



Project n° 029105

Project acronym TRESEGY

“Toward a social construction of an European youth: the experience of inclusion and exclusion in the public sphere among second generation migrated teenagers”

Instrument STREP

SIXTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME
PRIORITY [7]

[CITIZEN AND GOVERNANCE IN A KNOWLEDGE BASED SOCIETY]

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1.1.GENERAL INFO

Acronym: TRESEGY – Transnational Research on Second Generation Youth

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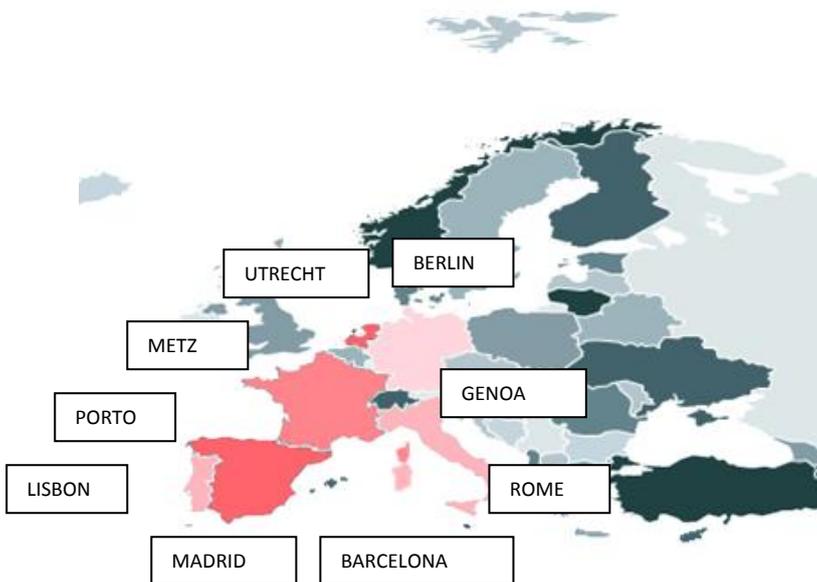
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Website:

www.treseqy.eu

Project Logo:



1.2. INTRODUCTION

TRESEGY project's main area of interest was focused upon "*The social construction of inequalities in European societies*" and the project has been implemented by enforcing "*a comparative approach to second generation migrated teenagers' experience of perceiving and accessing material and non-material resources available in the public sphere*"

Given this TRESEGY aimed to explore second generation migrated teenagers' life experiences in nine different local urban localities within six national contexts. This target group represented – and still represents indeed- an important challenge for the EU and its member states. Their social and cultural location and representation varies dramatically within different European host societies. From this perspective, the proposed project aimed to evaluate and compare the different structural, cultural, economic and socio-political factors that contribute to organization and orientation of socio-economic exclusion/inclusion phenomena among these groups in the public sphere. Ultimately social actors' perceptions about degree of inclusion and/or belonging to their receiving societies as well as relation to EU oriented values and principles were explored and compared from an European perspective.

TRESEGY employed – as the core of the research- an ethnographic and "emic" approach in order to put mainly into light upon social actors' perspectives. From this different and somehow innovative standpoint it has been possible to achieve two main goals: firstly, to understand the shift between institutional dimensions on the one hand and teenagers' perceptions and expectations concerning their access to public material and non material resources on the other. In a second instance, it has been possible to compare and to assess how different national contexts provide – in a policy recommendation oriented view - positive and negative conditions that lead either to participation and integration or to marginalization and exclusion.

1.3. RATIONALE

If TRESEGY project departed from an approach based on social actors' *subjectivity* and subjective social constructions in social and public arena, it became crucial to question some potential theoretical and methodological consequences.

First of all it is widely accepted that some problematic implications might emerge from a exclusively *emic* and subjective oriented investigations. Broadly speaking data and findings arising might contravene some largely acknowledged criteria according to which any research process can be defined as scientific. In this respect objectivity and repeatability variables could have been put into danger while employing such an exclusive perspective.

To prevent this TRESEGY has been designed as a multilayered research process integrating already existing objective data and information with newly recorded information collected among investigated social actors themselves.

Project design reflected this while:

- a) started from a introductory phase characterised by collection, analysis and comparison of existing and available national and local level data about general migration issues and second generation youth emerging and ageing in six participating countries;
- b) proceeded with an ethnographic field work centred on exploring second generation migrants' perspectives and experiences about social inclusion and exclusion;
- c) terminated with a transnational cross-cutting comparison useful to connect at a broader level interconnectedness between social actors' experiences and the contextual conditions in which they occur.

A second point that should be clarified concerns the working framework and definition for social phenomena under TRESEGY investigation. Exploring social phenomena (like perceptions about marginalization, inclusion and exclusion and livelihood expectations among young second generation immigrants are) implies to accept also two crucial assumptions: all these processes are always shaped around a *contestive* and a *contrastive* dimension. The former assumes that space and time variable are determinants in shaping such phenomena while the latter recognizes that social processes' construction works in a bidirectional way. In this perspective any decision, action, choice or strategy is always developed between an internal process based on their own individual, collective and socio-cultural belonging (in-group/intra-cultural) in confrontation and maybe contrast with what are the contextual historical, economic and socio-cultural conditions in receiving societies (outgroup/ intercultural).

Given this TRESEGY project has represented a step onward to the current state of the art of scientific large scale European level researches on second immigrant origin/descent youths and their participation to receiving societies.

