



UL Engage Reports

2017, No. 5

#Youth Engage Enhancing Civil Society within an International Context

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#Youth Engage

Enhancing Civil Society within an International Context

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Data underpinning this report was recorded and collated in part fulfilment for the UL Practicum - graded module BR4103/BR4104 on the BA HPSS by Mary Jackman (ID: 14117703) and Kevin Saude (ID: 13067834), May 2017

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ABSTRACT



The *Limerick Be Heard #Youth Engage* project addresses the societal challenge to build inclusive, innovative and reflective societies. The project is a community collaboration between Limerick Youth Service, Limerick Comhairle na nÓg and the Department of Politics and Public Administration, University of Limerick. The project links together four existing community partnerships between youth workers, young people and academics, in four different sites, each with collaborative connections to LYS and/or UL. Together we have agreed to run 'mirror' projects based on the Limerick Be Heard initiative, which carried out youth and community workshops to address political participation and engagement in Spring 2016 (Forde-Murray, 2016, UL Engage Report, No. 4). The aim of the project is to build capacity, resources, tools and techniques – made by young people and designed for young people – to promote political participation and political agency for justice and inclusion.



INTRODUCTION

One of the greatest contemporary threats to our capacity to build a social and economic framework that promotes and protects social justice is increasing political disillusion and disengagement. The rights of the most vulnerable are only upheld by the constant vigilance of empowered citizens willing to speak on their behalf. In the face of increasing political cynicism, apathy and isolation, this project is designed to empower young people (aged 14-25) to develop their own political understanding and agency – for the preservation, protection and promotion of equality and human rights – via mainstream political mobilization and electoral impact.

INSPIRATION AND OPPORTUNITY

The 2015 Yes Equality Campaign energized voters and presented a very new model for political campaigning and active citizenship in Ireland. The tone of the campaign was deliberately open and conversational, summed up by the campaign theme ‘I’m Voting Yes, Ask Me Why?’. The result was a refreshingly different political campaign which, instead of the usual podium politics and political posturing, was intensely local and personal, staffed by 100s of gay and lesbian canvassers, supported by friends and families and floods of volunteers (Healy *et al*, 2016). It was, according to political analyst and commentator Noel Whelan ‘the story of how the two pillar organizations for gay and lesbian rights, with some input from a handful of political and media specialists, built the most extensive and effective civic society campaign ever seen in Irish politics’ (*Irish Times*, 25 May 2015). Aside from the passing of the marriage equality referendum with an unambiguous majority (62%), the Yes Equality campaign provided many lessons regarding the potential for a new positive style of political engagement. The Yes to Equality campaign was able to engage and connect with voters in ways that the traditional political parties had all but forgotten about. Many on the campaign found themselves newly politicized. It was, according to one local activist ‘an example of a real grass roots movement that was facilitated by a centralized idea’ and after the campaign, there was much talk about what issues ‘the rainbow army’ might contribute to next.

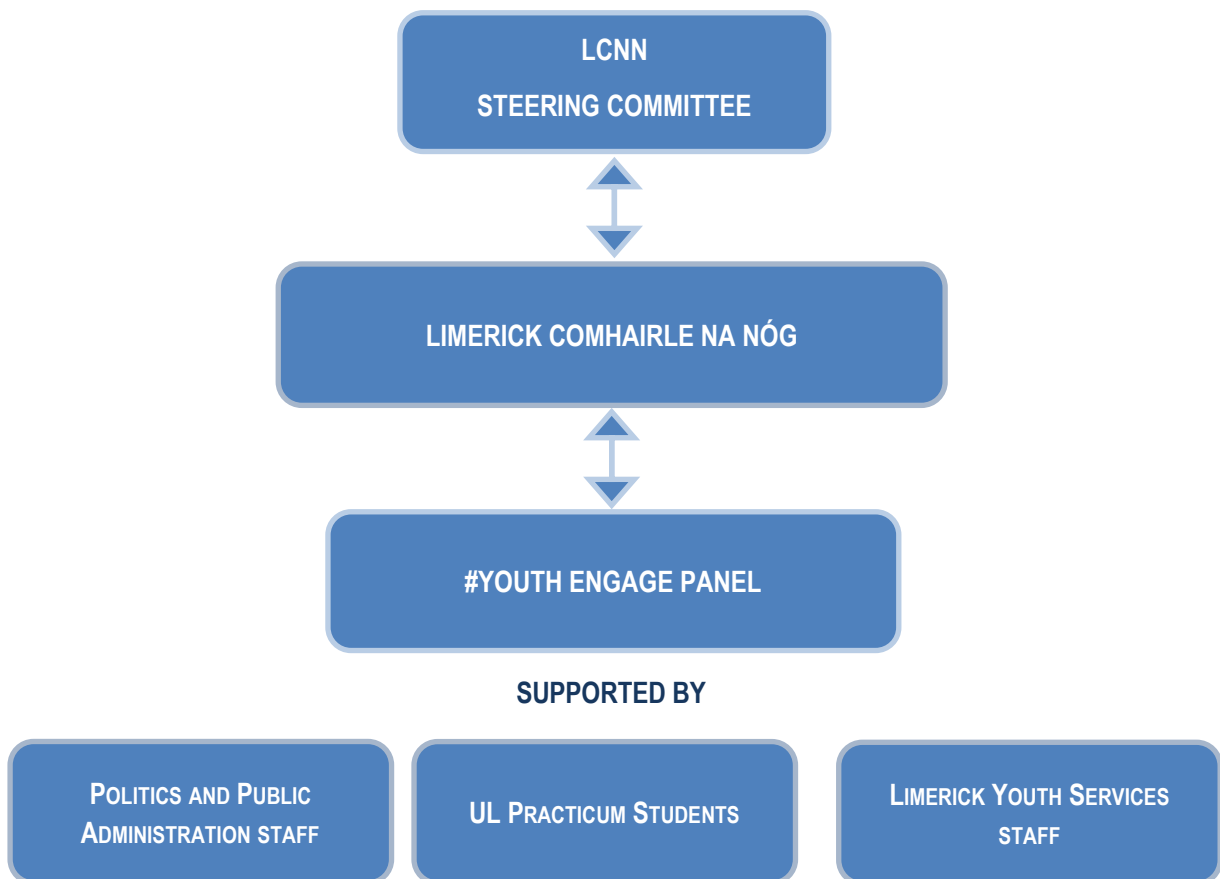
Less than twelve months later, the Irish General Election in February 2016 presented an opportunity to see how this positive political campaigning approach might work in the broader political context of a general election. The Limerick Be Heard project was an attempt to apply the lessons learned from the Yes Equality campaign and to harness this energy for a local campaign to increase the vote in Limerick. The Limerick Be Heard project aimed to establish Limerick as the place where politics can be conducted differently – in a way that is inclusive, creative, subversive, diverse, respectful and even fun. The campaign was designed to contribute positively to personal and community capacity-building to develop political understanding and citizen engagement.

In an evaluation of the project (Forde Murray, 2016), the responses of Young People to a series of #GE16Flashdebates and workshops were particularly notable: the undergraduate students who had helped facilitate the debates and workshops gave enthusiastic endorsements to this alternative and applied way of learning about politics; and the Young People who participated in the workshops found them interesting and informative as well as interactive and engaging. Both sets of Young People were keen to do more, leaving only one question: why wait for another election?

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Limerick #Youth Engage was designed by a collaborative partnership between staff from Limerick Youth Services (LYS), Limerick Comhairle na nÓg (LCNN) and the Department of Politics and Public Administration (PPA), at the University of Limerick. The project was overseen by the LCNN Steering Committee comprising representatives from: the Education and Training Board (ETB); Limerick Youth Services (LYS); Tusla (the national child and family agency); West Limerick Resources (a county-based community development organization); Foróige (the leading Youth Organisation in Ireland); Limerick City and County Council and Limerick Comhairle na nÓg (LCCN). The Steering Committee supported the work of this project by providing feedback, advice and ideas regarding the project's design and implementation. Project evaluation was integrated into the design of all project activities and collated by two UL students in part fulfilment for the UL Practicum M-graded module BR4103/BR4104. Both these students are credited in the authorship of this report.

Figure 1 Governance structures for #Youth Engage



In order to develop the project aims and objectives, a panel of youth project volunteers were recruited from LYS and UL. These Young People would constitute the 'Youth Ambassadors for Democracy' in our project. The majority of them comprised former Limerick Comhairle na nÓg members who had expressed an interest in continuing their engagement and, in particular, in developing Young People's workshops as a follow on from the Limerick Be Heard initiative.

PROJECT RATIONALE

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Limerick Be Heard #Youth Engage project was designed to capture the creativity and dynamism of Limerick's Young people as a strategic resource for the promotion of human rights and political engagement, thereby challenging the prevailing political orthodoxy that Young People are not interested in politics. The central ambition of the project was to make political engagement more inclusive and representative of the often marginalized voice of young people, thereby combatting stereotypical attitudes towards Young People about their capacity and commitment to be involved in positive political change.

In doing so, the project sought to create forums for political engagement where young people could feel confident and comfortable to have their say about what matters to them, supported by co-created educational resources and activities. Through creative Youth Work facilitation methods, the project attempted to connect Young People across Limerick City and County to build a collective and authentic voice for change.

The creation of mirror groups by international project partners in the USA, South Africa, Sweden and Malta enables the programme to transcend the local and develop an international consciousness regarding human rights, global citizenship and the importance of Youth Voice as a vehicle for change.

The collaboration between academic institutions and pro-active Youth and Community Services facilitates evidenced and evaluated peer to peer learning and enables the creation of practical resources by Young People for Young People.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

The premise of this collaborative project was that shared expertise in youth work facilitation and political agency could be used to develop an engaging, interactive and youth-friendly series of workshops and related activities that could be used by young people in peer to peer workshops designed to foster a sense of political engagement and empowerment.

To do this, we worked with a small group of Young People who had expressed an interest in developing this kind of workshop for young people. Our approach was inductive and reflexive. We began with a discussion about what the group would like to achieve. Thereafter, the group met approximately every two weeks for two hours, taking a different topic or idea each week and developing activities to accompany it. University partners to the project documented these workshops in order to capture both the aims (the learning outcomes) and means (the activities used to produce them). Records of these workshops are contained in Section A of this report. The Youth Engage workshops enabled us to develop more informed insight into the motivations and aspirations of young people. With our small volunteer group, we were able to create workshop topics in response to their suggestions and later discuss the best means of engaging with them. It was as a consequence of this work that the Youth Engage group devised a template for a Schools Workshop. The 'Youth Engage Schools Roadshow' was delivered by members of the Youth Engage group, with assistance from younger members of Limerick Comhairle na nÓg, to five local schools.

The exact nature of the delivery varied a little from presentation to presentation, following a review by the presenters of what worked best after each session. Details of the Schools Workshops are contained in Section B of this report.

