



17.2.2020

Finland's Presidency of the Council of the European Union 2019 – Summary of the Presidency in the field of youth January 2020

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Finland's Presidency in the field of youth

This compilation summarizes the main documents of Finland's Presidency 2019 in the field of youth.

We had two main objectives for the Presidency of the EU: firstly, to enhance the quality of youth work and to raise the level of education and training of youth workers. Secondly, to increase the holistic understanding of and strategic approach to the use of digital media and technology in youth work.

We started our Presidency with an EU Youth Conference on *Creating opportunities for youth – How does youth work meet the expectations and needs of young people?* in Helsinki on 1 - 3 July 2019. The conference took place right at the beginning of the Presidency in order to ensure that young people's voices were heard while drafting the policy documents of the Presidency. In this way, we aimed to ensure appropriate follow-up of the outcome of the conference. The findings were used in the preparation of both the *Council Conclusions on education and training of youth workers* and the *Council Conclusions on digital youth work*. The Conclusions were adopted by the Council (Youth, Sport and Culture) on 22 November 2019.

The Council policy debate focused on the topic "*A vision for youth work in Europe – climate change, young people and youth work*". Over the last few years, climate change has surged to the top of the political agenda worldwide. Young people consider that protecting the environment and fighting climate change, along with education and training and fighting poverty and social inequalities should be the top priorities for the EU in the years to come. We wanted to give the opportunity to the ministers responsible for youth to reflect on the future of youth work in Europe in the light of young people's climate action.

We also arranged an informal breakfast meeting back to back with the Council meeting between youth representatives and ministers responsible for youth from the current Trio Presidency and the incoming German Presidency, as well as representatives from the European Commission. The discussion was guided by the following questions: How can we ensure that the next multiannual framework programme be more inclusive and accessible for more diverse groups of young people, and what kind of impact should the climate change activism of young people have on the mobility programmes?

The EU Directors General for Youth meeting was held on 8-10 October in Finlandia Hall, Helsinki. The aim of the meeting was to enhance the efficient implementation of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027. The meeting focused on three topics that were interlinked, and also connected to the main themes of the Presidency: evidence-based youth policy-making and knowledge-building;

quality youth work; and digital youth work. The meeting provided us with the opportunity to share good practices and to enhance cooperation between the European and local levels.

Our last Presidency event took place in Brussels on 12 December after the last Council Youth Working Party meeting. The event “*How to promote youth participation in the EU? Good practices and new developments?*” was organised by the ALL-YOUTH project of Tampere University in Finland, the Institute for European Studies at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), and the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture. One of the aims of the event was to reflect on the initial findings of a study on good practices in relation to youth participation in legislative processes that was carried out during the Presidency EU Youth Conference in July. Another aim of the event was to provide an opportunity for the ALL-YOUTH MasterClass students at the VUB to present their recommendations for how youth participation could be improved in various areas.

The EU Youth Working Party met in ordinary and attaché configurations eight times during the Presidency.

As regards the European Solidarity Corps Regulation 2021-2027, the Presidency did all it could in order to make as much progress as possible. Our preliminary aim was to conclude a political common understanding with the Parliament by the end of the Presidency. Unfortunately, this was not possible. The negotiations on the Regulation will continue under the current and coming Presidencies. We would like to take this opportunity to once again thank the European Commission, the Council Secretariat, our partners in Brussels and in Finland and all the Member States for their excellent cooperation during the preparation and implementation of our Presidency programme.

With best wishes,

The Finnish Presidency youth team

Annex

FINLAND'S PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

EU Youth Conference

**Creating opportunities for youth –
How does youth work meet the expectations and needs of young people?**

1–3 July 2019
Grand Marina Congress Center
Helsinki, Finland

PROGRAMME

Monday 1 July

Morning	Arrival of participants
11.00–15.00	Registration <i>Grand Marina Congress Center, Katajanokanlaituri 6, 00160 Helsinki</i>
12.00–14.00	Lunch <i>Grand Marina Congress Center</i>
	Moderator of the Conference: Anni Laurila
15.00	Opening of the Conference <i>Annika Saarikko, Minister of Science and Culture</i>
15.20	Welcome <i>Elisa Gebhard, Chairperson, Finnish National Youth Council Allianssi</i>
15.30	Introduction of the working groups <i>Heidi Välimäki, Project Manager, Youth Academy</i> <i>Reija Arnberg, Project Manager, Youth Academy</i> https://www.nuortenakatemia.fi/en/

15.50 **Group work session & dialogue: “Capacity building for youth workers”**

Working groups focusing on the five main themes:

