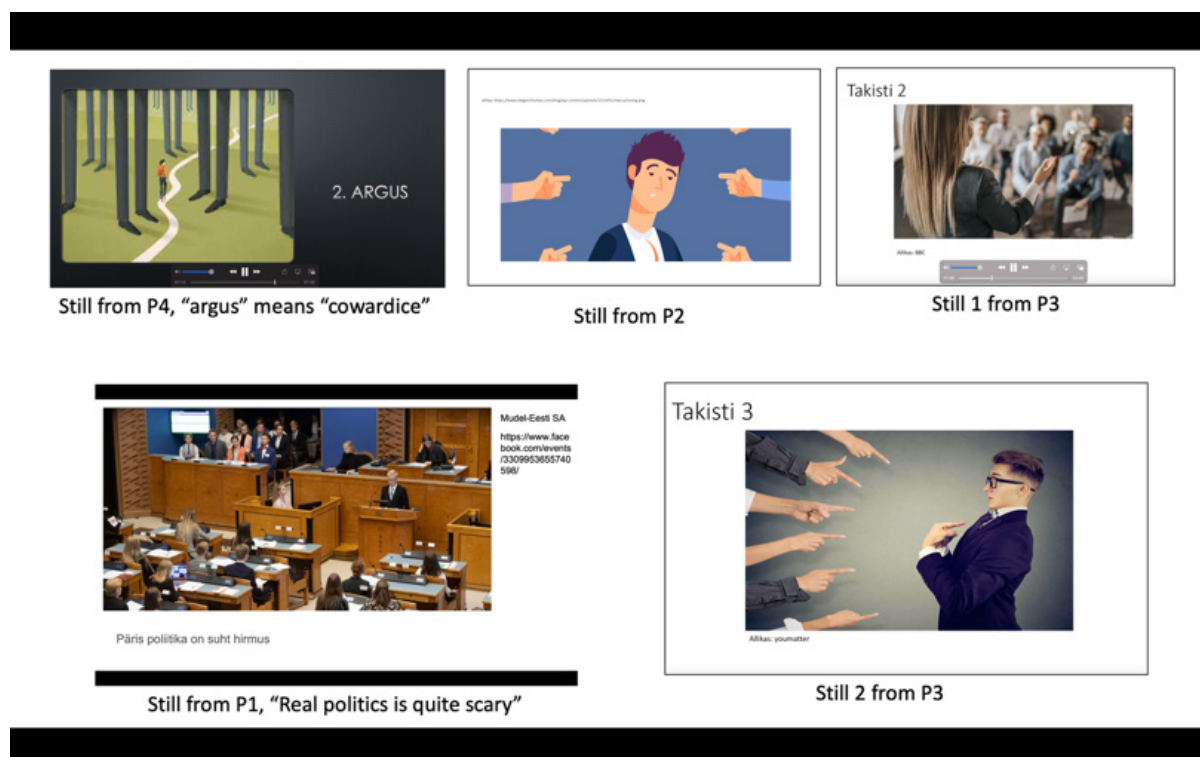


Image 6: Stills about fear in the stories by Participants 1, 2, 3, 4

Participant 4, thus chooses to use a fairly harsh word: 'cowardice', but then goes on to explain: 'by this I mean that I wonder whether my word is important enough to share it, to speak up, do my thoughts matter enough?' The visual illustration of a young person being lost in the woods of adult legs carries a lot of affects and this hesitation whether the young person will be heard by the adults echoes the findings from the first stage interviews (See Karatzogianni et al., 2021, working paper from deliverable 6.1). Participant 1 has included an image from a simulation exercise of the European Parliament, where she too participated, with an added text 'real politics is pretty scary.' She said that it is fun to simulate these things, but: 'I can't even imagine the chaos of real politics, so I most definitely don't want anything to do with it personally, simulations are fun, voting is great, but that is the extent of my political engagement'. Participant 3 adds a different framing, saying that it is important for him to not 'force my opinion on other people, it's not that I lack confidence, but forcing my opinion on others makes me uncomfortable, so this keeps me from participating'. This equation of sharing one's opinion with forcing it upon others echoes similar sentiments by the Estonian interviewees who considered themselves not politically active, where rhetorical links were created between politeness, centrism, civility and choosing not to be politically active (See Karatzogianni et al., 2021). Worth noting is also Participant 3's choice to include an image of a woman talking to a group of people to illustrate the fear of forcing one's opinion on others.

Both Participant 2 and Participant 3 chose an image of finger pointing to discuss their sense of discomfort and fear, and both young men chose to expressly articulate that ‘it’s not that I lack confidence, but ‘to explain lack of participation. Image 6, Still 2 from P3 illustrated Participant 3’s second challenge, which he described as an ‘overwhelming sense of responsibility’ as something that keeps people (presumably not him personally, as he is not responsible for ‘large groups of people’) from being politically active, by this he means that politicians and people ‘in higher positions’ have to make ‘heavy’ decisions. We’ll return to the finger pointing image used by Participant 2 shortly.

3.2. Patterns across non-activist and activist stories

In terms of similarities across activist and non-activist stories, two shared motivators (the desire for a better world and political participation as something that is edifying) and the way ICTs, specifically social media and its affordances were articulated.

An urge to change the world for the better was articulated as a motivator both in the activist story and in the non-activist stories. Participant 5 stated this as a pressing urge: ‘with COVID, and BLM, I really felt like I HAVE TO DO SOMETHING,’ which led them to start volunteering and later running an activist organization. Participant 3 listed ‘to make life better for everyone’ as his primary motivator for being politically active, interestingly choosing to use an image of a futuristic city with flying vehicles as his choice illustration (see Image 7). Participant 3 reflected on what he saw as a contradiction between what he had listed as challenges (wanting to not force his ideas on others), arguing that making the world a better place inevitably involves forcing one’s worldview on others.



Image 7: Still from P3 story

Participant 1 was more concrete. She started her story by saying: ‘to talk about what inspires me I have to start by saying that I have realized that in Estonian things aren’t so perfect that nothing needs to be done.’ She then went on to offer multiple practical examples:

My main examples include last year’s distance learning (goes on to show illegible screenshots from Zoom classes and a gif she had made to make fun of how another e-learning platform had very poor usability, see Image 8). What I am saying is that things could be much better organized in the field of education. (...) I could participate in politics to fix things like these.



Image 8: Still from P1 Story 'Everything is not great in Estonia'

Participant 1 didn't stop there though; she went on to a slide for which she had chosen to draw a version of the logo of the Conservative People's Party of Estonia (See image 9). While it is unclear why she didn't just use their actual logo, it is possible that this was an act of critique, a refusal to search for their name online, a refusal to use their symbols in intended ways. In the voiceover, she said: '... as far as I have understood EKRE they all hate - in some constellation - women, the LGBT community, black people, and as I like to exist, I would prefer EKRE to not be in power.'

