

**ANNEX I:
EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET**

PROJECT	
Participant:	101252945 – Uit de Marge vzw - UdM
PIC number:	892268469
Project name and acronym:	CERV-2025-CITIZENS-CIV - COSY

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	WP7
Event name:	Local community safety signals of young people at risk of being excluded by society/institutionally in Amsterdam North
Type:	Training
In situ/online:	In situ
Location:	The Netherlands, Amsterdam North 1. NDSM-kade 4, 1033 PG 2. Klusfabriek, Mosplein 14, 1031 AD 3. Klusfabriek, Mosplein 14, 1031 AD 4. Wingerdweg 260, Amsterdam
Date(s):	1. 07/07/2026 2. 08/07/2026 3. 09/07/2026 4. 10/07/2026
Website(s) (if any):	https://www.uitdemarge.be/cosy/
Participants	
Female:	1. 0 2. 0 3. 2 4. 3
Male:	1. 9 2. 7 3. 1 4. 3
Non-binary:	1. 0 2. 0 3. 0 4. 0
From country 1 [name]:	The Netherlands
...	
Total number of participants:	25

Description

Provide a short description of the event and its activities.

1. Introduction and objective of this report

This report accounts for the implementation of Work Package 7 (WP7) of the COSY project — "Local community safety signals of young people in Amsterdam North at risk of being excluded by society/institutionally" — in fulfilment of specific objective SO1 ("Gaining insight into local community safety signals behind the societal safety symptoms") and, more specifically, operational objective OO1.1 ("Discovering and determining societal local community safety signals from and with youngsters"). In line with COSY's Phase 1 methodology, WP7 uses the co-design principle and the flip-thinking Cypher method to give the primary target group — young people at risk of being excluded by society/institutionally — an equal and safe space to voice what causes them to feel unsafe or unsettled (unrest) in their local community, and where and why this occurs. Unlike the more structured, session-based methodologies used in some other COSY ecosystems, WP7 adopted a fully outreach-based approach: rather than inviting young people to a dedicated participation moment, the project worker met young people where they already were, across four consecutive field days. This report:

- presents the process toolkit that was used, across the whole COSY project, to determine what qualifies as a local community safety signal;
- describes the ecosystem context of Amsterdam North;
- describes the shared outreach methodology used across all four WP7 activities, including a specific ethical reflection on photography and visibility that emerged during fieldwork;
- documents of the four activities organized for WP7 (context, approach, participants);
- presents a consolidated overview of the signals identified across the four outreach days, since the underlying field documentation captures these signals as a single, integrated qualitative account (distinguishing group versus individual/paired conversation settings) rather than attributing individual signals to a specific date.

This report constitutes the underlying material for WP7 deliverable D1-8.2 ("Method(s) to determine what a local community signal is", shared with WP1-8) and for the WP7 monitoring & evaluation report (D1-8.3).

2. Process toolkit: determining and assessing a local community safety signal

To ensure that all eight COSY ecosystems apply a consistent, transparent and comparable method for identifying local community safety signals — while still allowing tailor-made facilitation per ecosystem and target group — the COSY partnership developed a shared process toolkit. This toolkit informed the design and interpretation of the WP7 outreach fieldwork in Amsterdam North. It consists of four complementary instruments, described below.

2.1 Working definition of a local community safety signal

Per the COSY Facilitator Notes, a local community safety signal is defined as:

"A recurring or emerging condition in a specific neighborhood that affects the safety, well-being or inclusion of young people, and which the local community recognizes as deserving attention or action."

A safety signal can relate to physical safety, psychological safety, social exclusion, unsafe public spaces, societal barriers, or (digital) side-effects of community conflicts. Importantly, signals are not individual incidents, but patterns or indicators shared across several young people. To structure the exploration of these signals, the toolkit works with a fixed list of 14 life domains, including education, police, justice, wellbeing, mobility, social media, gender, leisure and public space, among others.

Four working principles apply throughout: voluntary participation, a safe conversational environment, confidentiality, and the leadership of youth voice. In WP7, these principles were interpreted through a fully outreach-based, relational methodology described in Section 4.

