

Anholt Report

Research on non-formal learning processes

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1. Introduction

This is the research report of the Anholt project, that took place in the first two weeks of August 2011 on the Danish island Anholt. 27 youngsters with the age of 14-18, from seven European countries (Portugal, Spain, Italy, Austria, Germany, Sweden, Denmark) met there in the frame of the youth in action program of the EU.

The organizers of the Anholt youth exchange defined their central aim:

„ To create an informal process, through the creation and participation made by the participants in their micro society in an adventurous and reserved natural environment, in order to try to document and evaluate the impact of informal learning across various cultures. (...)

Main focus is the visibility of informal learning processes among young people. The common working titel that we have used during our preparations the last year is named: "Visico - Visibility of Informal Competence (in the field of youth-work)."

The camp was located in a schoolyard, using the infrastructure of the school like toilets and showers, the gym-hall, the kitchen (to wash the dishes for the youngsters, to cook and eat and have meetings of the teamers). The main three elements of the projects were:

1. No official program – only informal offers

There were offered two guided tours to learn something about the island and its society. Apart from that the organizers had prepared a network of people from the island to invite youngsters to spend a day with them, joining them in their work. (To be understood as kind of informal job-shadowing.)

2. Self-organisation of everyday life and self-responsibility for it

They had to organize their tent, their cooking, they had to manage their shopping account at the supermarket and of course, they had to organize their activities.

3. No electronic devices during the stay on the island

The two research questions are:

1. Is it possible to make informal learning processes visible?
2. How can informal learning be supported by a non-formal setting?

I was invited to offer a research design just one week before the preparation meeting of the youth workers at the beginning of June 2011. In this invitation there were two different

messages: One was the strong will to get a scientific report and the other was: how can a scientific attitude go along with the culture of youth-work? This kind of tension accompanied the whole research process. This was not specific to that project. One of the insiders describes that topic as follows:

“(...) the challenges are always related to two inner tensions of youth work practice: to remain open, simple, accessible and attractive to youth work practices (and, fortiori, to young people) and, at the same time, to become credible, accepted, recognised and valued by the scientific community for whom good practice is not enough if not backed by a capacity to reflect and communicate results according to the established canons.”¹

In June they accepted my research design and invited me to join the project and lead the research together with two youth-workers. (Very informal: without contract) The group had claimed that their main aim is to have a scientific report on their project, but during the preparations they were concentrated on the youth work side so no briefing for the observing was possible. I want to congratulate the organizers for their courage to take in a “strange element” and I also thank for the openness and curiosity towards a scientific approach to their work.

The research was done by a group of seven youth-workers. It had been the clear will in Lisbon at a former preparation meeting that they want to do it by themselves and not by any persons from outside like students. (So it was great that they accepted me.)

The idea was to have two groups in the camp: the youth-workers (one from each country) and the observers (also one from each country). It was not possible to have a clear line between them: From one country only one person took part, and she did both roles in one. From another country two persons took part, but one who was meant to be the youth-worker, was not very active. So often the observer was addressed by the youngsters as the youth-worker. From another country two persons came and the observer herself wanted to play the role of the youth-worker, too. From another country three youth-workers came, two to make the video and one in the double-role as an observer and a youth-worker. And when needed, she had to help the video team. One observer had his younger brother amongst the youngsters.

Another reason, why it was impossible to draw a clear line between the two groups was that the youth-worker themselves addressed the observers as youth-workers, too. So if there was something to do for the organisation of the project, the observers had to switch and do their job as youth-workers.

For the youngsters too there was no clear difference to see: Observers and youth-workers lived in the same place, cooked and ate in the same place, joined the same meetings and both decided about the interpretation of the rules.

Still beside these restrictions there was a big advantage by having known youth-workers to observe: they were accepted from the start by the youngsters to be there and observe and because there were not many rules to break the observers were allowed to be with them in almost all of their every day life situations.

One tool, that allowed to be in the two roles youth-worker and observer at the same time was the daily questionnaire, that was done in mother tongue and there the whole day was reflected. Here the double role again made the outcome much more meaningful.

¹ Riu Gomes: “Educational tools in Youth work: Opening or closing Pandora's tool box”; will be published in MIHUS, Estonian youth work magazine, December 2011

The youngsters were informed that there would be a permanent observation during the camp and they had to agree on that to take part.

2. The research design

The main research method was participating observation in combination with questionnaires with qualitative and quantitative aspects. At last there were five tools. The observing chart and the reflection chart, a daily questionnaire for the youngsters, a questionnaire for the observers and a kind of evaluation done by the youth-workers. The last tool allows a small comparison with the project the youth-workers did one year before in Germany.

3. Theoretical background

Research always takes place within a theoretical frame. Using methods like participating observation needs an explanation and a definition. Formulating research questions and hypothesis puts the possible answers in an understanding of causality ("which facts lead to which consequences?"). Research often speaks of evidence. But this term does not give an answer to the theoretical understanding of causality. The claim that there is a correlation between one fact and another fact, cannot be proved empirically. Of course two facts can be proved empirically, but the correlation between them stays an assumption. We have to be aware that we can construct a meaningful correlation between two facts only with probability and still we will have to face exceptions.

The method of participating observation follows the understanding of the term "observation" as it is used in the Systems Theorie.

"Observation is always participation. There is no way to escape becoming a participant and, as such, co-producer of the observed phenomenon."[76]²

So the meaning of participating observation is to share the same world with the observed and not to keep an artificial distance. that does not mean to intrude and offend. The observer wants to participate in the frame and circumstances to get a better understanding of the observed processes. Of course, a better understanding is related to the world of meaning of the observer. Such a concept is more located in Social Work theories than in Anthropology.

"Observation does not selectively grasp the world as it is but creates an observed world. Or, in other words, invents an observer-dependent reality. Accordingly, there is no such thing as a neutral or objective description. Anything said is said by an observer."[78]

Heinz von Förster added to this last sentence of Humberto Maturana: " And anything is said to an observer." So whatever the presentation of the data and the conclusions are, they are "objects" of observers. (Or they are ignored.) So the rules for the observing have to be effective also for the ones, who observe the data and the result.

² This and the two following quotes: Keiding, Tina Bering (2010). Observing Participating **Observation**—A Re-description Based on Systems Theory [81 paragraphs]. Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 11(3), Art. 11, <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs1003119>.

“The main consequence of these insights is that observers must make themselves observable.” [81]

This for, the observers must not hide and also must not pretend to be someone else. One of the important tools of the observation was the reflection chart, where the youngsters could give direct feedback on what the observers thought to observe. Participating in this sense also meant to be visible and addressable all the time the observation took place.

3.1 The work with the data

A lot of data was collected on Anholt, and as there was no contract about the research, there were no fundings even to prepare any evaluation. This changed after the impressing run of the project on the island and two students were paid to make the basic collection. Still this research report only can pick up some of the data and there are several important aspects that have to be left without discussion.

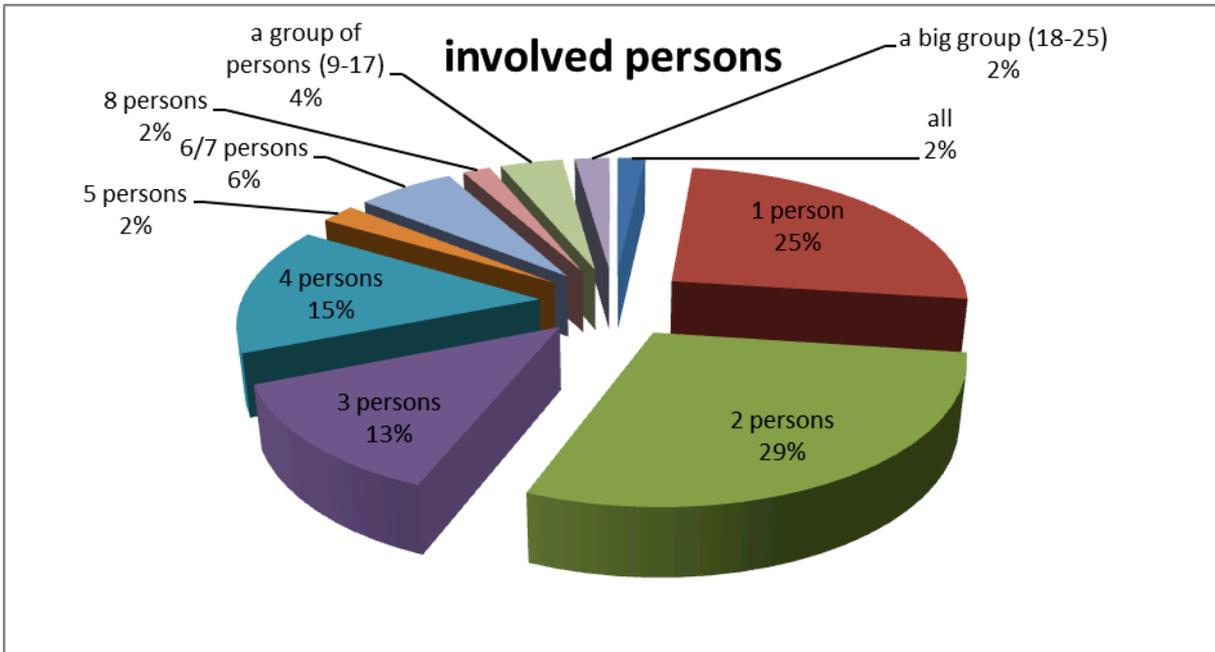
4. Observing chart

<p><u>Observing-chart</u> Nr.: ... day: observer:</p> <p>1. Involved persons:</p> <p>2. Setting:</p> <p>3. Process:</p> <p>4. I understand this incident as a/an intended learning process <input type="checkbox"/> non-intended learning process <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>5. What I observed refers to one of the eight categories*:</p> <p>6. Personal statement:</p> <p>7. I asked a person involved to fill in a reflection chart: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><small>*: (1) Learning to learn; (2) Communication in mother tongue; (3) Communication in foreign languages; (4) Basic competence in science and technology; (5) Digital competence; (6) Social and civic competence; (7) Cultural awareness and expression; (8) Entrepreneurship/sense of initiative</small></p>
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The main idea of the observing chart is that observing the youngsters needs a practical tool to observe and document at nearly the same time. So the main tool, the observing

chart, only consists of seven items and has the dimension of half a page so one can take it with him or her easily and answer all items within 30 seconds. The observers did 225 observing charts during the stay on the island.