Thirdly TRESEGY, by employing such research design, had the possibility to question current public, media and often scientific structuring of exclusion notion. By departing from a subjective based reading of social perceptions, some kind of ethnocentric prejudices about social exclusion notion and its formation have been revealed. Immigrants are often seen in a chauvinist perspective (more evident in media and public but also more subtly invisible in scientific discourses) and current large scale analyses and investigation- based on a exclusive ethnic perspective -often reflect this.

1.4. PROJECT EXECUTION

TRESEGY investigated social inclusion/exclusion factors among second generation migrant origin youths in 9 European cities, developing a 3 year research in each context, foreseeing 4 different steps through different but complementary methodologies.

The project envisaged investigation both on a national and a local level. All research teams have applied a mixed methodology: quantitative and qualitative approaches were brought together with theoretical and methodological models borrowed from statistics, sociology and anthropology. Despite the whole research design and methodological back-bone have been maintained similar, some variations in methodological/methodic components' involvement occurred according to contextual conditions/ demands in every location and each team's expertise and disciplinary specialization.

Basically the project developed in 4 research phases:

1. analysis of the national context: demographics, scientific literature theoretical definitions and relevant legislation;

2. analysis of the local socio-economic context through primary and secondary sources;
3. quantitative and qualitative analysis of the condition of young people through a questionnaire;
4. analysis and interpretation of inclusion/exclusion processes for young migrants through ethnographic research.

National/local dimension has been explored throughout three different stages: the first one was aimed at providing an overview of the demographics, socio-economic and political situation in which second generations of migrants live in every national-local context. A second stage envisaged the administration of a questionnaire to 600 young native and foreign origin/born teenagers, who were asked about their life - as young people – in respective receiving societies. Then the final stage was reached through the ethnographic research. It aimed at analysing in depth the aspects that had emerged from previous phases and allowing freer expression for the subjectivity and complexity of individual lives, as well as for the study of relationships systems.

National and local framework analysis used two main methodological instruments to provide a exhaustive shape of each setting. First of all a secondary data collection and analysis has been carried out primarily at national and then at local level. Secondly some interviews to key witnesses and informants (mainly policy makers, stake-holders, social workers and practitioners, and immigrant association representatives) have been collected to better en-value and estimate the local level effects, patterns and effects of juridical corpus and immigration, welfare and socio-economic oriented national policies. This represented an introductory step into collecting general information and to prepare the following research actions. At a very general level of analysis some interesting findings emerged.

First of all, all six participating countries provided very different contextual conditions for migrant origin/descent second generation youths. Different nation-states juridical and law corpuses became central in determining both project's and general account orientations in defining the research object as a social category. Each country provided a own system of norms and regulations either to define and manage this broad category of second generation immigrant youth or to set the normative constraints for immigration and naturalization procedures. In some cases it has been difficult to distinguish second generation immigrant youths from the one of local native one. I.e. in France, due to juridical relevance of *jus soli*, it has been difficult to apply a distinction based on native/immigrant distinction as most of immigrant descent second generation youths in France are French citizens. In The Netherlands as well it has been difficult - due to a consolidated political and socio-cultural tradition - to apply a distinction based on the exclusive principle of being "migrant". Therefore it has been necessary to distinguish between individuals – all holding Dutch nationality – of "*autochthonous*" and "*allochthonous*" origin. These situation in example influenced the possibility to collect significant and distinctive statistical information in some countries. Yet in this respect the comparative dimension between emerging statistical data from each country resulted no sense. In other cases, like in Italy, Portugal and Spain, it has been difficult to apply a traditional classic definition of "second generation" based on the assumption that someone should have been born in the receiving country from two migrant parents. In fact recentness of large scale immigration flows particularly characterized by extensive family reunions has prevented these countries to have a well established immigrant descent youth population that has born in Europe. By this, all TRESEGY network agreed to re shape a new and more extensive categorization of the notion of second generation. This has been possible due to the project standpoints formed around a inductive rather than deductive model and the bottom-up design. The project did not start from a well precise definition of the spotted research object but rather it

aimed to start from available ideas to rework a new set of notions in a continuous process of adjustment following evidence from the investigated social fields. In other words the core project's key strategy was based on a "*learning from*" rather than a "*learning about*" principle.

Following the insights emerging from national and local situation analysis, the following step was to implement a survey in each setting that would better sketch and clarify the experiences and expectations from both native and immigrant origin youths. After a process of questionnaire construction, validation throughout a test and final delivery in each local language, all team implemented it in the field to a shared proportion of 600 youths. It is important to state that the main object of the survey (and implicitly its design, validation and sampling procedures) was exploratory rather than explanatory. It means that the main aim was not to gain a scientifically consistent quantitative analysis but rather to picture out all potential research trajectories for ethnographic enquire that would have emerged from a larger sample of people. As in such the quality, deepness and extension of analysis resulted to be apparently poor and superficial. On the contrary, throughout a strategic exploratory approach (also implemented via a questionnaire section delivery specifically and uniquely designed for each context), the analysis of 600 questionnaires - applied in all nine participating localities and reaching an overall sample of 5200 respondents - produced some general and context specific accounts. Here some general findings are briefly presented as important emerging social processes and trends project-wide:

