**Athina Karatzogianni, School of Media Communication and Sociology (23.06.22)**

I’m Professor Athina Karatzogianni, and I work at the School of Media, Communication and Sociology and I’m Professor of Media and Communication. Because I work on digital technologies and societal impact and ethics around these technologies it encompasses different areas, so I have to work with many diverse disciplines, from informatics, computer science and data scientists, also psychologists, and the usual media and communication experts.

So DigiGen is a Horizon 2020 project; this is a 3-million Euro project so they tend to be pretty big and involving about 40 or 50 people - so it involves many different people doing many different disciplines, and in fact from the whole group I was the only one that was from Politics, and the one we led from the University of Leicester was a work package on ICT and civic participation, and for that I organised a three-country comparative study, so for Leicester we interviewed in the first phase some adolescents and also some older participants that were engaged in activism during the pandemic, so we focused on Extinction Rebellion and Extinction Rebellion Youth, and we interviewed from there, and also Black Lives Matter, and I focused on the protests in Leicester in particular, and we had a local example that was very, very interesting, because of how Leicester is and how mobilised Leicester was in this particular protest.

From the different experience of having so many additional disciplines, it’s very exciting - I mean, it poses some problems as well because of course I understand civic participation, and activism and digital politics in a different way than an education specialist would see that, and often we don’t understand the same things in the concepts we’re using and the theories we’re using, so if I did this on my own we would have had only a case from the UK where it was only me interviewing people, I wouldn’t have had the capacity to have a comparison with other countries or people from disparate backgrounds for me to actually engage with and have intellectual discussions and exchange about what we see from a different disciplinary perspective, so it would be a very different project.

The park culture I think in Leicester is really, really great. Victoria Park is amazing because during the pandemic we used to go there a lot, and you could see people playing music and the weather in the first wave of the pandemic was really, really good. So I became a park bum! I used to go to Victoria Park all the time - yeah, I really enjoy the park culture in Leicester, even in winter almost, I really like it.