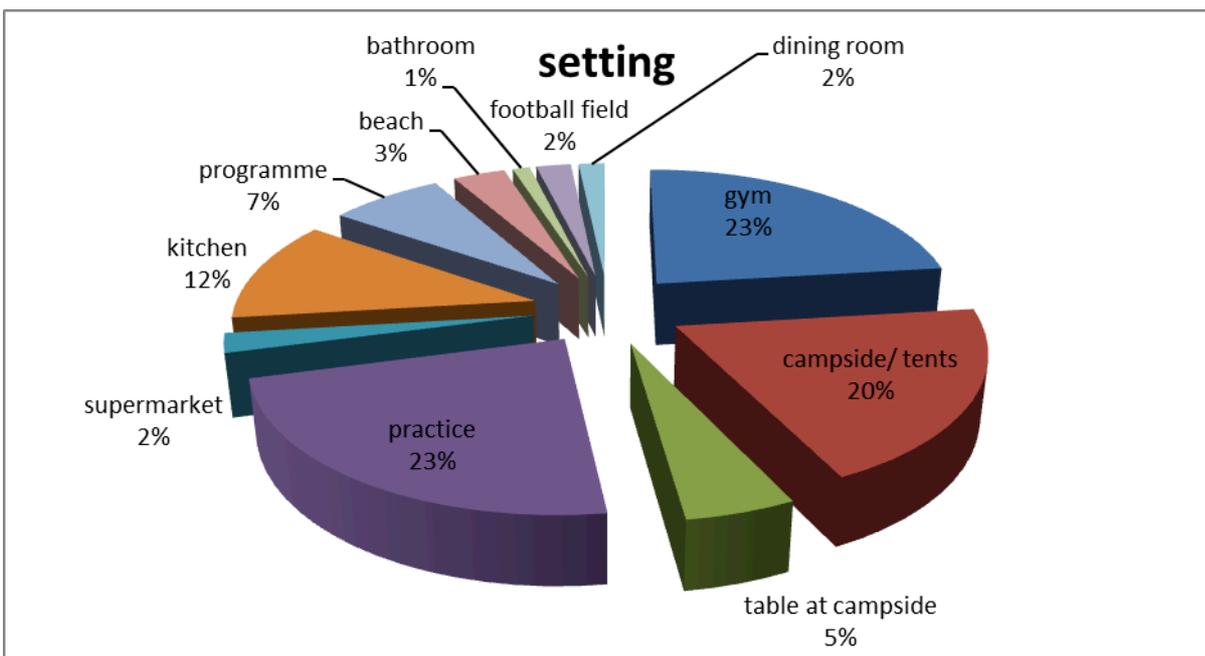
4.1. The first item shows the involved persons:



Total: 225

What can be seen from this is: informal learning went through interaction by 75%. So a non-formal frame for a youth-exchange should enable interaction between the youngsters.

4.2. The second item shows the setting where the learning process took place.



Total: 225

The observers focussed with 23% the “practice”, the places where the youngsters did their informal job shadowing and another 7% the “programme”. So together 30% of the settings the observers chose were linked with the non-formal frame. In chapter 6.2 there is shown how this percentage refers to the contents the youngsters mentioned.

4.3 In the third item the learning process itself is described.

Here are some examples, chosen by incident, to illustrate the processes that were described by the observers.

The Process:

20. *Youngsters had to clean the tent because of ants. They have to put their food out of the tent.*
22. *Persons are sitting around the table and 3 of them are talking about school systems in Denmark. After some time the last person (a girl) who was listening until that, begins talking with the Danish girl about the life in Denmark too.*
42. *Collecting red fruits, one girl realized that they have thorns, so she told to the others to take attention because she hurt. Sometimes one of them screamed “I got hurt!” and sometime they laughed because of this.*
43. *One shy girl comes in with used dishes, hears the music and is dancing with the dishes in her hands, is aware of being seen and laughs and goes on dancing.*
44. *They found out that there were ants in the tents. Then they got one of the mattresses out to get it ant-free.*
49. *They were speaking about how to plan and manage food and money; they plan what to buy for the next days because they still have food from the previous shopping to finish before leaving the island.*
50. *Some of them were playing a card game called “killer”, the others joined the others just watching after sometimes I came back to observe them and all of them were playing.*
71. *The child starts to use the monocycle running from a high point on a little hill and enjoying the speed. The boy after some of these runnings, took his bike and did the same.*
73. *The girl wants to learn to ride a bike. So the two boys offer her help, but she didn't ask for it. They showed her their technique. But they also went beside her while she was on the bike. One on each side.*
74. *So there is one guy from Sweden, and the other from Portugal. During the walk they are asking each other about words in each other's language.*
111. *Talking about who's playing in tonight's football game against Anholt Dream Team*
114. *The teacher started to cook the clay works. She puts some pieces on the top of the weaver before to cook them, and then she went away. One of the girls did the same with her works, and the others who had not finished before did the same just looking at her.*
161. *One boy, during the youngsters dancing, started to do some hip-hop movements and everybody starts helping in with all kinds of sounds pushing him to the middle of the dancing*
192. *One Italian tamer asks her by joke to sing something for us, she did show any fear, prepared dramatically and sang a Portuguese song*
193. *The girl asks me for a pen, I give it to her, before she leaves the room I shout after her to bring it back. After 1 hour she brings it back, I say thank you, she says you're welcome.*

210. The two girls are cleaning the bathrooms, and the boys wanted to enter, but as they dirt the just cleaned floor, they said them to not enter. The boys tried again but they are not wanted again. So one of the girl suggest to close the door with the key.

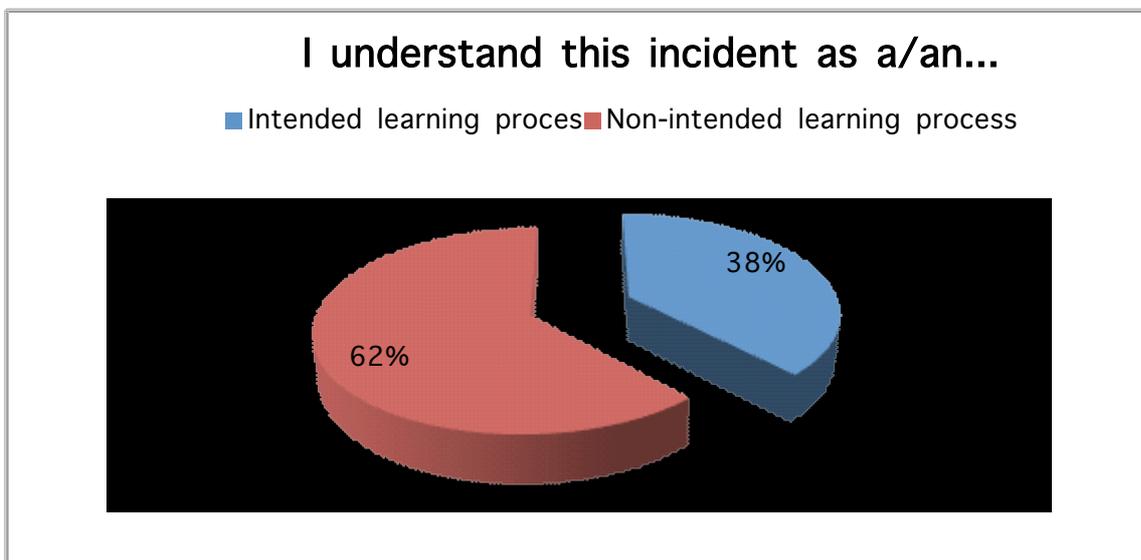
211. After the first explanation of how to work with clay, the girls start to work with it. After few minute, the first show to the others her work, then another one did the same and as the first had something written on her work, also some of the others had letters on their work too.

212. The two girls are painting and experimenting with colours and water (aquarelle), one of them tried a new artistic effect and the other looking at that paint, do the same to obtain the same result.

224. So the third girl told them and taught the girls how to use the fishing gear and which fish that s poisoned. She also told them how to kill the fish.