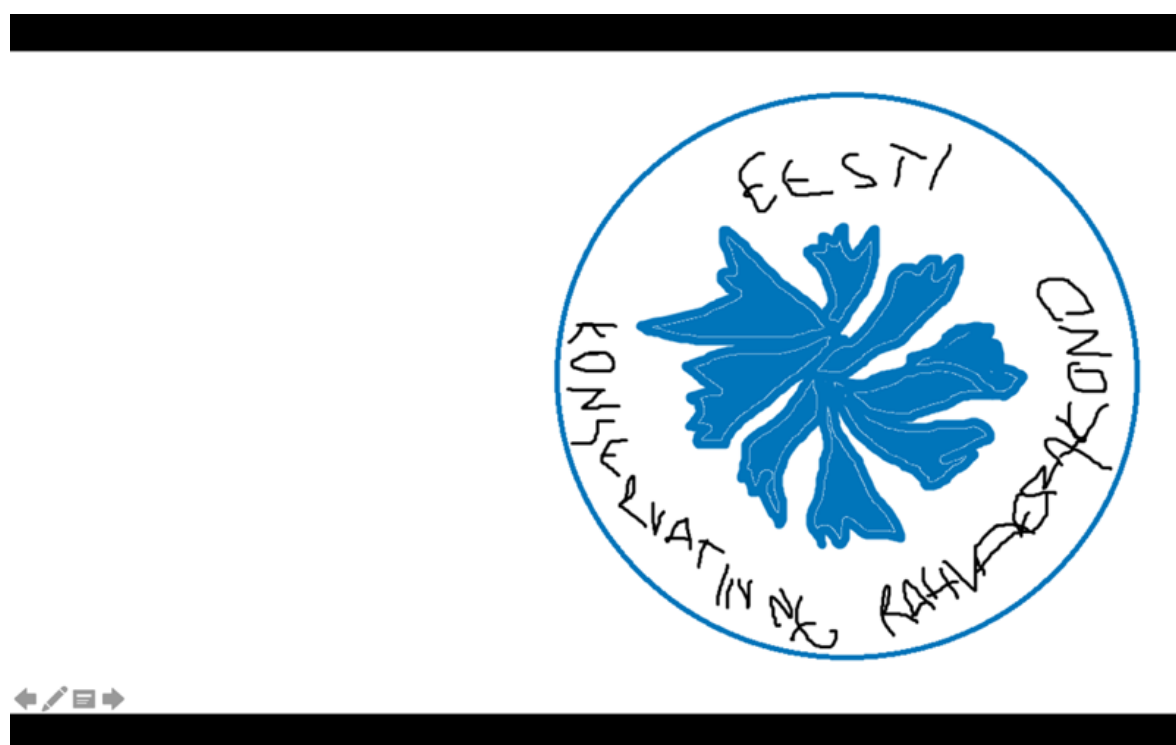


Image 9: Still from story P1

Motivation for political participation was linked to self-improvement and implicitly to a potential career trajectory in the activist story by Participant 5 and in a non-activist story by Participant 3 and 4. Participant 1 ended their story with talking about now, in their new role, being able to work alongside professional politicians is not explicitly articulated as a self-development or future career-oriented motivator, although the framing of it as a motivator suggests this interpretation. This is the only thing that is similar to some of the stories by the non-activist participants.

Participant 3 listed 'broadening the mind' as one of her motivators, defining it as 'being knowledgeable of the political situation and feeling as if I am included.' While Participant 3 listed knowledge as his second motivator for participation, articulating it as 'knowledge, just knowing what is going on around you, and you know how to choose more smartly during elections, and just ... it's good to be knowledgeable.' Both chose generic images to illustrate it, although the image chosen by P3 seems to focus on the outcome – a colourful lightbulb of an 'a ha!' moment perhaps, whereas P4 focuses on the diverse, noisy flow of information going into one's head (see Image 10).

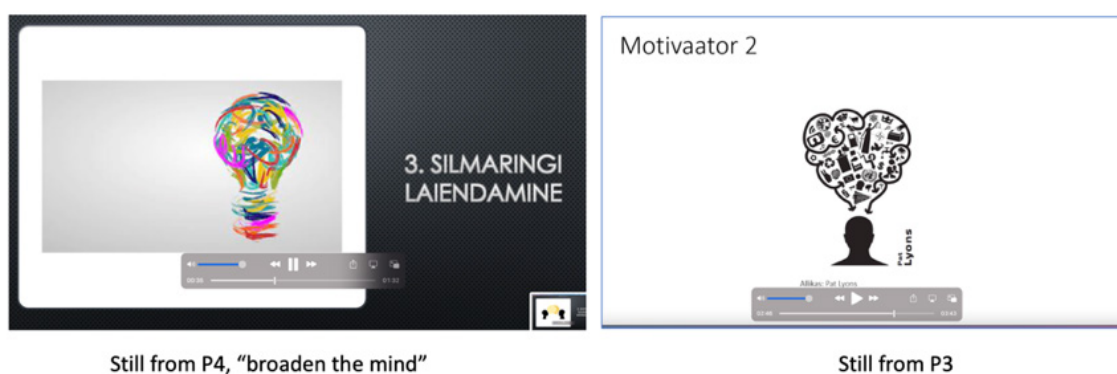


Image 10: Stills from stories positioning self-betterment as a motivator for political participation

For Participant 5, her entire story starts from seeing an ad for volunteers on Facebook. They said that they have always wanted to be an activist and consider themselves a queer activist, but in light of the Covid pandemic and the BLM protests the need to 'do something about it' intensified. They articulate the appearance of the Facebook ad as 'meant to be' or preordained, and its importance is reflected by the fact that Participant 5 chose to include the ad in their story (see Image 11).



Image 11: The ad that jumpstarted Participant 5's path as an activist leader. The ad says: We are looking for volunteers. Tartu LGBT+ is looking for good spirited and determined people. In case of interest, write us on Facebook or Instagram and we'll be in touch.

The internet is important for Participant 2 as well, he was among those who highlighted being able to speak up and make his voice heard as motivating, however, he argued that he prefers to do so anonymously. In the voiceover of the part of the story illustrated by a finger pointing image (see Image 6, Still from P2) he said: 'Political participation presumes courage and self-confidence, as I said before, I like participating in politics anonymously, I would prefer not to express my political opinion on Facebook, Instagram or somewhere online where there is a picture of my face attached to it ... it's about courage, I am not saying I am not confident, but I prefer speaking up as part of a crowd, not to be among the few in the foreground.' He did not elaborate if he preferred anonymous online participation or face to face crowd-based action, but given that one of his examples was participatory budgeting it can be presumed he meant anonymous online vote-based opinion casting as his preferred form of participation.

4. Digital Storytelling in Greece

In the case of Greece, the participants were provided with 40 minutes in which to work, and 15 more minutes were added because two participants needed some additional time. They were free to choose the subject of their story. In fact, during the introductory discussion, we avoided suggesting any subjects or even giving any examples that could influence their decisions. We chose this strategy in order to see what kind of issues concern participants and attract their interest. From the introductory discussion, we could conclude that the participants are interested in socio-political issues, without however mentioning that they are active in any kind of organisations or committed systematically in any kind of activism. They do care about politics in the broader sense, and they try to stay updated on significant social and political developments, but they could not define themselves as political active in the traditional sense.

Even though there was not any kind of guidance towards specific issues or topics, it is interesting that all the participants chose issues that marked Greek society during the last decade and linked to violence: three of the participants chose the topic of fascist violence as it was manifested by the neo-Nazi political party Golden Dawn, while one built his story on sexist violence that occurred in the killing of the LGBTQ activist Zak Kostopoulos/Zackie Oh, by two men and several

policemen. In all stories, the role of mainstream media was discussed in a rather critical way, while coverage of the facts on social media was also part of each story.

4.1. Story 1: The Golden Dawn Trial, 7 October 2020

The first story focused on the Golden Dawn trial that lasted five years. Details were provided through the narrative on a) the investigation whether Golden Dawn constituted a criminal organisation, and b) the three specific crimes that members of the organisation were accused of. The assassination of the rapper Pavlos Fyssas was presented as the main event that led to the arrest of the leadership of the Golden Dawn: 'Fyssas was killed exclusively for political reasons, because he had antifascist activity, and he was famous in the area of Piraeus and a strong antifascist activity with parties, such as Antarsya [left-wing alliance] and alone through his music obviously. The fact that the assassination was attributed to political motivations was also discussed as ironic because Roupakias [the murderer] during his defense claimed that he had no relation with Golden Dawn and that during his adolescence and afterwards he was organized in the Communist Youth, something that obviously was not taken into account at the trial.'

The assassination of Pavlos Fyssas had a truly significant impact and triggered a strong mobilisation during all these years and increased the attention for the other crimes as well, i.e., the attack against Egyptian fishermen and the attack against communist unionists in the broader region of Piraeus. The evolution of the trial was connected by the participant with broader political developments, such as the fact that in the 2019 legislative elections the Golden Dawn did not enter the Parliament, since it got a percentage just below the 3% threshold, which 'helped justice to move faster towards the completion of the procedure'. The mobilisation during these years and particularly the mobilisation on the 7th October, as well as the massive support to the decision on the social media was presented as a factor that enabled court to take the particular decision. This is interesting to see how the participant connected the effect of social media on the decision of the court.



ΠΑΥΛΟΣ ΦΥΣΣΑΣ

Ο Παύλος Φύσσας δολοφονήθηκε στις 18 Σεπτεμβρίου του 2013, στο Κερατσίνι από τον Γιώργο Ρουπακιά, μέλος της ΧΑ.

Η δολοφονία αποδόθηκε σε αποκλειστικά πολιτικά κίνητρα και αποτέλεσε την αφορμή για την αναλυτική έρευνα για τα ποινικά αδικήματα της ΧΑ.



ΑΜΠΟΥΖΙΝΤ ΕΜΠΑΡΑΚ

Ο Αμπουζίντ Εμπάρακ έμενε μαζί με άλλους 4 Αιγυπτίους αλιεργάτες σε μία μονοκατοικία όταν δέχτηκε επίθεση από 20 Χρυσάυγιτες.