2.2 Decision tree “Is it a local community safety signal?”

Every observation raised by youth or youth workers is tested against a five-step decision tree before it is treated as a validated local community safety signal:

- 1. Has a safety concern been observed by youth or youth workers? (if no → not a signal: unrelated to safety)
- 2. Does it affect more than one young person? (if no → not a signal: not associated with the community)
- 3. Is the issue linked to a specific local environment? (if no → not a signal: not associated with local circumstances)
- 4. Is there a pattern or repeated experience? (if no → not a signal: not structurally embedded in the community)
- 5. Could community actors influence the situation? (if no → not a signal: not generated or moderated by the community)

Only observations that pass all five checks (yes/yes/yes/yes/yes) qualify as a confirmed local community safety signal. The WP7 signals presented in Section 7 already reflect an initial level of this filtering: they were thematically clustered by the outreach worker specifically around patterns that recurred across multiple young people and, in several cases, across both group and individual/paired conversations.

2.3 Facilitator notes and signal-capturing template

During each activity, the facilitator bundles raw observations per life domain in a structured overview (signal observation → signal exploration on frequency, impact, spread, urgency and change potential → signal validation yes/no), so that no observation is overlooked before validation against the decision tree.

2.4 Safety Signal Assessment Framework

Once an observation has passed the decision tree, it can be scored using the COSY Safety Signal Assessment Framework, which rates each candidate signal on five dimensions (1 = lowest, 5 = highest): Frequency, Impact, Spread, Urgency, and Change potential. The combined score (range 5–25) is interpreted as: 5–10 Observation, 11–17 Emerging Signal, 18–25 Confirmed Safety Signal.

2.5 Signal Prioritisation Matrix

Finally, once validated and scored, signals will be plotted on the Signal Prioritisation Matrix, which crosses "impact on youth safety" (low/high) against "ability of the community to act" (low/high), yielding four response strategies: Monitor, Advocacy or policy dialogue, Quick community improvements, and Immediate

pilot action. This matrix will guide the prioritization of WP7 signals for Phase 2 (bonding and bridging with policy-makers and representatives of government institutions) and Phase 3 (co-production) of COSY.

3. Ecosystem context: Amsterdam North

Amsterdam North forms a distinctive context for research into safety and connectedness among young people. The borough has a strong history as a working-class area and has undergone major spatial and social change in recent years. New residential neighborhoods, amenities and population groups have contributed to a shifting social dynamic, while existing questions around equal opportunity, education, social mobility and the accessibility of public space for young people remain present.

These developments make Amsterdam North an interesting context for studying how young people experience their position in the neighborhood. Questions about safety, encounter, recognition and the feeling of belonging take on particular significance in an environment where different lived realities, interests and expectations come together.

In recent years there has also been growing attention to young people's involvement in local decision-making and in shaping their living environment. Initiatives such as the Youth Ambassadors of Amsterdam North show that young people are increasingly seen as conversation partners for administrators and societal organizations. Within the borough, there is an explicit search for ways to involve young people more structurally in policy development and societal issues — pointing to a growing recognition of young people as active participants in public debate and in the development of their neighborhood.

At the same time, Amsterdam North faces challenges linked to rapid area development and the changing design of public space. Urban debates increasingly address the extent to which children and young people experience sufficient room to meet one another, move around freely, and feel at home in their own neighborhood. The safety debate is thereby also connected to questions of ownership, visibility and young people's place in public space.

During the course of the COSY project, an administrative development is additionally taking place within Amsterdam's youth policy: youth work is shifting from a portfolio centered on participation, sport and education-to-labor-market transitions, toward a broader portfolio in which education, youth care and youth work are more strongly connected. This gives rise to a more integrated approach to growing up, wellbeing, equal opportunity and participation.

For the COSY project, Amsterdam North therefore offers a context in which questions of safety, connectedness and participation are closely tied to urban change, public space, and young people's position as co-shapers of their living environment.

4. WP7 methodology: outreach data collection in Amsterdam North

Within the COSY project, conversations were held with young people in Amsterdam North in an outreach manner. The aim of this data collection was to gain insight into how young people experience safety in their daily living environment, and which signals, needs and points of attention they name themselves.

Conversations took place at locations where young people are naturally present, such as neighborhood meeting places (community centers, youth centers), public spaces, and places where young people gather, such as the NDSM wharf. By connecting with young people's everyday lives, the threshold for participation was kept low, making it possible to also reach young people who are less likely to take part in formal consultation or research activities.

During the fieldwork, group conversations as well as individual conversations and conversations in pairs were held. This choice of different conversation formats made it possible to gather a range of perspectives. In group settings, conversations arose about shared experiences and collective images of safety. At the same time, it

became clear that young people often felt freer to share personal experiences and vulnerabilities in individual conversations or smaller settings. The combination of these methods therefore produced a rich and nuanced picture of how safety is experienced among young people.