- 1) Sustainability and youth work
- 2) Multicultural youth work – Inclusive societies and cultural diversity
- 3) Digitalisation and young people
- 4) Future of work and employability of young people
- 5) Access to services and accessibility

Coffee break during the group work session

17.50 **Each working group reports on its outcomes**

Exchange of views

Grand Marina Congress Center, Fennia II

18.30 **Summary and closing of the first day**

Practical information about the evening programme

19.00 **Walk to Helsinki Market Square**

Departure from the lobby/entrance of Grand Marina Congress Center

19.20 **Ferry to Suomenlinna Sea Fortress, UNESCO World Heritage site**

<https://www.suomenlinna.fi/en/>

20.00 **Evening programme**

Tenalji von Fersen, Suomenlinna Sea Fortress

Dinner hosted by the Ministry of Education and Culture

22.30 Ferry back to the market square

23.00 Back to the hotel

Tuesday 2 July

- 8.30 Breakfast
- 9.00 **ALL-YOUTH research project: Promoting participatory approach in legislative processes** (Youth delegates will be able to participate in the study during the Conference)
Jukka Viljanen, Professor of Public Law, Ph.D., Faculty of Management, University of Tampere
- 9.30 **Researchers' overview based on a study on the education and training of youth workers in Europe**
Marta Medlinska, Coordinator, Youth Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe
- 9.45 **Perspectives on the future of education and training of youth workers: Exchange of views between youth work students, youth work trainers and educators**
Dr Howard Williamson, Professor of European Youth Policy, University of South Wales
- Reflections and discussion by the audience**
- 10.45 Coffee break
- 11.15 **ERASMUS+ presentations and sharing good practices**
Andreas Karsten, Research Coordinator, Research-based Analysis and Monitoring of Erasmus+: Youth in Action (RAY Network)
Riikka Jalonen, Executive Director, The Peace Education Institute
- 12.00 Lunch
- 13.15 **Practical information about the field visits**
Henna Salosyrjä, Ministry of Education and Culture
- 13.30 **Field visits to youth work activities in the City of Helsinki**
Visits linked to the main themes of the Conference
- 16.30 Return to the Grand Marina Congress Center
- Refreshments served
- 17.00 **Presentation of the outcomes of the field visits**
Grand Marina Congress Center, Fennia II



- 18:30 **Departure for the evening programme**
- 19:00 **Reception hosted by the City of Helsinki**
Helsinki City Hall, Pohjoisesplanadi 11–13, 00170 Helsinki
- 20:30 **Evening programme**
by Finnish National Youth Council Allianssi
Restaurant Sipuli, Kanavaranta 7, 00160 Helsinki
- 22:00 Back to the hotel

Wednesday 3 July

- 8.30 Breakfast
- 9:00 Press conference
Press room, Grand Marina Congress Center
- Minister Annika Saarikko, Minister of Science and Culture, Finland*
Tibor Navracsics, Commissioner, European Commission
- 9.30 **First reactions by the rapporteurs regarding the outcomes of the Conference**
Dr Marco Kovacic, Institute for Social Research in Zagreb
Dr Tomi Kiilakoski, Finnish Youth Research Society
- 9.50 **Dialogue between young people and decision-makers: Future perspectives for education and training of youth workers**
Facilitated by the European Youth Forum
- Participants:*
Annika Saarikko, Minister of Science and Culture, Finland
Tibor Navracsics, Commissioner, European Commission
Antje Rothmund, Head of Youth Department, Council of Europe
Carina Autengruber, President, European Youth Forum
- 11.00 **Closing remarks:**
- Next steps for the Presidency**
Henni Axelin, Director, Department for Youth and Sport Policy, Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland

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Ministry of
Education
and Culture

Contribution by Croatia

*Valentina Cesar, the Head of Service, Ministry for Demography, Family,
Youth and Social policy, Croatia*

- | | |
|-------|---------------------------|
| 11.30 | Family photo |
| 12.00 | Lunch |
| 13.00 | Departure of participants |



27.8.2019

Youth work (education) in flux: contemporary challenges in an erratic Europe

Report on the EU youth conference, Helsinki, 1-3 July 2019

by: Tomi Kiilakoski & Marko Kovacic

The theme of the EU Youth Conference in Helsinki was the education and training of youth workers. This report starts by presenting the results of the group session workshops and dialogue on "Capacity-building for youth workers". It then goes on to present the main points which emerged from the discussions with experts. The final section offers conclusions and suggestions for the future.

I Results of the workshops

The dialogue part of the conference consisted of workshops. Participants analysed the needs of the young and proceeded to examine how youth workers could respond to those expectations.