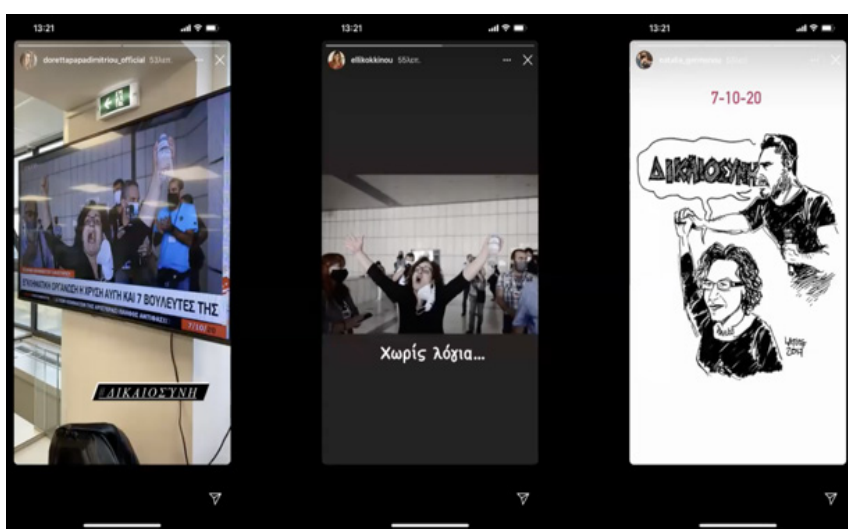
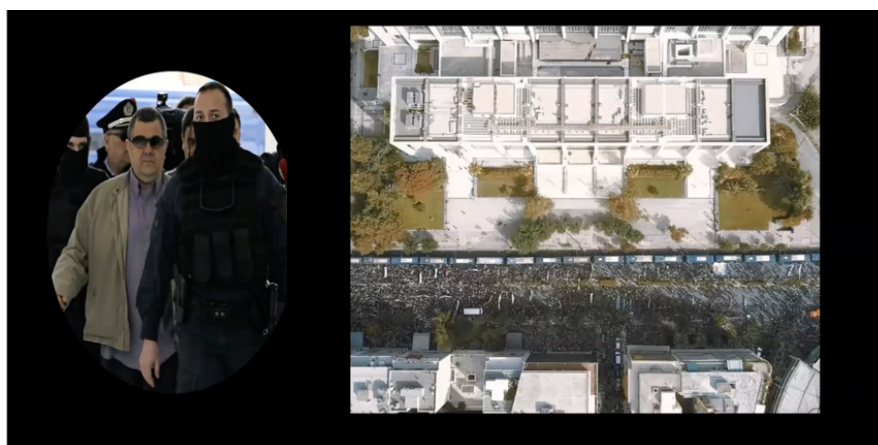
Επάνω σε 10 μηχανάκια αφού έσπασαν τα παράθυρα της οικίας των αλιεργατών πέταξαν καπνογόνα και επιτέθηκαν στους τέσσερις ψαράδες που βρήκαν μέσα στο σπίτι. Οι τρεις που κοιμόνταν στο σπίτι κατάφεραν να αποφύγουν την επίθεση, ο Αμπουζίντ Εμπάρακ δεν τα κατάφερε.

Τον χτύπησαν αλύπητα και τον τραυμάτισαν πολύ σοβαρά, του προκάλεσαν βαρύτατο διπλό κάταγμα στην κάτω γνάθο.



ΑΠΟΤΕΛΕΣΜΑΤΑ

Μετά από 5 χρόνια δίκης, στις 7 Οκτωβρίου 2020, κρίθηκε ένοχος για όλες τις κατηγορίες που του αποδίδονται, τόσο για ένταξη στην εγκληματική οργάνωση όσο και για τη δολοφονία Φύσσα, ο Γ. Ρουπακιάς. Επιπλέον, ένοχοι κρίθηκαν οι: Μιχαηλιάκος, Κασιδάκης, Λαγός, Γερμενής, Παναγιώταρος, Παππάς, Άγγελος, Αποστόλου, Καζαντζόγλου, Καλαρίτης, Μιχαλάκος, Μπαρέκας κ.α.

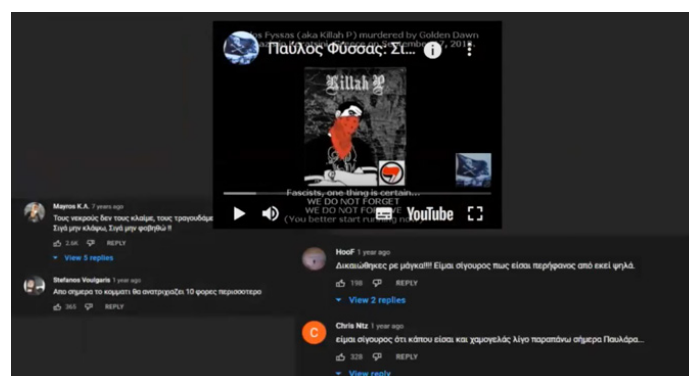
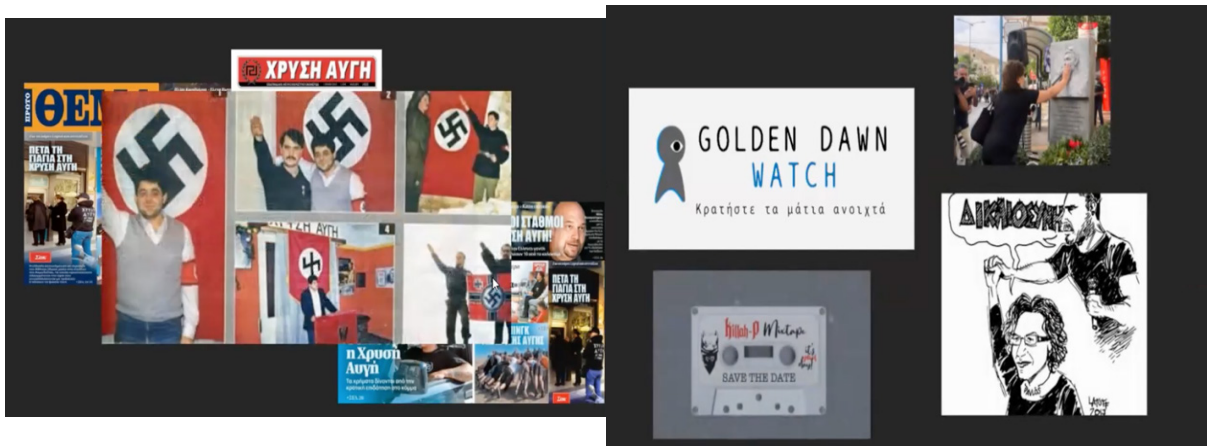
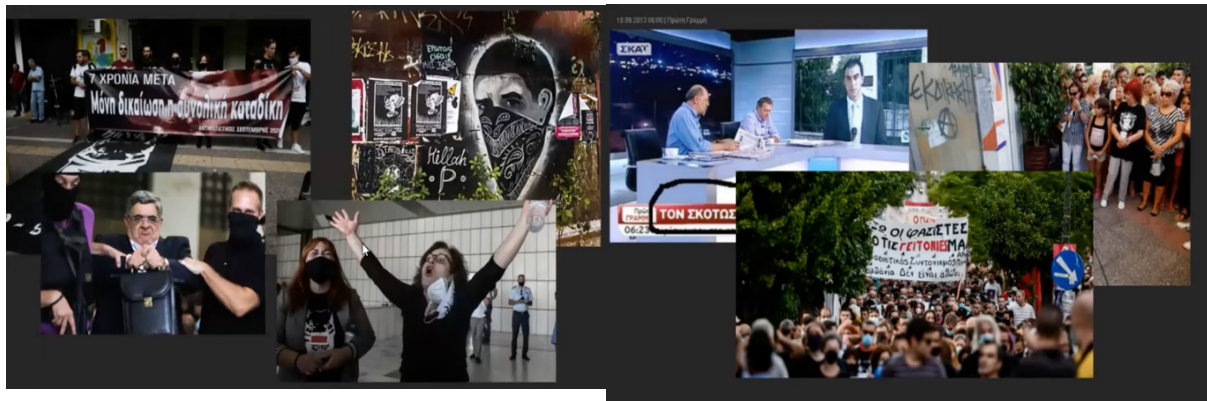


4.2. Story 2: The assassination of Pavlos Fyssas

The second story focused on the assassination of Pavlos Fyssas. The narrative started with a presentation of Fyssas' work with specific reference to his anti-racist and activist references. The narrative continued with the rising of the Golden Dawn: 'at the same period that Pavlos Fyssas was singing against fascism, Greek society was starting to become familiar with the Neo-Nazi party of Golden Dawn; mass media and the government, turning a blind eye, helped the until then non-existent in the polls party to assure 18 seats in the Parliament in 2012, presenting itself as a nationalist party ready to protect Greeks from the threat of migrants and refugees.'