The experience of work-shopping with the older Youth Engage group and the younger Limerick Comhairle na nÓg group, both in the preparation of workshop materials and in its presentation to school groups later – all of which were evaluated by participants - gave us a rich set of ideas and activities for developing young people’s interest and capacity in political action and civic engagement to advance democracy and human rights. This enabled the project team to develop a Youth Programme of activities for political action and democratic advocacy. The intention is that this programme will add to the range of activities that can be offered in Limerick Youth Services from September 2017. The co-created programme schedule and activities will be available on the open source digital platform designed and curated by Limerick Council as part of its Digital Strategy. The Youth Ambassadors for Democracy programme is detailed in Section C of this report.

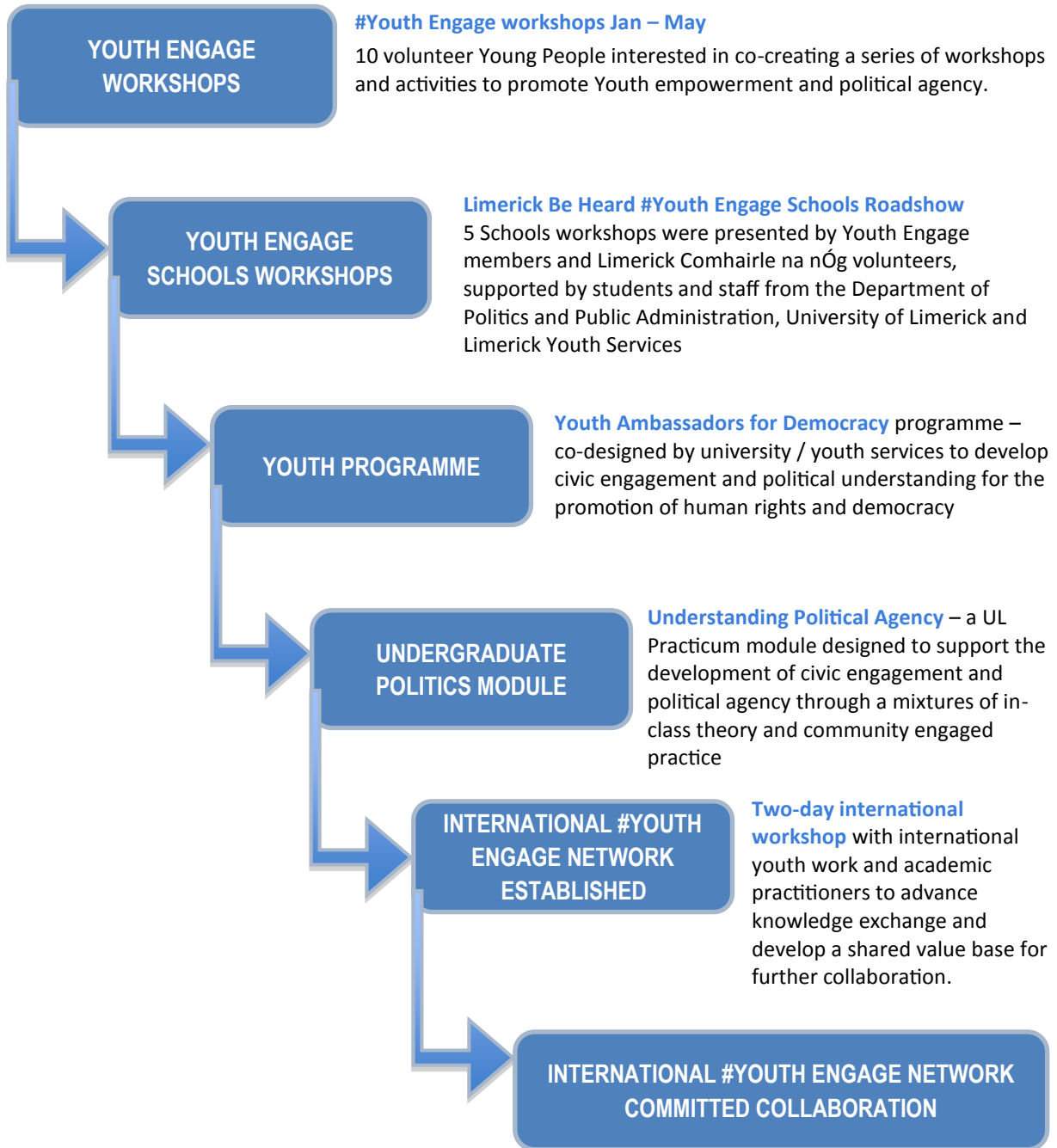
Following UL students’ successful and enthusiastic participation in the project activities, supporting and recording workshops and helping to develop workshop resources, it was decided to create an undergraduate politics module that would run in parallel to the Youth Ambassador programme. The new module in Political Agency enables students of politics to develop their understanding of political agency – both in the theoretical frameworks used to explain political behaviour and in practical application through their support for, and engagement with, the Youth Ambassadors for Democracy programme. These two programmes together are mutually supportive, making the collaboration between the University and Limerick Youth Services more sustainable in the longer term, and providing more support for the development of political understanding and civic engagement between a wide range of young people from different backgrounds. An outline of the undergraduate module in Political Agency is provided in Section D of this report.

As was mentioned at the outset of this report, these activities were designed to be carried out in parallel with ‘mirror groups’ in Boston, Malta and Sweden. In May 2017, all participating partners met together in Limerick to discuss the development of these activities and the scope for further international collaboration. A summary of the project conference and activities is provided in Section E of this report.

This meeting led to the creation of an international #Youth Engage network. The composition of network partners offers a variety of differentiated opportunities for future and further collaborations between different combinations of partners, based on alternative funding calls and criteria. The May meeting led to a series of collaborative project proposals including: Erasmus exchanges between the Maltese and Limerick ‘Be Heard’ groups; collaborative teaching on undergraduate modules between UMass Boston and University of Limerick; a variety of programmatic exchanges; and the creation of a larger-scale research project on political agency and civic participation.

Details of proposed outcomes are contained in the concluding section of this report.

Figure 2: #Youth Engage Knowledge Cascade








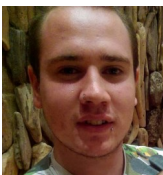





Projected outcomes include: creation of joint platform for shared resources; shared undergraduate module teaching between UMB and UL; MA collaboration between IFWEA and UL; CAROLINE post-doc application; programmatic exchanges between partners; and the establishment of a global network supporting Young People’s political agency and participation

A: YOUTH ENGAGE WORKSHOPS

Limerick #Youth Engage is a project aimed at promoting political engagement and political awareness among young people. In order to do this, LYS recruited nine Youth Volunteers who had expressed an interest in developing peer to peer workshops. The group came from a variety of backgrounds.

The one element in common was that all of the group had previously been active users of Limerick Youth Services as members of Lava Javas Youth Café and/or Limerick Comhairle na nÓg. This meant that the group was fully conversant with youth work methods and approaches. The group was augmented by two UL Practicum students who were keen to develop more applied approaches to the understanding of political agency and young peoples' political participation

Table 1: membership of the #Youth Engage group

			
Keith Allen	Kathlyn Coleman	Bethany Hanrahan	Thomas Keirns-Horan
			
Mary Jackman	Callum Mudge	Naomi O'Mara	Alannah O'Neill
			
Ryan O'Shaughnessy	Kevin Saude	Andy Yu	

Responses and inputs collected in workshops at early stages of the project have shown that youth disinterest in and indifference towards politics is, in fact, misconceived. Instead, young people have shown a real desire to make a difference, but express concerns that their voices are seldom heard and that they have not been provided with the tools, knowledge, awareness and opportunities to materialise their ambitions to make a difference.

Eight Youth Engage workshops were held between January – May 2017

WORKSHOP 1

17th January
2017

INTRODUCTORY MEETING AND PROJECT BRIEFING

- Introductions / ice breakers
- Project overview
- Hopes / Expectations
- Group contract
- Making a difference – discussion
- Group work
- Pizza
- Reflection

6.30-8.30pm,
UL C1060

1 Introduction / icebreakers

We used a variety of ice-breakers each week. The first— name, one good thing, one bad thing that happened last week—is also used by the Boston group, where it is known as ‘Roses and Thorns’.

2 Project overview

LIMERICK BE HEARD #YOUTH ENGAGE

In the face of increasing political cynicism, apathy and isolation, this project is designed to empower young people to develop their own political understanding and agency, that is: to feel that they matter; that their opinions matter; and that they have the means to make a difference, in their own lives and the lives of others.

In this project, we wish to combat stereotypical attitudes towards young people regarding their capacity and commitment to be involved in positive political change.

The group discussed...

- What this new committee wanted to achieve (building young people’s interest in politics),
- Agreement that the group came together because they all have shown interest and capability
- Linking this project with other similar groups in South Africa.
- Building from the Limerick Be Heard project to become more political in their message.
- T-shirts for their group.
- Agreement that everyone is expected to show up and support and encourage new members of Comhairle na nÓg.

3 Hopes / Expectations

In this exercise, participants were each given two sticky post-it notes. They were asked to write down their expectations on one, and their concerns on the other. Participants then placed the post-it on a large poster, divided into two sections: expectations and concerns. There followed a facilitated discussion about the groups expectations and concerns and how both might be met. What we found was that our young people were ambitious and motivated to ‘make a difference’

4 Group contract

On a flip chart the letters of the word CONTRACT were written down the left hand side of the poster. The group were encouraged to suggest good rules for the group beginning with each letter. During discussion, the following were agreed: C – confidentiality; O – openness; N – no bullying; T – tea; R – respect; A – amiable, C – coffee; T – trust. This group has worked together over the last two years, for them, the contract was a routine part of project set-up with room for a bit of banter.

5 Making a Difference

Group was presented with two life stories from age 14 to 20 something. Each life story was presented in key bullet points, marking ‘significant developments along the life story’. After a summary of the two life-stories, the group was asked to predict who would ‘live happily ever after’. The intention was to talk about a variety of life experiences, good, bad and indifferent. The primary aim of this discussion was to explore what makes people happy – is it life events, or approach to life events. During this discussion the idea of personal resilience was explored in tandem with resilience to changes in life (as exemplified by the stories). Where do people get resilience from? What do they do with it? What can people achieve? The purpose of this discussion was to explore the strength of personal disposition as the most powerful means to make a difference.

This discussion led naturally to examples of social action and social change. The presentation was intended only to prime the group as a means to promote discussion.

The group were keen to get started and everyone had a lot of opinions when it came to why their peers seem to be disconnected the political system.

- Young people felt that they were not listened to,
- That they aren’t taught enough when at school
- That the connection of how political decisions made have an impact on young people’s life’s are not made

Movements like the Marriage Equality referendum campaign were discussed, and particularly the means by which this campaign (which resonated strongly with all the group) had gained momentum via a nationwide dialogue. The ‘momentum effect’ was noted in that the more popular the ‘yes campaign’ became, the more people wanted to join it. The group felt that the diversity and inclusivity of the people who had become involved had created new synergies between a lot of people, which meant that in the end this campaign had a very significant impact, on politics more generally, as much as on the referendum vote itself.

The discussion then led quite naturally to the next big question, which was: ‘How can this group make a difference?’

Through discussion the group noted that:

- Making themselves heard was only half the battle,
- Knowing what they would like to mobilize around was crucial.