225. They are sitting in the sun and teaching each other about how to count in their own language.

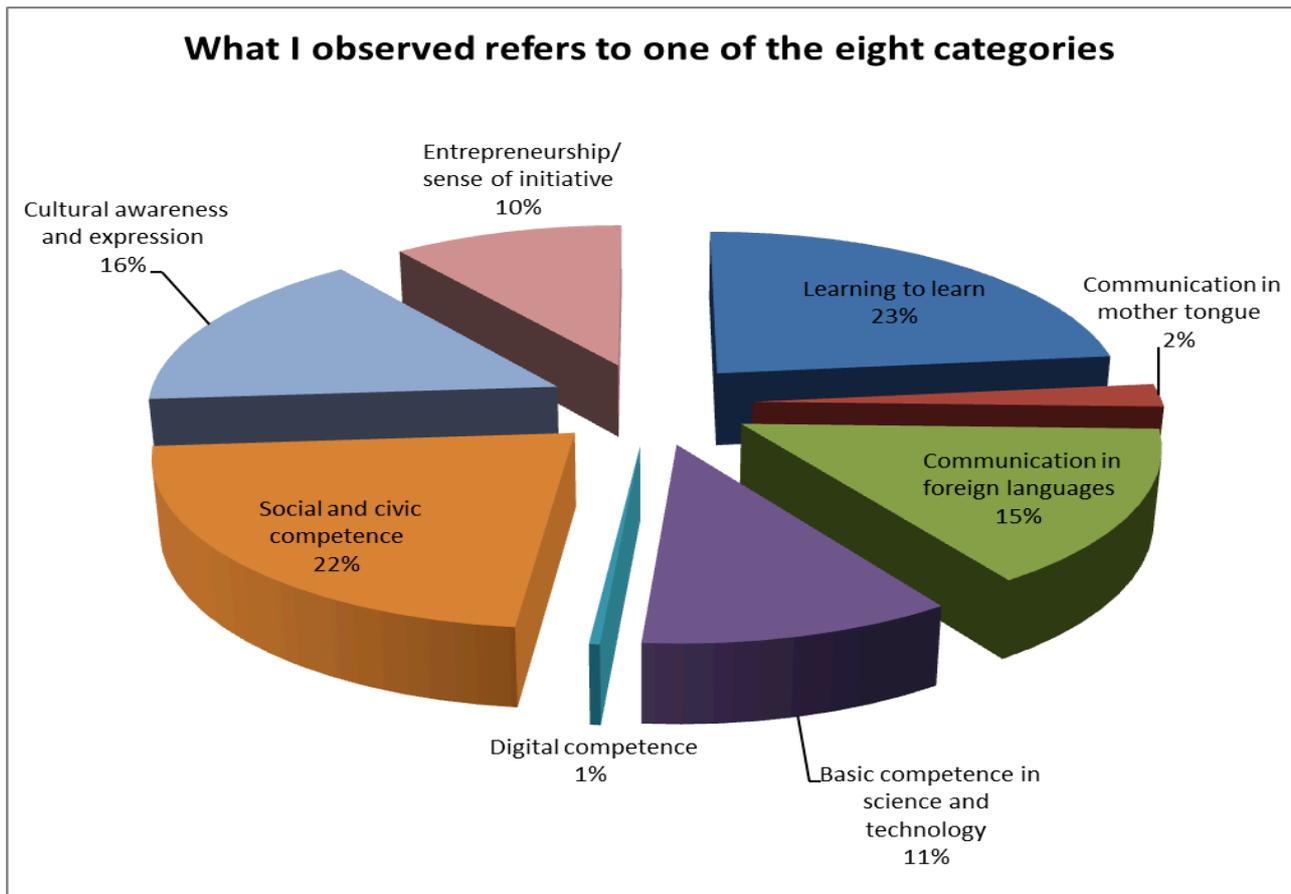
4.4 Then the observer is asked about intentionality.



Total: 208

Here a general aspect of informal learning is visible. About two third of the observed settings started – in the eyes of the observers – without intention. In chapter 5.2 the youngsters in their reflection named a relation of 53% to 47%.

4.5 The fifth item is about the contents.



Total: 271

The eight categories of the EU were used to structure the contents. Of course in a project, where electronic devices are excluded, it is not to expect that youngsters improve their digital competence. Beside this and the communication in mother the other six categories are in a range of 10% to 23%.

4.6 Personal statement

Here the observer has the chance to reflect.

4.7 The last item only shows if the observer also used a reflection chart.

The figures can be seen below in connection with the statement of the youngsters themselves.

5. Reflection chart

Reflection-chart (Related to the observing-chart Nr.: /Name.....)

1. There was something new in what I saw/experienced.
 Yes: No:

2. I learnt something I asked for.
 Yes: No:

3. I was not aware of learning till the observer asked me for reflection.
 Yes: No, I was aware of learning.

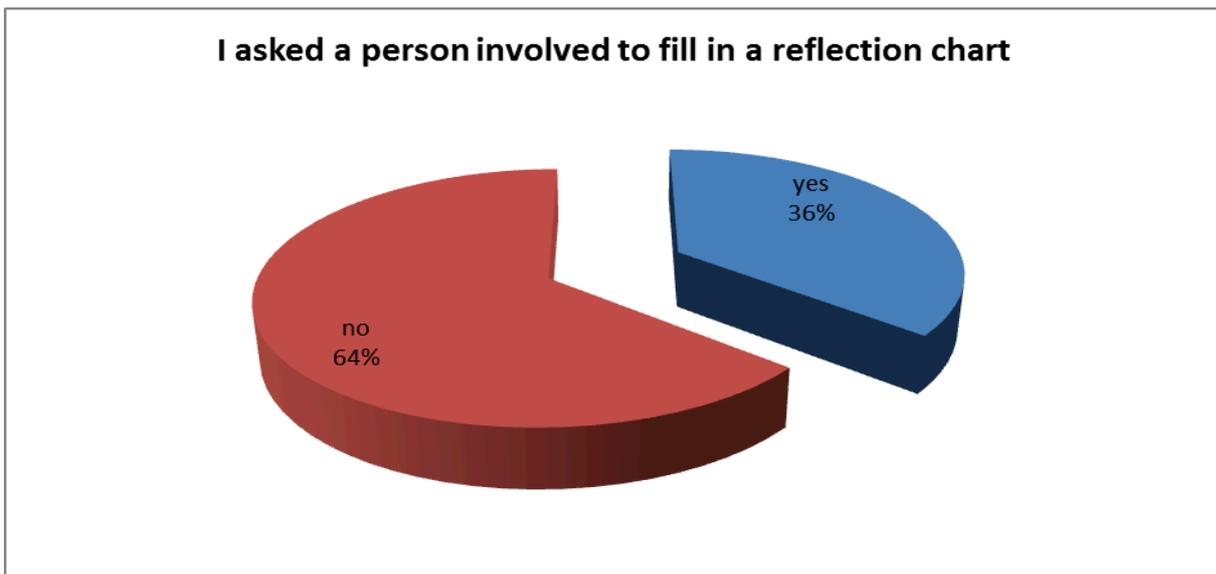
4. In the process I felt accepted as a person:
 Yes, totally mainly not much not at all

5. Personal statement: (What was the learning about; how did I feel in the process; etc.)

6. What I learnt refers to one of the eight categories*:

*: (1) Learning to learn; (2) Communication in mother tongue; (3) Communication in foreign languages; (4) Basic competence in science and technology; (5) Digital competence; (6) Social and civic competence; (7) Cultural awareness and expression; (8) Entrepreneurship/sense of initiative

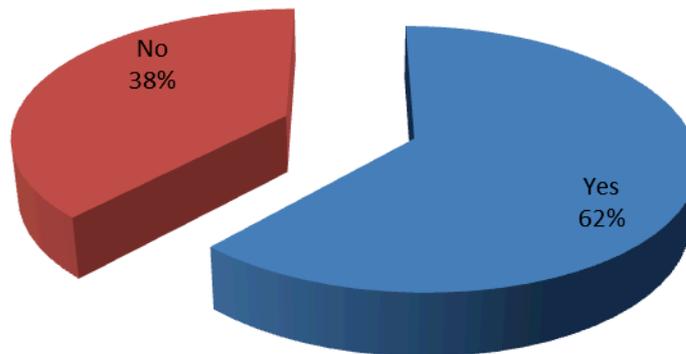
The reflection chart has the function to control the observation. It should not be done every time because using it means interference. The idea was to use it on average every third time. There were done 89 reflection charts and 225 observing charts.



Again, the tool is meant to be handled very easily. The observers produced 89 reflection charts.

5.1 The first item asks the observed youngster if there is an awareness of learning.

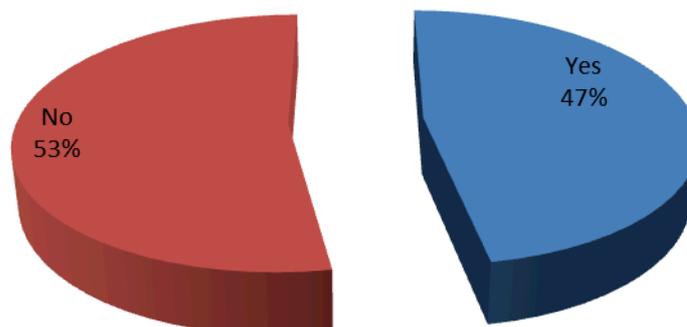
1. There was something new in what I saw/experienced.



This is a critical feedback to the observers. One third is not thinking that there was a learning process at all. In chapter 5.6 these figures are relativized.

5.2 Then the observer asked about intentionality.

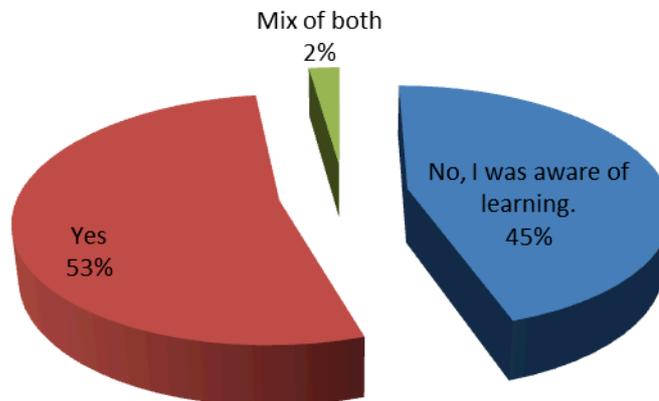
2. I learnt something I asked for.



