



This project has received funding from the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration under grant agreement no 613368

**MYWEB (Measuring Youth Well-Being)
Grant agreement no: FP7-613368**

WP4: Direct engagement with children and young people (CYP)

Deliverable 4.1: Country level reports on interviews and focus groups from delivery partners (Spain)

Editors	Mariona Ferrer-Fons (Universitat Pompeu Fabra), Pau Serracant (Catalan Youth Observatory), Roger Soler-i-Martí (Catalan Youth Observatory)		
Version	1.0		
Date	31 th of January 2015		
Work Package	4		
Deliverable	D4.1		
Dissemination level	PP		
WP Leaders	Mariona Ferrer-Fons (UPF)		
Deliverable Date	Month 10		
Document history			
Version	Date	Comments	Modified by
1.0			
1.1			

MYWEB: FP7-613368

Deliverable 4.1: Country level reports on interviews and focus groups with CYP from delivery partners

Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Fieldwork characteristics.....	3
3. Main empirical findings.....	6
3.1. Understanding and measuring well-being among children.....	6
3.2. Understanding and measuring well-being among young people.....	12
3.3. Remarks on the definition and operationalization of well-being in the fieldwork.....	21
4. Differences in the understanding of well-being depending on certain factors.....	23
5. Having their voices heard and survey engagement.....	25
6. Other recommendations informing MYWEB project.....	26

1. Introduction

This report presents the main conclusions collected from the qualitative data fieldwork among children and young people (CYP) in Spain (specifically, in Barcelona and its metropolitan area) about their definition and measurement of well-being. The empirical work, through the development of interviews and focus groups, entailed the involvement of a total of 53 CYP.

The report is divided into 5 sections apart from this introduction. The first one, Section 2, focuses on the fieldwork characteristics. We explain the socio-demographic profile of the participants, the recruitment strategies and the criteria of selection used for the contrasting schools. Section 3 consists in the presentation and analysis of the material collected with the main empirical findings, which are divided into two groups: children and young people. Section 4 discusses the existence of differences on the understanding of well-being, and how dimensions are prioritised on a selection of factors (such as gender, social background, political and civic engagement, nationality/place of birth, personal characteristics such as a disability or dyslexia, other particular events or family situations and the place of residence) that we considered in order to have variation in different profiles of CYP. The next section deals with the motivations for being involved (or not) in a cross-sectional and panel survey, the use of incentives, the best places to be interviewed and ways of collecting data. The last section summaries some recommendations that may be useful for MYWEB project.

2. Fieldwork characteristics

Wp4 fieldwork entailed the involvement of a total of 53 children and young people (CYP). We specifically contacted 15 children (mostly 11 year olds but one was 10 years old) and 38 young people between 15 and 19 years old. We engaged in 21 interviews and 4 focus groups distributed around the four types of CYP: (1) pupils from a state primary school in a very well-off neighbourhood of BCN city, (2) students doing the last year of compulsory secondary education in a state high school in BCN city in a working-class neighbourhood where many families have been affected by the economic crisis, (3) a selection of young people who are not active in civic or political organizations and (4) a selection of involved young people. For each type we did 5 interviews (or 6 for the non-organised young people) and 1 focus group.

The fieldwork took two months, from October to early December 2014. Three researchers of the MYWEB team were involved in it. We did not face ethical complications during the fieldwork. All the interviews and focus groups were anonymised and transcribed. For the case of minors, we asked for parental consent by giving them a letter with advice about the project giving the opportunity for parents to call us for extra information.

MYWEB: FP7-613368

Deliverable 4.1: Country level reports on interviews and focus groups from delivery partners

For the fieldwork in the two educational centres, we faced some problems due to the difficulties to organize empirical work during the academic term. Schools had not only exams and their own curricular activities, but also other research activities and thus it was not easy to organize the dates of our visits. In both cases (pupils from the state primary school and the state secondary school) we had full support from teachers, after approval in the School Council. The teachers asked for volunteers but in addition, they selected some specific cases.

Table 1 summarizes the main characteristics of the fieldwork. As can be seen, the data present a lot of variation of the participants in terms of gender, age (mainly from 11 to 18 years old but with 3 exceptions being 10 or 19 years old), origin, social class or family background, type of family (parents together, single family, divorced), organised vs non-organised young people and place of residence (focusing on BCN city and the metropolitan area with small and medium cities). We were also able to consider personal characteristics/situations that may affect CYP perceptions of well-being and that are not easy to cover in fieldwork: blindness, dyslexia or recent death of parent. We also consider language(s) spoken at home and with friends because we know that it is a variable related to social integration and networks in Catalonia. The most difficult socio-demographic condition was to find young working people due to the limitation of the range age. In our case, many respondents are students (a few with part-time jobs) and one unemployed.

Table 1. Main socio-demographic characteristics of the participants in the fieldwork

	Interviews	Focus groups
Pupils from primary school (15 children involved)	3 boys, 2 girls 4 eleven year olds, 1 ten year old 5 born in BCN (1 British mother) 2 speaking Catalan, 2 Catalan and Spanish, 1 Catalan and English with their families 4 living in BCN, 1 in small city 4 parents together, 1 mother widowed 5 both parents working	5 boys, 5 girls 10 eleven year olds 10 born in BCN 7 speaking in Catalan, 3 speaking Catalan and Spanish with their families 10 living in BCN 6 parents together, 4 divorced parents 10 both parents working
Pupils from secondary school (14 teenagers involved)	3 boys, 2 girls 3 fifteen years old, 2 sixteen years old 3 immigrant origin, 2 national origin 3 speaking Spanish, 1 speaking Catalan and 1 speaking Armenian with their families 5 living in BCN 3 parents together, 2 divorced parents 5 parents working	5 girls, 4 boys 7 fifteen years old, 2 sixteen years old 3 immigrant origin, 6 national origin 7 speaking Spanish, 1 speaking Catalan and Spanish, 1 Speaking Portuguese and Spanish with their families 9 living in BCN 5 parents together, 2 divorced parents, 2 single families 3 father unemployed, 6 parents working
Non-organised young people	3 boys, 3 girls 1 sixteen year old, 4 seventeen year olds, 1 eighteen year old 4 studying, 1 unemployed and 1	4 boys and 2 girls 2 sixteen year olds, 1 seventeen year old, 2 eighteen year olds and 1 nineteen year old All students

MYWEB: FP7-613368

Deliverable 4.1: Country level reports on interviews and focus groups from delivery partners

(12 young people involved)	studying and working 2 immigrant origin, 4 nationals 5 speaking Spanish and 1 Spanish and Arab with their families 5 living in the metropolitan area of BCN, 1 in BCN 4 parents together, 2 divorced parents 4 one of the parents unemployed, 1 father inactive, 1 parents working	1 immigrant, origin 5 nationals 4 speaking Catalan and 2 speaking Spanish with their families 4 living in BCN and 2 in the metropolitan area 4 parents together, 1 divorced parents, 1 emancipated 6 parents working
Involved young people (12 young people involved)	3 girls, 2 boys 1 sixteen year old, 1 17 year old, 3 eighteen year olds 4 studying, 1 studying and working 2 living in the metropolitan area of BCN, 3 in BCN 1 immigrant origin, 4 nationals 2 Speaking Spanish, 2 Catalan, 1 Catalan and Spanish with their families 2 parents together, 2 divorced parents, 1 single family 5 both parents working	5 boy, 2 girls 3 17 year olds, 3 eighteen year olds, 1 nineteen year old 5 studying, 2 studying and working 5 living in the metropolitan area of BCN, 2 in BCN 1 immigrant origin, 6 nationals 3 Speaking Spanish, 3 Catalan, 1 Catalan and Spanish with their families 4 parents together, 2 divorced parents, 1 emancipated 3 both parents working, 2 father or mother unemployed, 1 parents unemployed or inactive, 1 retired father