The outreach approach was characterized by informal encounters, relational presence, and the creation of a safe conversational space. The focus was not on administering a questionnaire or working through a checklist of exercises, but on building contact and listening to young people's stories, in a place where they feel comfortable. This way of working made it visible that safety, for young people, is not only linked to physical circumstances in the neighborhood, but is also strongly connected to social relationships, recognition, trust, and the way they are approached by professionals and institutions.

The conversations showed that young people feel safest in places where they know people and feel at home. At the same time, they named various factors that reinforce feelings of unsafety, such as dark public squares, the unpredictability of street-level behavior by people who appeared to be using drugs, tensions between young people and enforcement officers, and an experienced distance from municipal institutions. Young people also emphasized the importance of accessible meeting places, meaningful relationships with professionals, and more mutual understanding between young people, police and the municipality.

The fieldwork showed that outreach research does not only produce valuable data but also creates room for young people to share their experiences and perspectives in a way that connects with their daily reality. By being present in their living environment, conversations arose that provided insight into both experienced safety issues and possible directions for solutions from young people themselves. The data collection thereby made an important contribution to understanding safety as experienced from the perspective of young people in Amsterdam North.

4.1 Reflection on photography and visibility

During the fieldwork it was noted that a substantial proportion of young people did not want to be photographed. Even when it was explained that photos would be used exclusively for project purposes and that non-identifiable images were possible, many young people remained reluctant. Several possible explanations emerged.

First, the conversations revealed that trust is not self-evident for all young people. Some have experiences with institutions, professionals or systems in which they felt judged, monitored or insufficiently heard. In such a context, being photographed can feel like a form of registration one would rather not be part of — especially since these young people had already signed a participant list, which represented a significant degree of commitment.

Second, young people's digital living environment may play a role. Photos can easily be shared, stored, or end up in unexpected places; even when anonymity is guaranteed, young people do not always have full control over what happens to images. For some young people, a sense of control over their own representation appeared more important than the possibility of being pictured unidentifiably.

Reluctance may also relate to the position some young people find themselves in. Young people in vulnerable circumstances, or with negative experiences of authorities, may be especially cautious about sharing personal data and images. Notably, several young people were willing to take part extensively in conversation and to share their experiences, while not wanting to be visibly recorded. This underscores the importance of voluntariness and freedom of choice within participatory, outreach-based research; respecting this choice proved essential for building trust and holding open conversations.

An important observation is that participation does not automatically coincide with visibility. For these young people, being heard appears more important than being seen. Their reluctance regarding photography can thus be understood as a form of autonomy and control over how they take part in research — a choice that itself offers valuable insight into the meaning of trust, ownership and representation within outreach work with young people.

5. Activities organized for WP7 in the ecosystem of Amsterdam North

Four consecutive outreach field days were organized with young people at risk of being excluded by society/institutionally in Amsterdam North to realize OO1.1. They are reported separately below, numbered WP7.1 through WP7.4.

Event	Date	Location	Format	Participants
WP7.1	07/07/2026	Amsterdam North — outreach locations	Outreach group conversation	9 (9 boys); 1 country
WP7.2	08/07/2026	Amsterdam North — outreach locations	Outreach group conversation	7 (7 boys); 1 country
WP7.3	09/07/2026	Amsterdam North — outreach locations	Outreach individual and paired conversations	3 (1 boy, 2 girls); 1 country
WP7.4	10/07/2026	Amsterdam North — outreach locations	Outreach small-group and paired conversations	6 (3 boys, 3 girls); 1 country

Note on signal attribution: because the WP7 outreach methodology deliberately combined group and individual/paired conversations across the four days to build trust and let young people speak freely, the underlying field documentation records signals as a single, integrated qualitative account rather than attributing individual signals to a specific date. Where the source material distinguishes between group and individual/paired settings, this distinction is preserved in the consolidated signal analysis in Section 7.

WP7.1: Outreach group conversations, Amsterdam North (Day 1)

Description

On 7 July 2026, outreach fieldwork was carried out in Amsterdam North as part of a four-day outreach data-collection effort for WP7. The project worker met young people at locations where they were already present and places where young people gather such as the NDSM wharf rather than inviting them to a dedicated, separate session.