5.3 The third item refers to the interference of the observer.

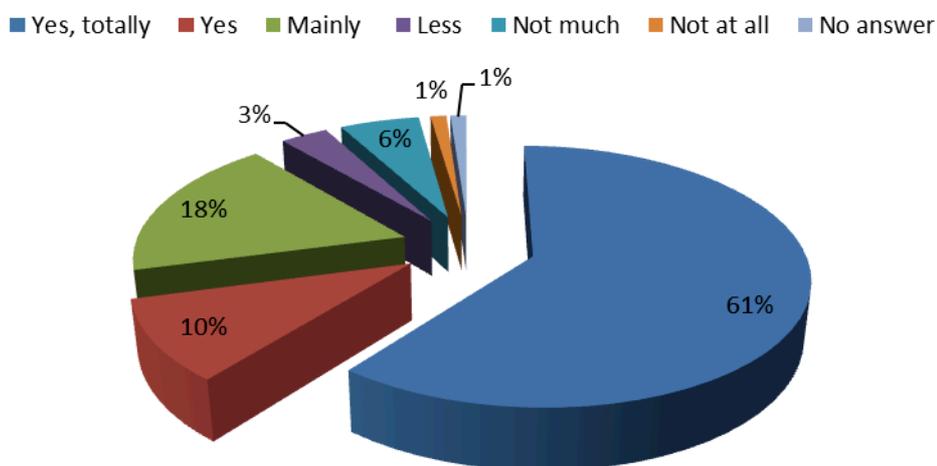
It is a kind of cross-check of the second item. 53% said they did not ask for what they learnt, and 53% said they were not aware of learning.

3. I was not aware of learning till the observer asked me for reflection.



5.4 The fourth item shows the emotional dimension.

In the process I felt accepted as a person



Nearly 90% of the situations were seen to be positive.

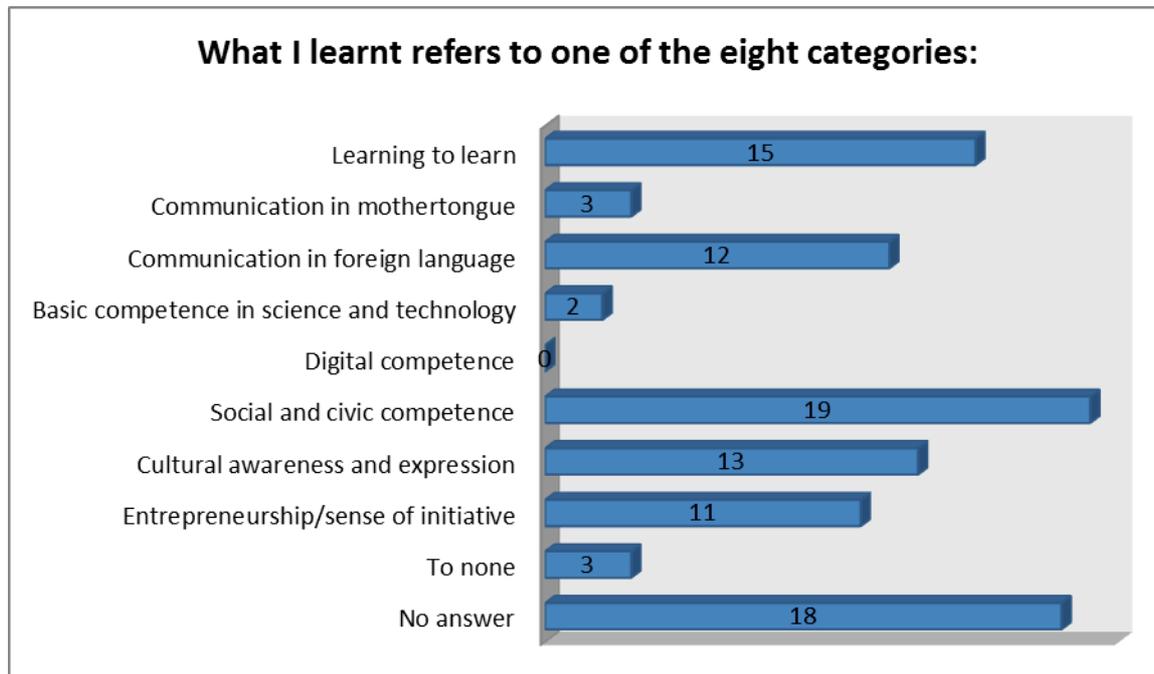
5.5 The fifth item asks for a personal statement of the youngster.

“What was the learning about; how did I feel in the process; etc” 28 gave no answer.

Here are some of the answers:

- *A very important experience*
- *Learn to cook anywhere.*
- *Did not know if someone was watching our behavior.*
- *I was pleased to learn a little history of the island.*
- *Something new for me, I like rhythm and it is very funny.*
- *I learnt that regardless of nationality it is more important that we have sympathy for people.*
- *Thank all that amused me.*
- *Tired, but funny.*
- *To share my emotions*
- *I just want to know more about the countries.*
- *I get better my one English.*
- *For me it was just a moment to give some kisses.*
- *Just follow my emotions.*
- *I like to walk with the kids and started to feel what the parent's feel about the kids and also the Danish children are different of my country children.*
- *I love to learn the language of my colleague so it is easier, and can also learning to speak the language.*
- *Good at first...*
- *Very well because I got it!*
- *Normal*
- *Really funny, I want to learn more in Portuguese! It was great!*
- *For the next time we will be more prepared with the rain.*
- *We already knew that when it rains, we have to save our things.*
- *You have to be careful when you play football.*
- *It's really important to have fun together, not alone to search for communication, because I want it and not because I must it.*
- *I am afraid, but I want to learn it now.*
- *Very important to listen to everybody, very important that everybody can express their view/opinion.*
- *It felt good and very fun, first time!*
- *I asked questions about how many people live here and about the nature and that a seagull can be 30 years old.*
- *Ants are shit. The first idea is not every time the best!*
- *My skin is burned.*
- *It was interesting, because it wasn't like learning in school by teacher. I learned something from a person, who really lives there. This was a more realistic kind of learning! ☺*
- *As we went shopping I explained the others that we are going shopping for all of us, but they didn't want to understand. They always complain when we shop for us cola and sweets.*
- *I learnt that we have to communicate better.*
- *You have to be careful, because dragonfly can hurt you.*
- *Learnt that not everybody plays for the team but for themselves.*
- *Normal*
- *Bad, because I cleaned a lot of things of the other participants.*

5.6 The last item again is about the contents.



38% said in chapter 5.2 that there was nothing new in what they saw and experienced. But only 18 out of 89, that means 20%, gave no answer about the contents. This can reduce the number of the ones who were misunderstood by the observers. But still it has to be assumed that 20-30% of the observations were not informal learning processes. The youngsters named (beside digital competence and communication in mother tongue) a range of 11% to 19%, so all learning competences are in a narrow range. The categories also seem to be rather clear for the youngsters as only three of them could not relate their contents to a category.

6. Daily questionnaire:

The idea of the daily questionnaire was to get a structured feedback from the youngsters. So it had to be done in their mother tongue. Here it was a big advantage to have youth-workers as observers. There was at least one observer from each country so the youngsters could reflect in their mother tongue. The observers translated the answers simultaneously, so of course this was depending on the knowledge of the English language of each.

6.1

1. Please tell me what happened during your day: (if you took part in any program, please tell about it.)

The first question should just make the youngsters reconsider what happened and be thus prepared for the questions related to the research.

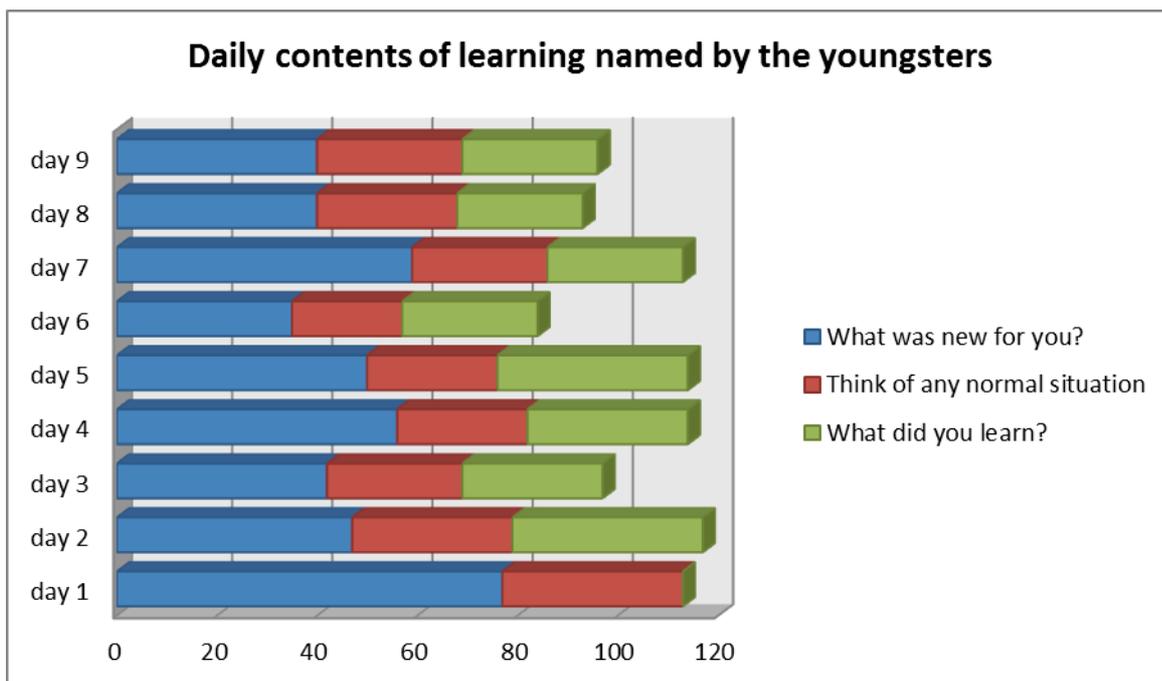
6.2

2. What was new for you today?

3. Think of any “normal” situation today (preparing meal, washing dishes, cleaning, eating, shopping etc.)? Was there anything worth to be mentioned?