The criterion for the selection of schools was to choose 2 contrasting neighbourhoods of Barcelona city and within them, to select state schools with different pupils' characteristics. In one school, the fieldwork was done with children 11 years old and with one who was 10 years old, all in their last year of compulsory primary education (see Table 1 above). The school is located in one the wealthiest neighbourhoods in BCN, in the middle of the countryside and with excellent infrastructures. The pupils' families have high or very high educational background and/or highly qualified occupations. The language of FG and interviews was always Catalan.

The other school, where we interviewed students in the last year of compulsory secondary education (10 fifteen year olds and 4 sixteen year olds) is in a working-class area, with many families affected by the crisis and who are unemployed or in badly paid or precarious jobs. Hence, many students come from working-class families and some from migrant origin (Latin-American countries in particular, and Eastern Europe). The language of the FG and the interviews (with the exception of one interview) was in Spanish.

Surprisingly somehow, it was much more difficult to have a structured focus group with the teenagers than with the children. All children participated actively in the focus group whereas in the case of the secondary-education students, some girls did not talk and had a passive attitude. The fieldwork showed great socio-economic differences among pupils. On one hand, this conditions a lot of the experiences, conceptualizations and expectations of CYP. And on the other, this determines the work of the school and its capacity to influence the discourses of CYP. The teacher of the pupils in the primary school dedicated, after the fieldwork, a class to debate about well-being

MYWEB: FP7-613368

Deliverable 4.1: Country level reports on interviews and focus groups from delivery partners

and the interviewees explained their experience to the rest. This was not done in the secondary school, among other things, because teaching is much more challenging and many students in the classroom were not interested in the topic at all.

Those young people, who were not selected through the education system, were contacted 1) through a database of young people (people who answered a Catalan Youth Survey and accepted to be re-contacted), 2) contacting different types of social and political youth organizations and 3) using snowballing strategies among friends, work colleagues or students. We really tried to find variation on several socio-demographic variables.

Being involved in social or political groups was the most determinant variable for being more talking active in the interviews and in the discussions in the focus groups. Those with a high level of education -those in the first year of university- in general had much more elaborated discourses.

The main differences between interviews and focus groups was that in interviews, CYP were more open to explaining personal problems, in particular, those related to the situation of their family.

3. Main empirical findings

3.1. Understanding and measuring well-being among children

Next, we will present the main results of the analysis of the 5 interviews and the focus group carried out with 10- and 11-year-old children. The aim of this analysis is to understand the concept and the factors that determine the well-being of children from their own perspective. To do so, we will follow the different dimensions of well-being that have guided the fieldwork.

Before entering into the results, it has to be said that the school selected for the fieldwork with children in primary school has some special characteristics that shape the results (see fieldwork section). Therefore, it is important for the analysis to have in mind that it is a public school in one of the richest neighbourhoods of Barcelona, with families with a very high socio-cultural level.

Global understanding and definition of well-being

Both in the interviews and the fieldwork, one of the first aspects that has been asked of children is to give a global definition of well-being. We are working with a very vague and abstract concept and we were interested in having an impression of what are the ideas, feelings and domains that children relate with well-being. In the focus group, the question on “what does well-being mean for you?” triggered a spontaneous discussion where several concepts and dimensions of well-being appeared; in the interviews they needed more time to express the complex concept.

MYWEB: FP7-613368

Deliverable 4.1: Country level reports on interviews and focus groups from delivery partners

The answers to this general question confirm the multidimensionality of the concept of well-being. In some cases the very initial responses are quite evident: “being good”, “to feel ok”, “to live well”... However, when we insist on a more concrete answer, the ideas of the different children interviewed are pretty diverse and make reference both to objective-material and subjective-psychological dimensions. Many of them mention having basic needs covered (like food, housing or clothing). But beside this, there is also a reference to psychological aspects of well-being:

“When you feel good (...) when you are glad, happy... When you feel good, when you are at ease” (Laia, Interview, Female, 11)).

Or even references to the socio-affective needs:

“I think that well-being is to have people that love you” (Roser, FG, Female, 11).

When asking about the meaning of well-being, some children also use a negative scope in understanding well-being as the absence of problems or situations of malaise. This is particularly present in children that have a concrete problem or worry (in our fieldwork there are cases of children with dyslexia, with a particular worry with their body or a girl whose father had died recently). In all these cases, this particular problem or concern appeared spontaneously in the first question about their well-being. This indicates both the presence and importance of these problems and the ability and predisposition to talk about it. However, the absence of problems is not only a way of defining well-being in children that do have a particular concern. The reference to possible problems is also present in other children that use them as a way to describe well-being:

“I don’t know. I think that at our age [well-being] is that your parents do not divorce because you are going to start secondary education and it is hard. Although this is not my case. Then... do not leave friends” (Leo, Interview, Male, 11).

Both the interviewees and the focus-group respondents seem to be conscious of the inequalities in well-being among children. With different emphasis in general, they have pointed out that differences not only come from inequalities in the access to money and basic needs but also from different family situations (like divorced parents, diseases, etc.).

Major domains of well-being

Some important domains for well-being appear spontaneously in the first definition that children give to the concept.

Family is probably the most important element identified for well-being. The relationship with parents is the main pillar for children’s well-being. In general, the influence of the family is perceived as positive or very positive for their own well-being. And, as we will detail later, many of them identify everyday situations with their families as moments of happiness. However, the effects there may be when there are bad experiences are also recognized – such as the anxiety or

sadness when a child becomes aware of the problems of their parents or when they see parents arguing or with economic problems:

“My parents sometimes argue but, at the end they always solve their problems (...) I feel a bit sad because I don’t like to see them arguing but at the moment they are solving their problems and I feel very good” (Martí, Interview, Male, 11).

Many of the children in the focus group had divorced parents. In the focus group, 5 out of 10 children had parents who were separated. In the discussion about this the situation (of having separated parents, living in different houses or having new or reconstructed families) it didn’t appear as a problem. However, even if they are used to and happy with the situation, usually the process of separation is perceived as traumatic for many of them.

Studies also appear as an important aspect for well-being although with different intensity depending on the children. For some children, studies seem to be a major concern as it is their main responsibility and very related to the evaluation when they were asked for a good or a bad day. For other children, studies do not have this same presence even if they accepted that is a crucial aspect of well-being. In general, it is evident that they start to feel certain pressure on their studies; all of them are conscious that next year they start secondary school. Probably for children that have more difficulties, this is perceived as a new stressful situation.