In total there were 61 different suggestions. Those suggestions were grouped together in four different categories: knowledge; personal and professional requirements; working with young people and helping them to achieve their goals; and working with the local community and within the broader framework of youth policy. In the report, all the requirements are left as they stand in order to demonstrate the scope of what is required of youth workers.

The expectations for youth workers attending the conference are multiple and cover different fields.

I.1. What youth workers need to know (N=21)

According to the participants, youth workers require an extensive knowledge of various different topics. They require knowledge of a) young people and their needs, b) the economy and labour markets, c) digital tools and cultures, d) youth policy and the service system, and e) how to fund and run successful projects. They must:

- 1) have knowledge of social entrepreneurship;
- 2) have knowledge of political processes and channels for influencing decision-making;
- 3) have knowledge of the clear rules governing what is "allowed" (as youth workers);
- 4) know how to encourage people to share their own cultural backgrounds in order to enhance their intercultural competence/understanding;
- 5) be aware of, and respect, the different cultural backgrounds, religions and ethnicities of young people;
- 6) know how to use different media, platforms and technologies in order to enhance understanding
 - i. and be aware of the associated risks;
- 7) be actively present in and conscious of digital platforms;
- 8) know and understand the socio-economic background of the various media content users;
- 9) know where and how to find young people on digital platforms such as Snapchat and Instagram, etc.;
- 10) be aware of and be able to discuss various aspects of the digital media;

- 11) be aware of the differences between digital and “real” life, know how to make them complement one other and have the ability to explicate these differences and similarities;
- 12) develop a knowledge of how the digital world works on a social, technological and informational level;
- 13) have knowledge of and skills relating to tools and methods of non-formal education;
- 14) YW need to know more about how to apply for, manage and fund projects in order to offer young people more opportunities;
- 15) have knowledge of the GDPR and online safety and privacy in order to be able to deal with such issues;
- 16) have knowledge of the policies, rules and political processes;
- 17) understand the processes within the labour market;
- 18) understand the needs of young people;
- 19) understand the policy context of vulnerable young people;
- 20) YW need to learn and understand the specific circumstances and issues facing “vulnerable” young people as well as more general principles relating to working with them;
- 21) have knowledge of specialist services, and be able to identify the needs of young people - including mental health issues - and refer them to specialist services.

I.2. What types of qualities should youth workers have? (N=12)

Youth workers should possess a wide array of skills. They should have personal qualities which help them make and maintain contact with the young. They should display a flexible, empathetic and positive attitude towards young people while at the same time possessing critical capabilities.

- 1) youth workers need to be open-minded and embrace diverse thinking, rather than placing all young people in the same box;
- 2) youth workers need to demonstrate critical thinking and be able to compare and distinguish networks and sources so as to be able to explain them to others;
- 3) youth workers must have the courage to support young activists;
- 4) youth workers must be creative enough to support young people in making sustainable life choices;
- 5) youth workers also have to be able to participate in digital platforms, such as Snapchat or Instagram, etc., as part of their youth outreach work;
- 6) youth workers should develop their emotional intelligence and skills such as empathy, agility and open-mindedness;
- 7) youth workers should be willing to receive feedback and be open to new ideas;
- 8) youth workers should recognise their own limits;
- 9) youth workers should have the critical capacity to self-reflect and acknowledge their own and structural limits;
- 10) youth workers should be open-minded, non-judgmental, empathetic, culturally aware and unbiased;

- 11) youth workers should display a persistent and positive attitude and a belief in the local community;
- 12) youth workers should be open-minded and embrace diversity.

I.3. How should youth workers work with the young? (N=21)

Youth workers should be able to make contact with young people in a way that respects a young person's identity and personality. They should also work with the young in way that produces good results and respects diversity and human rights. Youth workers should also produce positive outcomes. There are expectations about 1. how to initiate a relationship with young people, 2. how to maintain the quality process and 3. how to produce good outcomes. They should also have links to other professions and be able to connect the lives of young people to other social contexts and services.

- 1) youth centre workers must offer proper guidance and openness and inspire youngsters to adapt a sustainable lifestyle;
- 2) youth workers need to act as supportive mentors;
- 3) one of their most important skills is to be able to decide when one cannot pursue a case as a youth worker and when one needs to hand it over to an appropriate professional;
- 4) youth workers must encourage critical thinking as a lifelong process and as a tool for empowerment and for becoming an active citizen;
- 5) youth workers must adopt an attitude that allows young people to speak up and feel listened to;
- 6) youth workers must be close to the places where young people are found (physically or online);
- 7) youth workers must be able to help young people develop an attitude of critical thinking;
- 8) youth workers must facilitate dialogue that takes account of cultural sensitivities and has the potential to resolve the specific context;
- 9) youth workers should strive to remain objective on online platforms and apply the principles of equal treatment to all users;
- 10) youth workers should be able to facilitate online youth-related activities by means of digital tools;
- 11) youth workers should gain digital competences in a co-learning process together with young people;
- 12) youth workers should recognize the abilities of young people and create an environment which enables young people to develop and fulfil their own potential;
- 13) youth workers should encourage young people to take responsibility and let them lead the projects, even if it means failing;
- 14) youth workers should be able to take young people out of their comfort zone, while creating a safe environment;
- 15) youth workers should guarantee the recognition and validation of competencies acquired through internships, apprenticeships and other forms of work-based learning, as well as volunteering and non-formal education;