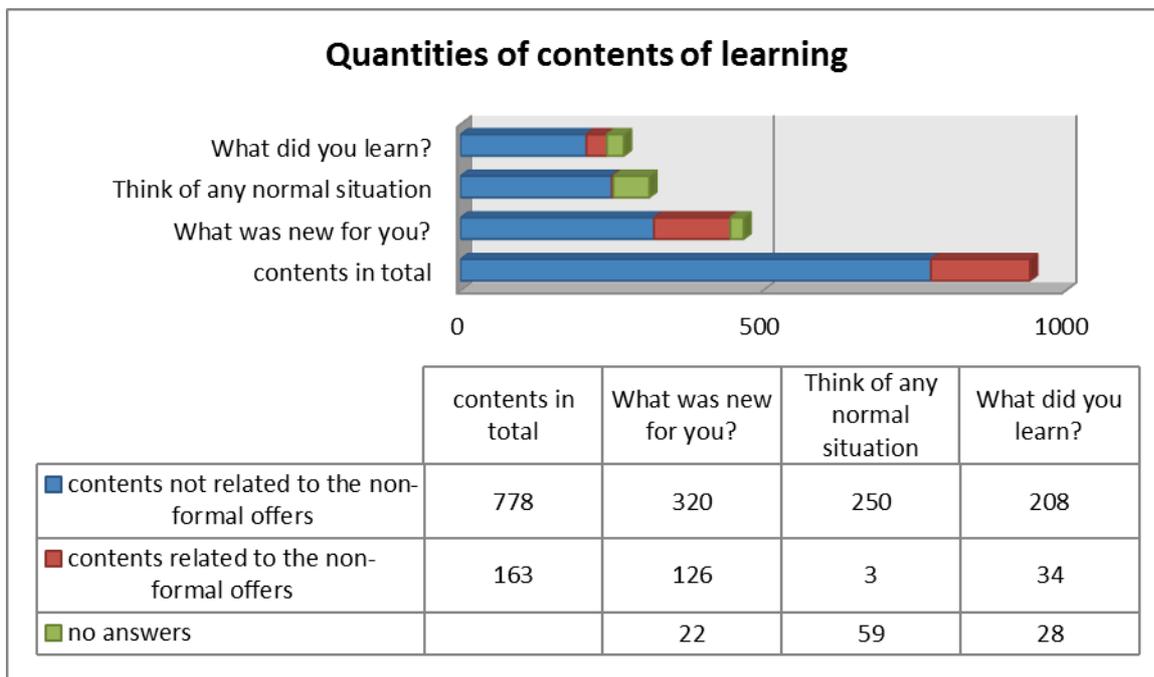
4. Was there something you learnt today?

Informal learning is what the following three questions are about. One aspect of informal learning is that the learner is not always aware of it. And if the learner is aware, how long does it stay in his or her mind? So, what will be the answer if one asks at the end of the day? Will there be more a kind of summarizing and not the mentioning of single processes? The youngsters did not make that kind of summary one can often get at the end of seminars or projects: “I learnt a lot.” Or “This and that is better now.” To all three questions they answered in relation to concrete processes and the contents were on a big scale from very concrete (“I learnt how to built up a tent” or “the work in the field”) to very abstract (“Teamwork” or “It is true that we are different – we are fantastic different.”) “Learn” is a term that already needs a specific level of reflection, so the second question of the daily questionnaire just asked for what was new. (Referring to the definition of Gregory Bateson what an information is: a difference that makes a difference.) The third question should bring the youngster deeper in his or her memory and the fourth one then comes up to the term “learning”. The fourth question was done from day two on, when the questionnaire already was introduced.



One can see that the three questions go well with each other. Because “what was new for you” was the first one, there are the highest numbers. But still there are contents for the

other two questions. So the youngsters could name about three different contents each day.



On the whole there could be identified 941 contents, named by the youngsters themselves, beside the observation. Only a small part (163 or 17%) was related to the non-formal offers. The observers focussed on this to a bigger extend (30%) wanting to show the importance of these offers. But that small part is also related to the amount of non-formal offers. There were only several opportunities per day always for single youngsters (apart from the tours, the work on the farm and the workshops) and each offer was made only for one or two days so it is not clear how much informal learning would have been related to non-formal offers if there had been 27 offers per day.

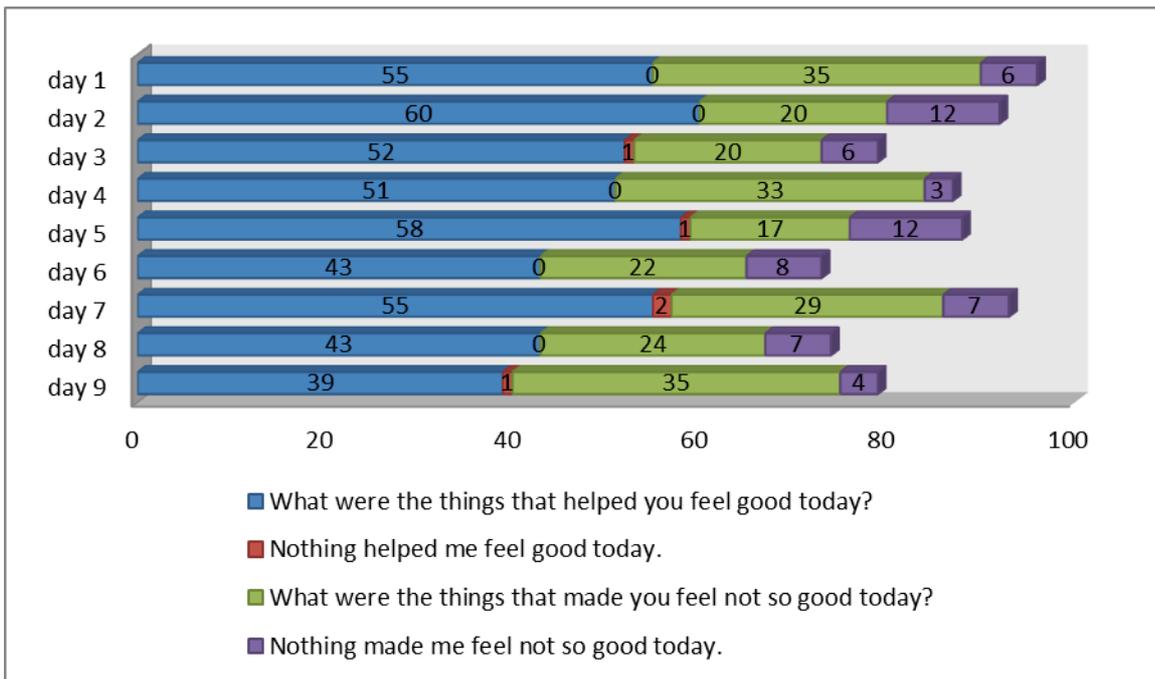
On Anholt the main part was simple informal learning coming up spontaneously from any situation.

6.3

5. What were the things that helped you feel good today?

6. What were the things that made you feel not so good today?

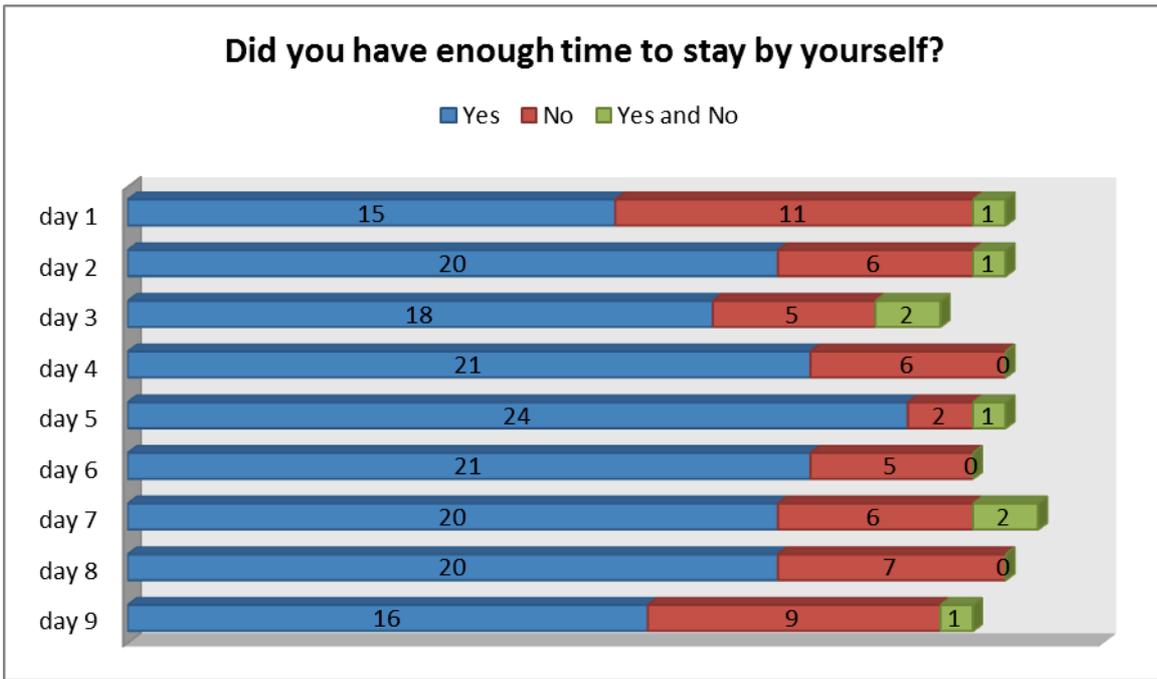
The next two questions should give an idea of the general feeling of comfort and security. It can be seen that the things that made the youngsters helped to feel good are named as double as often as the opposite. And the number of the youngsters in a general good mood (Nothing made me feel not good today) is significant.