Having **friends** is also an important aspect for children and in some cases, the use/availability of their leisure time appears as an important dimension for well-being (meeting with friends, use of tablets/Playstation, playing, doing sports such as dancing or walking). In the different interviews and the focus group, peers and friends appear as an important source of fun and support but also as a source of conflicts and frustrations:

“[Answering to “what is important for your well-being?”] To have friends, colleagues that give me support. To be kind with people and for people to be kind with me. And well... One thing that I don’t like is people that criticize me. Instead of criticizing I would like them to help me” (Bernat, Interview, Male, 11).

One remarkable and unexpected issue that children give great importance to is the area of **health**. None of the interviewees had particular health problems (only the cases of dyslexia or perceived problems with weight could be related) but it appears as a well-being domain in almost all the interviews. So the importance of health is not based on their own experience but is conveyed by their relatives. There is the exceptional case of a girl whose father died one month ago and she was very conscious of the importance of health for well-being. However, in general, the importance given to health cannot be attributed to their experience but probably to the adult discourses about what is important. This is an interesting aspect to take into account as it shows how well-being is not only experience-based but also culturally-based. It also responds to the social construction and transmission of needs.

Money/economic situation appear in the interviews/focus group but not as a major personal problem, as many of the respondents came from middle/upper class families. Nevertheless, they are all very conscious of the importance of money for material well-being and how poverty can affect the subjective well-being.

In one interview the decrease in family living standards has appeared as a result of the crisis. In that case, the interviewee perceived how the family had to change their holidays in recent years and how their parents have become more restrictive in spending money. However, the problem for this interviewee does not seem to be the economic changes but to see the effect of this in her father's mood:

"My father gets angry with everything because we have no money. When he sees the spending of the month, we stay in our rooms so he can let off steam because he gets very angry" (Laia, Interview, Female, 11).

Children tended to also include as "important domains for well-being" **psychological aspects** that we had not categorized a priori such as happiness, love, generosity or empathy. In the focus group for example, they talked a lot about the need of being solidaristic with other people for their own well-being. It has to be said that this was a major issue in the focus group but not in the interviews.

When asked about the domains that they will give importance to when they are adults, children tend to answer in a very similar way as now. The only difference is that some of them give more importance to money and work and less to friends, but family stays as the most important domain.

Happiness

In general, it is easier for children to answer questions relating to good feelings or good situations than when they are asked to describe bad feelings or experiences. This is true both for the interviews and for the focus group. However, in interviews it is easier to go further and more deeply into less pleasant aspects.

Even if, as we have said, they all consider family to be more important than friends and peers, when they are asked to remember situations of happiness, many of them tend to identify experiences with friends or at school. Usually these are activities or exceptional situations that have been perceived as "fun", "amusing" or "exciting".

Many respondents also refer to family when asked about situations of happiness. Unlike what happens with friends, in this case the situations reported are usually related to everyday life.

Finally, there are also some respondents that have a particularly strong hobby (dancing, sports or video games) which is perceived as very important to them and they relate their good moments with this hobby.

In relation to the negative feelings or experiences, many children refer to situations relating to their studies. It is very clear that they feel they are in a moment where studies start to be more demanding and this is perceived as a worry. This is particularly evident in children that have more difficulties with studies:

“The thing that I like the most [from a normal day] are days where I don’t have homework and I can be free and do whatever I want. And the days I don’t like are the days where I get very stressed because I have too much homework and I have activities out of school and I don’t have time to do the homework, and stuff like that (...) I get very stressed and I feel that I don’t have enough time. I think that I’m not very good at studies. I don’t know. I feel mentally blocked” (Teresa, Interview, Female, 11).

Bad feelings like sadness or anxiety can also be related to traumatic situations. We interviewed a girl whose father died a month ago and, this situation was evidently a factor throughout the interview as a source of sadness, frustrations and fears. Other less serious life changes can also have an impact on children’s moods. Another boy changed school four years ago and the process of leaving his friends behind from the other school and integrating into the new one is perceived as traumatic. This episode is present in his story as a difficult moment that he has got over:

“It was a hard period but now I have new friends and I feel well again” (Martí, Interview, Male, 11).

If family is one of the domains that children refer to when they are asked for situations of happiness, problems or conflicts in the family are also a particular source of feelings of anxiety, frustration and worry. We have to bear in mind that our fieldwork on children took place in a school with families with a high socio-economic position, so we have hardly found any reference of the impact of family economic problems in children that are probably more important in other contexts. Instead of this, there are many children that express a certain desire to spend more time with their parents. This is an issue for children in this context and it is mentioned even if they do not personally have this problem:

“The truth is that I’m very happy because I’m always with them [the parents]. But there are many children whose parents work a lot or work at night and they cannot see them. This is something that never happens to me, that my parents don’t spend time with me. (...) I’m with them a lot” (Leo, Interview, Male, 11).

The separation of parents is another traumatic situation that is very present in this school where many children have separated parents. As we said, it seems that the process of separation is a traumatic situation that is experienced by children as a difficult moment. However, when the situation becomes stable, the fact of having separated parents is not perceived as something bad. It probably helps that, as we were able to verify in the focus groups, this is a very normal situation in this context.

MYWEB: FP7-613368

Deliverable 4.1: Country level reports on interviews and focus groups from delivery partners

“Pep: I’m happy with my life, but there was a time where I was very depressed and I thought that I didn’t have any value.

Interviewer: And why were you depressed? What happened?

Pep: Well, it was when my parents got separated and the school didn’t go as well and there was a boy that annoyed me all the time.

(...)

Tanit: I was very young and I hardly remember [the separation of her parents]. But if I think of it now... On the TV there are series where people want their parents to come back, but what if they don’t want to be together? And I have many things now. So no thanks. They got separated and I have many good things because of that.

Pep: Yes I can’t imagine my live with my parents together again.

Eugeni: Well... I don’t imagine this. That would be very strange. They are separated and that’s all” (Focus group).

Life-satisfaction

Usually, children express satisfaction with their lives. In the focus group, there was a homogeneous consensus about a good level of satisfaction in life for them and children like them. In the interviews, the satisfaction with life is also the major feeling. However, it is in the interviews where children with specific problems (like dyslexia and dissatisfaction with their body, for example) report how these can present some obstacles to their happiness.

In all the interviews and the focus group, it is clear that children have the sensation that they are growing up and that this is a good stage in their lives. This seems to be one of the main sources of psychological satisfaction in children at this age. Childhood is the phase of life where changes are more profound and take place faster. At this age (10, 11 years old) they are conscious of this and that helps them to have optimistic expectations about their own future. Even those children that are in difficult situations have the impression that they are in the good way – they have the idea that they are progressing.

“Before I used to hit a lot other children. But now I have control of myself and I don’t hit anymore. Well.. I don’t like to hit. Also... before I had many difficulties reading and writing and I had very bad handwriting but I have kept improving (...) [in the next years in the school] older students have more homework but I will have progressed more. Like when I was in 3rt course and I didn’t know as much as I know now” (Bernat, Interview, Male, 11).