- 16) youth workers should have the skills to ask the right questions;
- 17) youth workers should be able to adapt youth work to overcome practical barriers;
- 18) youth workers should be able to empower young people and other members of the community to run youth projects;
- 19) knowledge needs to be responsive to changes in the labour market, particularly as regards educational pathways, career expectations and viable perspectives in order to provide tailor-made guidance;
- 20) youth workers must approach all situations with an open mind and take account of all views, opinions and attitudes;
- 21) young people in vulnerable positions must be empowered/educated to become active owners of their own basic/human rights.

I.4. How should youth workers influence the local community? (N=7)

Youth workers should also be able to influence the local community and relevant stakeholders. They should be able to work with the local community. In other words, youth workers should engage in youth policy in a practical manner.

- 1) youth workers should understand how to apply human rights in practice by cooperating with stakeholders (politicians, institutions, NGOs, etc);
- 2) youth workers should encourage critical thinking as a lifelong process and as a tool for empowering and becoming active citizens;
- 3) youth workers should be able to reach out to young people and influence stakeholders;
- 4) youth workers should be key drivers for change;
- 5) youth workers should be able to identify the needs of the local community;
- 6) there should be an inter-sectoral approach towards and on the part of youth workers, self-organized young people and policy makers;
- 7) regardless of whether one is a volunteer or a professional youth worker, one should have access to high-quality professional education and/or training.

II Experts' observations

The experts at the conference delivered lectures and organised panel discussions. The scope of the experts' observations was broad. In this report, those observations are analysed thematically rather than in the chronological order of the conference. The experts' observations pointed out the variety of education and training available in the different member states, while the professional development of professional and volunteer youth workers was analysed and the reasons for the formal and non-formal education and training of youth workers was noted.

Bigger picture

Youth work is an art, a craft and a science, depending on one's perspective and specific reality. As an eclectic concept, youth work also depends on different cultural viewpoints,

and should therefore be treated accordingly. In order to develop high-quality youth work policies, youth work should be observed in a holistic matter, and therefore youth workers should never stop learning. It is insufficient to rely only on competences acquired during initial education, because the needs of young people and their characteristics and position in the world are changing. In addition, due to the demanding challenges which today's world is imposing on youth workers, their profession should be valued, and therefore recognition is needed on a legal, social, individual and political level. Only by recognising youth work as a profession can we guarantee its development and quality as such.

Prerequisites

In order to ensure the recognition of youth work across Europe, we need to answer the following questions:

- who youth workers are;
- how they qualify to be youth workers;
- what employment and career paths are available to them in Europe.

By answering those questions, we are helping to define common ground for youth work and allowing different countries to have a clear idea about what youth work brings to society and to young people. Moreover, in the absence of commonly understood concepts it is difficult to develop European and/or international guidelines on the quality of youth work.

The importance of education

If we are to have high-quality youth work, we need to have qualified youth workers. There is a need to combine formal and non-formal education because individuals' needs differ. Both voluntary and professional youth workers need to have competencies that are relevant to young people's needs, wishes, problems and realities. They need to focus on enhancing the participation and social inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities, and therefore their education should be targeted in that direction. While the education of youth workers is complementary to the education of other professionals in social sciences, the distinct characteristics of youth work mean that it should rely heavily on practice and relationships with communities.

Adaptability

Youth work should respond to modern-day challenges. Even though it is sometimes difficult to keep pace with the needs and issues facing young people, we need to have tools to anticipate and adopt quickly to new realities. If climate change, for instance, is a relevant topic, youth workers must know how to recognise it, facilitate discussions about it and translate young people's point of view to policy makers. In order to meet this requirement, the training and education of youth workers should focus not solely on knowledge, but also on the skills which will allow youth workers to be flexible and receptive to social phenomena occurring in their surroundings. Moreover, youth workers need to know how to link such occurrences to the aspirations of young people. To that extent, the education and training of youth workers should include the development of such skills and attitudes.