On average the youngsters could name double as many positive than negative aspects that influenced their well-being. One fourth was in a constant good mood and only on three days one person and on one day two persons could not name anything that helped to feel good.

7. Did you have enough time to stay by yourself?

A general feeling of comfort and security is also connected with a balance of social activeness and chances to retreat und reflect. So the third question to get an idea of the mood of the youngsters asks if they had time enough to stay by themselves. The arrival and the departure day were obviously more stressing, but still there is a clear relation of 3:1. On average, three out of four youngsters had enough time for themselves.



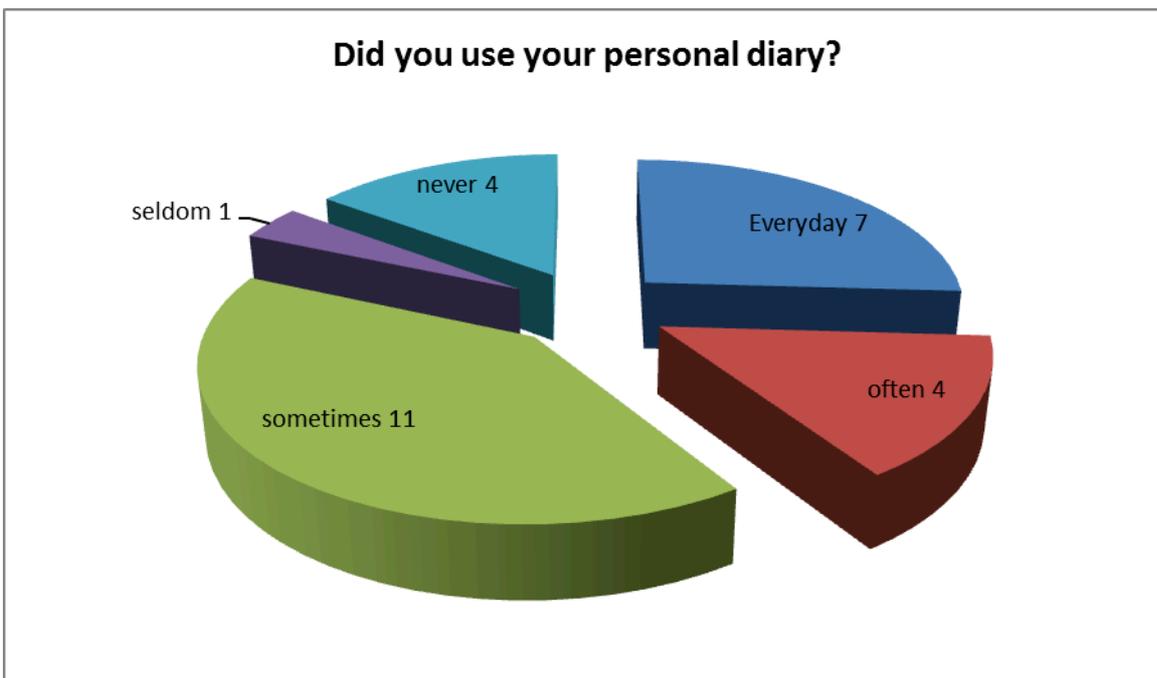
6.4

On day nine of the project, 3 more questions were added:

8. Did you use your personal diary?

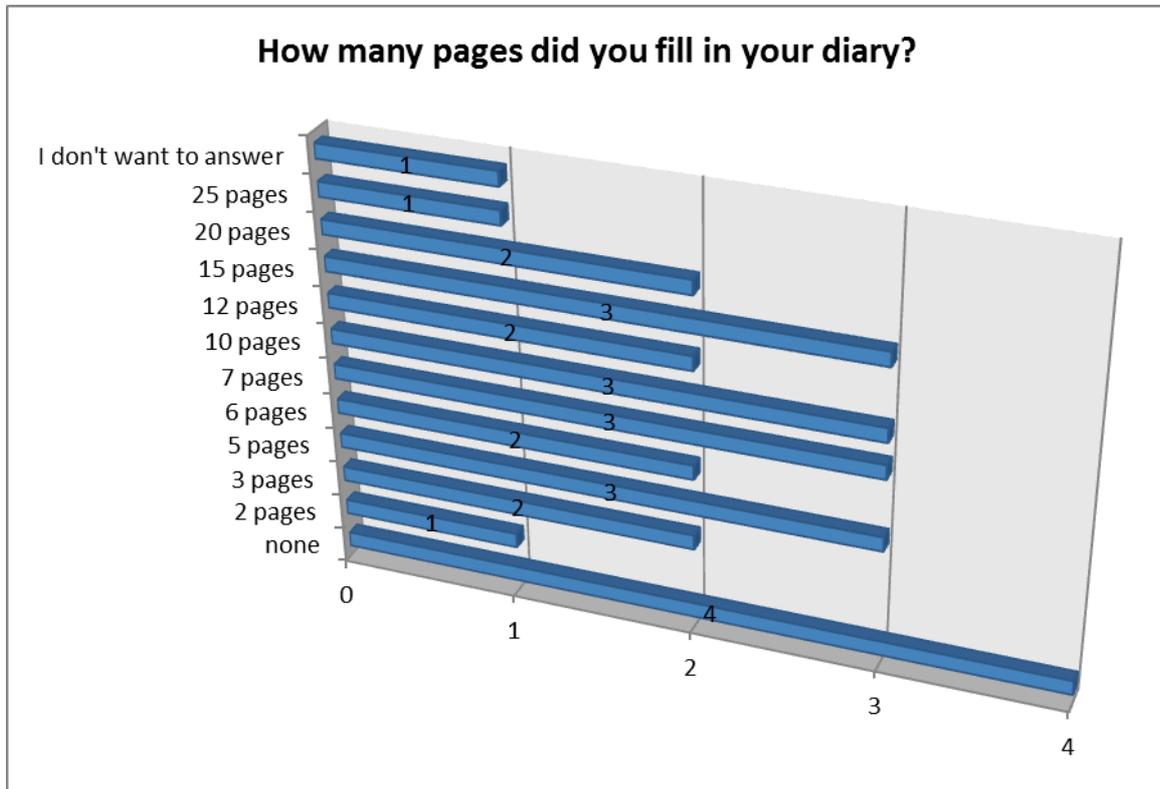
A personal diary was handed out in the beginning of the project and the youngsters were told that it is for their personal use only. So they could take it home at the end and nobody is allowed to take a look in it.

Only 4 of 27 did never use it. And 7 used it every day, 4 often.



9. How many pages did you fill in your diary?

The youngsters used this diary obviously as an individual tool of reflection. 23 of 27 youngsters on average wrote about one page per day.



6.5

The last question gives the youngsters the chance to think about alternatives to what they experienced during the project.

10. What would you make different in the Anholt Island Project? (Use the backpage for answer)

Summarized the statements are as follows:

- More exercises for the participants
- I would use bigger tents.
- I would at first look that the people in the camps stay more together
- Exercises for us, so that we come through the exercises more together (through working on the exercises). Or let us play more games. A Fireplace where everybody can meet the other people from other nations (central place).
- We could do more activities together
- I would put some rules more by the teamers. About the cleaning, it would be the most important one. I appreciate to stay here, so I didn't change anything else.
- I expected something more challenging, adventuring and I stand with less civilization.

- To let all the freedom you felt was a very good idea, but I would like to have some moment's we're all together.
- I would put some rules.
- Different...no...but I noticed some differences about how the rules were made respected by the teamers.
- I would like to have more workshops, but because I like them...
- I would like that the project would have more activities
- More time, more 2 weeks
- I think that we should do more things together.
- Sometimes the freedom is good but I rather prefer more offers of workshops.
- Nothing
- I would try to get to know people from the beginning.
- There were some places where adults should have interfered. They should have split up - one of the groups. It affected everybody that the group didn't function. The other - youngsters could have said we could change but if you like your own group you don't want to.
- Next time I would choose to be in another group where there also were girls. It must be clearer from the beginning from the adult what is allowed to do and where it is allowed to be because they shouted if we did wrong.
- Everything was good. More rules for the bathrooms. Not throw away the garbage. Would you want time again? - Yes.
- I liked that we were allowed to decide for ourselves. But a little more rules like cleaning the bathroom.
- It was good how it was. Eating outside at night was very cold, we needed a room to eat, it's cold outside.

The youngsters had the wish to get more things organized for themselves. Maybe it would suite to a non-formal frame to offer them a special place as a meeting point where they have to go to get the news about the non-formal offers. To realize it as a special place could make it easier for them to use it as an assembly space to discuss things all together by themselves.

7. Questionnaire for the observers (midterm, end)

Starting the observations in Anholt had two main challenges. One was to test the tools and adjust them and second to brief the observers and give them space to reflect. The tools were tested at the first day and some adjustments had to be done. The observers were briefed in one to one talks and for the first three days we also held a separate meeting to share the experiences. But as they were also involved in the meetings about the camp and the project it was an additional load for the observers. So I switched back to single talks and developed a questionnaire for the observers, one for midterm and one for the end, to get a structured reflection. Two observers had big problems with the tools and their role, but there was not time enough to reflect and clear this within the nine days. The result was that those two only came up with some observing charts. In the last days two of the other youth-workers also made some observations and wrote them down.