Psychological well-being

As we have just seen, all children interviewed show an optimistic view about their futures. They feel that their daily lives are worthwhile and meaningful and they tend to think that they are learning important things for their future. In general, they see their future following the general path of their studies. At this age, they don’t seem to be worried about having to take big decisions about their lives soon. What is present in some interviews is the worry about starting secondary school. They all have the impression that this stage will be more demanding and that this is a key moment in their

MYWEB: FP7-613368

Deliverable 4.1: Country level reports on interviews and focus groups from delivery partners

pathway; probably it is one of the first moments where they are conscious that their futures will start depending on their own effort and attitudes. Teresa, when explaining the influence of friends, highlights this optimistic view of her pathway and she also seems to be conscious of living in a crucial moment:

*“Teresa: [2 years ago] I didn’t like to study, I didn’t want to study... well I was not interested
 Interviewer: And what has changed?
 Teresa: I don’t know... mainly friends, because they left me behind. I went more with boys and then, when I was with girls they left me behind. And now I’m trying to change and be a bit more with everybody.
 Interviewer: How do you see yourself in two or three years?
 Teresa: I think that I will be more intelligent, I will have better marks in the exams, I will have a better physique and I will think things in more detail.
 Interviewer: And now, friends are a good influence for you?
 Teresa: Some are and some are not. Because they do things that they shouldn’t. I like them as friends but sometimes I don’t like what they do. And there are others that are very kind, they don’t do anything bad. These are the good friends.
 Interviewer: Do you think they can influence you in the future?
 Teresa: Yes. I think so. Because I have two choices; I can go with more quiet people or I can go with more popular people that want to lark about all the time and things like that”
 (Teresa, Interview, Female, 11).*

In this key moment of life, children always answer that their parents and family are a good influence on them. Also, there seems to be a consensus that teachers play a positive role in their lives and in how they face the future, even if several interviewees express that they have preferences for some teachers more than others.

3.2. Understanding and measuring well-being among young people

Global understanding and definition of well-being

There are different approaches to “well-being” among the interviewed/FG with young people (YP). Broadly speaking, two extreme positions can be identified: on the one hand, those that relate it to material issues and the fulfilment of basic needs:

“To guarantee a minimum of conditions for people to have a relaxed life” (Clàudia, FG involved, Female, 17).

“To have your basic needs covered” (Joana, Interview, involved, Female, 16).

“Having the basic things to subsist” (Mireia, FG school, Female, 16).

On the other hand, there are those that stress an inner dimension, like self-assurance, optimism or self-acceptance:

“To feel OK with oneself” (José, FG school, Male, 16).

“To feel at peace with oneself and with others” (Jonás, Interview, involved, Male, 18).

“To feel OK with what happens to you” (Noelia, FG school, Female, 15).

Among these, some of them consider the material issues unimportant compared with having a positive, self-reliant attitude that is perceived as the key to achieve well-being:

“The differences [in well-being] among YP mostly depend on the education one has, on the way one looks at things, on your attitude. With a positive attitude you can achieve whatever you want” (Jonás, Interview, involved, Male, 18).

In between these positions, some YP consider well-being as a state in which things “are OK”, where the different dimensions of life are balanced and there are no significant troubles in any of them:

“It’s an ensemble of factors: health, family... It’s an abstract concept that combines everything that rules your life. If you’re happy with all of these factors, the higher your well-being will be” (David, Interview, school, Male, 15).

“There is physical, psychological and social well-being. It’s having the conditions to be able to develop as a person in a complete form and according to each person’s needs” (Neus, Interview, involved, Female, 18).

YP identify broad differences in the well-being of YP, some of them related to its materialistic conception: they talk about YP with unmet basic needs (such as children and YP living on the streets and addicted to drugs, or YP living with families with harsh economic difficulties); and others related to its inner dimension: they talk about different attitudes towards life, personalities, ways of reacting to problems, etc. Depending on the approach, they explain the differences as an outcome of social inequalities such as the neighbourhood or family income (materialistic approach); or as an outcome of the different personalities and characters of YP (inner approach). They also highlight the differences in well-being depending on one’s perception of it, which depends on what one is used to:

“In my country of origin there’s a lot of poverty, for example, back there, having a decent and clean bathroom is considered differently to here. Here it is not valued like there” (Soraya, FG school, Female, 15).

“In private schools people don’t have to worry about many things, as they take them for granted and they don’t consider it to be well-being, they see them as innate. But perhaps people from a more humble neighbourhood have to worry about how to pay for school

books, how to make ends meet, even how to pay for food” (Marta, Interview, not involved, Female, 17).

Major domains of well-being

Family appears as the key element for all YP. They rate it as the main influence of their lives and the issue they care more about. It can offer a positive and constant support, which is very much appreciated:

“Family is always important because it’s always going to be by your side” (Ivan, Interview, school, Male, 16)

“I receive very, very important support from my mother” (Neus, Interview, involved, Female, 18)

However, it can also be perceived as the main focus of discomfort or unhappiness. This can be related to occasional annoyances, but many young people have stressed the pain, discomfort and unhappiness that their parents’ quarrels and/or separation have caused them:

“Since my father has left I feel more relaxed as quarrels have stopped; however I also miss him and I don’t know when I’m going to see him again” (Sandra, Interview, school, Female, 15).

“There were lots of shouts, many quarrels, I was there and I didn’t like being there. It’s fixed in my mind (...). That he went to X also affected me a lot because my father has influenced me a lot and I don’t like having him far away” (Pere, Interview, involved, Male, 15).

Complementary to this, YP value when family relations work:

“[It makes me feel well] To be all together, talking when having lunch. Explaining what is happening to us and being listened to. And we also listen to what is happening to them and want to know how they are” (Manuel, Interview, school, Male, 15)

Even those that do not perceive that their families have a fundamental role in their well-being, positively or negatively, place it as the domain they care the most about. Among those that have siblings, their relationship with them is also fundamental:

“I feel good when I’m OK with my sister, and I feel bad when I’m not OK with her” (Jonás, Interview, involved, Male, 18).

“To me (...) my siblings are more important than my friends” (Ivan, Interview, school, Male, 16).

“My younger brother is always happy and it’s as if his happiness was transferred to me. Always when I see his face I get happy” (Manuel, Interview, school, Male, 15).

Among those with younger siblings, taking care of them is a common responsibility perceived at the same time as a source of well-being and as an obstacle for other activities.

Most YP place **friends** as their second source of well-being, both as those people with whom they share interests and have fun with and those with whom they can count on in case they need emotional support:

“Last week I was with some friends. We went to buy comics and went for a stroll and then spent three hours talking about several issues” (David, Interview, school, Male, 15).

“My friends have helped me a lot with this process [family quarrels and separation]” (Sandra, Interview, school, Female, 15).

However, most of the YP consider that friends are not as important for them as their families. Some of them have stressed that they are aware that their different educational careers will set them apart and that new relationships will appear.

Among many YP it is their **studies** that regulate their daily life, including weekends. Their studies rule their timetable but also occupy a central role in their thoughts and activities outside of school (homework, exams, etc.). Studies can be a source of satisfaction, especially if the results are acceptable for them and/or they find it interesting or purposeful:

“Studies are important to find a decent job, to find time to be with your family and have the means to have fun” (Ivan, Interview, school, Male, 16).