The story continues with the events of September 17th 2013 and the assassination of Fyssas by a member of Golden Dawn, while a text to the leader of the organization was mentioned: 'I like it, I like it, Golden Dawn for a Greek September!!!' The participant insisted on the immediate coverage by the mass media, which were significantly slow in presenting the assassination as a political assassination and underestimated it as a fight around football, since Fyssas was watching a football match in a bar when he was attacked. The story ended with the result of the trial and the sentences imposed on the members of the Golden Dawn and the support that Fyssas' mother received in the social media and from several organisations.



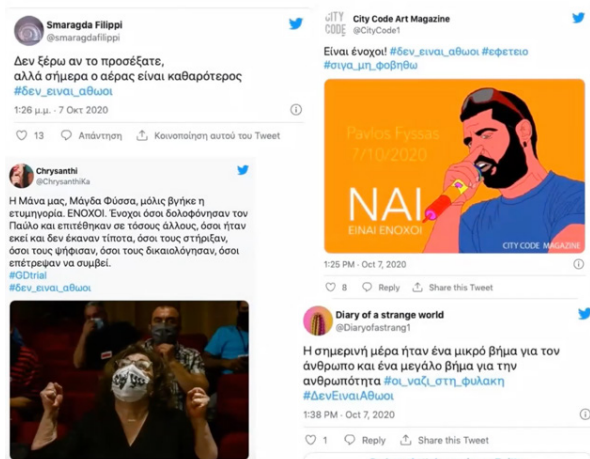
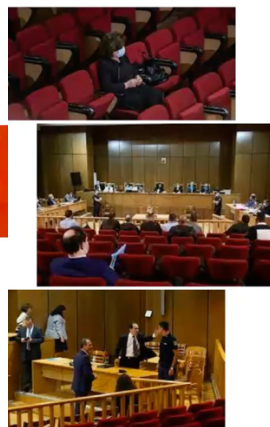
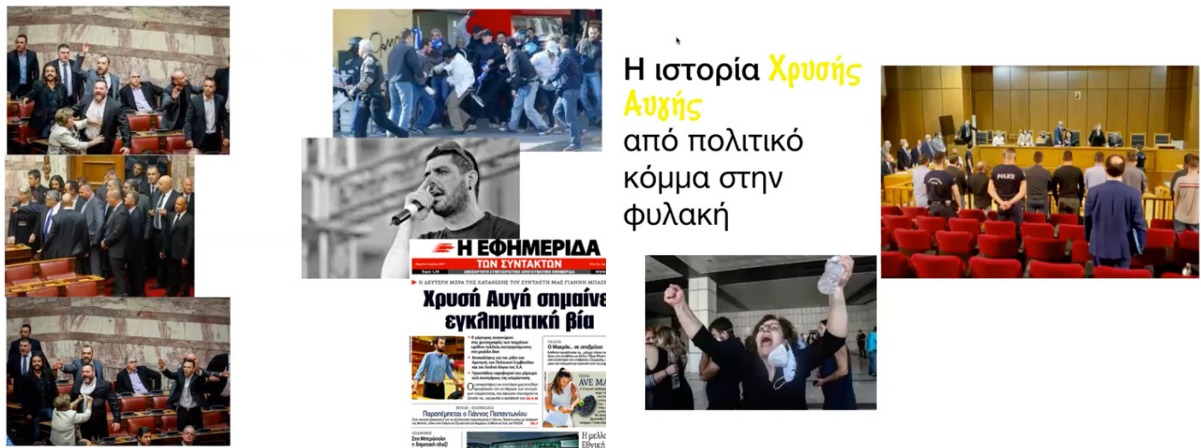


4.3. Story 3: The history of the Golden Dawn: from political party to prison

The third story focused on the history of the Golden Dawn since the early 1980s. The participant showed the Neo-Nazi roots of the organisation and its gradual steps towards its consolidation

as a parliamentary party in 2012. This increase of its political influence was accompanied by an increase of its violence: 'It must be noted that from 2012 until September 2013, there was a sharp increase of racist violence incidents, something that is directly linked with the entrance of the Golden Dawn in the Parliament; more precisely in 2013 the Network of Reporting Incidents of racist Violence, reported 166 incidents of racist violence, several of which are connected with members of the Golden Dawn.'

The assassination of Fyssas by Roupakias is mentioned as a crucial fact for the arrest of Golden Dawn's members. However, and despite the legal actions against the leadership of the party, the participant referred to the decision of the High Court (*Areios Pagos*) to approve the participation of the Golden Dawn in the European elections of 2014, where it was the third party. Finally, in October 2020 the Golden Dawn was judged as a criminal organisation, something that was celebrated by thousands of people and by massive post at the social media.

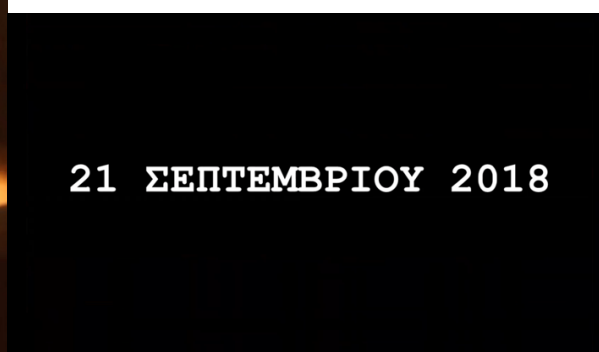


4.4. Story 4: Zak Kostopoulos/Zackie Oh

The fourth story focused on the killing of the gay activist Zak Kostopoulos/Zackie Oh and particularly on the way that mainstream media covered the facts. After a short presentation of his life and activity as a queer activist, HIV positive and drag queen, the narrative continued with the events of 21st September 2018, when Kostopoulos was killed at the centre of Athens by a jewellery store owner and by police officers: 'In fact, and describing what happened, Zak looked very stressed knowing what was going to happen and he was asking for help by people who were around. So, he found the jewellery store's door open and he entered in order to be protected, but he was locked inside.'

He was attacked by the owner and a real estate agent who had his office there. The policemen who were called by the owner continued to hit him, while Zak died with cuffs on. Although evidence has shown that Zak did not intent to rob the store, neither he had used drugs, mass media continued to show him as 'a figure that should be condemned', while they repeatedly attempted to justify the reaction of the shop owner. Both the latter and the media emphasised that the jeweller was a family man [οικογενειάρχης] who was just protecting his store and his family. The participant used an older quote by Zackie, comparing it with the lack of intervention/assistance by the bystanders: 'When you see someone who is attacked, why do you turn your face to the other side? I am not saying that you should get into a fistfight because me neither I am for fistfights, but you can shout. You can do something; you can react somehow'.

Finally, the story ends with the reactions of the LGBTQ community and other citizens who have been protesting against the 'multiple assassination of Zak', while artists and journalists have produced songs and documentaries.





«Είναι μια Drag Queen οροθετική τσιούλα...»: Ο Γ. Καρατζαφέρης για το θάνατο του Ζακ Κωστόπουλου

27K views · 3 years ago

«Είπα σε...»

«Είπα σε...»

Ζακ Κωστόπουλος : Ποιος ήταν ο νεκρός ληστής του κοσμηματοπωλείου στην Ομόνοια

πουλος, ήταν ο άντρας που προσπάθησε να της Παρασκευής κοσμηματοπωλείο στην οδό ο της Αθήνας και που τελικά βρήκε τραγικό

Ζακ Κωστόπουλος : Τι λέει ο μεσίτης που τον χτυπούσε μαζί με τον κοσμηματοπώλη

Ο Α. Πορτοράλης και ο Δ. Σούρας για το θάνατο του Ζακ Κωστόπουλου και τη βία (ΣΚΑΙ 25/9/18)

33K views · 3 years ago

Καθώς δίνουμε

«Έχουν πρόγραμμα με την κριτική» Ο Άρης Πορτοράλης για το πάρτυ στις ΜΜΟ και την ΕΡΤ και ο Δ. Σούρας για τον θάνατο του Ζακ...