6 Group Work

Participants were divided into 3 groups. Each group was given a question related to 'making a difference':

1. What are the obstacles?
2. How do you keep people involved?
3. What to do to get people interested?

The group was split into four smaller groups each with a question, such as **"What to do to get people interested"**. There were several suggestions made such as the crazier the better,

- March from Limerick to Dublin stopping in town and building interest,
- Using resources such as UL Graduates, Celeb backing, Creating Vlogs,.

This discussion took wings and the young people were talking about creating a movement which as many young people as possible went for election and even if it failed this would create a movement of young people being involved in politics, (f**k off movement).

Outcome:

- Agreed on meeting on the 28/01/17,
- All attending the residential stay 20 – 21/01/17,
- Agreement to encourage new members of Comhairle na nÓg,

7 Pizza

Food would work better first as a means to socialize into the meeting, get gossip over and give a real break between end of school day and work, and beginning of evening and project.

Also, need more creative thinking about the food that is offered. – Raises issues about space. It would be cheaper to buy food to prepare and sociable, but this needs a space to facilitate this.

Reflection

The attention span of young people is quite short and they are very easily distracted. Keeping them to task seemed hard, but I think that there was a mismatch of understandings about what 'the task' was. For me, it was 2 hours extra teaching that I wanted to complete and know what the outcomes were for next steps. For them, it was 2 hours with friends, to develop a purpose.

They didn't separate out the 'having fun' from 'having a purpose' in the same way that I did. Their emotional intelligence and intuitive understanding is extremely precise.

Complete clarity of issues: not being listened to, views ignored or rationalized away (inexperienced, unknowing, unformed).

Closest descriptor is that they felt over-whelmed, but not irrationally or emotionally. Just a very real appreciation that it is extremely difficult in contemporary organization of the world for young people to 'make an impact'. Central problematic, agency is really difficult.

WORKSHOP 2

17th February
2017

MAKING A DIFFERENCE – LOCAL ACTIVISTS TALK ABOUT WHAT THEY DO AND REFLECT ABOUT THEIR MOTIVATIONS

6.30-8pm, UL
Kemmy
Business
School

AGENDA:

- Greetings /Pizza
- Activists' presentations
- Group work
- Reflection
- Next Steps

1 Greetings / Pizza

The Youth Engage group were greeted by UL staff and Practicum students with pizza and minerals prior to commencing the workshop. This format allowed everyone involved, the #Youth Engage team, UL and LYS staff, as well as the guest speakers, to mix and get to know one another. As experienced in previous workshop, teenagers on a Friday evening have a lot to talk between them; providing refreshments at the beginning, maximized their attention throughout.

2 Activists' presentations

We invited three activists involved with different organisations to come give the group ten minute presentation about what motivated them to get involved in their work. This session was intended to: explore the personal satisfaction that is gained by getting involved; find out about the different forms of political activity that are possible; explain the connections between larger global issues and local political action. The message from the speakers was clear: no cause is too ambitious and that even small scale actions, when put together, can have a meaningful and substantive impacts on a wider scale.

Zoe Lawlor is from Limerick and works in the School of Communication and Culture at UL. She is a representative on the National Committee of the IPSC (Ireland Palestine Solidarity Campaign), a coordinator of Gaza Action Ireland, and a member of Shannonwatch – a group of peace and human rights activists based in the mid-West of Ireland, set up to monitor military flights and rendition-linked flights in and out of Shannon and through Irish airspace. Zoe is active in refugee solidarity: she has travelled to Lesbos, Greece and Calais, France, lending practical solidarity and support. She has also organised demonstrations in Limerick in solidarity with the people on the move and people here living in Direct Provision.

- *Zoe Lawlor gave the group a presentation of her numerous and varied involvements. Palestine, SOWETO, and anti-war small scale events, just to name a few. She demonstrated that at a very local level, herself and a small group can have a meaningful impact even on an international level, organising exchanges with Palestinian and Irish children football players. She argued that even though some causes may seem out of reach, her actions are useful to “keep the pressure”. She also spoke of the camaraderie and the ‘buzz’ of taking action.*

John Lannon is a founder and active member of Shannonwatch – the peace and human rights group, mainly focused on campaigning against US military and CIA use of Shannon Airport. He is Chairperson of Doras Luimni – promoting and protecting the rights of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants. He is a Founder and active member of Soweto Connection – raising money in Ireland to help communities affected by HIV/AIDS in South Africa. He is also active in Campaign for Democracy in Congo - establishing and supporting partnerships between the Democratic Republic of Congo and Ireland

- *John Lannon who has also worked with Zoe on various different causes was up next. After a brief introduction to some of his work supporting groups like Amnesty International, Palestine Solidarity and Shannon Watch, John emphasized why, as opposed to the how he continues to work. He gave a personal account of the reasons he chose to give his time to causes that initially seem out of reach by most people. John argued that the satisfaction and the sense of achievement he draws from his activism help him in his personal development, his activism does as much to make him feel better about himself as it does for the groups that he supports. For some years, when his family asked him why he did this, he thought it was because he was helping other people. Now John understands that this work helps him!*

Jenny Hannon is originally from Blanchardstown in Dublin. She came to Limerick in 2002 when she was accepted onto the access programme in UL. Jenny was an active member of the Irish Peace Society in UL from 2003-2007 and helped organise the 2005 Human Rights Conference along with other fundraising and consciousness raising campaigns. She has worked voluntarily in Ghana, Palestine and Ireland. In 2003 she was a member of the Shannon Peace Camp and campaigned to end the military use of Shannon airport for which she was arrested in April 2003. In 2015 she coordinated the Limerick Yes Equality canvassing campaign and is currently engaged to her fiancée, Limerick artist Ann Blake. Jenny used to manage PALLS, a community project which supports men coming out of prison and on probation in Limerick. She is currently the Dual Diagnosis/Drug and Alcohol Worker in McGarry House, a low threshold emergency accommodation in Limerick city for homeless adults in addiction that helps Drug-users and their families deal with alcohol abuse and homelessness.

- *Building on the previous two speaker insights, Jenny gave an even more personal account of her activism. As a Lesbian herself, Jenny hit home when she spoke about how activism in different forms was for her a way to control her inner anger towards the social world since her teenage years. She spoke about her tendency to violence in the past and how she now manages this by channelling her feelings into actions for human rights and equality. She made a profound impact on the group by encouraging them to engage with people who disagree with them. Activism, she argued, is not only about opposing ideas but also about educating people. She gave the example of her experience in the Yes Equality referendum campaign where disagreements usually stemmed from ignorance and misinformed opinions.*

Reflection

The Youth group were particularly keen to engage with all three speakers (despite the end of week slot). This interaction was designed: to provide real life and relatable examples of how civic activism may fit into everyday life; to illustrate the meaning that this activity holds for the activists; and to demonstrate that activism is scalable – the scale of activity can fit in with the time and resources available. A good deal of discussion was given over to ‘connecting’ larger scale issues around the world to ‘local level actions’ that connect one to the other.

3 Group Work

The #Youth Engage group were divided into two groups to reflect on what they heard and gathered from the presentations and to answer three questions.

They were also provided with a complementary bowl of sweets to keep them tuned in.

Both groups were given the same questions, one question at a time. The groups were to map out their answers on an A1 sheet of paper. For each question, groups were given 10 minutes to answer them.

- **What do you care about?**
 - ⇒ The intention of this question was to direct participants attention to action in their own lives in a pragmatic way. First they list all the causes they care about, which may be local, regional, national, or global and ranging from politics to environment.
- **What are the challenges when addressing what you care about?**
 - ⇒ The intention of this question was to identify what kinds of barriers and/or challenges they feel might get in the way when seeking to address the causes they listed above.
- **What can you do about it?**
 - ⇒ This question was designed to develop practical responses and/or actions to addressing the challenges and engaging in actions.

Reflection

This set of questions, given one after the other, was intended to break down feelings of being overwhelmed by issues of concern, or feelings of powerlessness in the face of 'grand problems'. The discussion concluded that 'solutions' are not necessarily clearly identifiable and finite actions: they may instead be made up of a series of smaller related actions connected by a common concern ("it's like Lego!"). The task then, is to find actions that can be carried out locally, on a scale that is feasible, where this action connects to a larger concern – building awareness and action through a series of small scale achievable activities.

4 Next Steps

This workshop was designed as a foundational exercise. This group of mentors went away on a residential trip on the following Monday and during their mid-term break to accompany the larger Comhairle na nÓg assembly. The goal of this workshop was to give the #Youth Engage group some ideas and inspirations to then convey them to the larger Comhairle na nÓg group who will later decide on the work they will carry out over the forthcoming year. The discussions that the post-presentation questions prompted helped them internalise a sense of agency and how they might be able to fit activism into their everyday life, or as it were, into the next Comhairle na nÓg agenda.

As mentors, the #Youth Engage team cannot push their own agenda to the larger group, but can workshop some ideas to then submit them to a vote by the whole assembly.

WORKSHOP 3

20th February
2017

**PETERSBURG RESIDENTIAL TRIP - COMHAIRLE NA NÓG AGENDA
SETTING AND ASSET BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

2pm – 8pm
Petersburg
outdoor
activity centre

AGENDA:

- Group Work: Introduction to tasks
- Exercise one: creating a talent pool
- Exercise two: making connections
- Exercise three: Planning actions
- Reflection

1 Group Work: Introduction to Tasks

Building from workshop 2, the #Youth Engage group separated from the Comhairle na nÓg group. As outgoing members of Comhairle na nÓg, the #Youth Engage group are all aged between 17- 18 years old. Their task on the residential workshop is to guide their peers towards a concrete and feasible agenda for the upcoming year. As mentors, they have participated in Comhairle na nÓg activities for two years, and all are outgoing, motivated and experienced with youth work methods and approaches. The UL group (Maura Adshead, Mary Jackman and Kevin Saude) took the group of mentors apart from the main group.

Activity 1. Creating a talent pool

The Youth Exchange group formed three small groups in order to answer a series of open questions. These were logged on a sheet, for later discussion and reflection with the wider group. The questions were not disclosed all at the same time but were instead carefully sequenced so as not to subconsciously direct their thoughts.

- What makes you happy? What are your interests?
- What are you good at? What are your colleagues in the group good at?

This task was designed to give a list of group assets / resources. When all of these answers were listed and discussed by the group, they began to recognise that together they had far more skills and talents than they initially believed. Armed with a list of group talents / assets we moved to the next part of the activity.

Activity 2. Making Connections

Taking the issues that the group had already identified as important to them in Workshop 2 and taking the lesson about developing local connections to larger issues, we began to work through the list of topics and look at the connections that we could make locally – given the groups identified talents and assets.

- What are the connections between identified issues and possible actions?
- Connecting your topics to your talents

The group's answers were understandably varied and gave us a good glimpse into the resources available to us for better mobilisation and effective actions by the group. Some of the answers to the first questions included, for example, knitting, chocolate and tea but also hugging, talking, counselling, and people. To the second question, the answers ranged from martial arts, making friends and fashion dressing to **making people happy**.