- Second generation notion cannot be considered either as an homogeneous taxonomic category in all six participating countries either as a socio-cultural morphological social category in social actors' perspective. Especially the latter –while en-lighting innovative visions- resulted to be of great importance and relevance in TRESEGY project further implementation and added value in European and state of the art perspectives.
- The majority of the interviewees of foreign origin/descent cannot be defined – nor they do not define themselves- as strictly "second generation". That can be explained either because they do not feel themselves like that or because different legal, juridical, political and socio-economic provide very different constraints to this category definition in each local setting.
- The majority of relationships and socializing dynamic are maintained among people of same origin/nationality. Tendency for students of foreign origin to live a "separated socialisation" largely depends on two main variables: it largely changes in relation to the length of stay in receiving countries and according to the receiving countries' level and degree of social, welfare and education policies enforcement.
- Self-definition processes are largely based on gender, age, sexual orientation and clothing style. National origin as well as cultural and religious orientations are highly relevant to self identification processes , while it gains more importance in the construction of the hetero-definitions (otherness);
- The perception of racism and discrimination is high and widespread in both sub-groups. Nonetheless it seems that such experiences are more context specific to some social arenas and public spaces than hypothesized. It seems that respondents are clearly demarcating some specific places and situations in which they are more exposed to marginalization, discrimination and exclusion in receiving societies. This largely refers to institutional situations rather than to more free, unstructured ones. To mentioned here the inter-generational, the gender variables as influential. However this does not seem to be related to individual personal experiences;
- Civil rights, democratic and political participation do not appear to be key issues for

interviewees, regardless of their origin. The appeal for citizenship is restricted to specific claims and specific demands. As a general account both natives and migrant origin/descent youths are not particularly inclined to political participation in its broader meaning. This can be justified with the condition of being youth (as a unpowered social category in our society) rather the one of being a second series migrant descent citizen and/or a immigrant one.

- The European identity and citizenship dimension is therefore highly unknown, unvalued and disregarded by both native and immigrant origin/descent samples. Some cases make exception to this: in fact in some circumstances (highly related to the education degree, socio-cultural and political awareness and participation) some immigrant origin/descent respondents imagine the European dimension and newly risen identity discourses, as a potential gateway to overcome the nationally generated and reproduced stigmas, labels and forms of exclusion.
- Social inclusion/exclusion experiences and their representations pass mainly through the lens of daily life and quotidian practices and habitudes, material and relational conditions, lifestyles and buying habits.

Starting from the results of the survey, all participant contractors have set up the ethnographic studies in all their respective localities.

Through the applying of different ethnographic methods (participative observation, field notes, in-depth interviews, focus groups, life histories, narratives, case studies and network analysis) all teams have collected a rich ethnographic database based on approx 220 key informants in all six participating countries.

The main results of the ethnographic studies can be so resumed:

- polarisation “us-them” and bilateral xenophobic stigmatisation;
- problems emerging mainly in the intergenerational dimension either at familiar level or at behaviour level in public spaces (adolescence-driven behaviour and tension on the tradition/transgression axis)
- Emergence in some contexts (Genoa, Rome, Barcelona, Utrecht, Berlin and Lisbon) and in relation to certain social strata (i.e. gender) of a separation (segregation and limited participation notions versus and in opposition to the marginalization dilemma. The bottom-up and “learning from” principles helped to reveal in some respect the emergence of such contradictory and often ethnocentric perspectives on social and cultural relations between mainstream societies and migrant origin minority communities. In some cases the extreme consequence is that while some groups do not want and actually do not integrate in any mean within the receiving social tissue, there is no chances for any interventions or policy to reverse and disentangle the situation. The ethnocentric assumptions on the contrary aims to provide a solution to any potential conflict in a top-down perspective, presuming the right for the majority to act in this way and the obligation for minorities to ineluctably and passively to suffer for it.
- Education on the one hand is largely perceived as the gateway to emancipation and acquisition of equal opportunities, but on the other hand in many respect it does not provide concretely the opportunity for encounter and exchange (despite being often the only space of intercultural socialisation). This situation is largely perceived as a structural fault of educative systems at national and local level. Despite this in some cases and contexts the overall expectations about education are generally accomplished.
- All youths have a double side attitude toward the future and their expectations. On the

one hand they are optimistic with the future if compared on the intergenerational axis (better off than their parents) while less positive and some how despondent if the same perspectives are endorsed from a peer point of view (they still believe they have no equal opportunities than their local native counterparts have).