«Όταν βλέπεις να επιτίθενται σε κάποιον, γιατί κοιτάς από την άλλη; Δε λέω να παίζεις ξύλο γιατί ούτε εγώ το έχω με το ξύλο αλλά μπορείς να βάλεις μια φωνή. Να κάνεις κάτι, να αντιδράσεις με κάποιον τρόπο.»

Η μπολάντα για τον Ζακ - Αποστόλης Μπαρμπαγιάννης

Τρομογμένο μου - Άννα Βίση

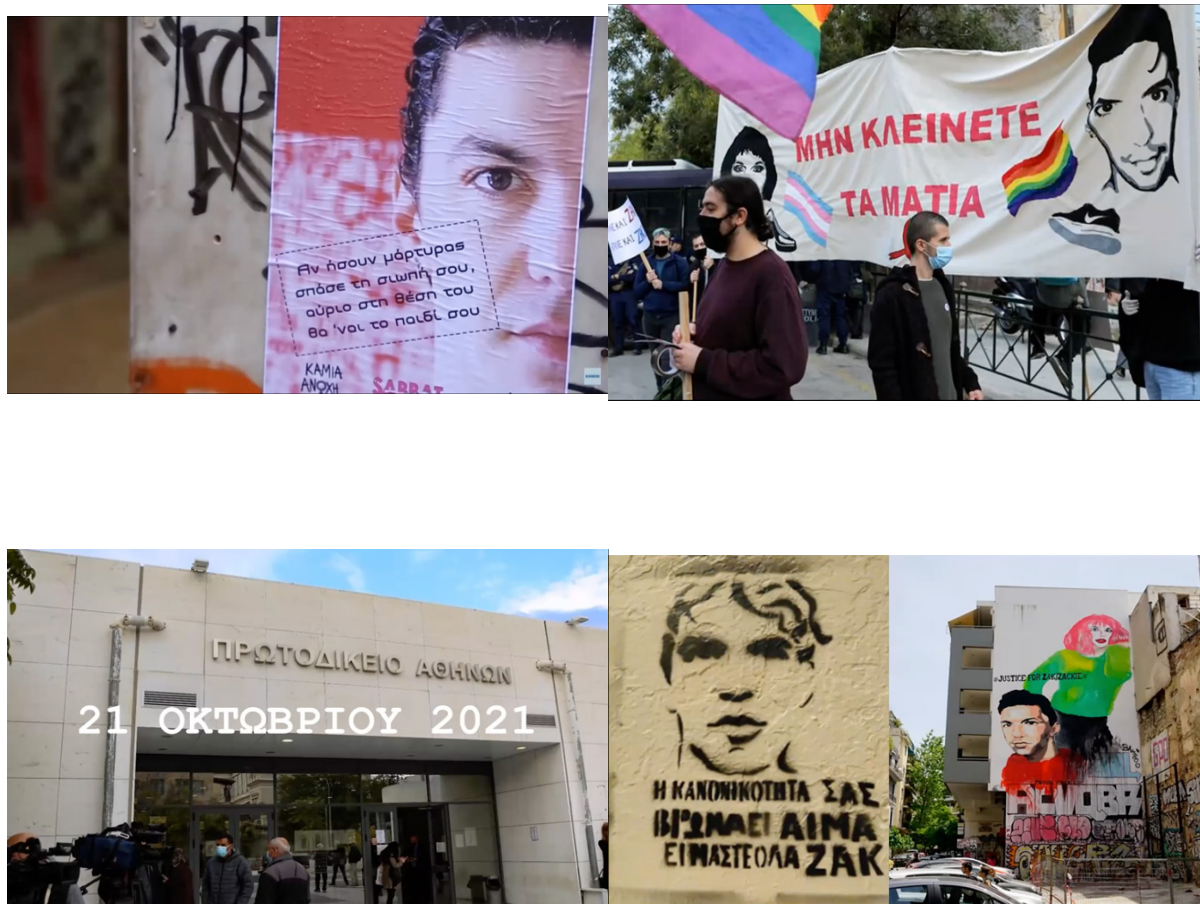
Η σκληρή αλήθεια για τον Ζακ Κωστόπουλο

Μικροπράγματα

Ένα αποκλειστικό, ηχητικό ντοκιμαντέρ του Άρη Δημηκίδη, που φωτίζει το μυστήριο των τελευταίων λεπτών της ζωής του Ζακ, ανατρέποντας στερεοτύπους και ευρέως διαδεδομένες πεποιθήσεις.

LIFO Podcasts

Step 20/21 · Played



As mentioned above, it is revealing that all participants chose stories that have marked Greek society because of their violent imprint. Both topics chosen by the participants showcase the increasing polarisation of Greek society, particularly within the crisis that was sparked since the late 2000s. Significantly, the choices do not seem to follow theoretical or abstract ideological interest, but they seem to be based on extraordinary events that have marked the collective memory. The participants were young children when the assassination of Pavlos Fyssas took place. However, the significance of this event and its repercussions seem to resonate with their social and political concerns, since it calls for a reflection on the quality of democracy and its institutions in a society scattered by social and political unrest on many levels. It seems that young people cannot have the luxury of avoiding severe cases of racist and sexist violence, when these are present in a such intensive manner.

5. Digital Storytelling in the UK

In analysing the stories produced in the UK we present the data from three cases below. Each case presents a unique story relating to issues around race and racism.

5.1. Story 1: The Wedding of Megan Merkle and Prince Harry (The Voice of Participant 1)

In this quote from the narrated digital story, Participant 1, explains why she felt inspired to participate online in the celebration of the Royal Wedding. In her own words:

In 2018, Meghan Markle and Prince Harry got married. It was a very joyous occasion. The whole country came together to watch the two get married. It was a very memorable day. I remember sitting around the TV with my family watching this amazing wedding dress was amazing, so beautiful. And you could really tell that the two were in love and they would suffer because they really loved each other. And I think that was very special, a special thing to have. *The social media platforms were quite supportive of the power of a lot of support from the black community of Meghan being married into the royal family, and it was quite inspiring for little black girls to see a very first black princess.* So, a lot of black and mixed girls will remember that day, a lot of the British public very joyous about these things and a lot of people in support of the union, and people were proud to be British. It was such a proud day for a lot of us. But a lot of people were focused and consumed by how infatuated Prince Harry was with Meghan. Absolutely adorable. I think a lip reader... could tell what he was mouthing to her, and he said I'm the luckiest guy in the world after she removed the veil, which was adorable. One can't stop smiling. So cute. I think a lot of people were vocal about Harry and Meghan's union and it was like an inspiring time because there was like a first publicly like Black Princess in the U.K. that all of us knew about. *It was like a role model for little black girls to look up to... a lot of people are vocal online on Twitter, Instagram, on the news about it...* I would say, it was inspiring for me, and I'm sure it was inspiring for a lot of the people that looked like me. I think it was how the humble beginnings Megan had and her being able to be where she is now. That was quite inspiring. Like, she's a mixed-race woman who was raised by a single black woman. It's just, yeah, it's really inspiring. And a lot of black girls don't really have lots of role models to look up to, especially in the UK. Well, it's not really talked about. So having a public figure like that was really inspiring.

As Participant 1 reflects on challenged her civic participation she identifies racism on social media:

Unfortunately, there were a few people that were not in support of her. Piers Morgan was one of them. He was quite vocal about his views on the two especially Megan. He made a few tweets; few is quite an understatement. He made quite a few tweets about his opinions on Megan where I think it wasn't his place. He did not have any business making such remarks about Meghan Markle. A lot of the media focused on her relationship with her dad. And Meghan's relationship is quite shaky with her father, and I would say they don't really have much of a relationship. But there was a constant theme of him being brought up. He and the media trying to get comments from her father. This ... was quite vocal, making judgements about how Meghan is a social-climbing actress and how she is manipulative, how she is playing tricks, how she doesn't really belong there. To be honest, all these mean remarks ... continued with people like Donald Trump making comments as well. Not long after the royal wedding, Meghan and Harry had their first baby, and unfortunately, a lot of the British public had a lot to say about the race of the baby, people referring to the child as a monkey. The comments being made in the royal family, *referring to how dark the baby would come out* to be during the interview with Oprah Winfrey, to which they revealed quite a lot of things going on behind the scenes in the royal family. So, it is revealed that she felt quite suicidal and that she felt like she was discriminated against in the royal family.