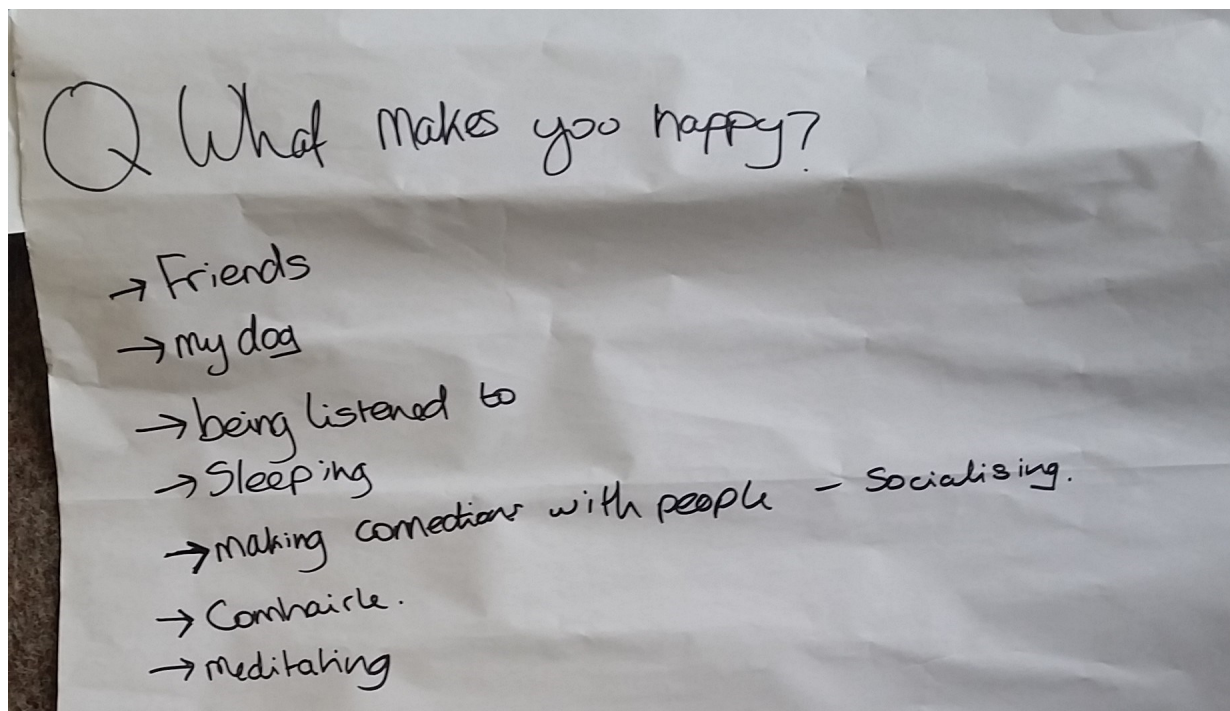
Activity 3

Making people happy quickly became the starting point of a collective effort in attempting to connect the topics to talents, which then prompted an idea that resonated throughout the whole day: **Happiness Packs**. Small shoe box / lunch box with items included for an identified group (children in direction provision; homeless; elderly; young people etc). For each identified group, the mentors would carry out basic research to find out what the identified groups needs are, then work to develop packs for that group – through campaigns, schools projects, group activities.

The #Youth Engage group unanimously agreed that this idea could be elaborated and developed by the main group, depending on the outcome of the vote on the yearly agenda.

Reflection

The aim of this small-scale workshop is to invite the Youth Engage group to reflect on the resources available within the group, in terms of skills, interests and attributes. By asking these simple questions the group came to realise how valuable they all are in their own way, and how to make the best use of their skills. Subsequently, ideas that could potentially draw from these attributes naturally came to their mind.



WORKSHOP 4

15^h March
2017

COMHAIRLE NA NÓG AGENDA ITEM 2 (HAPPINESS PACK) – LET’S GET TO WORK !

6.30-8pm, UL
Kemmy
Business
School

AGENDA:

- Greetings – Sandwiches
- Cape Town link-in preparation
- Group Work: Happiness pack brainstorming session
- Reflexion
- Next steps

1 Greetings—sandwiches

Building from Workshop 3 (Petersburg residential trip - Comhairle Na nÓg agenda setting), all mentors available that evening met in the Kemmy Business School, University of Limerick, to commence happiness packs planning and devise a draft agenda. Olivia, John and Cathy (LYS), Maura Mary and Kevin (UL) supported the group. “Happiness packs” is one item of Comhairle Na nÓg’s agenda sanctioned at the residential trip (workshop 3), and completion of which, is not due until March 2018. However, due to summer holidays and end of year exam, the planning process needed to be commenced as early as possible, capitalising on fresh ideas stemming from the previous workshop. Taking up a suggestion, we ordered gourmet sandwiches in a ‘munch box’, which we thought might be healthier and nicer, but clearly our group of teens didn’t feel quite the same! Lesson learned, pizza it is next time.

2 Cape Town link in preparation

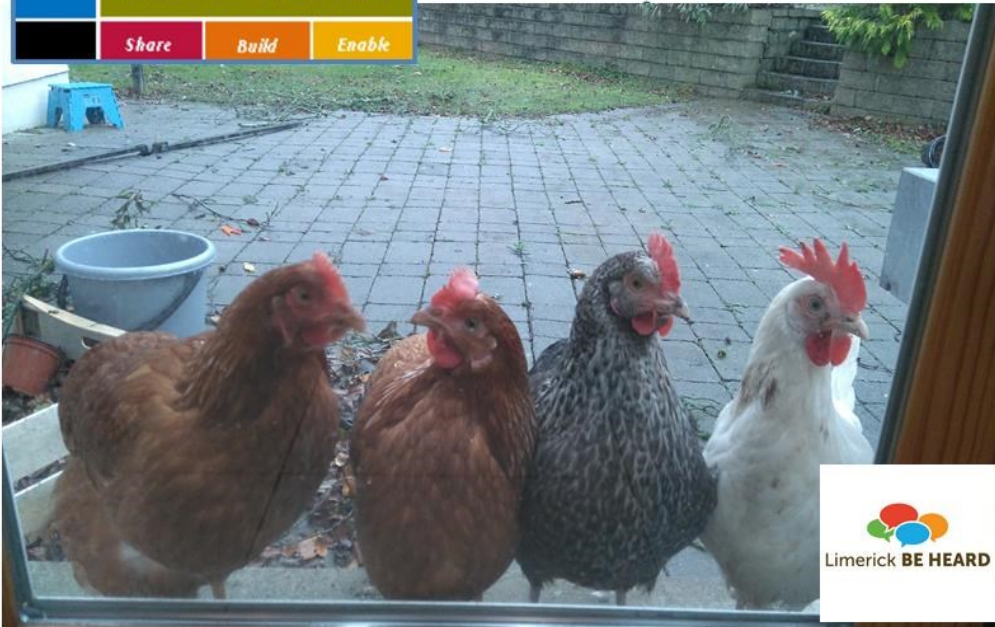
As our mirror group in Cape Town, are about to commence their workshop series, we devised a system of postcard activities to facilitate introductions between the groups.

- Post cards: All mentors are to take two pictures, one reflecting their life in Limerick (anything, the Shannon their everyday life, their pet, etc.) and another of themselves. Let’s get to know each other. Their photos will feature in lieu of a stamp
- All post cards will be uploaded on the IFWEA online platform in due course
- All mentors will then write a quick message on the post cards describing what life of a youth in Ireland is like, in order to then confront it with feedbacks from mirror groups. Concerns, lifestyle, and frame of mind of youth across the world might differ or converge.

These activities will be implemented at a later stage.



GREETINGS FROM LIMERICK !!



Hello Capetown!

Why did you choose this photo?

Here are my chickens—George, Bart, Etzio and Elsie. I keep them in the back garden for fresh eggs every day :)

What’s special about Limerick?

Ball-hopping—the slang expression for teasing people. Limerick people are very good at this.

What are Limerick people concerned about or interested in?

Limerick is a big centre for Rugby – the Munster team captain, Rassy Rasmusen is from South Africa!
Maura :)



Capetown Be Heard
Community House
Capetown
South Africa



limerick youth service



IRISH RESEARCH COUNCIL
An Chomhairle um Thaighde in Éirinn

3 Group Work: Happiness packs brainstorming groups

All mentors were divided into 3 groups, and asked to think of ideas for these packs, in terms of: the chosen issue; who the group should talk to locally to understand the issue better; what might be put into the pack; pack distribution plans and ideas; and finally, they were asked to come up with a plan/agenda, for implementing the project.

Three groups were working separately on the following, and logged their work on A1 sheets. At the end of the session, they presented their ideas to the rest of the group. Responses below:

Migrants + young travellers

- Contact support services who work with such people, and draw from last year's Comhairle Na nÓg's project on immigrants on direct provision (awaiting decision on status of refugee). Barnardos for young travellers.
- Identify what items to put in the packs
- Get sponsorship from support services
- Have a spokesperson from these groups at these events
- "Its like Lego"
- Confirm everything is ready for the event
- Advertise for the event, in schools, local media, youtube etc.

Homeless:

(NB. Youth and adults may have different needs)

- Contact support services who work with such people, and take up the invitation from one of the invited workshop speakers (Jennie Hannon) to get advice on how to develop this project.
- Nutrition guide/pack – age specific
- Toiletries
- Toys (under €10) – colouring books
- Books / journal + pen
- Hats/gloves
- Mirror with smile on it

Elderly people

Investigate who to ask for advice and support with this idea locally.

- Loneliness, boredom, out of touch, difficulties to do certain things
- Teddy
- Herbal tea
- Mirror with smile on it
- Books
- Puzzle books
- Positive card

The group as a whole, also came up with the idea of rolling out, in Limerick, a system of vouchers or standing orders for coffee. (Customers can pay for a cup of coffee for the next customer, or someone with a voucher can come and collect. Anonymous)