Studies can also be a source of dissatisfaction. This sometimes is related to issues such as the routine of studying, the (perceived) lack of purpose / future utility many subjects have (which makes them uninteresting), the lack of interest of teachers or to educational issues:

“Education teaches you to memorize concepts instead of helping you to think” (Eudald, FG not involved, Male, 18).

A recurrent complaint, especially among middle-class YP, is the pressure to achieve certain academic results:

“I was enraged because they pressured us a lot to pass, to get a good mark, to go to university (...). And they were disparaging to those that did not want to go to university, just because they want to do other things. They pressured you, as if to be someone in life you had to go to university and get good marks and all this. (...) A lot of competition, competition, competition (...), this upset me a lot. In the last term I thought of quitting everything. I couldn’t stand it, I cried so much, it was horrible” (Beth, Int. involved, Female, 18).

MYWEB: FP7-613368

Deliverable 4.1: Country level reports on interviews and focus groups from delivery partners

Complementary to this, two issues related to studying appeared as important sources of dissatisfaction. The first one is bullying, which appeared in all the FG and in many interviews:

“People insulted me, said things I didn’t like and I became lonely and self-centred” (Pere, Interview, involved, Male, 17).

Some YP stress the importance of having the support of some friend (family is not mentioned) to face bullying, and they all agree that this may or may not be a traumatic experience depending on the personality of the person and his/her capacity to play it down.

Finally, school (or university) attendance, homework and exams tend to fill the agendas of many YP. If they participate in some out-of-school activities (sports, music, dance, etc.) or are politically / socially engaged they are stressed by a structural lack of time, although they appreciate their activities. In the case of the teenagers from the secondary school, studies appear less important than for other YP or the children from the primary school.

As most of the interviewed YP are not working, **work** is not perceived as something basic in their daily life. All of them are aware of the importance it will have in their lives, but mostly as a tool for achieving other goals and material security. **Money** is also perceived more as a tool than as an end in itself, although the importance they give to it depends on the financial situation of the YP (those with serious economic problems tend to value it more, even as something decisive for well-being). Some immigrant YP highlighted the contrast between Spain and their countries of origin, and although they miss their friends, family and country, they also value the opportunities they have in their new country.

Most of them consider that having a **partner** is not something crucial for them now. They admit that it is a very common subject, and something that produces many satisfactions and worries:

“Many of the people I know depend emotionally on their sentimental situation, that is, if they have a partner or not, if it works, if they’re interested in someone...” (Àuria, FG not involved, Female, 16).

In one unique case, a young boy values enormously the emotional support his girlfriend gives him, which is missing from his parents. In another case, another young boy stresses the unhappiness generated by an unsatisfactory relationship. However, they tend to see their present or future partners as something temporary and something that will probably change.

Happiness

Many of the interviewed YP see youth as a **double-edged** phase of life, i.e. that its positive side implies its negative one. They consider youth as a moment of **freedom, lack of responsibilities, intensity, energy, open-mindedness**; they perceive that everything is possible and that they are in control of their lives:

MYWEB: FP7-613368

Deliverable 4.1: Country level reports on interviews and focus groups from delivery partners

“The will to experiment, vitality, the capacity to be critical” (Josep, FG involved, Male, 17).

“Dynamism, the capacity to do many things, to adapt. As you grow you tend to lose these capacities, and people value them” (Jonás, Interviews, involved, Male, 18).

However, this openness and lack of responsibilities (duties) means that they have no tools to do what they want (rights): they **lack autonomy** (which often leads to confrontation with parents), financial resources, their own housing, etc.:

“There’s no way they [his parents] understand it. I’m not a child of ten anymore, I’m at an age where I’m responsible and I don’t need all the security they want to give me” (David, Interview, school, Male, 15).

“You don’t work so you don’t get a salary, you can’t manage your money as you wish instead you are always asking for permission, dependency...” (Pere, Interview, involved, Male, 17).

Also, many of the interviewed YP consider that another undesired effect of the intensity of youth and the many activities they develop is feeling **stressed** and sometimes **frustrated** (they have no time to do what they want and have to sacrifice friendships or activities):

“I’m studying, I also play football and I’m with the scouts, many times I can’t go to a match because I’ve got to study or because I’ve got to go to the scouts and I end up stressed out” (Mar, FG involved, Female, 17).

“School, football, politics, arriving home at 10.30 at night and not having had time to take a breath, then having to start studying for tomorrow’s exam. It’s horrible” (Pere, Interview, involved, Male, 17).

On the other hand, some young people (from working class, immigrant origins and not involved) have stressed the contrary; the **boredom** they often experience when their friends (which in their case is the only source of entertainment) are not available, or when there is nothing interesting to do with them. However, some have a political view of this issue:

“For the great majority of YP money is the problem. Adults can pay and children get everything paid (...). YP want to do things but we can’t afford it. (...) They should help us. Public transport is very expensive. 2,15 € to go to X, come on! (...) The bus-card is expensive. We have nothing to do so we spend all day in the park, bored, many smoking while others are drinking, this is shit. To some this way is normal and they don’t advance in their lives, they only smoke and drink. There’s nothing open in the village, no transport, they have no focus and it’s normal for them. They don’t give them the means” (Musta, Interview, not involved, Male, 16).

Some of them have stressed the importance they give to **maturing**, as they perceive their past (or their friends) as arrogant and/or irrational and extremely emotional, this being due to their

MYWEB: FP7-613368

Deliverable 4.1: Country level reports on interviews and focus groups from delivery partners

ignorance and lack of perspective. They appreciate “growing up” as a self-responsibility process that brings them emotional stability.

“At our age a small problem is often seen as very big. For example, if someone insults us we may get very sad. We tend to exaggerate and do not think before acting” (María, Interview, school, Female, 16).

A certain consensus appears with regard to the evolution of relationships and life in general from childhood to youth. These YP consider that during childhood, life is easy and friendships are taken for granted (friends are the classmates) but not especially significant. During adolescence, friendship becomes more significant and also more difficult to achieve:

“In the past you have your friends and that’s it, now happiness requires an effort, it doesn’t come by itself” (Àuria, FG not involved, Female, 16).

Next, from adolescence to youth, friendships seem to blur as the YP enter the world: many of them start university or work and get involved in different activities, begin stable relationships, etc.:

“As you grow you want to meet new people, learn new things, change your routines. This is the cool thing about being young” (Jonás, Interview, involved, Male 18).

When asked to remember something that recently has made them happy or unhappy there are two main answers: **family relationships** and **academic results**. With regard to the family, they do not tend to mention specific events that make them happy (most of them are happy with their usual, every-day relationships), but in regard to unhappy feelings, the situation is different: they focus on disruptive events (mostly quarrels with parents or siblings, or between parents) or situations (absent parent, illness, lack of job or resources). With regard to academic results, they produce both positive and negative effects. Another recurrent positive issue is **going out or being with friends**. It has to be noted that the research methodology (focus groups and relatively short and focused interviews) may blur the importance that **partners and relationships** may have for YP. Only two of the interviewees talk about the happiness/unhappiness their relationships bring them, but many of them admit that it is a very common issue in their conversations and that it is very significant in their friends’ lives.