On this day, conversations were held with a group of 9 boys. In line with the shared WP7 methodology (Section 4), the emphasis was on informal encounter, relational presence, and creating a safe conversational space, rather than on administering a fixed questionnaire or working through a set list of exercises.

Prior to participating, young people were briefed on the purpose of the COSY project and asked to sign a participant list. Consistent with the ethical reflection documented in Section 4.1, several young people who took part fully in conversation preferred not to be photographed, even where anonymized images were offered as an option; this preference was respected throughout.

The signals shared by young people on this day are presented, together with those from the other three WP7 outreach days, in the consolidated cross-activity analysis in Section 7 — since the source field documentation

records signals as an integrated account distinguishing group versus individual/paired conversation settings, rather than attributing specific signals to a specific date.

Photo



WP7.2: Outreach group conversations, Amsterdam North (Day 2)

Description

On 8 July 2026, outreach fieldwork was carried out in Amsterdam North as part of a four-day outreach data-collection effort for WP7. The project worker met young people at locations where they were already present — neighborhood meeting places (community centers, youth centers) — rather than inviting them to a dedicated, separate session.

On this day, conversations were held with a group of 7 boys. In line with the shared WP7 methodology (Section 4), the emphasis was on informal encounter, relational presence, and creating a safe conversational space, rather than on administering a fixed questionnaire or working through a set list of exercises.

Prior to participating, young people were briefed on the purpose of the COSY project and asked to sign a participant list. Consistent with the ethical reflection documented in Section 4.1, several young people who took part fully in conversation preferred not to be photographed, even where anonymized images were offered as an option; this preference was respected throughout.

The signals shared by young people on this day are presented, together with those from the other three WP7 outreach days, in the consolidated cross-activity analysis in Section 7 — since the source field documentation records signals as an integrated account distinguishing group versus individual/paired conversation settings, rather than attributing specific signals to a specific date.

WP7.3: Outreach individual and paired conversations, Amsterdam North (Day 3)

Description

On 9 July 2026, outreach fieldwork was carried out in Amsterdam North as part of a four-day outreach data-collection effort for WP7. The project worker met young people at locations where they were already present

— neighborhood meeting places (community centers, youth centers)— rather than inviting them to a dedicated, separate session.

On this day, conversations were held with 1 boy and 2 girls, individually and in pairs. In line with the shared WP7 methodology (Section 4), the emphasis was on informal encounter, relational presence, and creating a safe conversational space, rather than on administering a fixed questionnaire or working through a set list of exercises.

Prior to participating, young people were briefed on the purpose of the COSY project and asked to sign a participant list. Consistent with the ethical reflection documented in Section 4.1, a number of young people who took part fully in conversation preferred not to be photographed, even where anonymized images were offered as an option; this preference was respected throughout.

The signals shared by young people on this day are presented, together with those from the other three WP7 outreach days, in the consolidated cross-activity analysis in Section 7 — since the source field documentation records signals as an integrated account distinguishing group versus individual/paired conversation settings, rather than attributing specific signals to a specific date.

WP7.4: Outreach small-group and paired conversations, Amsterdam North (Day 4)

Description

On 10 July 2026, outreach fieldwork was carried out in Amsterdam North as part of a four-day outreach data-collection effort for WP7. The project worker met young people at locations where they were already present — public space — rather than inviting them to a dedicated, separate session.

On this day, conversations were held with 3 boys and 3 girls, in a small group and in pairs. In line with the shared WP7 methodology (Section 4), the emphasis was on informal encounter, relational presence, and creating a safe conversational space, rather than on administering a fixed questionnaire or working through a set list of exercises.

Prior to participating, young people were briefed on the purpose of the COSY project and asked to sign a participant list. Consistent with the ethical reflection documented in Section 4.1, several young people who took part fully in conversation preferred not to be photographed, even where anonymized images were offered as an option; this preference was respected throughout.

The signals shared by young people on this day are presented, together with those from the other three WP7 outreach days, in the consolidated cross-activity analysis in Section 7 — since the source field documentation records signals as an integrated account distinguishing group versus individual/paired conversation settings, rather than attributing specific signals to a specific date.

Photo



6. Signals identified across the four WP7 outreach days

Across the four outreach days, conversations were held with a diverse group of young people aged 15 to 25 from Amsterdam North. Conversations took place in different settings: some young people were spoken to in groups, others individually or in pairs. This produced a varied picture, combining shared experiences that emerge in groups with the more personal signals young people more readily share in a smaller setting. The aim was to gain insight into how young people experience safety in their neighborhood, what they consider unsafe, and what they say they need.