Reflection

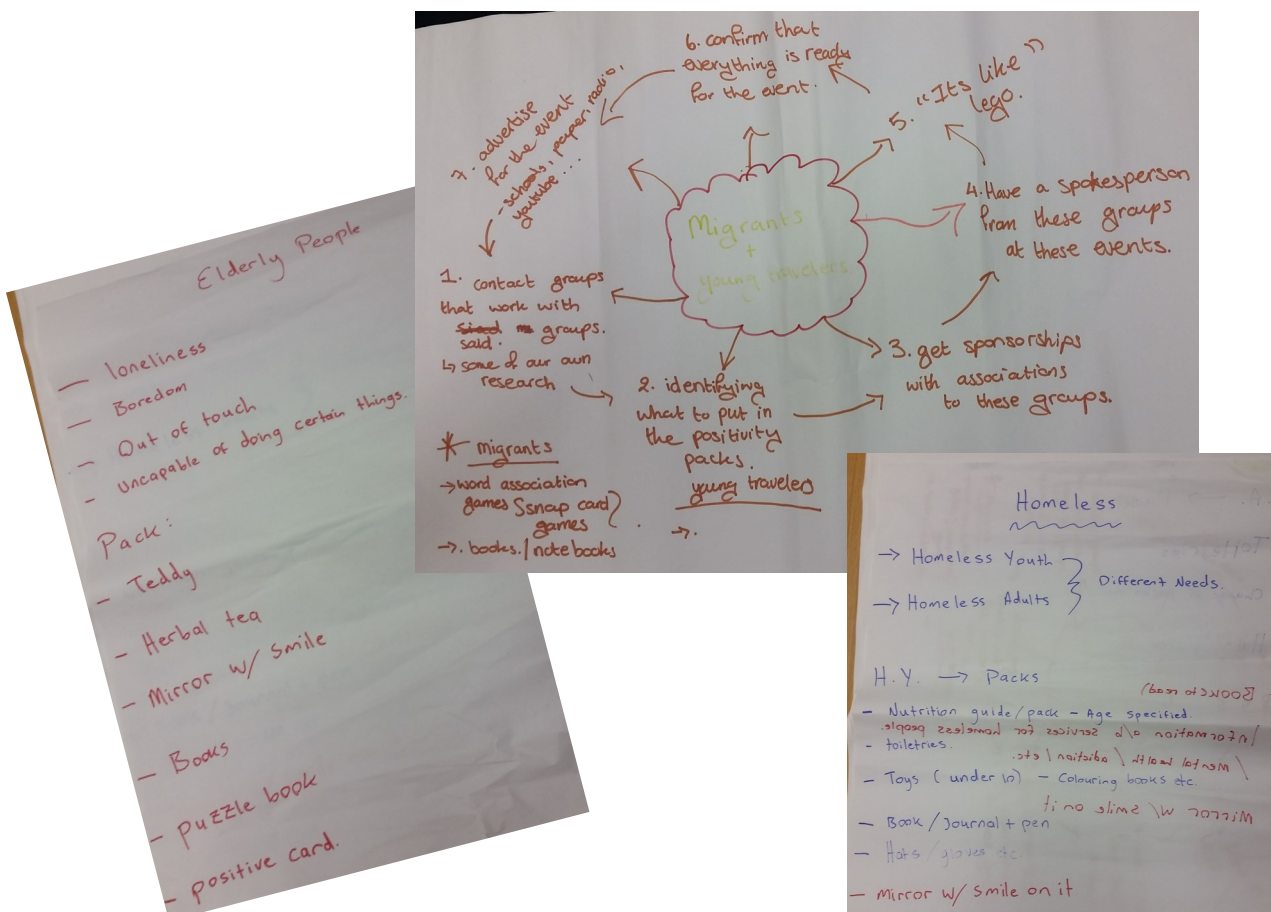
This meeting was organised in order to touch-base with our group following the prolific Workshop 3. As their ideas were still fresh, we wanted them to come up with a preliminary plan for implementing their Happiness/positivity packs. It is clear that they are relying on LYS support, as the tasks ahead seem rather big. In this respect, however, following from Workshop 2, which was important in making local connections with global issues, the group were quite confident that this was a concrete action that helped them to feel that they were able to make a positive contribution. As always, they carried out the tasks with enthusiasm.

Finally, we felt it was important for our mirror groups to get to know each other through the post card idea, and although the mentors have already explored issues locally, with a less privileged or different population in previous projects, we feel that they will benefit from interacting with the Cape Town mirror group to gain a more global perspective on their actions in Limerick.

4 Next Steps

At the next meeting/workshop, the mentors will have to prepare for the Schools Roadshow. They will share with the wider Limerick community their work, what they have learned so far and which will also help them reflect on how much they have achieved to date.

The school roadshow will be our priority as we would like to roll it out preferably before the upcoming Easter holidays.



WORKSHOP 5

30^h March
2017

ROADSHOW

PREPARATION

6-8 pm,
Limerick Youth
Services
building

AGENDA:

- Greetings – food
- Agreed format of the roadshow
- Deliberations
- Reflexion

1 Greetings—Food

Together, with the support of Limerick Youth Services (LYS) and University of Limerick (UL) staff, the #Youth Engage group created a 'Schools Roadshow'. The intention was that the Roadshow sessions would be presented by young people to young people, with the #Youth Engage group and Comhairle Na nÓg volunteers acting as workshop facilitators. Food was served prior to a meeting promising to be busy and studious, as the first roadshow was scheduled on the following Tuesday.

2 Agreed format of the roadshow

The #Youth Engage group shared their ideas with junior Comhairle Na nÓg members who were included in the discussions with the group and their opinions were valued and taken into account in finalizing the roadshow template for increased efficacy and impact. It was decided that the workshop would be primarily activity based and that 2-3 youth facilitators would present each activity. Since many of the ideas for activities came from earlier #Youth Engage workshops, members of the #Youth Engage group conclude each activity with a summary of their understanding of the learning outcome achieved. The overall ambition was to engage school pupils to think more broadly about what political engagement might mean in their own lives and in their own locale. The intention was to challenge more mainstream conceptualizations of politics as an 'out of reach' and national level activity, carried out only by older, elected politicians.

The roadshow was designed with a target audience of 13-15 year olds. It was decided that holding the workshop in a neutral (non classroom style) space would make for better impact, and that a large space allowing chairs and tables to be moved around would facilitate group work.

3 Deliberations

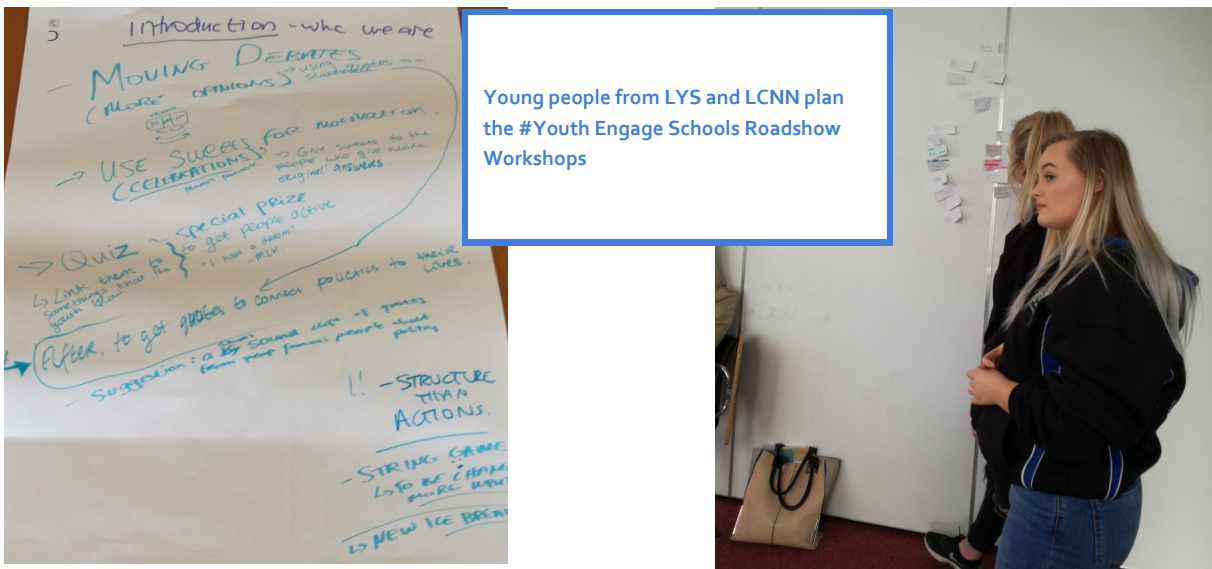
Our group divided into two and were then asked to reflect on the past workshops, and devise a short 10 minute presentation that they will deliver to the Schools Roadshow. Facilitators left the room to allow them the space and freedom to design the presentation as they wished, and went on to address more formal and administrative aspects of the preparations (contacting local schools, organizing transport etc).

It was during this period that the #Youth Engage group explained to their peers in Comhairle Na nÓg the essence of the work that they being doing.

- The Youth Engage group first summarized their work over the past 4 workshops, emphasizing where they started, and where they are now. They gave some of the examples of activism mentioned by guest presenters in Workshop 2. The theme of the presentation is called “Making a Difference”.
- The group then presented a sample of a happiness pack based on Workshop 3 and invited their Comhairle Na nÓg peers to think of other tangible applications.
- The next part of the workshop entailed a 25 minutes group work session mirroring Workshop 3, with young people from the #Youth Engage group and the LCNN group brainstorming actions or project ideas to tackle the identified issues.
- Finally, the groups presented their ideas to each other in poster form.

Reflection

There was a palpable enthusiasm from all at this meeting as they were getting a sense that the work they have done is coming to fruition. The #Youth Engage group is well accustomed to presenting in front of an audience, as well as producing feedbacks of their work as they had learned with Comhairle Na nÓg. The idea behind asking them to carry out most of the roadshow workshop is twofold. First they will benefit from a new learning experience where they will have to reflect on the work they were asked to do, to them transmit it to the class, transitioning to facilitator. Secondly, we unanimously thought that teenagers addressing other teenagers would have a much bigger impact in terms of take-home messages.



Young people from LYS and LCNN plan the #Youth Engage Schools Roadshow Workshops

WORKSHOPS 6 AND 7		
4th and 5th April 2017	THESE WORKSHOPS COMPRISED THE PILOT OF SCHOOLS ROADSHOW WITH LOCAL SCHOOLS See Section B: Youth Engage School Workshops	Colaiste Nano Nangle and Villiers School

WORKSHOP 8

13^h April
2017

LIMERICK YOUTH ENGAGE EXCHANGE PREPARES TO CONNECT WITH CAPETOWN

4-6 pm,
Limerick Youth
Services
building

AGENDA:

- Greetings
- Video link with LGAP
- Youth Engage presentation
- Group Work: What are Irish youth concerned about?

1 Greetings

The objective of this session was to prepare for a video link-in with international partners and mirror groups, and to discuss the possibility of meeting up with international partners as part of the Youth Global Awareness Programme (YGAP), on which some of our mirror partners already collaborate.

2 Video link with YGAP

Our group will link-in with the mirror group, Capetown Be Heard, by means of a videoconference. The Limerick group will present some of their work carried out as part of Limerick Youth Engage project in order to facilitate an international exchange of ideas and awareness between young people. In order to prepare for this, the Youth Engage group were to first send postcards introducing themselves to the mirror Capetown group, using the IFWEA online platform. Following 'virtual' introductions via postcards, the Youth Engage group planned to send a 'Youth Exchange' briefing, introducing the issues of concern for Young People in Limerick to Young People in Capetown.

3 #Youth Engage presentation

In order to provide the Capetown group with a comprehensive and structured presentation, we asked our group to choose a couple of topics already discussed as part of Limerick #Youth Engage and develop it for a Youth Exchange briefing poster (see exemplar overleaf).