Life-satisfaction

There are significant differences in life-satisfaction among YP. However, the factors that produce these differences tend to be the same, and coincide with the aforementioned events that have made them happy or unhappy recently and with the identified major domains of well-being: mostly, family (relationships and material conditions), studies and friendships. Among those involved YP, their social/political activities are clearly a source of satisfaction. Among all of the YP, **hobbies can** also play a stimulating role. Music is often quoted as a significant issue, as it tends to generate bonds between YP that share a similar taste.

MYWEB: FP7-613368

Deliverable 4.1: Country level reports on interviews and focus groups from delivery partners

Broadly speaking, some typical situations have been identified:

A) Those YP that tend to be satisfied and happy. Among the interviewed YP, most of them come from the middle-classes and are socially or politically involved; however, we have interviewed two highly optimistic, self-reliant YP of working-class, immigrant origin.

“Well, my studies are going well, so I’m quite satisfied, and proud to be doing it. With my family I’m also OK, I get on very well with them and this is important to me. And my friends, I love having different groups of friends” (Joana, Interview, involved, Female, 16).

Among these YP there are those that “feel OK”, slightly or quite satisfied, but do not seem (or have expressed it) to be especially enthusiastic about it: their lives are going as they expect.

B) Those that tend to combine positive and negative feelings and that perceive their emotional life as unstable. Among those YP that have expressed feeling this way, there are both involved and non-involved YP and from different social backgrounds.

“[The bad thing about being young is] the hormones [its ups and downs]” (Salma, FG school, Female, 15).

“I’m a roller-coaster. (...) Some days you’re very happy, others very bad, others you feel normal. If you calculate the average, it’s normal. But if you look at each day, some of them you’re super-happy and others you don’t want to do anything at all” (Marta, Interview, not involved, Female, 17).

C) And those who, even if they do not say directly that are dissatisfied with their lives, express feelings of unhappiness or worry and of their lack of personal resources to face it. Most of these YP deal with a specific event or feature which causes their unhappiness and, as has been said, this relates to family issues (relationship with or between parents or lack of material resources) or, in some cases, to bullying or difficulties with having friends:

“If you are not OK with your family, anything [that happens] makes you fall” (Noelia, FG school, Female, 15).

“I’m sad when my family quarrels, there are discussions constantly and I always take the rap, and this upsets me” (Andrés, FG school, Male, 15).

Clearly, family relationships emerge as the main source of well-being or the lack of it.

Psychological well-being

In general, YP are satisfied with the *course* of their lives. Despite the fact that many of them report ups and downs in their mood or troublesome issues, some of which are important to them (see section above). Generally this is no obstacle to them feeling that the direction of their lives is

MYWEB: FP7-613368

Deliverable 4.1: Country level reports on interviews and focus groups from delivery partners

worthwhile and meaningful. However, the interviewed pupils from the secondary school, many of whom are from immigrant and working-class environments, are somehow less positive, or more passive, with regard to the course of their lives. Studies have a central role here, as they regulate their lives: despite their ambivalent position with regard to them (usually considered to be boring, stressful, etc.), even those that do not value them by themselves think or hope that that they will serve them to be part of a general culture and/or to attain a job to achieve the desired independence. Among the involved, participant YP, their social or political activities are also a source of meaning and well-being, with the idea of *'helping the others'* being a common leitmotiv. It is worth repeating that among some non-involved YP, *boredom* seems to be a relatively common issue.

As in the other dimensions of well-being, **family** is usually mentioned as a support factor in their daily-lives.

"My family, especially my mother, is the most important thing for me to feel OK" (Beth, Interview, involved, Female, 18).

Friendships also have a supporting and stimulating role. Despite the fact that most YP consider that they can count on their families in times of need, some of them also admit that they do not share certain issues with them but with their friends.

As a complement to this, as reported, troubles with family and friends are often quoted as being disruptive of this general ease in their routines.

Some YP from working-class environments mentioned **TV** and/or **computer games/Play-station** as an element that distracts them. **Teachers** are regarded mostly as a neutral influence, although some of them highlight the positive role some (perceived as) exceptional teachers may have:

"I've been quite lucky with teachers because to me they've been more than teachers. They've been a feeding source, they've taught me more than they had to and have been very responsive" (David, Interview, school, Male, 15).

The interviewed YP mainly **expect to have a family** in the distant future. They value this as their main life-goal and the rest of the objectives they may have (relative prosperity, a stable job, etc.) are seen as tools to fulfil this future family's needs. A girl from a family that is having economic troubles has, as her main goal, to have a stable job and economic stability more than anything else. But even those younger YP (15-16) that have a clear career in mind (music, computers) or hobby (travelling as often as possible) consider having a family as their main priority, or at least that once they have it, it will be so. It is worth noting that some immigrant YP are those who express this desire with more clarity.

With regard to their recent past and near future, many of them do not see much of a difference, as they stress a continuity of their lack of autonomy (perceived as something negative) and lack of responsibilities (positive). On the other hand, other YP see this period as marked, precisely by a

MYWEB: FP7-613368

Deliverable 4.1: Country level reports on interviews and focus groups from delivery partners

process of achieving greater autonomy: not fully, but where, according to them, a significant change is occurring (or expected to occur).

Finally, the current context of crisis in Spain appears in some discourses and is faced differently. The involved YP tend to be critical but at the same time are more optimistic about their particular future, something related to their social backgrounds but also to a somehow proactive, positive attitude. Also, some YP from working-class backgrounds are conscious of the impact that the crisis has had on their surroundings and of the way they want to face it:

“We’ve got to deal with the crisis; when you were a child you aimed to study all you wanted and to work, and now things are not so clear. (...) You look at what is happening to the neighbourhood, that they’re fighting for a job. And then you want to study and you’re OK knowing that you’ll be able to get a job in the sector” (Martín, Interview, not involved, Male, 17).

“Many people are more aware now of the importance of studying to get a good job. This has changed, because right now there are lots of people that have basic training and therefore there’s a lot of competition: they’ve got to work more hours, for less money and not everybody is prepared to do so” (Álex, Interview, not involved, Male, 18).

3.3. Remarks on the definition and operationalization of well-being in the fieldwork

One of the main challenges of this research consists of working with a complex, highly abstract and vague concept. Well-being refers to all the areas of people’s lives and both to objective conditions and to subjective experiences. This broad concept could have two kinds of problems when taking it to empirical analysis: The first problem, as an abstract concept, could be that the children and young people did not understand what we were referring to. And the second, as a broad and vague concept, that we could not find a good way to operationalise the concept to make it observable.

In our fieldwork, we did not have to face the first of these problems. In none of our 21 interviews and 4 focus groups did the respondents seem to have any major difficulty in identifying what is well-being. It is an abstract concept but, as it is much related to people’s primary experiences and feelings, YP and also children connect very easily with the questions and the discussion. This has great potential for studying well-being and has to be taken into account in designing a survey on this issue.