When Participant 1 showed and narrated their story, Participant 3 agreed that there was racism



across society in the UK and in the media environment when compared to the previous Royal wedding and what this means at the societal level:

'I think this whole situation just showed the position that both England and the UK was in just because of the amount of political attention from actual political leaders that this whole union brought attempts by people like Boris Johnson, Piers Morgan people will like really high significance but really invested in something that I believe wasn't an issue for like marriage should be a joyous moment. I remember when Kate and William got married, basically, I was in primary school at the time, and I think we got days off and it was like a whole week and celebration And there was just a lot of like celebration and happiness around the wedding. But I felt like this wedding was just it was very shocking because it's a royal event, and we know that in England, the monarchy's very, very respected. Everything to do with it is very respected. But in this instance, there was a lot of backlash, not just from political figures, but also from the newspapers, from blogs, all of the sorts. And I think it just shows where the UK was as a society and how we view race and how much we've actually evolved, especially because the UK is very diverse, especially in London, where the wedding basically took place. So, it was just very interesting just to see everything unfold.'

Similarly, Participant 2 pointed to the racism inherent in society:

'I think that this issue showed how deeply rooted racism really is within the royal family and within a society because something as nice as marriage shouldn't be looked like such a bad thing. And like you said, having a child, there's a joyous event, not an event to really slander people or make rude comments. I wasn't really surprised because we are in the United Kingdom. So, it wasn't unexpected. I think there's always going to be a backlash to wherever is new. Some people won't like it. There are some people that don't like change. So, I wasn't really surprised by it'.





5.2. Story 2: The Killing of George Nkencho (Participant 2)

Participant 2 was inspired by the social media-coordinated protests and surrounding the tragic killing of a young man in Ireland:

I'll be talking about the tragic killing of George Nkencho, which was the key factor in me speaking about the rights of black people and what really got me

engaging within the online community and talking about problems within our community. As you can see from the slide show, George was killed and false information about him spread on social media kind of justifying his death, which was untrue. It caused a lot of uproar within the black community.

Many of us decided to go and protest about this because the killing was unjust, and people were trying to justify it. There are four people standing outside Guarding the Station in Dublin, and guards were told to treat protesters, not as protesters, but as threats. Here's another photo of us protesting the night after he was killed. It was a big commotion on the streets at the event, the final days after. The killing of George hurt a lot of us and I'm sure none of us will forget it. Here's a photo from the memorial of George, we had a celebration of his life. And we had a ceremony to dedicate to him.

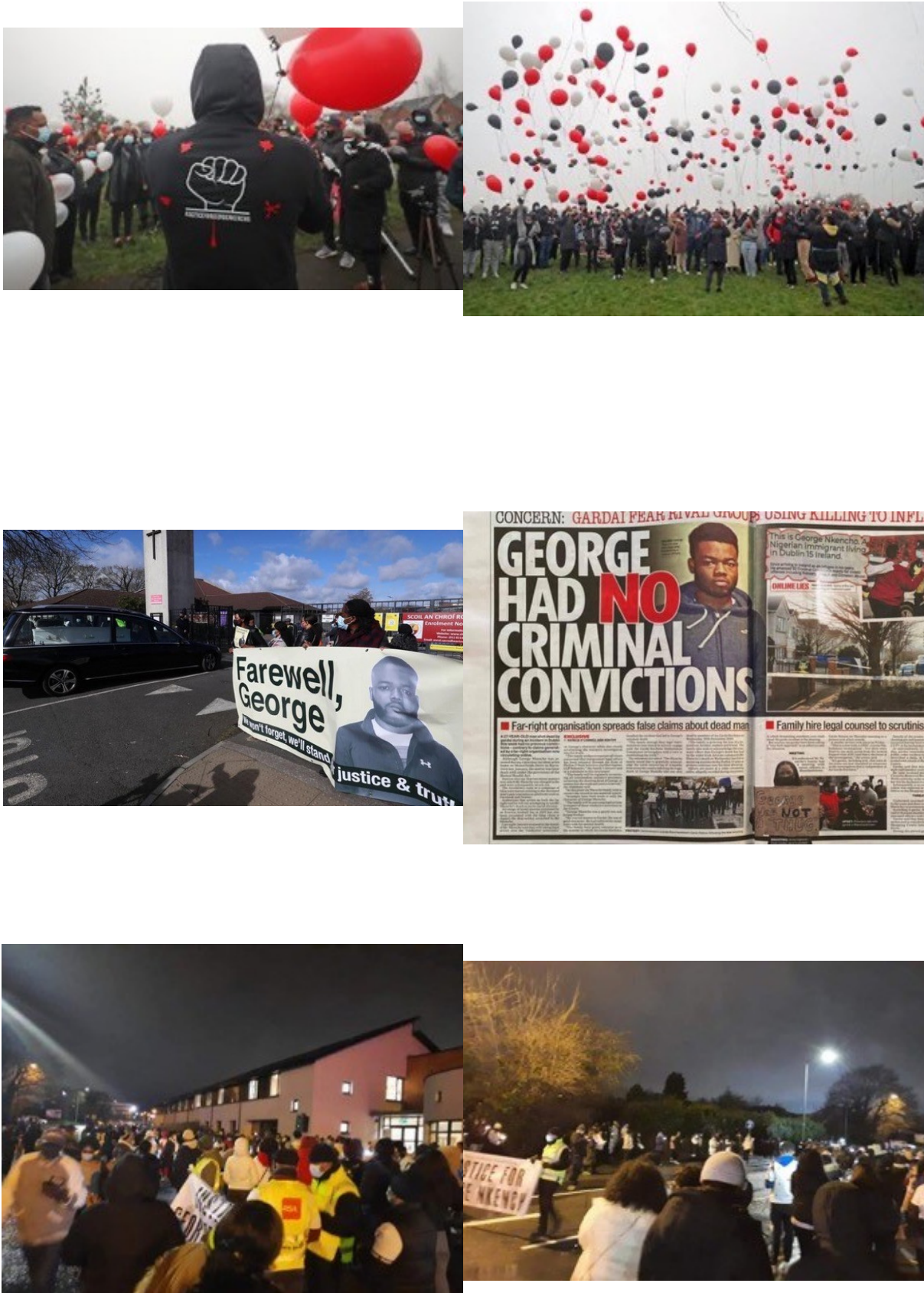
This photo here really strikes as that first indication of black power that people should be treated equally and says justice for George. Two months following, there was a funeral for George which as you can see, it is very sad, it was a killing that was very unjust and was not needed. There it says if you believe that takes a dozen guards and five bullets to incapacitate one man, you are either an idiot or a racist, which I thoroughly agree with because one man should not be shot, especially when isn't a threat to the people around him. No one is saying what he did was right, we're saying no life should have been lost.

As a challenge to his online civic participation, Participant 2 identified fake news and racism:

This is a photo which was talking about the false information that spread about George. They were told that he abused his girlfriend, that he was carrying a machete and that he slashed a victim's face. A couple of months following each and every one of them was alive. He said that someone was in the store before he was killed. All of this is just false information spread by people who wanted to justify his killing, which caused me to speak out and speak against all of this information. Here's one more photo from his celebration of life. Here are the parents of George Nkencho left stricken by this deep tragedy. I was there for the protest, but I wasn't there for the balloon ceremony.

The false information and spread? Well, because it is the internet, I knew there was going to be false information spread the amount of it was truly disturbing because there was clearly many, many people trying to destroy the image that he had just to try and justify his killing, which certainly is not right.







These lies are then being shared by ordinary people who are falling for them.

George Nkencho, who had mental health issues, had no criminal convictions. None.

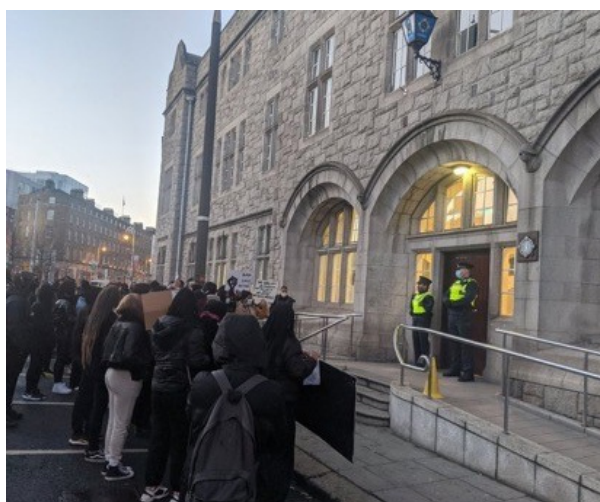
The police continue:

"unfortunately these lies went viral and lots of right minded people in society think the dead man was a criminal when he was not."

People have also been sharing pictures of an Everton fan with a slashed face and claiming it was a victim.