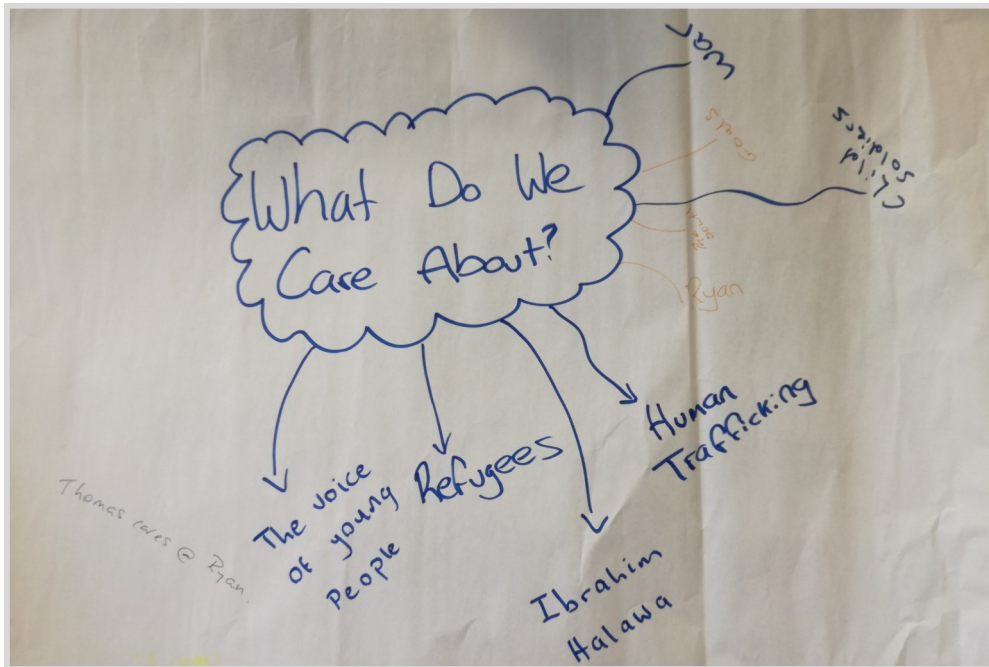
The Topics chosen were:

- Refugees-immigration
The condition of refugees in Europe is at the top list of concern amongst people of all age and should be reflected as such to our mirror group.
- Education – Points system
Education in Ireland may vary greatly from our mirror groups' in terms of organisation, access to higher education, equality/equity
- Voting at 16 years' old
There is a growing appetite in Ireland amongst the young population for lowering the legal voting age.

DIRECTION PROVISION

Direct Provision in Ireland refers to the system of care for Asylum Seekers who have come to Ireland hoping to gain refugee status - that is the right to live in Ireland permanently. Direct Provision is intended to provide for the welfare of asylum seekers and their families as they await decisions on their asylum application. It 'directly provides' essential services, medical care and accommodation and board with three meals a day provided at set times. Asylum Seekers living in Direct Provision are not allowed to work and are paid €19.10 per week per adult and €15.90 per week per child. Although the system of 'direct provision' is overseen by an agency in the Department of Justice, (the Reception and Integration Agency, RIA), the majority of the 35 direct provision centres in Ireland are privately owned and operated, and the standards of accommodation and living conditions vary widely.

The average length of time in direct provision is 5 years. Many asylum seekers have been in the system waiting for their application to be heard for much longer.



4 Group Work: What are Irish youth concerned about?

The mentors broke into three groups and rotated “café style”, and writing down their ideas on the selected topics on an A1 sheet. The following is a summary of their responses:

REFUGEES

- Need to correct misunderstandings about refugees, why they are coming to different countries
- Put into unsuitable accommodation, basically open prisons and bad conditions
- Racism - Ethnic discrimination - gypsy – prejudice - stigma
- Hyperbolic speech connects any refugee to Isis
- The notion that “Muslims are terrorists”

THE POINTS SYSTEM AND EDUCATION

- Assessment learning –v- assessments for Learning
- Teachers are only assessed when there is a problem
- Too much pressure
- Placing academic intelligence over other intelligence is unfair to those who struggle
- Punishes those not academically inclined
- Limits the College places youth can apply for
- No continuous assessment
- PLC’s are good
- The change in the points system is unfair as students are now unprepared for the Leaving Certificate
- Students who are unable to do a second language cannot go to College
- Disability access routes

VOTING

- Too bureaucratic
- Reducing voting age would give more youth a voice
- Youth may not be educated enough to vote on certain issues
- Celebrity endorsement
- Youth people manipulated by parents and friends
- Influence of social media – negative and positive
- Had the voting age been lower in the UK, the Brexit outcome might have been different
- Might encourage youth to be interested in a political career
- Empowers the youth to challenge the “old men in office”

At the time of writing, the Youth Engage group are still in the process of exchanging briefs with their Capetown mirror group and plan to visit them in October 2017. More details of how these activities are planned to grow are contained in section E of this report.

B: YOUTH ENGAGE SCHOOLS WORKSHOPS

SCHOOLS WORKSHOPS AND PARTICIPANTS

SCHOOL DATE: 4th April 2017	COLÁISTE NANO NAGLE Girls Secondary School, Sexton Street, Limerick
TEACHER:	Jennifer Kiely

PARTICIPANTS

3rd year girls, Nano Nagle school; Mary Jackman, UL; Ryan, Youth Engage; Alannah O'Neil, Youth Engage; Caitlin O'Sullivan, Youth Engage; Bethany, Youth Engage; Kevin Saude, UL

SCHOOL DATE: 4th April 2017	VILLIERS Co-ed Boarding and Day School, North Circular Road, Limerick
TEACHER:	Janet Woods

PARTICIPANTS

4th year transition students, Villiers School; Mary Jackman, UL; Ryan, Youth Engage
Caitlin O'Sullivan, Youth Engage; Bethany, Youth Engage; Kevin Saude, UL

SCHOOL DATE: 15th May 2017	COLÁISTE CHIARAIN Co-ed Post Primary School, Croom, Co. Limerick
TEACHER:	Stephanie O'Neill

PARTICIPANTS

2nd year students, Coláiste Chiarain; Mary Jackman, UL, Naomi O'Mara, UL / Youth Engage

SCHOOL DATE: 17th May, 2017	DESMOND COLLEGE Co-ed Post Primary Secondary School, Newcastle West Co. Limerick
TEACHER:	Kerrie Collins

PARTICIPANTS

2nd year students, Desmond College; Lauryn Fitzgerald, LCNN, Emma Russell, LCNN; Kevin Saude, UL

SCHOOL DATE: 19th May, 2017	COLÁISTE MHICHIL Boys Christian Brothers School, Sexton Street, Limerick
TEACHER:	Charlotte Hennessy

PARTICIPANTS

2nd year students, CBS Sexton St, Comhairle Schools Roadshow; Mary Kate Carolan, LCNN,
Matthew Cronin, LCNN; Tinu Johnson, LCNN, Lakeisha Lazo, LCNN, Kevin Saude, UL

Five schools workshops were facilitated by teams comprising UL students, members of the #Youth Engage group, and members of Limerick Comhairle na nÓg. Using the principles established in the ‘Limerick Be Heard’ project, the Schools workshops were designed to create supported spaces for young people to develop their political understanding in a way that is inclusive, creative, subversive, diverse, respectful and even fun.

The Youth Engage group gave plenty of advice about the ways that young people prefer to engage. With young people, activities are always preferable to passive listening. This meant that the format that we designed was focused around four workshop activities, with four accompanying learning outcomes.

LIMERICK BE HEARD ORGANIZING PRINCIPLES

- LBH will not advocate for any independent or party political candidacy.
- LBH will be inclusive and representative of all who wish to engage with this project
- LBH seeks to support diverse engagement from all walks of life, ages, backgrounds etc.
- LBH is tolerant and respectful of differences of opinions and views.

WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES	LEARNING OUTCOMES
EXERCISE 1: What is politics?	EXERCISE 1: Politics doesn't have to be boring
EXERCISE 2: What matters to you?	EXERCISE 2: Politics is about having an opinion on things that matter to you
EXERCISE 3: Politics is about doing something about the things that matter to you!	EXERCISE 3: Lots of people get involved in politics all the time—because they're worried about things, because they want to be heard, because they want things to change
EXERCISE 4: What can you do about the things that matter to you?	EXERCISE 4: Being political means being involved in the stuff you care about!

We spent some time trying to work out the best way to begin the workshops. The #Youth Engage volunteers were keen to break down barriers to participation with ice-breakers and games. This was considered an important means to develop young peoples' confidence to participate. The Youth workers pointed to the significance of re-arranging the classroom space and sending a clear signal that 'this workshop presents a break from the traditional school room lesson'. In this way, we hoped to identify the space as a 'safe place' for discussion. We tried different techniques to do this in different schools and found that there was a tension between doing things that are fun and relaxing, and carrying out activities that communicate political understanding. Sometimes the message was clear, but the medium was less engaging. And sometimes the exercise was fun, but the message was not specific. These insights were important in the development of the Youth Ambassadors programme that we devised after piloting the Schools Workshops.

Figure 3: Schools Workshop Exercises and Activities

EXERCISE 1

1. Give out post its – markers
 2. What do you think of when you hear the word politics? Write it down and let's see what we get.
 3. Introduce yourself, give yourself a name sticker and bring up your politics post-it
 4. Does anyone else have something similar. Facilitate discussion and group themes
- => End exercise: what do we think @ politics

LEARNING OUTCOME: to establish what the group thinks about politics

EXERCISE 2

1. What are the things that upset you?
2. What would you like to see changed?
3. If I was Taoiseach and could tell the government what to do... the one thing I'd change would be _____?
4. Facilitate discussion around the topics that matter to the group and explore whether/ why these topics are / are not part of political debate.

LEARNING OUTCOME: to establish that politics should be about what matters to the people

EXERCISE 3

QUIZ

Look at the following set of photos (see page 34)– do you recognise what they are about?

Students were shown a selection of images of:

- Selma, Alabama 1965 and 2015
- Martin Luther King
- Right to water—anti water charges campaign
- March for Science, Ireland—Dublin 2017
- Campaign for Civil Marriage Equality

LEARNING OUTCOME: to explore the different ways that people take political action

EXERCISE 4

- What can you do about the things that matter to you?
- What kinds of action can you take?
- This is what we decided to do... Happiness packs!!

LEARNING OUTCOME: to find ways of exercising your opinion and making a difference

C: YOUTH AMBASSADORS FOR DEMOCRACY

What follows below is an outline for a Youth Programme for Limerick Youth Services. This content has been co-designed by young people in Limerick, with support from staff in Limerick Youth Services and the Department of Politics and Public Administration, University of Limerick. As it stands, therefore, this content is designed specifically by young people in Limerick to address Young People's concerns in Limerick. This content is shared with our international partners, who are developing parallel programmes. Because of the bespoke nature of the design, not all programme contents are identical. The international project partners to this project are using a shared digital platform provided by Limerick Council Digital Strategy in order to share individual programme curricula and activities. The intention is that, using a shared pool of curriculum content and resources, we can mix and match the individual workshops in our programmes to suit the conditions in each of our local contexts. It is intended that the Limerick Ambassadors for Democracy programme below will run for the first time in the Academic Year 2017/18. It is envisaged that additional project work might comprise an additional element to this programme.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- ⇒ Explore issues of social responsibility, ethical practice and in sustainable community contexts.
- ⇒ Identify the advantages and disadvantages of different kinds of political engagement
- ⇒ Think about what I personally can do

SESSIONS WILL

- ⇒ Promote social-emotional learning, community and civic learning, self-confidence and efficacy
- ⇒ Provide university role models for paths to higher education
- ⇒ Support personal growth, insights and knowledge about political agency



RTE crew come to hear Young Peoples' voices in Limerick, May 2017

WORKSHOP 1. INTRODUCTION / OVERVIEW

Preparation

- Video / photo montage of political activities and movements
- Quiz Answer sheet: What is the issue? What is the action? Who is taking part?
- Sweets for prizes

AGENDA

1. Hopes and Expectations
2. Group Contract
3. Agreed timetable
4. Activity: Quiz
5. Reflection

ACTIVITY

Quiz.