Together we stand

The role of a youth worker is to create space for the healthy and high-quality development of young people. Only by ensuring an enabling environment can young people fulfil their individual potential and become active and contributing members of society. When creating an enabling environment, it is important to bear in mind the diverse backgrounds of young people and to incorporate their differences into those spaces. Diversity should therefore be seen as a resource or a potential rather than a problem. In order to achieve this, youth workers must reflect on their privileges and how to avoid imposing them. It is also important for youth workers to critically examine their position in society and teach young people to do the same.

During the conference, several issues regarding different aspects of youth work were addressed. Although not all of them were answered, it is important to identify them since they may provide an incentive when organising future events of this kind.

Food for thought or questions which we think require clarification:

- 1) What is the role of women in digital youth work?
- 2) How to connect the local and the global in youth work?
- 3) Does working with youth NGOs and youth workers really constitute youth work?
- 4) The question of the accessibility of activities - should young people be paying for youth work activities?
- 5) Do adults understand young people? What does meaningful participation mean? Creating time and space at conferences such as this one for meaningful youth contribution and participation.
- 6) What is the difference between education and schooling in terms of youth work? When is one more convenient, and when should we focus on the other?

The aforementioned questions are indeed valid points worthy of further analysis.

III Conclusions and recommendations

- 1) Conference participants pointed out multiple requirements for youth workers if they want to accomplish high-quality youth work in the changing social, cultural, economic and ecological context. They should have extensive knowledge of young people, labour markets and society, and of how to implement projects and influence society. They should develop personal and professional qualities which help them establish contact with the young. They should be able to maintain a good relationship with the young, and be able to oversee processes which produce good outcomes for young people and for European society as a whole. They should also be able to influence the local community.

These requirements are stringent. A flexible, well thought-out and systematic system of education will be required if youth workers are to do this job. These

requirements are so stringent that any assumption that youth workers can learn all of these things by themselves is out of the question.

- 2) There are specific challenges affecting European societies, such as youth unemployment, climate change, digitalisation and standing up for human rights. Youth workers need to be educated to face up to those challenges. Differentiating between basic education for youth work and education for tackling individual topics is likely to be required.
- 3) In the current societal context, different professionals require both initial and continuing training. Such training takes place on both a formal and an informal basis. The creation of an educational and training system that responds to the needs of continuing education will likely be required.
- 4) The conference dealt with the issues of *what* youth workers need to know and *why* youth work education is needed. The importance of systematic youth work education was argued for from many different points of view. The discussions did not tackle the problem of *how* flexible youth work education could be organised in Europe. It will be necessary to analyse this problem and define the roles of member states, European institutions and local stakeholders if the common European challenge of providing high-quality education is to be tackled.

As a general conclusion, one can say that this conference focused on the questions of **what** and **why**. While a great deal was said about the situation regarding youth work across Europe, education and why education is as it is, the conference did not offer any answers to the question of **how**. We still need to investigate in detail how to achieve the desired outcomes, and which tools to use to design quality curricula and to ensure the quality of youth work. The conference offered a very good analysis of the status quo and identified forces influencing different variations of youth work across Europe. Examples of good practice were identified and contextualised, but mechanisms for the potential implementation of such practices in different contexts were not covered. Therefore, in future it will indeed be necessary to focus on specific mechanisms for achieving certain targets.

8.10.2019

EU DIRECTORS-GENERAL FOR YOUTH

Finlandia Hall, Helsinki, 8 – 10 October 2019

Programme

Tuesday, 8 October

Arrival of participants

Accommodation:

Scandic Park Hotel, Mannerheimintie 46, Helsinki

<https://www.scandichotels.com/hotels/finland/helsinki/scandic-park-helsinki>

18.00 –

21.00 Registration at Scandic Park Hotel

19.00 –

20.30 Get-together at the Scandic Park Hotel

Wednesday, 9 October

08.30 Registration opens in Finlandia Hall
Coffee

08.45 Departure from the hotel to the conference venue:
Finlandia Hall, Mannerheimintie 13 e, M1

09.15 Meeting of the EU Directors-General for Youth

Opening

Henni Axelin, Chairperson, Director for Youth, Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland

Presentation round and introduction to the meeting

Sophia Eriksson Waterschoot, Director for Youth, Education and Erasmus+, European Commission, Directorate General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture

Session 1:

- 09.50 **Evidence-based youth policy-making and knowledge-building**
(Contribution to the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027)

How external evaluations impact national youth policy making
The case of Finland - OECD study 'Investing in Youth Finland' and its impact on the preparation of the national youth work and youth policy programme

Mikko Cortés Téllez, Senior Adviser, Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland

Comments by *Linda Nordin Thorslund*, Deputy Director-General, Ministry of Culture Sweden