Methodological note: *the conversations showed that the setting influences what young people share. In group settings, young people sometimes feel less free to speak openly about unsafety — put simply, one must feel safe to share something about feeling unsafe. Signals from individual conversations and pairs were therefore often more specific and personal in nature. Where relevant, this distinction is indicated below.*

6.1 When and where do young people feel safe?

- Young people feel safest in their own neighborhood or in familiar places, provided they know many people there. (Domain: Public space/ Other: social dynamics)
- Being from a neighborhood helps young people feel safe; familiarity with the environment and the people in it is a protective factor. (Domain: Public space/ Wellbeing)

6.2 Unsafe places and moments

- Squares with little or no lighting, and squares with alleys one cannot see in, are experienced as unsafe. This signal came mainly from young women, in smaller conversation settings. (Domain: Public space/ Gender)
- Cycling alone at night is also experienced as unsafe by some young women. (Domain: Public space/ Gender)

- The unpredictability of people using drugs on the street (referred to by participants as "junkies") is named as unsafe by several young people, especially at night; this came up both in group and individual conversations. (Domain: Public space/ Wellbeing)

6.3 Large groups of young people: a paradox

- Individual young people, and young women in particular, indicated feeling intimidated and unsafe because of large groups of young people on the street, especially in the evening. This signal emerged mainly in the smaller conversation settings. (Domain: Public space / Gender / Other: social dynamics)
- Notably, those same young people who form part of large groups — when spoken to in group settings — in turn feel unsafe because of police and enforcement, since they feel they are approached or stopped "without reason". (Domain: Police/ Other: social dynamics)

6.4 Relationship with police and enforcement

- Young people in groups experience being stopped regularly while simply chilling. (Domain: Police)
- They report being judged on appearance, clothing style and skin color. (Domain: Police/ Other: race-ethnicity)
- Concerns about police violence emerged, including references to being tackled or shot at; this came up especially in group conversations, where young people appeared to reinforce each other's accounts of these experiences. (Domain: Police)
- Young people often do not know their rights and are unsure what police and enforcement officers are and are not allowed to do. (Domain: Police/ Information)

6.5 Relationship with the municipality and policy

- Young people feel there is a great deal of distance between the municipality and themselves. (Domain: Other: social dynamics/ Wellbeing)
- There is generally no positive image of what the municipality does regarding safety for young people. (Domain: Public space/ Police)
- There is a sense that policymakers do not look at issues through young people's eyes. (Domain: Other: social dynamics)
- Boredom is named as an underlying cause of hanging around and behavior that is perceived as unsafe. (Domain: Leisure/ Public space)
- Peer/group pressure plays a role in moments where things go wrong; this was said mainly by young people the outreach worker did not speak to in a group setting. (Domain: Other: social dynamics)

6.6 What young people say they need

- More places where young people can stay until late, such as youth centers and studios; keeping youth centers open longer was also explicitly mentioned. (Domain: Leisure/ Public space)
- Better findability and longer opening hours for community/neighborhood centers, which are currently not always found or close too early. (Domain: Leisure/ Information)
- Age-based separation within community centers: older young people do not want to go to a community center if there are "too many little kids"; a separate approach per age category is desired. (Domain: Leisure/ Wellbeing)

- Better lighting, and cameras or motion sensors on dark squares, so that lighting activates on movement. (Domain: Public space)
- Street coaches who connect more genuinely with young people — but too much, or "creepy", connecting by street coaches is also not appreciated; when older street coaches act as though they understand young people's world, this is not valued. The relationship should be central, not enforcement. (Domain: Police / Other: social dynamics)
- More understanding and fewer prejudices from police and the municipality. (Domain: Police/ Other: social dynamics)

6.7 Notable insights

1. Paradox of the group feeling: young people who hang around in groups cause feelings of unsafety in others but also feel unsafe themselves — particularly because of police and enforcement. This became visible because both sides emerged across different conversation settings.
2. Setting determines what you hear: young people spoken to in groups share different, and sometimes less personal, signals than young people spoken to individually or in pairs. The combination of both settings produced a richer picture than either approach would have on its own.
3. Knowledge gap regarding rights: young people do not know what police and enforcement officers are and are not allowed to do. This increases the sense of arbitrariness and unsafety in their contact with them.

This document was produced in the framework of the CERV 2021–2027 programme, funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are those of the organisers and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union.