Show clips of different political movements and see if group can identify what they are and what they are about?

REFLECTION

Discussion:

What do they have in common? Who participates?

Do you recognise any of these?

Selma, Alabama
1965, 2015

Limerick

Dublin

Dublin
2017

MARCH FOR SCIENCE, IRELAND
GRAND CANAL SQUARE, DUBLIN 2
2:00 PM | SATURDAY 22 APRIL
#ScienceMarche | #DublinMarche

THERE IS NO PLANET B

WORKSHOP 2. YOUR STORY IS WORTH TELLING

Preparation

- Prepare ice breaker
- Prepare postcard template
- Prepare platform to upload postcards to international partners

AGENDA

1. Ice-breaker
2. Activity: Your story
3. Discussion
4. Reflection

ACTIVITY

- Find someone you don't know – find out about them and write a paragraph describing them
- Use the postcard template if it helps
- Ask your partner to describe an observation or experience of a social or political issue that effected them?
- Decide together what you've learned to share with the group

REFLECTION

Partners introduce each other and share their insights



Capetown Be Heard participants

WORKSHOP 3. MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Preparation

- Identify local activists and invite them to talk to the group. Their presentation should be focused on what motivates them to get involved and how they feel about what they do.
- Prepare and upload podcasts of speakers for international partners.
- Paper and markers for group work

AGENDA

1. Introduction to Speakers
2. Activists' presentations to group
3. Activity: #Youth Exchange
4. Reflection

ACTIVITY

Group work:

Small group discussions with speakers participating

- What do we care about?

Read postcards from international partners

- What do we think our partners might be concerned about?

REFLECTION

Discussion:

- What do they have in common?
- What is different?
- What would we like to know more about?



Students of Coláiste Mhichil attending the #Youth Engage Schools Workshop

WORKSHOP 4. #YOUTH EXCHANGE WORLD CAFE

Preparation

- Prepare a group Thank You template to send to the speakers, leave space for any questions that the group might be interested in following up.
- Identify potential topics from the presentations given by local activists in the last workshop. For each topic, write an explanatory brief (250 words max). These will be used by the group to guide their discussions.
- After the workshop send/upload #Youth Exchange briefs, including the discussions from the world café exercise, for international partners.

AGENDA

1. International activists podcasts
2. Review
3. #Youth Exchange World Cafe
4. #Youth Exchange Briefings
5. Reflection

ACTIVITY

Picking up topics from the last workshop (either local or international) arrange 3-4 café tables with each table dedicated to one of the topics.

Divided into groups, young people move from table to table to share their ideas about each topic, writing down their thoughts on the café table sheet.

REFLECTION

Thank you and review

Review:

- What do we have in common?
- What is different?
- What would we like to know more about?

Thank you postcards to speakers



Students of Coláiste Mhichil attending the #Youth Engage Schools Workshop

WORKSHOP 5. MAKING THE CONNECTION

Preparation

- Present international partner activists' #Youth Exchange Briefings
- Prepare a set of artefacts for the quiz comprising different kind of political action (badges, amnesty postcards, petitions, boycotts, marches, theatre, songs, film clips etc.)
- Sweets for quiz
- Prepare group work template: What we are concerned about? Why? What we could do?

AGENDA

1. International partner #Youth Exchange Briefings
2. Review
3. Activity: Quiz
4. Reflection

ACTIVITY

Match the Action to the Issue!

Divide into quiz teams, and see how many kinds of political action you can identify? Extra points if you can identify the issue the action concerns!

REFLECTION

Reflection / Discussion:

How can I be political? Let me count the ways...

Get into groups and, choosing an issue, work out all of the actions you could take to address your concern.



Students of Desmond College attending the #Youth Engage Schools Workshop

WORKSHOP 6. OVER TO YOU

Preparation

Prepare a gallery walk comprising all the templates used so far to identify issues of concern.

Sticky dots for voting

AGENDA

1. Gallery walk: Review of political issues the group has encountered
2. Activity: Scoping out issues
3. Reflection

ACTIVITY

Identify the top 3 issues of concern.

Divide into groups to explore the actions that might be taken to address the issue.

One/two presenters for each group to summarize the discussion for everyone.

REFLECTION

Discussion:

What do I want to do?



#Youth Engage panel review Fine Gael leadership debates for RTE's 'The Week in Politics' Show

D: UNDERGRADUATE MODULE: POLITICAL AGENCY

INTRODUCTION

UL Practicum modules are designed to provide students with practical experience, generic skills development (such as applied research work, team work, problem-solving and project work) and opportunities to apply the disciplinary knowledge that they have learned to real-world projects.

This module combines class room based theoretical insights into the motivations that underpin political action, including insights from new social movements theory and rational choice approaches, with a selection of case studies to demonstrate alternative forms of political behaviour. Module delivery combines traditional lecture based content, with a series of practical exercises, designed to support knowledge of, and capacity building for, increased political understanding and civic engagement for the promotion and protection of human rights and democracy.

Both the theoretical and practical elements of the module content are designed to support the Limerick Be Heard #Youth Ambassadors Practicum Project. Students taking this module will be prepared to engage in supporting research, preparation of group activities and group facilitation with Young People taking the Youth Ambassadors for Democracy programme.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- ⇒ Develop the capacity to apply curriculum-based knowledge in a real-world setting.
- ⇒ Develop competence to work effectively as a member of a multi-disciplinary team in collaboration with external community stake-holders
- ⇒ Develop project work and problem solving skills
- ⇒ Develop competence in conveying ideas clearly and effectively to a range of different stakeholders in different organizational and/or community or cultural settings contexts.
- ⇒ Explore issues of social responsibility, ethical practice and in sustainable community contexts.
- ⇒ Develop the capacity to see new opportunities to address commonly identified issues/ problems within the community
- ⇒ Recognize the capacity of those outside their own area of expertise to deliver their own professional and/or experiential expertise into collaborative project work.

MODULE ASSESSMENT

There will be two assessments points to this module, each worth 50% of your final mark. The first assessment will comprise the creation of a Reflective Portfolio to review the #Youth Ambassadors for Democracy Programme and your participation in it. The second assessment will be an essay. Guidelines concerning the creation of portfolios, and final essay topic questions are available from the module's sulis site.

Repeat Exam

Students who fail this module will not be eligible for a repeat exam. Students who fail a UL Practicum must repeat an alternative elective module offered by the university, subject to their own course board / home university approval.

MODULE ATTENDANCE

- This module comprises the University of Limerick commitment to a joint university / community partnership with Limerick Youth Services and Limerick Comhairle na nÓg.
- If you are intending to take this module, you must commit to giving your full contribution to the delivery of the agreed outputs necessary to support this project.
- Students taking this module **must** commit to full attendance.
- Failure to attend any of the prescribed module will result in the automatic award of a C3 grade.
- Absence from 3 or more lectures, classes, off-campus activities will result in the award of a Fail grade.

MODULE OUTLINE

Lecture topics – full reading lists to accompany lectures may be found on the module site

Practical preparation – **timely completion** of this work is essential for the delivery of the project. If you decide to take this module, you must sign an MOU agreeing to carry out the required preparation for delivery of #Youth Ambassadors for Democracy workshops.

Off-campus activity: - Weeks 3-8 inclusive in this module will involve off-campus activities concerning facilitation and/or delivery of workshops associated with the #Youth Ambassadors for Democracy programme.

Week 1: (classroom): Introduction to Module

2015 Marriage Equality Referendum – a new model for political campaigning in Ireland? Limerick #Youth Engage Project Overview and Introduction.

Practical arrangements regarding delivery of lectures, external applied work, expectations and implications of external elements to the module. Module assessment mechanisms, individual and peer assessment. Student Contracts. Agreement to participation in the project and delivery of agreed outputs. Introduction to Group work and Project set up

Week 2: (classroom): Political Movements and New Social Movements – a framework for analysis

Practical exercise: Identify suitable movements for political quiz. Find video clips/ photos/ interviews. Produce a short abstract to explain the movement.
Create #Youth Engage Political movement resources.
Exemplar (use #Youth Engage Briefings template to make a Political Movements resource)

Week 3: (classroom / off campus): New vehicles for political mobilization: Populism – causes and consequences

Examination of video / photo montage and accompanying #Youth Engage Resources. Selection for workshops.

Workshop 1 Youth Ambassadors Programme: 'Political movements Quiz'

Week 4: (classroom / off campus): From local to global: solidarity and global citizenship

Create #Youth Engage Postcard resources.
Exemplar (use #Youth Engage Postcards template to make a Project Postcard resource)

Workshop 2 Youth Ambassadors Programme: 'Telling your Story'

Week 5: (classroom / off campus): The Logic of Collective Action – lessons from rational choice theory for effective political action

Create #Youth Engage Political Activist resources.
Exemplar (use #Youth Engage invitation to local activists)

Workshop 3 Youth Ambassadors Programme: 'Making a Difference'

Week 6: (classroom / off campus); Engaging with citizens: creating the spaces and places for political engagement.

This lecture reviews a number of attempts to develop deliberative forums for civic engagement, including: We the Citizens; Constitutional Convention.

Introduction to World Café principles and practice

Workshop 4 Youth Ambassadors Programme: '#Youth Engage World Café'

Week 7: (classroom / off campus): What constitutes political action? Institutional, Organisational and Individual forms of political activity

Practical exercise: Prepare a set of artefacts to represent different kinds of political action (badges, amnesty postcards, petitions, boycotts, marches, theatre, songs, film clips etc.)

Create #Youth Engage quiz sheet and a group work template: What we are concerned about? Why? What we could do?

Workshop 5 Youth Ambassadors Programme: 'Making the connection Quiz'

Week 8: (classroom / off campus): Asset Based Community Development – a framework for action?

Prepare a gallery walk comprising all the templates used so far to identify issues of concern.
Sticky dots for voting

Workshop 6 Youth Ambassadors Programme: 'Over to You'

Week 9: (classroom): What is impact? Why should we care? Evaluating Impact

Graduate Attributes reflection and evaluation

Week 10: (classroom): Planning for impact: logic modelling for outputs, outcomes and impact

Group Review and Reflection

Week 11/ Week 12

The off-campus element to this module means that by the end of week 10 you will have already fulfilled the required contact hours for a 6ECTS module. Weeks 11 and 12 will be given over to: any outstanding project and/or group work; completing your module assessment; and ensuring that all final project outputs are submitted / uploaded.

E: INTERNATIONAL #YOUTH ENGAGE NETWORK

This section comprises the two-day programme of activities carried out by all project partners to the project.