For the second problem, the strategy of the project has been to organize the schedule of the interviews and focus groups following theoretical dimensions of subjective well-being. In accordance with the nature of the fieldwork, we have focused on the subjective measures of the concept and have taken different dimensions of the concept from the literature. Therefore, the

MYWEB: FP7-613368

Deliverable 4.1: Country level reports on interviews and focus groups from delivery partners

interviews have been divided asking for: global understandings of the concept, the domains of well-being and the theoretical dimensionality of the concept (happiness, satisfaction and psychological well-being). In contrast to the easy understanding of the concept by the respondents, it has been very common that interviews and discussions in the focus group have not easily followed the parts proposed by the schedule. The following are some of the problems and considerations related to this that have arisen during the fieldwork:

- The borders between satisfaction, happiness and psychological well-being are not always clear for the respondents.
- In relation to this, many problems, reflections and experiences have appeared in both the interviews and the focus groups. This has not necessarily been a problem for the fieldwork because it makes it easier to ask again for the conflictive issues. However, it has to be taken into account for the subsequent analysis.
- There is an element that maybe has to be more explicitly treated. It is the fact that some problems that CYP identify as such do not have much importance for their well-being while others do. This difference is not only due to the gravity of the problem but also to the ability of the person to isolate or to accept it. It would be interesting to explicitly treat this point because it makes the difference in the perception of well-being.
- Similar to this, the conceptual treatment does not help to identify the relationship between material and subjective well-being. The project is focused on subjective well-being as we are interested in people's experiences but, as we know, subjective experience is heavily related to material conditions. Maybe it would be interesting to explicitly gather information on what are the mechanisms by which material well-being influences feelings and perceptions, and how this affects in a different way different CYP.
- Throughout the fieldwork, we have found that the relationship sphere of life is a crucial aspect of well-being. And even if it is treated implicitly in the entire schedule, it might be interesting to address part of the research to analyse the role of social support.
- Likewise, well-being is, at least partially, culturally-based. That means that social norms affect the self-experience of satisfaction and happiness. It would be interesting to explicitly look at the importance of social norms.

4. Differences in the understanding of well-being depending on certain factors

In this section we explain to what extent might a selection of several factors have an effect on the main dimensions that are relevant for well-being from the point of view of CYP and on the way they conceptualized it.

Gender

In general, it seems not to be an important factor. However, it has to be pointed out that more girls than boys talked about the relevance of feeling good with their physical appearance and their weight as dimensions of well-being -although not among the most important dimensions- and some girls mentioned that love, being loved, or the relationship with the boyfriend as aspects that can affect their well-being feelings too. Moreover, two girls who are 17 and 18 years old respectively and politically organized -one in a feminist organization and the other in a youth left-wing ecological party- consider the importance of sexual identity and the processes that question one's own sexual identity or gender issues as relevant dimensions of consideration when measuring well-being.

Social background

At first glance, social background does not seem to have an important effect on the discourses and conceptualization of well-being on the main dimensions YP identify as relevant to their life-satisfaction. However, the personal situations of CYP and the resources they have to face them differ substantially; it is obvious that they are mediated by the family socio-economic situation. CYP from upper- and middle-class social backgrounds who are mainly Catalan speakers, tend to be more socially and politically involved, which affects their perception of well-being and they do not suffer from material deprivation. Thus, despite the fact that they may value similar things, their propensity to enjoy or prioritize them varies; and some people from lower social backgrounds have to deal with the frustration, stress or sadness that certain situations may imply (such as difficulties to pay the rent, parental unemployment, lack of money for entertainment, family discussions due to money, privacy, etc.). It has also been those YP from lower social backgrounds that have pointed out *boredom* as something somehow recurrent in their lives and, in some cases, they talk about the future with a lack of expectation. If you compare CYP from more privileged backgrounds, they have a more positive view concerning their future prospects.

Political and civic involvement

On purpose, we interviewed 5 young adults and created 1 focus group with young people involved in different types of groups. Specifically, our participants were involved in the following issues or groups: leisure, disability, migration, youth political parties, feminist groups and green organizations). When comparing to other young people, civic and political engagement seems to be a fundamental factor in explaining different approaches to well-being. Those involved YP, regardless

MYWEB: FP7-613368

Deliverable 4.1: Country level reports on interviews and focus groups from delivery partners

of their social origin, have a wider conception of well-being (which involves the community, or their environment) based on reciprocity and social resilience. Involved YP tend to be optimistic about their lives and enjoy a higher degree of life-satisfaction and psychological well-being. They also tend to produce a more complex discourse about well-being, which goes beyond them and includes social and political issues.

Furthermore, involved YP are mostly willing to participate in a panel survey without incentives but also stress that receiving feedback is the main stimulus they can have for doing so. They also ask for applicability of the research and the need to use the information collected for better youth public *policies*.

Nationality /origin

Foreign-born or those CYPs from immigrant origin families pointed out some issues related to their immigrant situation which affects their well-being: the first one is mostly related to the fact that their relatives (parents, siblings) may be in their countries of origin, and this forced separation affects them negatively. In addition to this, almost all interviewed young immigrants are both from lower social backgrounds and non-involved in organisations, which make them share similar characteristics with regard to the conception and enjoyment of well-being which are common to these groups. It seems that non-national YP value family relations even more than nationals.

Personal characteristics

We wanted to explore the impact of CYP who have some sort of personal difficulties or disabilities on their subjective perception of well-being. We interviewed an 11 years old colour-blind boy with dyslexia and a young boy with total blindness involved in two groups that give support to blind people. In both cases, their situation affected their subjective well-being. The first boy recognized that this difficulty has produced anxiety, group disturbances and shame. The blind young boy, obviously with a more serious disability, talked about his understanding of well-being that was totally influenced by his situation and the difficulties that he has to cope with to have a normal life.

Other personal events/situations

When you gather data on CYP well-being, as with any method of collection, you are influenced by the particular situation of the interviewee which could influence his/her type of answers. Specific situations not mentioned above that, in our fieldwork, affected the understanding of well-being were the following: a father's death or grave illness, having parents that quarrel often, living in a single family, a traumatic separation/divorce, or an absent parent. All these circumstances tended to be a source of sadness and/or stress that affected clearly "the lens" that CYP used to reflect on well-being. Other interviewed YP have pointed out the importance that bullying has had in their lives (or colleagues' lives) although this issue could not be investigated in depth.

The neighbourhood, rural vs urban places

MYWEB: FP7-613368

Deliverable 4.1: Country level reports on interviews and focus groups from delivery partners

Our fieldwork focused on BCN city and the metropolitan area. Not only did we use participants living in different neighbourhoods of a large city such as Barcelona, but we also used participants who were living in small towns and medium cities and in some cases, living on the top of a hill. CYP did not mention differences in their perception and understanding of well-being due to their environment, partially due to the fact that many CYPs move very often within BCN. Only two particular cases appeared to be sensitive to the close context: on the one hand, the teenagers of the focus groups, who all were from a working-class neighbourhood, introduced the relevance of living in an area with a high level of social conflict, delinquency and poverty. On the other hand, a boy who lived with his family isolated on the top of a hill outside of Barcelona explained how difficult it was to go and play with friends, and to do many things that his classmates did easily.