- Informal socialisation spaces for sport, games, music, arts, street art or encounter in general are crucial public spaces in which young migrant origin/decent teenagers can perform (similarly as their local native counterparts) as free, empowered and creative actors of social change. This perceptions are in opposition to the institutionalized spaces where youths' empowerment is neither allowed or tolerated. In this respect institutionalized public spaces are perceived as more problematic and exposed to potential forms of discrimination and racism.
- In many local settings (and often with reference to only some specific ethno-national origin groups) low importance of the local area in given in peer socialisation perspective. Strong perception of discriminations and hyper-visibility of young migrants in the public arenas based on distinctiveness, inferiority are the most common situations in this respect.
- The nature and form of these strong perception of discrimination and racism are a question of debate. Indeed, the original combination of various sources of data, studies and policy reports on the situation of young migrants in six different countries, permitted to establish significant conclusions on the situation of young migrants experiences when taking into account also the results of the quantitative and qualitative studies. Yet, the new expectations towards migrants and, in particular, young migrants, results in attributing to them new responsibilities concerning their will to integrate in receiving societies. Broadly speaking the empirical studies showed that the majority of the young migrants experience forms of discrimination, which cannot be easily explained by conceptions of so-called classical forms of racism but can be conceived in a daily routine of subtle, subliminal and pragmatized forms of discrimination in public places – especially the institutional environments and contexts such as school, public transports, recruitment centres and employment situations.
- Discrimination is an important structural problem for a successful labour market entry. Several case studies show that most young migrants feel that discrimination on the labour market exists and that natives consequently have more opportunities. According to native employers, discrimination occurs but the problem is overexposed. Sometimes they had negative experiences with migrants in the past, which makes them reluctant to hire young migrants. Employers stress the importance of a sufficient education level a little more than young migrants. Furthermore, linguistic deficiencies and a lack of soft skills are important causes for a problematic labour market entry according to employers. The presumed lack of soft skills of young migrants in explaining a disadvantaged labour market position is a recurring theme in several case studies. It is also pointed out that this can be a form of indirect discrimination. The idea about migrants as not possessing the necessary skills can be a reason for employers not to hire them. On the contrary, most migrants are strongly motivated to work. They have a clear wish for upward social mobility and a company of your own is often seen as ideal, because this offers independence and power. Nevertheless, there are differences between migrants who work or study and the non-participants.
- The role of the mass media in this process of social construction and discrimination – as analysed in profundity throughout the ethnography – has beyond doubt been playing a significant role. Generally in all countries, mass media contributed to the creation of a common social imaginary stigmatising second generation youths and their behaviours in

public social spaces.

From the analysis of all these materials in each setting and a their subsequent cross-cutting comparison, TRESEGY network has finalized the last step of the project that terminated in May 2009. Along the overall 3 years of research activities implemented and supported by a constant circulation and exchange of information between partners, it emerged how it would have been more important to operate first a general reconstruction of the various research phases in each setting (self-reflective process) and then to reflect critically on potential indications, suggestion and evidence arising from the work done. The aim was to gain first a kind of gestalt-like vision of the whole picture in each setting and then to produce a cross-cutting transnational comparative analysis of main emerging findings that would be suitable both for local-national and European level dissemination and policy recommendation. A short mention should be referred to the self-reflective dimension. Following general research hypotheses formulated in the proposal and will to produce form of knowledge learning from the investigated social field, all actions, initiatives and form of production have been figured out in a self-rising, relational and reflective exchange with social actors. This approach resulted to be particularly innovative and fruitful in the last two steps of the project (ethnographic work and final project transversal analysis). Yet TRESEGY has often welled over the constraints of normal forms of production by producing i.e. a film on the informants' experiences in investigated social fields (see paragraph 1.5.) and organizing during all project's meetings different forms of second generation migrant origin/descent youths involvement to proactive roles in project's knowledge construction. The final dissemination conference in Lleida - Spain on May 2006 represented the greatest chance to promote a full dialogue between youths, researchers and institutional representatives (see appendix) .

The ability of public administration to study and identify those phenomena, which are consequences of the contradictory processes of globalisation, without doubt results fundamental in order to focus upon good and bad practices and to conduct an intervention inspired by good ones in juvenile groups. Further processes of social inclusion are always dynamic and belong to a complex multitude of factors. The conducted study confirms us very clearly the complexity of socio-cultural problems cannot be analysed in a simplified manner. In this sense, the first orientation of political practice is to continue the funding of investigations that appear to be fundamental to be able to adjust the complexity of social reality, to dismantle its clichés and stereotypes and adjust public administration to the corresponding interventions. It is inevitable to equip those social actors and local institutions that work for this matter every day with training that includes knowledge and basic methodological acquirements in order to encounter this dynamic heterogeneity that characterises our society. This allows us to understand the different languages existing among the different discourses with youngsters. We understand that there is a lack of studies that consider the elements pointed out within this text in order to analyse and understand a society that is situated within the perpetual process of globalisation.

We are aware of the importance that investigations being developed at local level can be complemented with international studies, as done in TRESEGY Project, so that each context can enrich the interpretation of the other. At the same time, reflecting good practices and adjustment of local policies at European level (see Del. 21 of all TRESEGY partners) allows us to share and compare not only the view on the collectives, but also how to carry out an investigation with youngsters that result to conform themselves in more and more plural dimensions in a socio-cultural sense. However, we are aware that new researches should make a major effort to involve

the target population more directly in the study, as a way to create social capital within the target groups, and as a way to facilitate agency and empowerment.

In general terms, as outlined by Colectivo IOÉ, the perception of young migrants regarding the EU is that the entry and residence in the EU is seen like an open space of unlimited possibilities. They expect from the EU a world of opportunities which has higher rates of identification than with the national contexts, especially in the south European states. However, the restrictive tendency of the EU regarding migration (*Directive of return*) and the social and working conditions (*Directive 'Bolkestien', ect.*) does not guarantee a stable future regarding equality. Thus it is an ambiguous situation that does not support the high numbers of young migrants to be involved in the social model construction of the EU. Only a change in the tendencies of the immigration and social policies could be understood as an important activity and advances of the loosely involved young migrants in the European Constitution.

