

**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:	WP1
Event name:	Local community safety signals of young people at risk of being excluded by society/institutionally in district Borgerhout (City of Antwerp)
Type:	Training
In situ/online:	In situ
Location:	Belgium 1. De Branderij, Borgerhoutsestraat 34, 2018 Antwerpen 2. Luisbekelaar, 2140 Borgerhout
Date(s):	1. 21/05/2026 2. 08/07/2026
Website(s) (if any):	https://www.uitdemarge.be/cosy/
Participants	
Female:	1. 0 2. 2
Male:	1. 14 2. 10
Non-binary:	1. 2 2. 0
From country 1 [name]:	Belgium
...	
Total number of participants:	28

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 1 (WP1) of the COSY project — "Local community safety signals of young people in district Borgerhout (city of Antwerp) 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, WP1 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. Two activities were organized in the Borgerhout ecosystem to this end. This report:

- presents the process toolkit that was used, across the whole COSY project, to determine what qualifies as a local community safety signal;
- documents about the two activities organized for WP1 (context, approach, participants);
- provides a consolidated overview of the signals that were captured during these two activities, and the local context in which they occur.

This report constitutes the underlying material for WP1 deliverable D1-8.2 ("Method(s) to determine what a local community signal is") and for the WP1 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 was applied by the activity organizer during the preparation, facilitation and post-processing of both WP1 activities in Borgerhout. 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: (1) health, (2) housing, (3) information, (4) justice, (5) mobility, (6) education, (7) public space, (8) police, (9) social media, (10) sport, (11) leisure, (12) wellbeing, (13) gender, and (14) other.

Four working principles apply throughout: voluntary participation, a safe conversational environment, confidentiality, and the leadership of youth voice.

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.

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. The facilitator notes also include a short sketch of the target group present (age, gender, ethnic-cultural background, interests, needs, and living context) and a table to log positive and negative testimonies about contacts with societal institutions.

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 — how often does it occur (from less than once a month to multiple times a day)?
- Impact — how strongly does it affect young people's physical or mental well-being?
- Spread — how many youth groups are affected?
- Urgency — will it worsen without immediate action?
- Change potential — to what extent can local actors influence it?

The combined score (range 5–25) is interpreted as: 5–10 Observation, 11–17 Emerging Signal, 18–25 Confirmed Safety Signal.

2.5 Signal Prioritization Matrix

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

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

3. Activities organized for WP1 in the ecosystem of Borgerhout

Two activities were organized with young people at risk of being excluded by society/institutionally in the Borgerhout ecosystem to realize OO1.1. Both are reported separately below, numbered WP1.1 and WP1.2 respectively.

Event activities	Date	Location	Format	Participants
WP1.1 — J100	21/05/2026	"Branderij" (JES vzw), Borgerhout	In-situ focus groups	16 (14 male, 0 female, 1 non-binary, 1 prefer not to say); 1 country
WP1.2 — Luisbekelaar	08/07/2026	Luisbekelaar square, Borgerhout extra-muros	In-situ individual outreach ("quiz")	12 (10 male, 2 female, 0 non-binary, 0 prefer not to say); 1 country

WP1.1: J100 — signal-gathering session, Borgerhout

Description

The activity was organized in a room of the "Branderij", the central building of JES vzw, on 21 May 2026 from 18:00 to 20:30, in collaboration with the J100 youth movement.

It served a double purpose: capturing local community safety signals from participants and preparing them for a planned meeting with Antwerp's alderman for youth and sport, Karim Bachar, on 30 May 2026 — an event that unfortunately had to be postponed due to unforeseen circumstances.

16 youngsters took part (14 boys, 1 non-binary participant, and 1 who preferred not to specify), coming from Borgerhout (2140) or the neighboring district of Antwerp North (2060).

Participants were split into three groups of five to six, each answering, in turn, one of three questions: (1) What causes unrest for you? (supported by printed COSY life-domain icons and by answers gathered during the earlier WP9.1 activity with KRAS Borgerhout, printed on A6 sheets); (2) Where is the unrest located? (using an A2 map of Borgerhout on which participants indicated locations and the type of unrest); and (3) Where do you find rest? (collecting input for the J100 gathering and for later COSY phases).

Each group had 20–30 minutes per question, with a 5-minute break in between. The activity closed with participants filling in the COSY evaluation form and the EU survey form, followed by a barbecue on Branderij's square.