Asking the observers shows the problems and advantages of the special situation in Anholt.

7.1 Midterm on the Island

1. How would you describe your role as an observer?

- It is an important role for the project. I try to do my best. (...) To use the tools is not so difficult but to understand the informal observing processes is. With the group I feel sometimes as an observer, sometimes not, because I also am a leader. Sometimes I felt interfering by observing (...). When I take photos from distance, they act a little bit different.

- I am an observer of processes to document them with specific tools. These tools support to focus. (...) If I am not sure about that, I can ask the involved youngsters. I am only interfering, when I ask, else wise I'm accepted. (Accept I am "spying".) Distance in space is important, except I am already in the situation by myself.

- It is very new for me. It is funny, usually you do not do it as a youth-worker. Now I am really listening to everything. Like a robot scanning them. I have to put more energy in it as if I was a youth-worker. (...) In the beginning, they acted a little bit different. When you ask for reflection it is interfering in a positive sense.

- I try to catch extreme situations. Mostly I am not interfering, sometimes I am irritating. They are behaving only in the beginning differently, when I am with them.

- I try to learn with the youngsters that they learn. I am 100% learning. They do not feel disturbed at all.

- When I do observation, I try not to interfere. Sometimes if I ask a question to go deeper, I do not know if I interfere. I am accepted by the youngsters by normal stuff. If they want to do something not allowed, they would see me.

- I try to detect informal learning processes with a minimum of interfering as possible. (...) I think they do not notice me.

So alternatives could be that the observation is done by unknown persons or the youth-workers get a clear briefing in advance. For Anholt, both were no options. The approach was: work with what you have got.

2. What are the differences to the role as a youth-worker?

- As an observer, I don't care. As a youth-worker, I care, I'm more active, I give inputs. It is not so easy not to care.

- A youth-worker can always interfere, give advices, care. An observer does not.

- As an observer I want to know, see reflect what they share together, learn from each other. Usually I would help them. If you interfere, it is no longer informal learning. As a youth-worker, I let them discuss by themselves, but when they got stuck, I give them a tip.

- Both is the same, as an observer I do not give any tips, observing and accompanying is the same. As an observer I have fewer expectations as a youth-worker.

- Yes. But I try not to show, sometimes I show it to my college. For him it is sometimes too much to have no rules here.

- As a youth-worker, I go into the process very often, I say my opinion, ask many more questions to make them reflect, I try to motivate – now I do not motivate.
- In this exchange it is quite different – youth-workers love to pay attention to the needs of the youngsters. Sometimes they come and ask if they should interfere und get a little bit disappointed. (“What are we doing here?”) A youth-worker was very animating and I spoke with him to retreat a little bit.

From this quotes it can be seen that the “observers” tried really hard to play their role and that they had a high level of reflection.

3. How would you describe the project?

4. What are the differences to other youth exchange projects?

Here the observers showed that they are rather clear about the project.

5. What did you learn from the youngsters so far?

- I learnt how girls and boys are so different in relationship. (...) I learnt that the youngsters are able to stay by themselves, that it is not necessary to have relationship all the time with them. Everyone has a different point of view of the things they experienced together.
- They have very different basic attitudes concerning duty and responsibility. (For example: many signed up for the island-walk, some of them did not come.) There are always active youngsters. For them boredom hardly exists. Others do not move and follow others. This gets visible by our frame here.
- That there are lot of ways to reach happiness. (They are happy to learn a new world in a new language. Or a laugh is happiness here.) There are a lot of ways to communicate, they showed me new ways. I learnt new words.
- That they are sometimes smarter than we. They know how to apologize without words, in different ways. They chose you to contact instead we chose them.
- Till now I thought youngsters would reflect very little. I never let them enough space and time to realize that they reflect much. The roles beneath the youngsters are different than I expected. (...) There are many more ambitious girls than boys.
- They are the same as adults. They react in the same way. After the first chaos they make structure und take care of each other. Then they can give instead of take.
- It is like to put them out of control if you allow them to organize their own time. I did not expect that it takes them such a long time. They were not prepared for organizing their own time. I expected that they are more independent.

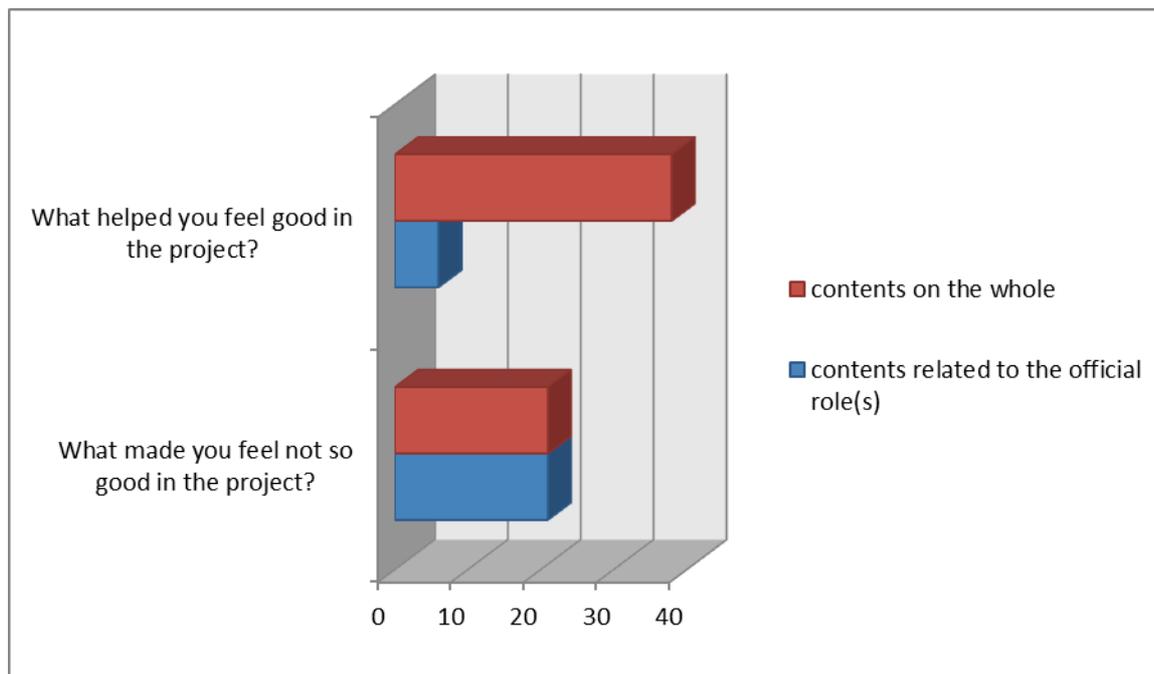
6. What did you learn from the teamers so far?

- That we are different minds, it's hard to work not in the way we are used to. It is important to try to think from different points of view, that you can take a rest.
- I learned to bake bread, to make marmalade, to cook crab tails. Despite of 2 years preparation we have no common acting here. (...) Some want to put them in front, too many dominant persons (there are named 3)

- Many teamers have different ways to communicate, different opinions. Even though we have the same goal, we have very different ways to climb the mountain. I want to focus on our goals. There are older persons who take things personal.
- *With teamers of the same age it is easier. With the male of the oldest it is easier to speak because they are strict and straight. Older women are not so friendly. But of course I learn with everyone. For me it is a school.*
- I have seen that often teamers have an inner force to control and to help, which can be contra-productive. (...) In the meetings the teamers have more conflicts than the youngsters. I understand that, they learn in the same way.
- *I learnt if you make opinions to a rule. (Just have opinions.) (...) We have here also the time to go deeper in our reflection. I learnt to look around the problem, not only what a kid says but also that the other involved kids say. I learnt to look at myself and to reflect myself.*
- Even though we agree in many points, we have different understandings of the points. I have learnt to improve the way we communicate.

7. What were the things that helped you feel good in this project?

8. What were the things that made you feel not so good in this project?



Question 7 and 8 are the same that the observers had every day for the youngsters. So the observers should get an idea of what it means to be asked that questions. Remarkable is that to feel good, there were many things beside their official role(s). But all the contents named to make them feel not so good are related to their role(s). Nearly all contents referred to a negative communication between the teamers.

7.2 One day after the stay on the island

1. What did you learn from the youngsters?

-They feel more than a group because they experienced the island together. They think more like a group. They are out of the process now and can share this as a common experience. They re-act very fast, change very quickly from bad to good mood.

-How important it is about fairness, I ask myself: are we really structured to the rules? If some youngsters come up with a story we feel sorry about it. But still they broke a rule.

- It was a big challenge for them. When they had so much days for away from home, there was a big boom of emotions, they are stronger than I thought they were (my 4), they do not need so much high tech stuff (only one girl brought her mobile, she never asked for). (...) sometimes they can give us more than we can give them.

- That they are able to survive by themselves, to have some kind of initiatives, to make reflections about what they are learning.

- It is difficult to document learning processes. (...) They have different strategies so deal with conflicts. Basically they deserve very much trust – they can deal with this well. Nothing bad happened.

- They can make very many inputs by themselves if they are let to, that they can assess moments, where they need inputs from outside, that they could figure out the project well and involve themselves. But when the pressure is away, they fall back to their role as participants completely.

2. What did you learn from the teamers?

- There were too many conflicts, how to get the group into the right mood. You can be a teamer even if you are not a perfect person.

-You cannot always cooperate. Even though you work for the same thing you have different opinions. That takes a lot of everyone's space.