A fundamental discourse about policy recommendations refers to the difficulty of nationality access in different states, including for children born in this country. As we have seen in our study, we can affirm generally speaking that for the access of nationality in European countries a "right of the blood" (*jus sanguinis*) predominantly exists and, complementary, a "right of the soil" (*jus soli*), which is theorised and applied very differently in the different territories. In different countries, such as Italy, Portugal, Spain and Germany, the application of this right is highly restricted, and i.e. in Italy children of foreign parents born in this country will only be able to obtain it one year after having lived in the country for 18 years since they were born. In this sense, it would be fundamental to establish a dialogue on various national levels in order to give importance and a higher legal weight to the *jus soli*. This right that exists in a direct form in France, allows the young children of migrants to project themselves in the country and to consider their future life like all the others children of the country.

At the same time, we think that it would be important to facilitate at a national level the right of family reunification. In fact, this right is considered in the legislative apparatus of all six investigated countries, even though the norms, the conditions and the procedures to obtain it are very variable. In fact, in countries such as France and the Netherlands, the model of family reunification is more open and are allowed more easily than how it is done e.g. in Italy, in Portugal, in Spain. We furthermore remark that in different countries, particularly the states in Southern Europe that are characterised by a "recent immigration", this topic is discussed a lot within the political sphere. In Spain and in Portugal, for instance, an important problem is arising in case of many reunifications, in particular for youngsters, who receive a residence permit but no work permit. Evidently, a situation of this type facilitates processes of social exclusion, both in the case of not entering the labour market and in the case of working without contract with a high probability of labour exploitation.

We are convinced that the legal status of undocumented migrant youth/youth of migrant origin is very important because without a clear intervention policy to regularise the status of undocumented youth of migrant origin, it is impossible to develop any comprehensive policies to improve their welfare. It is important to act while they are still minors, as once they become adults, legal frameworks become more complex. Thus, allowing and facilitating their legalization would certainly improve the opportunities of the undocumented youth of migrant origin. The early legalisation of the youth is very important, because as adults they are seen and perceived as criminal or violators of the law, and once they reach legal adulthood, they assume that it is due to their parents' irresponsibility or inabilities (lack of financial resources to pay, or lack of information, etc.) that they did not legalise them. Another important issue related to legalisation and youth, is the fact that most of the times when youth are granted residency they are prohibited from work, perpetuating their dependency status that hinders them enormously. In this sense,

youth are prevented from legally entering the labour market (or even doing paid internships) and are made a financial burden to the parents who need to provide for them.

To pass the critical preconditions that youngsters of migrant origin face in different receiving societies, that we analysed in our study, now some very general accounts can be drawn to discuss about policy recommendations:

- The general trend toward receiving model based on strict connection between work and permit of residence. Discrimination process based on labor condition;
- Permanent production of a mediatic panic over “the migrant”. Sustain to campaign in which migrant are imagined as subaltern, obedient and useful labor force (especially in the way they accomplish our societies’ economic demands). Youths due to their condition and position in receiving societies normally and constitutively contradict this perspective;
- Recurrent discourses on integration and multiculturalism that remain empty words in the way they are not transformed into active and concrete set of targeted actions. Large and diffuse rethoric discourses on this especially at educational and school level;

In this sense, the ultimate preconditions and goals in this sense should be:

- Not to reproduce forms of subaltern integration;
- Not to reproduce a dichotomy and binary vision of Us/Them relationship;
- A better understanding of the local pertinences;
- To transform the system of availabilities into a one of opportunities.

In this sense, there is a relative coincidence between the different studies in consideration of good political practices and those ambits that have been considered to be important, which facilitate or complicate the inclusion of foreign and migrant populations at local levels. In general, they correspond to what we call a *vicious circle* in opposition to a *virtuous circle* of exclusion, i.e. the formation for labour, quality education of children, multiple relations in the ethnic community and with the exterior; social, cultural and religious participation, health and the access to social contributions, feeling of security and adequate collective equipments in residential areas (transport etc.). Therefore, while accounting for migrant origin youth, one of the main objective of any socio-economic intervention in terms of policy should be turned to sustain and follow migrant origin youths agencies. Departing from a proactive and active vision of social actors’ agencies (therefore not seeing and picturing them as passive victims) the following main objectives should be pursued:

- *A policy for visibility* in terms of recognition policies in all means and with particular reference to the ones that through visual and performance would allow non-stereotypical forms of “presence”;
- *A policy for distinction* in order to support second generation migrant origin youths’ symbolic and social capital formation not based exclusively on ethnicity;
- *A policy for hyper-personhood* to contrast with any mean the “disappearance” effect in receiving societies (such as promoting different forms of ethnic entrepreneurship and collective performances). At the same time it would be important to make valuable the multiple aspects, expertise and abilities that migrant origin youths would be able to bring into ageing in public spaces and arenas;
- *A policy for making home* in other words to support migrant origin youths participation to public and social life in receiving societies and more specifically to enhance youths’ experiences of public spaces management in different mean and forms.