Discussion

- 10.20 Council of Europe Youth Policy – What’s in it for the Governments?
Matjaž Gruden, Director of Democratic Participation, Directorate-General of Democracy, Council of Europe

- 10.35 Datafication in youth policy and youth work in Estonia
Edgar Schlümmer, Director, Estonian Youth Work Center, Estonia

Andres Kukke, Deputy Director General for Information Technology, Statistics Estonia, Estonia

Discussion

- 11.20 Progress on evidence-based policy-making in the youth field by the European Commission
Florencia van Houdt, Head of Unit, Youth, Volunteer, Solidarity and Traineeships Office, European Commission

- 11.30 Coffee break

Session 2:

- 12.00 **Quality youth work – meeting the expectations of young people and the youth sector**

Joint session with the Intercity Youth Network

Using the knowledge gathered from EU Youth Dialogue to inform policy making

Dan Moxon, Pool of European Youth Researchers

- 12.20 The role of local youth work in a national context

Esko Ranto, Director General, Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland

12.40 Turning policy into practice – on the importance of European policy development, follow-up and networks
Facilitated by *Jonas Agdur*, Chairperson of InterCity Youth

Discussion

13.30 Lunch

14.30 **Short introduction to the field visits**

14.45 **Departure for the field visits**

17.30 Back to the hotel

18.30 **Departure for the visit to Oodi, Helsinki Central Library**
Töölönlahdenkatu 4
<https://www.oodihelsinki.fi/en/>

18.45 **Guided tour at Oodi**

19.45 Departure from Oodi

20.00 Dinner
Bio Rex, Foyer
Mannerheimintie 22-24, Helsinki
<https://amosrex.fi/en/bio-rex/>

22.30 Back to the hotel

Thursday, 10 October

09.00 Session 3:
Digital youth work in theory and practice

Defining digital youth work

Suvi Tuominen, Manager, Verke, The national youth work centre of expertise for digital youth work, Finland

What new does the concept of digital youth work bring to media literacy?

Niels Brüggem, JFF - Institut für Medienpädagogik in Forschung und Praxis, Germany

STEAMing ahead: Making the case for public-private-NGO partnerships and how youth policy can support digital youth work outcomes

Janice Feighery, Camara Education, Ireland

09.50 Workshops in parallel (participants can choose which one of the two they attend):

Hands-on with micro:bit – an intro to the why and how of programming a microcontroller

Janice Feighery and Juha Kiviniemi, Planning Officer, Verke, The national youth work centre of expertise for digital youth work, Finland

or

Innobox – toolkit for creating new youth work practices with a systematic approach

Suvi Tuominen and Niels Brügger

10.30 Coffee break

11.00 Feedback from the workshops

11.30 **The climate crisis, young people and youth work**
Heta Heiskanen, Senior Specialist, Ministry of the Environment Secretary-General of the Finnish Climate Change Panel

Discussion

12.00 **Information from the upcoming Croatian Presidency**
Ivica Bošnjak, Director General for Youth, Croatia

12.15 **Closing words**
Henni Axelin, Chairperson, Director for Youth, Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland

12.30 Family photo

13.00 Lunch

14.30 **Departure of the participants**

11.12.2019

EU DIRECTORS-GENERAL FOR YOUTH

Finlandia Hall, Helsinki, 8 – 10 October 2019

Meeting report

The EU Directors-General for Youth meeting of the Finnish Presidency of the Council of the European Union was held in Helsinki, Finland, on 8-10 October 2019. The main aim of the meeting was to enhance the efficient implementation of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027. The meeting also provided an opportunity to promote cooperation between the European and local levels. Part of the programme was organised in cooperation with the Intercity Youth Network. The meeting brought together 78 participants from 27 Member States, representatives of the European Commission and the Council of Europe.

Wednesday, 9 October

Henni Axelin, Chairperson, Director for Youth, Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland opened the meeting. She emphasised the crucial role of the DG meetings as the only platform where the Directors for Youth could exchange views informally and enhance policy development at EU level. She introduced the main topics of the meeting: (1) evidence-based policy-making and knowledge-building, (2) quality youth work and (3) digital youth work.

After introductions had been made, *Sophia Eriksson Waterschoot*, Director for Youth, Education and Erasmus+, European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture gave a brief overview of the state of play regarding the nomination of the new Commission. She also reflected on the negotiations on the multiannual programmes Erasmus+ and European

Solidarity Corps, the launch of the expert groups on EU youth indicators and the recommendation on the mobility of young volunteers across the European Union.