5. Having their voices heard and survey engagement

After the analysis of the data, we found that there are 3 perspectives from CYP: 1) Some CYP argued that they are listened to but that the “adult” society (or institutions and governments) does not change their actions or decisions depending on that. They complain about their voices being heard in a futile way. 2) Another group of CYP considered that their opinions and views are taken into account: they do not consider another possibility given the fact that they are the future of society and that it would be senseless not to do so. Some children mentioned that they were not listened to but they expected to be once they became older 3) A larger group considered that YP are not even listened to and that the adult society takes decisions without taking into account their wishes and needs.

Depending on their position on the previous issue, they consider research on their views as something positive and necessary or not. However, in general they value the importance of research on CYP’s well-being but point out that it is only a preliminary step towards the really important issue: reacting positively to that knowledge. They ask that the research has to be applied and has to influence public policies.

Involved CYP, those who came from an upper social background and those who were studying at university tended to show a positive willingness to participate both in cross-sectional and/or panel surveys. The teenagers from the focus groups (and from lower social backgrounds) and some non-involved young people showed less motivation to answer surveys if there were no incentives around. In fact, among those who had a positive attitude towards research on CYP well-being, there was more interest for being involved in a panel survey than in a survey in which interviewees are contacted only once. They said that the fact that a panel allows youth transitions to be observed and how each one evolves is very interesting. Even so, many CYP stated the importance of feedback from the results collected. In the case of a panel, it was mentioned several times that it would be very interesting to observe their evolution depending on how they had answered the questionnaire. One key element for participating in a study on CYP well-being, many young people argued, was its

MYWEB: FP7-613368

Deliverable 4.1: Country level reports on interviews and focus groups from delivery partners

impact. This argument is shared by participants from different social backgrounds (they said: “we want to see that it serves for something”). They said that people like them would agree to participate in this kind of research if they had the certainty that this would be useful to improve CYP life quality.

As we have already mentioned earlier, young people from lower social origins and those not involved tend to be less enthusiastic about it, although not openly against it (it has to be said that they agreed to participate in our fieldwork as the most critical and least interested had already rejected the offer). They considered, however, that their friends would tend not to be willing to participate. Some mentioned the need for incentives: something related to their hobbies, a voucher, money, tickets for concerts/movies, a journey or free meals were also mentioned. They pointed out that certain types of CYP, passive and negative, would not even be tempted by incentives.

School and neutral places (civic centre or a bar) have been mentioned as the preferred places for survey answering. Some people also mentioned their home, but it is important to note that others said that their home would not be a good place at all. For instance, the FG with adolescents from a low social background and some of the younger children said that it would be better at school or in a public space rather than at home.

Finally, they were not asked if they prefer on-line, face-to-face or telephone surveys. In some cases, it was said that face-to-face was preferred to telephone surveys. But some young people studying at the university said that on-line surveys could be a good way to collect the opinion of more young people.

6. Other recommendations informing MYWEB project

- **The importance of the material conditions of existence.** The fieldwork has shown, as is well-known, the importance of the material conditions of existence in the configuration of CYP’s well-being. The family income or its activity status, the type of neighbourhood and school, the availability of public transport, the access to public health or the legal status of the CYP or their families all have a strong influence on their subjective well-being. This should be taken into account in the survey design. We suggest to complement (as if they were independent variables, so to speak) the questions about subjective issues concerning well-being with questions dealing with objective, material conditions.
- **Children, teenagers and young adults have different situations and well-beings.** Although there is an interesting continuum between children and youth, the life-phases in which children, teenagers and young people (in our case, YP were in their last year of non-compulsory education, studying at university or working) are quite different. During the fieldwork, it became

MYWEB: FP7-613368

Deliverable 4.1: Country level reports on interviews and focus groups from delivery partners

clear just what youth actually is – a life-phase in which childhood is left behind: this includes among other things, activities, attitudes, values and relationships. Precisely because adolescence implies a transition period between childhood and young adulthood, it can also imply very different subjective perceptions of well-being. This, of course, affects their well-being directly. It has to be considered that few of the interviewed YP were working, none of them full-time, and none of them with the exception of one had left the parental home: therefore, for certain YP, differences with children will be much bigger. This poses relevant questions with regard to the questionnaire design, or even to the sampling/universal definition. The “children vs young people” issue and the differences between teenagers and young adults have to be seriously addressed in the next WP.

- **The limits of a survey on well-being.** The qualitative fieldwork has allowed us to identify many issues that are crucial to CYP’s well-being. However, it has not been easy to deal with certain issues or to bring them out into the open: in the focus groups, certain subjects (like bullying or anorexia) have only been hinted at; in the interviews, it has been easier but, despite the fact that some of the interviewees have expressed their worries or even cried, it has not been possible to get a satisfactory insight into these issues; and the research team is aware that many issues have not even materialised. Therefore, and despite the fact that we are aware that qualitative and quantitative instruments have different objects, it seems clear that a survey on well-being has strong limitations in achieving its object. It would seem worth while considering the possibility of complementing the survey with qualitative tools. A tool that could be especially complementary to the longitudinal survey is Longitudinal Qualitative Research, which would maintain the dynamic nature of the survey while providing a qualitative dimension that seems essential in any comprehensive approach to subjective well-being.
- **The theoretical divisions of subjective well-being may not be ideal when structuring the questionnaire.** The script/structure/dimensions of the qualitative fieldwork of WP4 was designed following the theoretical background of well-being. A relevant result of the fieldwork is that the borders between satisfaction, happiness and psychological well-being are not always clear for the respondents. Moreover, some problems that CYP identify as such do not have much importance for their well-being while others do. On the other hand, we have found that the relational sphere of life is a crucial aspect of well-being, and that social norms affect the self-experience of satisfaction and happiness. These findings suggest that they should be considered when designing the questionnaire.
- **The particular characteristics of certain groups or models of family.** The fieldwork has also highlighted the specific issues that certain groups can have: the only interview with a disabled YP (blindness) has shown the great importance that a disability may have on subjective well-being; or the role of the legal status on the well-being of a foreign family. The influence of different models of family (parents living together, single parenthood, divorced parents) also needs being considered. Despite the fact that the MYWEB project focuses on the whole of the CYP, and that this issue of specificity is common to most research, this seems to be a crucial issue that must be properly addressed in the next WP.

MYWEB: FP7-613368

Deliverable 4.1: Country level reports on interviews and focus groups from delivery partners

- **The difficulties to include certain groups.** Again, this is not a challenge specific to MYWEB, but is also has to be addressed. It has been difficult to find and stimulate apathetic CYP to participate in the interviews and focus group, and to make them participate and express themselves. This is relevant as, in this group, we may expect to find some CYP in risk. This should be considered when designing the sample and establishing the substitution criteria or some particular incentives to try to include them.

- **The importance of feedback and applicability of the research.** Linked to the issue of including all groups in the survey, the strongest motivational factor that has appeared in the fieldwork for participating in a survey (and in a panel) is feedback: CYP are interested in their own situation and expect their effort (participation in the survey) to be useful and to gain some form of feedback. Knowing that the time they have devoted to it has had an impact is important for them to participate again, but even if they are not expected to do so, they tend to demand a certain amount of feedback. In this sense, applicability of the results that are produced through the empirical results appears as a complement to that. They are very critical as to how CYP are listened to by institutions and the adult world in general. If they participate in a research, they want the results to have some applicability, which implies a clear link between research and public policies.