In accordance with the aforementioned points some general policy making recommendations can be made in a more concrete way:

- A bottom-up construction of incorporation projects planned, driven and managed by youths' actions at individual, group and association level. These actions should be accounted both at individual-familiar level as well as based on collective form of belonging;
- Reorganization of public spaces both at symbolic and physical level (se i.e. the case of religious belonging as a discriminating issue) to overwhelm ongoing situation of intergenerational and intercultural conflicts. The former seem to be more relevant than the latter at some stage indeed. This process should be guaranteed throughout direct addressees participation in negotiation and selection for initiatives. The crucial emerging point is that, actually, selection process of any potential initiative stands in a top-down logic and implementation framework. Resources made available should be shared and distributed via a peer-to-peer selection process and negotiation at the base of society and at very local level. The role and power of local sub-urban municipalities should be enlarged in this respect;
- In general terms, a process of symbolic recognition and dialogue with a determined part of youth that had been stigmatised, mediatically and socially is needed. We consider the attempt of conducting public recognition, dialogue and compromise between social parties to be the most productive and correct way to implement an intervention into stigmatised groups. We furthermore regard conflict reduction through social recognition and dialogue to be the most intelligent way of trying to contribute to the construction of integration processes of these youngsters into our society.
- To support: youths' participation to shared activities of research (to know about you and the others); youths' empowerment in a proximity policy construction since from the very local up to the national; youths' organization around different form of association. Particular attention should be paid to the generational dimension rather than to the ethno-national one. In other words all efforts should be turned toward youths cultures' construction on the base of common condition of being young rather than being from a place or another;
- To promote migrant origin youths' soft skills at all level and not only at school one. The ability to use receiving society language, relational and normative codes in a proactive ways is one of the main objectives that should be pursued. These actions would be able to support migrant origin youths in a long term and future perspective. The ability to cope in a positive ageing perspective is essential to support their transition to adulthood and access to resources made available at individual and collective level (a constructive and context sensible implementation of availabilities into opportunities).

1.5. FEATURE DOCUMENTARY

The film has been imagined as the main dissemination tool toward a broader public audience . As in such from the beginning of the project it has been agreed that the production and filming of the documentary would be divided by the two teams who had showed an interest in doing the filming: UFP and Univ. Genoa. The two coordinators for this task were respectively, Paula Mota Santos (UFP) and Eugenia Teodorani (Univ. Genoa). Already in the first meeting of the consortium in Genoa in 2006, the two filmmakers presented their ideas for the film, requesting remaining partners to suggest any other ideas; a timetable of what was required to each team to hand in to the filmmaking teams was also outlined. In every WP meeting there was allocated a time slot in the meeting calendar for the discussion and updating of the consortium on issues related to the documentary. As a work methodology, the film crews worked in close collaboration with the

researchers team in each terrain; the individuals filmed were so by indication of the group of researchers working that unit; the general script for each terrain was also constructed between the filmmaking team and the researchers team so as to make sure the representation of the reality in film was according to the researchers' aims and relation to the terrain. However, as a work that is an artistic endeavour, the documentary produced is always the view of its makers on the reality being filmed, and the filmmakers are never representatives of any community, they are only representatives of themselves and their cinematographic vision. Having said this, one of the major filmmaker concerns, as to make sure the documentary would serve the project's purpose adequately, i.e., that would supply the viewers with the diversity encountered by the researchers and the project as a whole and that would promote discussion and reflection of the project's subject matter.

The final result is a 57' feature length documentary entitled "*IN BETWEEN – 09 takes from the European scene*". In it the nine terrains are featured through one or more than one individual and respective communities, in it the individuals express in their own terms their main concerns and perspectives on the issues tackled by TRESEGY during the project.

1.6. APPENDIX

The final dissemination conference that took place in Lleida Spain on May 2009 has been designed to discuss the issue of inclusion and exclusion among second generation migrant origin/descent youths in a open and dialogic structure with both representatives from the institutions and public bodies and with same representative youths from TRESEGY participating localities. Especially the last public session has been specifically turned to this end and researchers, stake-holders, politicians, social workers and young second generation immigrant origin/descent youths joined together to discuss TRESEGY findings and main emerging issue in a future perspective.

Participating youths from Lisbon decided to take a step forward by presenting and reading to the audience a declaration letter as their way to make clear and to claim for a proactive role in decision making processes and policy making planning about their condition and future.

It represented also a great chance for TRESEGY project to fulfil one of the objective of the project to create a new working framework – and not only in scientific academic terms – to give voice to those individuals that are part and represent the future of our societies. TRESEGY project considered such occasion as an opportunity and decided to make this text an integral part of official documentation of the project. Hereafter the text is delivered in its integral original version followed by a translation in English.

Carta Aberta dos Jovens do Vale da Amoreira aos políticos

Estamos aqui para vos contar a história da realidade de um “povo” cujo dia-a-dia consiste numa grande luta. Esta luta não tem como fim a conquista de um Império ou de um território, mas a conquista de uma vida, a conquista da sobrevivência e, a conquista do direito de sermos considerados cidadãos no país onde vivemos.

Há muitos anos atrás, os nossos avós e os nossos pais saíram de África à procura de algo melhor para a geração seguinte, e vieram para o Vale da Amoreira que é considerado um dos bairros mais críticos de Portugal. Chegados ao país do “aqui será melhor” repararam que as coisas não seriam assim tão boas para o futuro dos seus descendentes. Nós, os jovens imigrantes ou descendentes de imigrantes, nascidos e/ou criados em Portugal, somos a maior prova disso.

Todos nós temos sonhos, sonhamos com um futuro melhor, sonhamos em ser doutores, sonhamos fazer algo de bom, sonhamos ser reconhecidos e quem sabe, até ganhar prémios, seja lá em que área for. No entanto, para nós, os jovens do Vale da Amoreira, bastou crescermos um pouco para nos certificarmos de que as portas, para a realização dos nossos sonhos, estão trancadas a sete chaves e só com muita luta é que as conseguimos abrir.