The assault in the shop was a punch. No one was slashed. This is another lie.

The small knife reported by witnesses has grown into a 'machete' - playing on racist stereotypes about African men.



5.3. Story 3: Anti-Police Brutality Protests in Nigeria (Participant 3)

Participant 3 was inspired by the #EndSARS protests in Nigeria for her online civic participation. This is how she narrated her engagement during her digital story:

So, in 2020, in October and the #EndSARS protests, occurred in Nigeria, this photo basically just symbolizes what really started it, which is casualties of police brutality on Twitter and Instagram. There were several quite gruesome images of casualties circulating, which caused an outcry not just in Nigeria, but it managed to get attention across the globe. So, all the way in the UK, also in the US and in other countries as well. Aisha Yusuf is a Nigerian activist. She's one of the main reasons why I also followed this #EndSARS situation so closely. She's a co-founder of the BringBackOurGirls movement, which happened quite a while ago because of the Chibok girls that were kidnapped in Nigeria. But she was quite vocal and led a lot of protests. She was on the news quite a few times, and she helped me keep updated with what was going on, what was really going on because she was basically like on the grounds of the whole protests that were going on in Nigeria.

This image over here is the Special Anti-Robbery Squad, which is basically what SARS is. It was really interesting, the whole #EndSARS situation because it was almost as if there was some sort of mirroring similarities between the relationship between the public and the police of Nigeria and the relationship between the public and the police in this side of the world. Although we don't face as much corruption, it was the whole tension between the public and the police. The distrust that the public has against the police was quite interesting to see.

This basically just signifies the messages that will be portrayed in social media, just as Diasporas we are able to see the suffering and the pain of citizens in a country from which I partly originate. But because of this, it ... open my eyes to other issues that were going on in Africa. This image is of human trafficking, which is still an issue.

This is on the BringBackOurGirls protests, just because of this #EndSARS situation on social media. Those are the issues being discussed. Because corruption is not just exclusive to Nigeria. This country around Nigeria that experiences corruption in countries around the continent. And it just made me more aware. Is in the side of the world quite sheltered and not a lot of this stuff is covered as often as much, even though Nigeria is a Commonwealth country'.

In the part of her story where she is reflecting on challenges, she argues that this event was not visible in UK media or talked about by the UK government, there was misinformation, nevertheless it helped her connect to her homeland, as well as other people from the Nigeria diaspora:

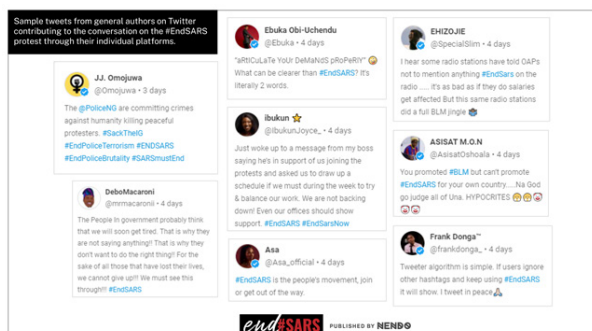
One of the downsides of the ... entire situation and it is linked to social media is the constant back and forth on Twitter trying to decipher the fake news from the real news. Here are just some tweets of people complaining about fake news, which was the reason why... the whole situation struggled with getting coverage because it was like people weren't sure whether to repost or which certain things as they weren't sure if that was actually what was occurring, what was going on as a diaspora halfway across the world, which made it difficult for me to know if what I was reading was like the truth, which made it difficult to connect with the whole situation as a whole.

I also put a picture of the Commonwealth flag, because even though Nigeria is a Commonwealth country that wasn't really a lot of noise being made here, there wasn't a lot of I didn't feel that a lot was being done on the side of the world. I felt like a lot of the education of the situation had to be done by myself on my part. I didn't really hear a lot from the British government about the whole ENDSARs situation until maybe further along when things really, really escalated to the West. So that was like the downside, the negative of the whole situation. And lastly, these were some of the protests that were happening on the side of the world. So, this was in London, and it just showed how this whole situation managed to bring diasporas together.

But the downside of this is that although we as Diaspora protest in London is not like we were getting much response, *so it almost made me feel voiceless* in some sense that although I know what's going on politically across the world, there's not much I can actually do to impact or change Situations in certain countries.

Then on a positive note, *it brought different people in the Diaspora together*. So Diddy is an

African American hip hop artist and Burna Boy is a Nigerian Afrobeats artist. These people live through different experiences. They probably have both had run-ins with the police, which may have been synonymous, but it was just nice to see them show solidarity to each other, even though Diddy probably has never, ever been to Nigeria in his life and Burna Boy has never lived the African American experience.





6. Comparisons and Concluding Thoughts

First, although there were significant challenges stemming from conducting the digital storytelling workshops online, which was not conducive to creating an atmosphere where participants were socializing and getting to know each other, as well as immense difficulties relating to recruitment. The twelve young people who participated and produced stories in the workshops demonstrated a willingness to share the visual content they collected with their peers, as well as reflected meaningfully on both the socio-political events which triggered their online and offline participation and the challenging constraints of doing so.

Second, there are clearly common political concerns surrounding political polarisation, violence, and securitisation be it racist (UK and Greece), gender-related (Greece and Estonia), as well as emerging environmental consciousness (Estonia), which is continuous with the topics which were very much discussed during the previous research phase (See Karatzogianni et al., 2021, working paper for task 6.1).

Third, the Estonian participants identified challenges such as, time constraints, fear, and lack of confidence, focusing more on themselves and their motivations and having their voice heard to improve society in the fight for more justice and against LGBT and racial discrimination, while in Greece and the UK, they chose to speak about violent events involving structural, institutional racism, gender-based violence and problems relating to media visibility, misinformation and policing. This is in continuation with findings from tasks 6.1, where Estonian participants were less mistrustful of government and the media establishment in general, in comparison to the Greek and UK participants, who perceive that they live in a much more polarized political environment, where misinformation, hate speech and securitisation is more widespread.

It remains to be seen whether in the next phase in this work package, involving task 6.3 when we analyse digital citizenship related policy documents in the three countries, if we can ascertain the extent to which the national structural political context has far more weight in the becoming of citizens for young people than any policy efforts targeting the digital realm.

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7. Appendix A Table of Participants

Estonia

Participant	Age	Gender	School	Date
Participant 1	18	F, she/her	Fee-paying	29.09.2021
Participant 2	18	M, he/him	Fee-paying	29.09.2021
Participant 3	18	M, he/him	Fee-paying	29.09.2021
Participant 4	18	F, she/her	Fee-paying	13.10.2021
Participant 5	18	Non binary, they/them	State	13.20.2021

Greece

Participant	Age	Gender	School	Date
Participant 1	15	M, he/him	Fee-paying	15.01.2022
Participant 2	17	F, she/her	State	15.01.2022
Participant 3	17	M, he/him	State	15.01.2022
Participant 4	16	F, she/her	Fee-Paying	15.01.2022

United Kingdom

Participant	Age	Gender	University	Date
Participant 1	18	F, she/him	Fee-paying	18.11.2021
Participant 2	18	M, he/him	Fee-paying	18.11.2021
Participant 3	18	F, she/her	Fee-paying	18.11.2021

8. Appendix B Digital Storytelling Protocol

Min	Sequence	DigiGen WP6 Digital Storytelling Workshop Protocol
10	Welcome	Introduction DSW organisers and participants, include ethics
30	Story-circle	<p>Ground rules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect • Confidentiality • Consideration • Focus on the session • Silence is OK <p>Today you are going to make your own digital story about your online civic participation. This about online activities through which you develop and express your opinions on the world and how it is governed, in order to shape decisions that affect your life, developing thinking around political issues, joining a community group or organisation, campaigning, voting, joining a political party, standing for office.</p> <p>A digital story is around 3 minutes long. It has images (like photographs or drawings) and a voiceover which tells the story.</p> <p>We invite you to think about a time, place, event, person (including online/digital lives), which both inspired and challenged your civic participation. Take a few moments to think about your story.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It should start with something that has challenged/inspired your civic participation. • The middle is the biggest part of the story. It is about how you overcome your challenge/made the most of your inspiration. • The end is short and can be anything you like. <p>Share your story with the group.</p> <p>There are no right or wrong ways of telling your story. No one is allowed to talk about another person's story outside of this group.</p>
20	Story-planning	<p>One idea per note</p> <p>Sequence</p> <p>Identify images</p> <p>Draft script</p>
40	Story-making	<p>Now we would like you to turn your story into a digital story of no more than 3 minutes. Digital stories are special because they use photographs, words and voice(s)</p> <p>Please select 10-12 images (photographs, cartoons, memes) that will help you to make your story about any ONE reason why and tell your story about how you participate online to express your political opinion about an issue. You can use the photographs that you brought with you, or you can create (draw/ take) pictures to tell your story.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first one or two images show what inspires your civic participation online. • The next 8 photographs make the middle of the story. You could use 4 images representing inspiration and 4 images representing challenge during your online civic participation. • The last one or two images make up the end of your story. <p>Now that the images are ordered, think about what you will say in each image to tell your SHORT story. Please remember that you can speak for 10 seconds or less per image.</p> <p>Now record what you want to say (Show how to add voiceover). You can speak, rap, sing, or tell your story in any other way you like.</p> <p>Story-making using PowerPoint software. Tutorial how to: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AGSk_ynrvTA</p>