How different we are depending on where we come from. The differences in cooking.

- That I need to learn more how to work in a team, how to share our information, a big process personally und professionally, the "oldest" can give little appointments, they are crucial in the process. They know more than me.

- Different perspectives to deal with the same topic (informal learning). Everybody is an "expert" or try to be. The frame for informal learning is an open frame. I wished some flexibility by the teamers.

- We do not only need to make a project planning but also a personal planning. The paradigmata have to be shared by all. All work for a common product in the end and coordinate accordingly. Clear communication before the project!

- They are only big youngsters with an education. If the teamer-group is not functioning, then the relation to the youngsters does not. Also if there is less interaction. I learnt to concentrate on the topic.

Just on day away from Anholt, the observers, back in their role as only youth-workers, are more reflective und less emotional about the team situation.

3. What would you make different if you have again the role of an observer in a youth exchange project?

- First I would like to have no relationship with them, I am no teamer and no friend, maybe it is the first time to meet. I would not be addressed as a teamer, as an adult. Otherwise they ask you all the time.
 Second I would like to be more prepared what to look at and what not. The method should have been shared before. I was sometimes lost.

- It has been so open for me how I observe. I think I would be more active, means reminding yourself to have this role. You forget to be an observer if you got involved, I would have taken my book with the charts always with me. I observed a lot of things but I did not write them down. I observed 10-15 things, I remembered only 5.

- Yes, I would work with more rules for myself.

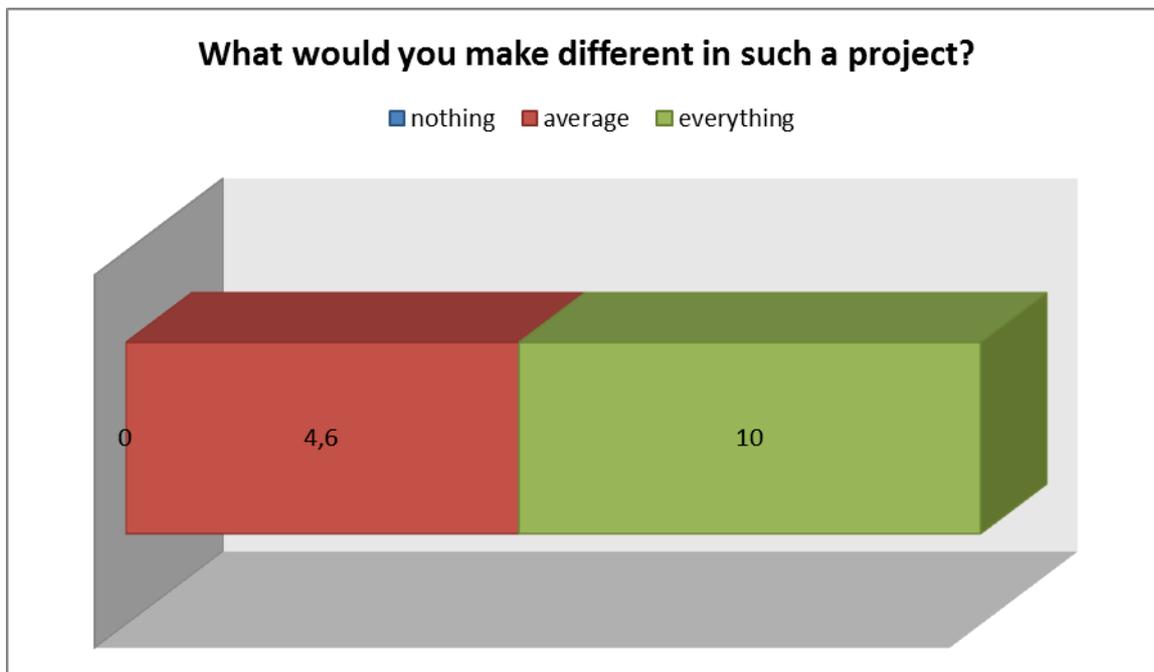
- I will focus on best preparation for myself. (...)The method is important but also the criteria of the behavior. We have to take what worked well and we structure it. I must not be invasive (interfering) – like a camera, doing notes.

- I would like to have a clear briefing in advance, a clear order, clear rules and an ongoing briefing with reflection.

- More interaction with the youngsters – I did observe too intensely.

The youth-workers show a high level of self-critics. Even with no briefing in advance and with the ongoing mixture of roles they can reflect their problems and successes and turn them into a constructive idea for the future.

They also had a significant high distance to the project itself. Directly after the project they answered to the question:



Between 0 (I would make nothing different) to 10 (I would make all different) they quoted 4,6.

4. Do you think that the goals of this project are reached?

The same critical distance can be seen in the answers to question 4 and 5:

- Yes, but I think something is missing: I liked the first idea (desert island ...). We reached the point in a soft way, too soft.
- *Some parts are, others not. For the part of exchange, we reached it. From the scientific side, not all parts are filled in. (...)I think not everything (...) is as good as we planned.*
- *Yes, because I did not expect the youngsters to be so cool with their electronic devices. They managed to occupy the dead time from no electronic devices.*
- *Yes, on some way. Maybe we can get more.*
- Depends: Informal learning: yes.
- Yes and No.

5. Please argue for yes and no:

- The environment is important, I think for some of them it was like holiday. It was too easy for some of them. (...) Anyway they had to manage things they are not used to. They have learnt to live more in their everyday life.
- *For the informal learning: You can do activities and still you have it. You do not have to do it all on your own way. (Sitting and playing cards.) We could activate them to use the whole time of them, then we could pick more – the observers should do more organized observing.*
- The reflection chart was very good because they are not aware. If you ask them, you can see in their eyes their surprise.*
- I would have taken in some non-formal elements.
- *Yes: The youngsters have reflected more because they were observed. They cared more so they also cared more for themselves. The teamers would need some kind of training before.*
- No: The teamers did not reach a common point of view about informal learning.*

The many restrictions for the observing caused by having a team of youth workers and the big lack of preparation can be avoided. But the high level of reflection shows the importance that the observation of informal learning processes has to be done by people who are experienced in youth work and are familiar with such projects.

Conclusion:

To repeat the two research questions:

1. Is it possible to make informal learning processes visible?
2. How can informal learning be supported by a non-formal setting?

The evaluated data enables to answer the first question with “yes”.

On the whole the Anholt project showed how informal learning processes within a non-formal frame can be observed and thus made visible.

It is also shown that informal learning processes in that frame are no rare events. The number of 225 observing charts only can give an idea about the quantity. I made a test on the second day, sitting 30 minutes in the morning and 30 minutes in the evening in the schoolyard and I wrote 5 each. So I made ten in one hour. If seven observers are all around and they try not to observe the same processes, there can be hundred to two hundred documented observations per day. Still there would not be caught the total of the informal learning processes. On average in Anholt, the observing youth-workers were between two and three hours per day their role, some not an hour, others up to six.

The second research question for the organizers was from the beginning an implicit one. It was meant that by their special non-formal setting and program the informal learning would be the logical outcome. And, of course, the three main elements (only informal offers, self-organisation of everyday life and no electronic devices) supported the non-formal learning. But to which extend?

The 941 contents named by the youngsters themselves in the daily questionnaire prove the huge amount of non-formal learning processes that went on in Anholt. The youngsters named the contents every late evening, in a kind of retrospective view over the day. So there was already a selection and reduction of what was seen important and remarkable at the end of the day.

So the Anholt project shows that informal learning happens often in less structured, self-organisation-enabling programs with little distraction.

There are important aspects to make informal learning happen. A good relationship is necessary between the youth-workers and the youngsters. The less structure is offered the more has to run through trustful relation. This is the base for a general feeling of comfort and security that makes interaction possible and wanted. During the daily filling in of the questionnaire an open and friendly atmosphere was observed and the youngsters talked a lot about their experiences.

The lack of structure also seems to need a very homogeneous team. Youth-workers and observers were stressed by discussions and arguments caused only by single members. And this stress was in some situations also handed on to the youngsters.

In a second step of clarifying the connection between the non-formal setting and the quantity and quality of informal learning, this project has to be compared with others. Arthur Longin made final evaluations after the Anholt Project and the project in Lütgensee one year before, where nearly the same team of youth-workers offered one day with a similar frame as on Anholt (your day”) and the other days were structured in a rather traditional way. The question was:

“The best for me in this youth exchange was”

After the project in Lütgensee **13 out of 28 name the day called “your day”** and beside this **no one out of 28** mentioned any part of the official programme that took place the rest of the days.

After the Anholt Project **14 out of 27 named one part of the non-formal frame** to be the best.

So this small comparison may give an idea about the differences to be assumed.

What was done with the observers also should have been done with the youth-workers: to make structured reflections about their role in this special setting.

Youth-workers have to understand themselves as part of this setting. So on one hand they do not have to interfere, on the other hand they are also informal learning addresses both to make youngsters learn and to learn by themselves. Youngsters could see the difference between the “official” youth-worker role and the “private” adult person that responds, when you address her or him. Not to interfere does not mean not to communicate. Being in the same setting makes it impossible to avoid communication. This is an aspect that should be reflected on more by the youth-workers. How clear has the line between youngsters and youth-workers to be drawn? How far do they have to share the same setting, spend the time under the same conditions? Do they have to sleep in tents as the youngsters do, can they use an indoor kitchen instead of the camping cookers? The kitchen was a very informal place – so did it support the “creation of informal processes” to exclude the youngsters from there partly?

For to discuss and evaluate all experiences to come to rules for an effective frame for informal learning processes, there is still much work to be done. The Anholt project showed innovative alternatives to the pedagogical mainstream – this courage should be continued.

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