O Vale da Amoreira é considerado por nós, os seus habitantes, a África em Portugal, onde as pessoas, em alguns aspectos, são mais calorosas, mais amigas e mais unidas. Há uns anos atrás era quase um lugar perfeito para qualquer negro que viesse de África porque assim nem sentiria muita diferença. Todavia, hoje o Vale da Amoreira, é um “povo” dividido em grupos, com grandes lutas físicas e graves problemas sociais.

Por ser um bairro pequeno, não existem muitos postos de trabalho no Vale da Amoreira, logo é-se obrigado a ir procurar emprego nas áreas em redor (Barreiro, Lisboa, Moita, Setúbal, etc). No entanto, no momento da entrevista de trabalho somos confrontados com alguns pontos negativos, como por exemplo a cor da pele (a raça negra) e o lugar onde vivemos. Por causa disso, muitas vezes as pessoas dizem “Negro do Vale da Amoreira?!” e depois rasgam o currículo. Esta situação é muito frequente e, no final, quem fica com o emprego é alguém com menos qualificações e experiência.

Passar dias e dias na rua à procura de emprego é cansativo, até para quem depois de algum tempo consegue um lugar. Imagine você o que é passar dias e dias na rua à procura de um meio de subsistência durante meses e anos, e voltar a casa sem respostas!

Muitas vezes, a frustração e o desespero da vida dos nossos vizinhos, obriga-os a seguirem outras formas de vida (tais como, roubar, traficar droga e a prostituição) que, infelizmente, são bastante escolhidas pelas pessoas do Vale da Amoreira.

A nossa casa também deixou de ser segura porque os grupos e gangs que se formaram aumentaram os problemas dentro da comunidade, o que faz com que as pessoas dos bairros vizinhos não gostem de nós, sobretudo porque a população é maioritariamente imigrante.

Para além disso, as crianças acabam por ser influenciadas pelos acontecimentos que ocorrem todos os dias. Como assistem a lutas e discussões, julgam ser algo normal e acabam por seguir os passos dos mais velhos. Os jovens que ontem sonhavam, hoje ao verem o desespero daqueles que não conseguiram atingir os seus sonhos, preferem colocar todos os planos atrás das costas e ingressar no mundo do trabalho antes do tempo, no tráfico de drogas ou em qualquer outra actividade, onde se possa ganhar dinheiro fácil. Com tantas frustrações o ciclo repete-se e vai piorando de geração em geração.

Tanto a educação escolar como a de casa não são más, o problema é que os professores não lutam por nós nem pelo nosso futuro, e os nossos pais não podem impedir que as nossas amigadas nos influenciem. Por isso, é que encontramos no Vale da Amoreira muitas raparigas que são mães antes dos quinze anos.

A legalização é outro problema. A nossa autorização de residência foi complicada de adquirir porque para além de nos custar bastante dinheiro, também nos obrigou a faltar à escola e ao trabalho para resolver o assunto. Para além disso, o tempo de espera para obtermos a autorização de residência pode demorar meses, mesmo que estejamos a viver em Portugal à mais de dez anos. A nossa cor é o maior entrave nas nossas vidas, mas isto é ainda pior para aqueles que são negros e portugueses porque são excluídos socialmente. Se somos tão postos de fora, que outra solução temos? Como forma de nos livrarmos das nossas frustrações, muitos de nós preferem seguir o caminho do sexo e da marginalidade, visto que não temos nada a perder.

Somos negros? Sim!

Somos imigrantes? Sim!

Somos negros portugueses? Sim!

Somos pessoas como outras quaisquer? Sim!

Então, porque é que somos tão excluídos? Deixem-nos mostrar um pouco da nossa realidade, da nossa cultura, das nossas capacidades, como trabalhadores, amigos, doutores, cidadãos ... e como PESSOAS. Deixem-nos mostrar que, mesmo crescendo num bairro crítico, valemos a pena! Valemos o esforço! Lutem por nós, lutem connosco! Lutem pelo nosso futuro e o futuro do país e até mesmo, por um mundo melhor!

Pedimos-vos ajuda, dêem-nos uma oportunidade, e pedimos-vos que valorizem as nossas capacidades. Por exemplo, quando ocorrem actividades organizadas pelos programas de apoio aos bairros críticos, porque é que são dadas por pessoas vindas dos outros cantos do país e cheios de formação e diplomas? Não querendo parecer ingratos, isso a nós não nos motiva. Existem muitas pessoas, no Vale da Amoreira desempregadas, com muitas capacidades de ensino e socialização. Se os programas investissem em nós e dessem formação para trabalharmos em parceria, os programas poderiam ser mais eficientes no bairro, pois seriam pessoas que conhecem e vivem a realidade do bairro. Isto não só ajudaria as pessoas a saírem das suas frustrações mas também seriam um exemplo para nós, uma vez que já passaram por vários problemas e ainda assim, conseguem manter-se de pé. Por sua vez, isto além de nos tornar mais unidos também nos daria mais motivação para continuar a perseguir os nossos sonhos e acreditar que pudemos ser diferentes, apesar do bairro onde vivemos.

Estamos aqui para representar o Vale da Amoreira para provar que somos pessoas capazes de representar um país. Nós não somos uma cor ... somos Portugal e se apostarem em nós, também estarão a apostar em Portugal. Não olhem para nós como o lado negro de Portugal, mas sim como o futuro de Portugal. Um futuro que precisa de ajuda, precisa de ser ensinado, precisa de ser olhado e precisa de novos modelos.

Um futuro que está aqui ... O Vale da Amoreira.

Obrigado!