20	Sharing	Screen the stories for all workshop participants to watch.
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9. Appendix C Information Sheet and Consent Forms

WP6 DIGIGEN DIGITAL STORY TELLING WORKSHOP INFORMATION SHEET INVITATION LETTER AND CONSENT FORM

The Project: Work Package 6 'ICT and transformations of civic participation' DigiGen - The impact of technological transformations on the digital generation Horizon 2020 Grant Agreement number 870548. EUROPEAN COMMISSION - Research Executive Agency Inclusive, Innovative and Reflective Societies

Who are we?

We are researchers from the University of (University provided and list of researchers).

What are we doing in this project?

Broadly, we want to learn from you about your experiences of political participation in the digital age. Digital transformations have undoubtedly had a strong impact on civic participation and on the ways in which active digital citizenship is conceived, perceived and experienced.

Our other partners in this project will do the same workshops with young people living in Greece (partner Panteion University) and Estonia (partner Tallin University). We will use this information to better understand the context within which the political behaviour of young people is manifested online and will assess the extent to which it affects offline political practices.

We want to use this digital storytelling workshop with you in order to co-produce relevant material that will shed light on the motivations, causes and means that you as young people find appropriate and meaningful for what you perceive as civic participation (as digital citizens).

The Research Ethics Committee at the University of Leicester has said it is OK for us to do this study (add approval reference here). They know we will work carefully using both UK and international ethical rules. The committee will maybe want to look at the forms you sign (if you say yes to being in this study) to check that we did everything in the right way.

Why are we asking you to be part of this project?

Because you fulfil all or at least criteria 1-3.

1. Are 16-18 years old
2. Are OK speaking English and can read and write in English, and
3. Have been engaging in online political participation
4. Were recommended as a participant for this project by someone working at DigiGen or by a member of the project's Advisory or National Stakeholder Committees.

What do you need to know?

- You can say no. If you say no, there will be no problem, you don't need to give a reason. Even if you say yes now, it is OK for you to change your mind later and stop taking part. If you withdraw your participation at any point, all relevant data will be deleted
- The only potential for the researcher to break confidentiality is when research participants

are at risk of harm or where information needs to be disclosed pertaining to participants' involvement in crime or other illegal activities. In that case, the researcher is obliged to report this to the authorities.

If you say yes, what will you be asked to do?

You will be asked to participate in a research activity

Date and time	Place	Description
Date: ----- Time: -----		<p>We will ask you (and the other young people in your group) to use an artistic activity that will help answer the following questions about your political participation (activities through which you develop and express your opinions on the world and how it is governed, in order to shape decisions that affect your life, e.g. developing thinking around political issues, joining a community group or organisation, campaigning, voting, joining a political party, standing for office)</p> <p>What does it mean for a young person to be a 'digital citizen' and/or engage politically online?</p> <p>What are the challenges that a young person faces while engaging in online political participation?</p> <p>Have you noticed differences in how different individuals and political groups engage online? Why do you think that is?</p> <p>What/who makes it possible for young people to be OK when they are engaging in online political participation?</p>

We would like you to bring some pictures, text, video or audio that show your ideas and feelings about how you engage in online political participation, but we will also have some pictures available for you to use, and also some computers, tablets and non-digital materials. By the end of the workshop you will have made a digital story. There will be people at the workshop who can help you.

We will ask your permission to audio record the above so that we can write down what you say. We will also use video cameras to record what you are saying and doing during the research. We will also take photos of you during the research; we will ask your permission to use your pictures in on social media and on our websites. At the end of the workshop, we will ask you whether you are willing to be contacted in the future to have an interview with one of our research team.

What do you get out of this?

At the end of this study, a copy of the findings will be made available to you if you would like to have them.

Can you get hurt by taking part?

We don't think that you can get hurt physically, but there are some other risks. We explain them below and what we will do to manage them.

Possible/Probable risks/discomforts	Strategies to minimise risk/discomfort
Speaking English could be tiring or difficult.	If you prefer, you can speak in your home language. We will ask members of the research team or others in your group to translate into English so that the researchers who speak English can also understand.
You will complete the activities on [date] in a group.	Because you will be part of a group, other people will know that you participated, and what you said. To try and minimize outsiders knowing what you said, we will agree on group rules (e.g., treating one another respectfully; not talking to others about what specific participants said/did).
If your group makes a digital story (a type of a video) and this story is made public, your community and many other people will know that you participated in the study.	You do not have to take part in the digital story/video. Alternatively, if you do want to take part but you don't want other people to identify you, then we can find ways of hiding your face (e.g., by wearing a mask). You can also choose whether your name is added to the credits or list of people who are in the digital story/video.

What will happen to what you write or draw or make or say during the study?

We will ask a person/people to listen to the audio-recordings of the activity that you did and look at the digital stories and type what you and the other participants have said. This person/these people will sign a form in which they promise to keep the recording private (meaning they can't tell anyone anything about what they listen to and type up). Once everything is typed up, the researchers from the University of Pretoria will delete (erase/wipe out) what was recorded.

We (the researchers) will study the typed-up version of what you and others said. We will also

use it to write about what makes it harder and easier for young people to engage in political participation. We will probably quote what you said/wrote or show the digital stories you made when we write about what we learnt from you or when we tell others about what we learnt from you (e.g., at a conference or when we teach students). We will also compare what you tell us with what we have learnt from young people living in Estonia and Greece and use this comparison to better understand how young people think about health and about feeling good.

We will also keep a copy of what you said in a safe place in secure storage (TSD) at the University of Leicester to. We will keep the copies for 10 years. Your name will not be on any of these copies. We will allow university students who have to complete research projects on digital transformation of political participations in adolescents and young people, or people who want to research more about digital politics, young people or digital storytelling to use these copies for their research projects.

Who will see the forms you sign and what happens to them?

Only the researchers from the University of Leicester will have access to the forms that you sign. They will store these forms for 10 years.

Will it cost you anything to take part in this study?

No, it will not cost you anything. We will give you reimbursement to pay the cost of the local bus/local taxi that you use to participate in the research activities.

Do you have questions to ask?

- **If you have questions you can email or phone the PI (email and phone provided)**
- **You can contact the Director of the Research Ethics Committee (email provided) if you have any concerns or complaints that have not been adequately addressed by the researcher.**
- **You will receive a copy of this information and consent form for your own records.**

Please fill in the consent form below if you wish to take part.

Thank you very much for considering our invitation!

Team WP6 for DigiGen Horizon 2020

CONSENT FORM

Please complete this part of the form after you have read the previous Information Sheet. Thank you for taking part in this research. The researcher must explain the project to you before you agree to take part. If you have any further questions, please ask before you decide whether to participate. You will be given a copy of this Consent Form to keep and refer to at any time.

	Please Tick or Initial those that apply
I understand that if I decide at any time during the digital storytelling workshop (DSW) that I no longer wish to participate I can withdraw immediately.	
I consent to the use of, and quotation from, the material produced in the DSW for publications.	
I understand that, unless I state otherwise, my identity will remain anonymous, will not be revealed to other participants, and I will not be identified by name in any publications.	
I consent to the recording of this workshop.	
I consent to my online images, video, or text that we discuss to be used for research purposes only.	
I consent to my online images, video, or text that we discuss to be used for public engagement purposes upon prior consultation.	

Participant's Statement:

I agree that the research project has been explained to me to my satisfaction and I agree to take part. I have read the above notes and the Information Sheet and understand what the research study involves.

Signed

Date...../...../.....

Investigator's Statement:

Iconfirm that I have carefully explained the nature, demands and any foreseeable risks (where applicable) of the proposed research to the participant.

Signed

Date...../...../.....



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