MAKING YOUR MARK #YOUTH ENGAGE PROJECT MEETING LIMERICK 2017

AIMS AND OUTCOMES

Thursday 4 th May – UL Campus	Friday 5 th May – Limerick City
<p>That we all have a clear understanding of what each of our organizations does and our role within them.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That we understand the operation of existing project activities 2. That we begin to assess the opportunities for shared activities and resources 	<p>Knowledge of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. potential funding opportunities 2. potential teaching, learning, engagement opportunities 3. potential research opportunities 4. Clear understanding of different partner needs. 5. Agreement over Next Steps

PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

<p>ABF (Arbetarnas Bildningsförbund - the Workers' Educational Association), Sweden Carin Forsberg, ABF Ewa Lantzz, ABF Mia Malmgen, Young Eagles, ABF Zaynab Ouahabi, ABF Linnea Wennberg, ABF</p>	<p>American University Beirut: Hala Fliehan, Centre for Civic Engagement and Community Service, AUB Olga Safa, International Office, AUB</p>
<p>IFWEA (International Federation of Worker Education Associations) Sahra Ryklief, IFWEA General Secretary, Capetown</p>	<p>Limerick Team Maura Adshead, Department of Politics / UL Engage, UL Mary Jackmann, Department of Politics Sarah Jay, Department of Education, UL John Real, Limerick Youth Services Kevin Saude, Department of Politics</p>
<p>University Massachusetts, Boston Joan Arches, College of Public and Community Service, UMB</p>	<p>ZAK (Żgħażaġh Azzjoni Kattolia – national youth organization), Malta Roderick Borg, ZAK, Malta Monica Falzon, ZAK, Malta</p>

THURSDAY

The meeting began with an overview of the IRC New Foundations project, detailing the origins and inspiration, the aims and objectives, and our hopes for the workshop.

Following an exchange of ice-breaker activities from our respective organisations, the morning of the first day was taken up by workshop participants who each gave a brief overview of their organisation's mission, values and vision.

Outcome:

- ⇒ **mutual learning and articulation of core values**
- ⇒ **Generation of group consensus regarding shared values base.**

The afternoon of the first day was given over to a world café style activity, which was facilitated by Youth Engage panel members from LYS. The café focused on three key questions:

1. Describe how your project engages with young people – (what kinds of young people? How are they accessed/ selected? How do you work together?)
2. Discuss an element of your project that works well and/or needs improvement
3. What do you want to get out this collaboration? What can you give?

Outcome:

- ⇒ **Knowledge Exchange regarding respective approaches to engagement**
- ⇒ **Reflection on modes of engagement with young people in general and 'hard to reach' in particular. mutual learning**

Participants ended the day with a horse-drawn carriage tour of Limerick and dinner in a local Irish music bar. The itinerary's provision of less formal spaces and places for participants to meet was a deliberate strategy to provide opportunities for workshop participants to get to know each other and develop the relationships necessary to underpin future collaborations.

FRIDAY

The morning began with a presentation regarding funding calls and opportunities to develop collaborative initiatives. These included consideration of Erasmus, Erasmus plus, CAROLINE and others.

A second presentation was given by Dr Sarah Jay, a post-doctoral researcher identified by the project as having the necessary interests and experience to develop the research dimension to our project. Sarah outlined her own research interests as well as her potential to add to our project in terms of assessing the impact of the project's educational interventions in terms of developing personal and group efficacy, agency and empowerment.

Sarah detailed her research interests in social psychology, education, power relations and inter-group dynamics and fielded questions about how we might use theories and concepts from her work to develop a robust evaluation of our project's interventions.

The remainder of the day was given to developing an agreed shared set of organizing principles and objectives for the network and an exploration of the opportunities for further collaboration.

Organizing Principles and Objectives

The principles agreed were that the 'Be Heard' initiative:

- Would comprise a collaborative international partnership for positive political change to promote human rights, social justice and inclusion
- Would not advocate for any independent or party political candidacy.
- Would be inclusive and representative of all who wish to engage with this project
- Would seek to support diverse engagement from all walks of life, ages, backgrounds etc.
- Would be tolerant and respectful of differences of opinions and views.

The objectives of the initiative were varied, reflecting the variety of interests that constituted the collaboration. These were to:

- establish the architecture of engagement that enables as many people as possible to participate in an inclusive, respectful dialogue, about the things that matter to them.
- develop an innovative international partnership model to promote a positive examples of 'doing politics differently'.
- create a model of political engagement where citizens feel confident and comfortable to have their say about what matters to them.
- provide the identified supports and resources necessary to help implement this model.
- respond to identified needs of community groups and organizations who wish to strengthen their capacity to make politics responsive and inclusive to ordinary citizens.
- provide educational experiences for young people and students across the educational spectrum to develop civic responsibility, communication to operate as citizens of the future.
- provide research outputs associated with project activities.

Outcomes:

⇒ Agreement to develop a CAROLINE post-doctoral Fellowship application attached to the project.

⇒ **ABF Sweden:**

Interested in the activities of Limerick Youth Services, and would like to participate in the project to attract youth from certain vulnerable communities in different ABF branches. The project holds the potential to collect youth perspectives and also to channel them into existing organisations dealing with their issues.

⇒ **College of Public and Community Service, University of Massachusetts, Boston.**

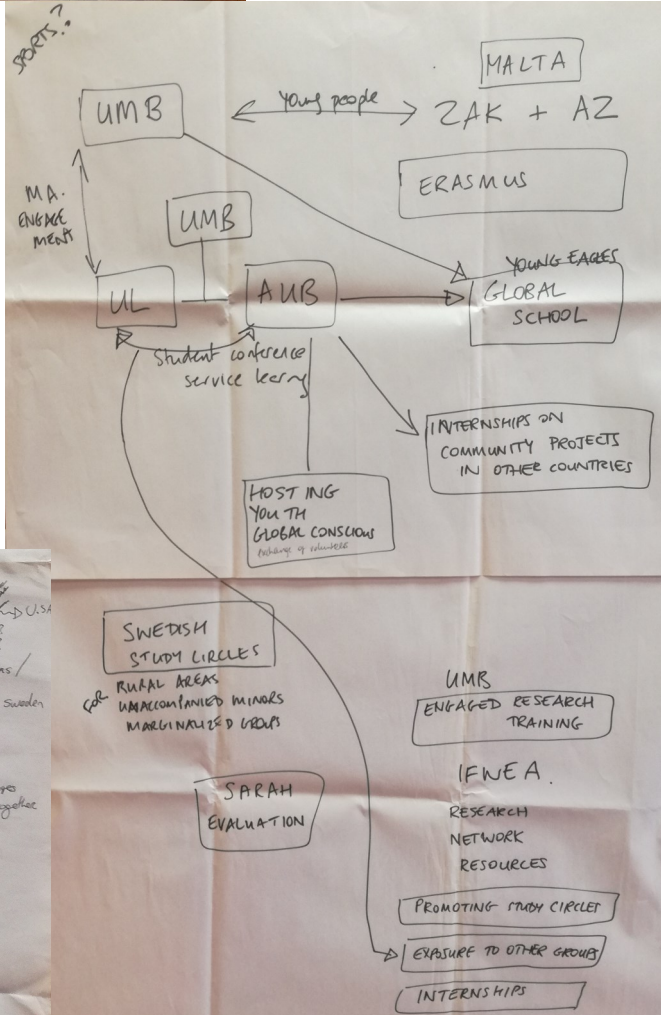
UMB work with inner city school-going youth in Boston is very similar in methodology and they like the focus on political agency. They would also appreciate the resource and youth exchanges with project partners through IFWEA. They will conduct their own "Boston Be Heard" activity in Spring 2018 and will make the resources available on OLA.

⇒ **Centre for Civic Engagement and Community Service, American University of Beirut:**

CCECS work with NGOs who provide education in the refugee camps, with the aim of integrating youth from warring factions in the camps. They like the focus on political agency and also the potential for global exchanges through IFWEA. They could approach these NGOs to participate in a global project.

- ① IFWEA + UL (Caroline) grant
 - ② Erasmus grant
 - ③ Young Eagles Exchange
 - ④ Commitment to share Resources
- Joint Erasmus+ between
→ Iceland, Sweden, Malta
- 1, Local groups
 - Engage Research Method
 - 2, Youth Ambassadors
 - 3, "Be Heard"
 - 4, Respect for ourselves
 - 5, Doing politics differently
 - 6, Inter cultural Education
 - 7, Global Citizenship

Workshop notes 5th May, 2017



- Go S. Africa
→ Unlocks Resources
↳ EU - Africa - S. Africa
- IFWEA
• Core approach to
Participatory Education & Research.
↳ Connecting with
the local groups
in Cape Town.
↳ Host + send
grantees
1. - Malta → Erasmus - Yip! (Iceland vs Malta vs Sweden? S. Africa?)
 2. - Lebanon → Conference → UL / UMas / AUB
 - Global School in Beirut + Sweden
 - U.S Aid project
 - Global Consciousness
 - Debates to build to conferences/exchanges
 3. - Sweden → Being a mixed group together
 - ↳ Swedish study circles
 - ↳ Local groups
 - ↳ Migrants
 - ↳ Erasmus+ practice?
 4. - US A → Youth Worker Exchange
 - ↳ Speaks + young ppl
 - ↳ "Academics voice Artists"
 - ↳ Global school
 - ↳ Conference / Camp
 5. - Limerick (UL) → Evaluation + Collaboration
- Nov - Dec
Africa
S. Africa
Cape Town

⇒ **UL ENGAGE, University of Limerick, Ireland**

UL Engage will facilitate the creation of a UL Practicum undergraduate politics module to run in parallel to the Youth Ambassador programme. The new UL Practicum module in Political Agency will assist students of politics to develop their understanding of political agency – both in the theoretical frameworks used to explain political behaviour and in practical application through their support for, and engagement with, the Youth Ambassadors for Democracy programme. These two programmes together are mutually supportive, making the collaboration between the University and Limerick Youth Services more sustainable in the longer term, and, through the collaboration with the IFWEA Secretariat, providing support for the development of political understanding and civic engagement between a wide range of young people from different backgrounds and countries.

⇒ **Limerick Youth Services, Ireland**

LYS would like to continue the “Limerick Be Heard” activities in collaboration with ENGAGE. They would also like to apply for a grant to facilitate a youth exchange with other European participants in the project in 2018, and with the global participants through IFWEA in 2019. They would like their partner ZAK in Malta to also be involved in the project.

⇒ **Young Eagles, Sweden**

IFWEA’s strategic aim is to build a global knowledge community. The Secretariat’s role in the project is to open up links with affiliates and youth organisations globally and co-ordinate the resource provision and communication for the project.

⇒ **IFWEA, General Secretariat, Capetown, South Africa**

IFWEA offers a non-partisan, global political ‘home’ for the project. Towards this end, the IFWEA General Secretary requested that Young Eagles, Sweden’s Co-ordinator Mia Malmgren be invited to attend the introductory workshop in Limerick as part of the ABF delegation. The IFWEA Secretariat will open up discussions with the Young Eagles Movement in Sweden to see if they are interested in expanding their Global Leadership School to include some young ambassadors from this project in future. Dialogue on this will continue through the IFWEA Secretariat in future.

⇒ **ZAK, Malta**

They value their partnership with Limerick Youth Services and are interested in expanding their activities in line with the “Be Heard” activities of project, and collaborating on the European exchange application.





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