Session 1: Evidence-based youth policy-making and knowledge-building

(Contribution to the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027)

How external evaluations impact national youth policy-making

The case of Finland – OECD Study 'Investing in Youth Finland' and its impact on the preparation of the national youth work and youth policy programme

Mikko Cortés Téllez, Senior Adviser, Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland presented the OECD study that was carried out in spring 2018. The study provided new data on youth services to support the formation of the new government programme following the parliamentary elections in spring 2019. The OECD study provided added value by yielding valuable proposals for solutions and information on how problems have been solved elsewhere. The external evaluations could broaden national thinking and bring new perspectives and tools to the provision of youth services. The proposals have been used in the preparation of the National Youth Work and Youth Policy Programme and have strengthened and raised awareness of youth policy across sectors.

Linda Nordin Thorslund, Deputy Director-General, Ministry of Culture, Sweden reflected on the impact of the 'Investing in Youth Sweden' study that was carried out in 2016. One of the main areas of focus in Swedish youth policy has been the transition between school and work and its role in preventing young people's exclusion from society. The OECD report raised awareness of the target groups that the national youth policy should address. The report identified previously-addressed target groups, but also proposed new ones that are often neglected to some extent. A valuable asset of the report was the preparatory phase, during which a large group of actors and stakeholders cooperated together. On the other hand, the report proved that youth policy and its effects are hard to evaluate. Overall, the focus of national youth policy should be in strengthening the skills of youth, and a key element in all policy-making should be international cooperation.

The presentations were followed by a discussion during which the challenges of providing quality employment for young people with higher education were highlighted. The lack of evidence-based policy-making was pointed out by some delegations. There had been some positive experiences of

using cross-sectoral instruments, such as a youth wiki. Striking a balance between political will and the goals set for youth policy-making may also be challenging.

Council of Europe Youth Policy – What's in it for governments?

Matjaz Gruden, Director of Democratic Participation, Directorate-General of Democracy, Council of Europe, focused on cooperation between the Council of Europe and its member states.

Datafication in youth policy and youth work in Estonia

Edgar Schlümmer, Director, Estonian Youth Work Center, Estonia gave a presentation on a new approach that had been developed since 2016. The aim is to develop a holistic model for monitoring and analysing the youth sector. Knowledge about young people, youth work and youth policy is collected in order to support the impact, policy and design of youth policies and services. The work includes 1) analyses of youth statistics and trends monitoring, 2) collecting data and carrying out analysis on youth work, services for young people and the quality thereof and 3) R&D initiatives and innovation relevant to youth work and youth policy. In order to facilitate innovation in the youth sector in universities, mapping has been carried out to identify the research interests in universities in relation to datafication, youth work and youth policy; support for renewing youth work training programmes and a support programme for R&D projects relevant to the youth sector has been launched. It has been shown to be important to support the data-awareness of youth work practitioners, innovation in local government and international cooperation on smart and digital youth work. The work is done in close cooperation with Statistics Estonia. *Andres Kukke*, Deputy Director-General for Information Technology, presented Statistics Estonia's open data portal and the first four dashboards (Ministry of Social Affairs, Local municipalities, Youth policy monitor and Estonian Travel and Tourism Association) and the roadmap up to 2020+, including all ministries, the Government dashboard (personalised dashboard for the President and Prime Minister) and the Food Industry Association.

The presentations gave rise to a lively debate about data and information collection and how information is used in the youth sector, including from the viewpoint of the basic principles and ethics of youth work.

Progress on evidence-based policy-making in the youth sector by the European Commission

Florencia van Houdt, Head of Unit, Youth, Volunteer, Solidarity and Traineeships Office, European Commission, presented a synthesis of the Member States' contributions to the Future National Activities Planners (FNAPS). The main cooperation topics suggested were the following: promoting the inclusive democratic participation of all young people in society and including diverse voices of young people in democratic processes; using innovative and alternative forms of democratic participation; mobility opportunities for all young people and youth workers; recognition of skills and competences gained through non-formal learning and supporting quality youth work development at local, regional, national and European level. Research proposals for 2020-2021 included, inter alia, research on accessibility to the EU programmes and the representativeness of young people engaged in youth policies. The Member States had proposed a broad variety of peer-learning activities and TCAs to be carried out in 2020-2021.

Session 2: Quality youth work – meeting the expectations of young people and the youth sector

Joint session with the Intercity Youth Network

Using the knowledge gathered from EU Youth Dialogue to inform policy-making

Dan Moxon, Pool of European Youth Researchers, presented the knowledge gathered from EU Youth Dialogue and explained how it could be used to inform policy-making. His key messages were that the dissemination and use of the findings should be improved, the political commitment should be enhanced and the dialogue should not be left 'up to the EU process'.