Safety signals captured (observation stage)

Safety Signal (raw observation)	Frequency of mention	Life domain(s)	Context/ example
Police brutality and excessive ID checks	2 groups	Police	Main reason participants describe their relationship with the police as "bad".

Police are absent when youngsters need them	1 group	Police	No further details or examples given.
Police give out fines too quickly	1 group	Police	—
Bad social housing	1 group	Housing	—
Constant camera surveillance of public space	3 groups	Public space/ Leisure/ Wellbeing	Makes participants feel uncomfortable occupying public space at ease.
Cameras don't lead to more targeted arrests	3 groups	Public space/ Wellbeing	Example: a youngster present near a stolen scooter was arrested regardless of role (suspect, accomplice or witness) perceived as arbitrary by the community.
Camera footage hard to obtain for victims of theft or burglary	3 groups	Public space/ Police	Reinforces the sense that surveillance is not built for their safety but as a means of control.
Stigmatization as "youngsters"	2 groups	Public space	Participants or peers displaying antisocial behaviour (noise, smoking, New Year's Eve rioting); participants recognize part of the unrest stems from peers' own behavior.
Racism and othering at school	2 groups	Education/ Other: social dynamics	Students with a visibly non-Belgian background feel rules are enforced more strictly on them ("we don't get a second chance"), limiting access to opportunities.
Racism and exclusion in the (student) job market	2 groups	Work/ Other: social dynamics	Example: identical CVs sent under a "Moroccan-sounding" vs. a "Flemish-sounding" name — only the latter received a callback; recognized by peers as a shared experience.
Ordinary/everyday racism in public space	2 groups	Public space/ Other: social dynamics	E.g. "Do you speak Flemish?" remarks in shops or on public transport; participants disagreed

			on whether such remarks are discriminatory or unintentional.
Perceived harshness of the justice system	1 group	Justice	"One mistake after your 18th birthday follows you your whole life."
Dirty streets	1 group	Public space	Attributed by the group to "the people".
Negative influence of social media	2 groups	Social media	—
Old and unreliable public transport	1 group	Mobility	Noted alongside an acknowledgement that the district is otherwise well served.
Excessive police checks on public transport	1 group	Police/ Mobility	Reported to discourage some youngsters from using public transport.
Peer pressure	1 group	Other: social dynamics	—
"Free-roaming wildlife" stigmatizing term for girls in public space	1 participant	Gender/ Other: social dynamics	Term used to describe groups of girls occupying public space, framed by the speaker as "drawing attention to themselves".

Photos



WP1.2: Luisbekelaar (KRAS Borgerhout + Sporting A) — outreach signal-gathering

Description

Following the meeting with the district mayor of Borgerhout, one recommendation was to give particular attention to extra-muros — the half of the district outside the ring — because of its relatively limited youth-work presence and youth-centered activities. This activity contributed to the district's ongoing effort to address this imbalance, including the renovation of youth infrastructure and the strengthening of KRAS Borgerhout's presence in extra-muros.

The activity took place at Luisbekelaar, the main public square dedicated to youngsters and the starting point for KRAS Borgerhout's outreach work in extra-muros (recently renovated, comprising a street-football field, a playground and a basketball field). It was organized with the support of the KRAS youth worker responsible for extra-muros (active there for a few months) and a worker from Sporting A, who runs summer activities for youngsters at Luisbekelaar.

Because the group of youngsters frequenting Luisbekelaar remained largely unfamiliar ("unread") to outreach workers, the activity was designed to be as discreet as possible: a bench between the playground and the basketball field was used, with materials, snacks and drinks. Youngsters were invited to take part when they stopped by, in the form of a small individual "quiz".

The format comprised: (1) a brief explanation of the activity's purpose ("I want to know what gives you unrest — what hurts your head"); (2) an A5 sheet with three questions — what gives you unrest, why, and can you give an example — supported by the same printed life-domain icons used in other COSY activities; (3) an optional indication of where the signal occurs; and (4) a collective A2 sheet on which participants wrote what makes them feel at rest.