Os Jovens do Vale da Amoreira

Vânia, Jacinta, Dino, Edson, Rita, Alegria, Carla e Gonçalo

Open Letter of the Youth of Vale da Amoreira to policy makers

We are here to tell the real story of one “community”, whose daily lives consist of one huge battle. This battle does not have as its objective the conquest of one Empire or of one territory, but instead the conquest of life, survival and the right to be considered citizens in the country where we live.

A long time ago, our grandparents and parents left Africa looking for something better, for the next generation, and they went to Vale da Amoreira, considered one of the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods. On arrival in the country that they thought to be better, they noticed that things would not be so good for the future of their descendants. We, the immigrant youth or immigrant descendants, born and/or raised in Portugal, are the greatest proof of that.

All of us have dreams, we dreamed of a better future, to go to university, to do something good, to be recognized and, who knows, even to earn prizes, in whatever area. However, for us, the youth of Vale da Amoreira, it was only necessary to grow up a little bit to realize that the doors are closed for us to fulfill our dreams. So it is only with by battling hard that is it possible to open them.

Vale da Amoreira is considered by us, its inhabitants, as a piece of Africa in Portugal, where the people, in some aspects, are very warm, friendly and united. Some years ago, Vale da Amoreira was almost the perfect place for any black person that came from Africa because they would not

feel too much difference. However, at the moment, Vale da Amoreira is one “community” divided into groups with great physical battles and serious social problems.

As it is a small neighbourhood, there are not very many jobs inside the Vale da Amoreira, hence it is compulsory to go and find a job in the surrounding areas (Barreiro, Lisboa, Moita, Setúbal, etc). Nevertheless, during interviews we are confronted with some negative aspects, such as skin colour (Black race) and the place where we live. For that reason, some people say “a Black from Vale da Amoreira?!” and then rip up the CV. This situation is quite common and, in the end, the person who gets the job is someone with less qualifications and experience.

Spending day after day on the streets looking for a job is quite hard, even for someone who, after sometime, can find one. Imagine what it is like spending long days, months and years on the streets, looking for a means of subsistence and then to return home without answers?

Many times, the frustration and the desperate lives of our neighbours compel them to follow other ways of life (for example, theft, drug dealing, and prostitution) which are, unfortunately, quite commonly chosen by the people of Vale da Amoreira.

Our houses are no longer secure because of the formation of several groups and gangs who have increased the problems inside the community. As a result, the people who live nearby the neighbourhood do not like us because the population is mainly constituted by immigrants.

In addition, the children are influenced by the environment inside the neighbourhood. As it is quite common to see fights and arguments during the day, children believe that this is normal and because of that, they follow the same behaviour of the older people. The youth who yesterday dreamed of a better future, see today the desperation of those who could not achieve their dreams, and so prefer to turn their back on their plans and enter into the labour market before their time, start drug dealing or other kinds of activities where they can earn easy money. With so many frustrations, the cycle is perpetuated and worsens from one generation to another.

Education in school and at home is not so bad. The problem is that the teachers do not fight for us nor for our future, and our parents cannot do anything about our friendships, nor about the influence that they have on us. For that reason, in Vale da Amoreira, it is quite common to find young mothers who are less than fifteen years old.

Legalisation is also a problem. Our residence permit was quite difficult to attain and it cost us not only lots of money but also lots of time. For instance, some of us needed to skip work or school. After all, we needed to wait many months, before we received a residence permit, even though most of us have been living in Portugal for more than ten years.

Our colour is considered by us to be the greatest burden in our lives, but this is worse for those who are black and have Portuguese nationality because they are also socially excluded. When we are so excluded, what solution do we have? As a way to vent our frustrations, many young people chose a marginal existence and sex, since we do not have anything to lose.

Are we black? Yes!

Are we immigrants? Yes!

Are we black Portuguese? Yes!

Are we people like anyone else? Yes!

So, why are we so excluded? Let us show you a little bit of our reality, our culture, and our skills as workers, friends, students, citizens ... and as PEOPLE. Let us show you that, even though we have grown up in a disadvantaged neighbourhood, we have value! We are worth the effort! Fight for us, fight with us! Fight for our future and the future of the country and even more, fight for a better world!

We are asking for your help, give us one opportunity, and believe in us and in our skills. For instance, when there are projects organised by governmental support programmes for disadvantaged neighbourhoods, why are they taught by people from other parts of the country

with lots of training and certificates? Without being ungrateful, this does not motivate us. There are too many people in Vale da Amoreira who are unemployed, and who have the capacities to do these kinds of things. If the governmental programmes invested in us, providing us with specific training to work in partnership with them, the programmes could be more effective in the neighbourhood because only we know the reality of the neighbourhood. This would not only relieve people from the frustration of their lives, but they would be seen as an example for us, since they have already experienced many problems, and yet they still keep on fighting. This in turn will make us more united and will give us some motivation to pursue our dreams and believe that we can be different, despite the neighbourhood where we live.

We are here to represent Vale da Amoreira to prove that we are able to represent a country. We are not a colour ...we are Portugal and if you invest in us, you will also be investing in Portugal. Do not look at us as the black side of Portugal, but as the future of Portugal. A future that needs help, needs to be taught, needs to be seen and needs new models.

A future that is here ... in Vale da Amoreira

Thank you!

The Youth of Vale da Amoreira

Vânia, Jacinta, Dino, Edson, Rita, Alegria, Carla and Gonçalo