Safety signals captured (observation stage)

Safety Signal (raw observation)	Frequency of mention	Life domain(s)	Context/ example
Public transport often too late and unreliable	reported	Mobility	"I was once too late at school because of the tram and they called my parents." Waits of up to 30 minutes reported.
Men following/harassing girls and women on the street	reported	Public space/ Gender	"I came back from a birthday party and was followed by a car with 4 men... I avoid the streets in the evening."
Work pressure	reported	Work	Difficulty combining work and free time due to tacit expectation of overtime/Saturday work; seen as harmful to social life long-term.
School pressure	reported	Education	Early mornings, strict teachers and grade pressure cause stress, especially during "superperiod" exam weeks; some support within school was acknowledged.
Peer pressure	reported	Other: social dynamics	Pressure to conform to the group; one participant linked this to feeling "ugly" when asked why.

Racism at school	reported (2 examples)	Education/ Other: social dynamics	Racial slurs used to justify exclusion from games or to explain a minor foul during football; classmates laughed, victims did not react to avoid showing they were affected, partly because they felt alone.
Power abuse by police	reported	Police	Perceived mistreatment increases when a person shows signs of not knowing their rights, not being "well-spoken", or having a "low" social position.
Presence of drug dealers	reported	Public space/ Other: crimes & felonies	Public squares and metro stations where drug dealing occurs, are perceived as unsafe and a source of chaos in the neighborhood.

4. Consolidated overview of identified signals and context

Together, the two WP1 activities engaged 28 young people at risk of being excluded by society/institutionally (24 male, 2 female, 1 non-binary, 1 preferring not to say) from Borgerhout and the neighboring district of Antwerp North. The table below consolidates the raw observations captured in both activities per COSY life domain, to support the subsequent decision-tree validation and Safety Signal Assessment Framework scoring at project-staff level.

Life domain	Signals raised in WP1.1 (J100)	Signals raised in WP1.2 (Luisbekelaar)
Police	Police brutality/excessive ID checks; police absence when needed; fines given too quickly; camera footage hard to obtain; excessive checks on public transport	Power abuse of the police toward people perceived as vulnerable or unaware of their rights
Public space	Constant camera surveillance; cameras not leading to targeted arrests; stigmatization as "youngsters"; dirty streets; ordinary racism in public space	Men following/harassing girls on the street; presence of drug dealers
Education	Racism and social dynamics at school	School pressure (workload, exam "superperiod"); racism at school (exclusion from games, slurs)

Mobility	Old and unreliable public transport; excessive police checks on transport	Public transport often too late and unreliable
Work	Racism and exclusion in the (student) job market	Work pressure (overtime/weekend work expectations)
Housing	Bad social housing	—
Justice	Perceived harshness of the justice system for adults	—
Social media	Negative influence of social media	—
Gender	"Free-roaming wildlife" stigmatizing term for girls in public space	Men following/harassing girls and women on the street
Wellbeing/Leisure	Discomfort occupying public space due to surveillance	—
Other: social dynamics	Peer pressure; racism (job market, public space, school)	Peer pressure; racism at school
Other: crimes & felonies	—	Presence of drug dealers

4.1 Recurring patterns across both activities

- Police contact is the most frequently and consistently raised domain across both activities and across genders, ranging from perceived power abuse and excessive ID checks/fines to disproportionate camera-based surveillance without a corresponding sense of protection.
- Racism and othering recur across three different settings — school, the (student) job market, and every day public space — and are consistently described as a shared, recognizable experience rather than an isolated incident, which under the decision tree supports treating them as a pattern rather than a one-off.
- Gendered unsafety in public space (harassment/following of girls and women, alongside stigmatizing language used about girls occupying public space) emerged independently in both activities despite the very different gender composition of the two groups.
- Peer pressure and stigmatization of youngsters' own group behavior appeared in both activities, indicating that participants also locate some of the unrest within their own peer group rather than exclusively with external actors.
- Public transport constraints appear both as a mobility signal (unreliability, delays) and as a police-related signal (checks discouraging use), suggesting overlapping domains that will need to be

discussed jointly with policymakers and representatives of government institutions in Phase 2 (WP17-24 and WP25-32).

4.2 Context of the two ecosystems within Borgerhout

The two activities intentionally covered contrasting sub-contexts of the same WP1 ecosystem: J100 reached an established youth-movement network centered on the "Branderij" building, in preparation for direct dialogue with local policymakers, while the Luisbekelaar activity specifically targeted extra-muros Borgerhout, an area with a comparatively limited youth-work presence, following an explicit request from the district mayor. This combination allowed the outreach team to capture signals both from youngsters already engaged through organized youth work and from a harder-to-reach group encountered through low-threshold outreach.

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