The role of local youth work in a national context

Esko Ranto, Director-General, Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland informed participants of the role of local youth work in a national context. In Finland, youth work in municipalities plays a strong role. At the local level, local authorities are responsible for youth work and youth policy. Municipalities are in charge of designing youth work and activities that meet local needs by organising services for young people and places for them to go and by encouraging young people to engage in civic activities. Municipalities also cooperate with other local authorities, youth organisations, young people and families with adolescents, where necessary.

Esko Ranto stressed the need to influence the quality of youth work by developing the skills of youth workers. In addition to basic vocational education and training, continuing training should be targeted at those needs that are of relevance locally. In order to develop youth work competencies, new practices should be introduced to better respond to the changing needs of young people.

Turning policy into practice – on the importance of European policy development, follow-up and networks

Jonas Agdur, Chairperson of Intercity Youth, stressed in his presentation how important it is that implementation of EU youth policy be connected to youth policy at regional and local levels and that activities support youth policies at grass-roots level. European policy development has created a foundation for the quality development of local youth work. Nevertheless, the further development of quality youth work - turning policy into practice - will require a combination of systems for documentation and follow-up and networks to support coordination, cooperation and mutual learning.

Field visits and social programme

The afternoon session consisted of study visits to Kannelmäki library and Youth Centre; a visit to the City Museum of Helsinki, including a workshop with Helsinki City Youth Council; Oranssi - Youth organisation; a workshop on special youth work in Varia and upper secondary schools in Vantaa; and a visit to the One-stop Guidance Centre, Youth Centre, Sello Shopping Centre (youth work) and Library.

In the evening, the participants visited Helsinki Central Library Oodi that had opened in 2018. Oodi was voted the winner of the 2019 Public Library of the Year Award by the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA).

Thursday, 10 October

Session 3: Digital youth work in theory and practice

Defining digital youth work

Suvi Tuominen, Verke, Centre of Expertise for Digital Youth Work, Finland introduced the topic of digital youth work, starting with the definition of digital youth work, as produced by an Expert Group set up under the EU Work Plan for Youth 2016-2018. She presented examples of digital youth work practice, especially in Finland, where digital youth work covers a broad number of activities, such as eSports and other gaming activities, using location-based activities, discussing digital cultures, online participation and online counselling, YouTube videos and maker activities.

What new dimensions does the concept of digital youth work bring to media literacy?

Niels Brüggem, JFF – Institute for media research and media education, presented the new dimensions that the concept of digital youth work brings to youth work. He pointed out that there is a need to consider youth work approaches, goals, ethics and professional boundaries in the context of digitalisation. He stressed the need to provide financing for infrastructure, equipment, and regular training for practitioners - staff and volunteers – as well as continued research. Policy-makers should advocate the value of youth work in supporting young people as they navigate increasingly digital lives. It is important to incorporate digital youth work into youth strategies, policy and legislation.

STEAMing ahead: Making the case for public-private-NGO partnerships and how youth policy can support digital youth work outcomes

Janice Feighery, Education Programme Director, spoke about STEAM education as an important aspect of digital youth work. In her presentation, she mentioned that 14 % of existing jobs could disappear as a result of automation in the next 15-20 years. Another 32 % are likely to change radically as individual tasks are automated. Learning and innovation skills - the 4Cs (Creativity and innovation, Critical thinking and problem solving, Communication, Collaboration) - can help prepare young people for increasingly complex life and work environments. She also emphasised

the importance of public-private-NGO partnerships in this context. The partnerships can help to pilot innovations, develop an evidence base for STEAM in youth work, design new youth programmes to respond to identified needs, help to build the capacity of the youth work sector through training and to support the provision of infrastructure (hardware, equipment, etc.). The policy can, inter alia, help to incorporate digital youth work into youth strategies, policy and legislation and facilitate cross-departmental working in exploring the role and importance of the youth work sector in the digital age. The policy can also support the youth work sector's needs for platforms to provide appropriate features for educational professional engagement.

The presentations were followed by two parallel workshops: *Hands-on with micro:bit – an intro to the why and how of programming a microcontroller*, and *Innobox – toolkit for creating new youth work practices with a systematic approach*.

The climate crisis, young people and youth work

Heta Heiskanen, Senior Specialist, Ministry of the Environment, Secretary-General of the Finnish Climate Change Panel, focused in her contribution on the role of youth work in the climate crisis. The general purpose of youth work is to support young people in growing up, preparing for independent life and feeling included in society, and to promote the active citizenship of young people. Heta Heiskanen considered it necessary to redefine youth work during the climate crisis. Youth work in the context of climate action should not be treated as separate from general functions, but be integrated into daily actions: food, travel, use of energy, the circular economy. Youth work should support young people in living a climate-neutral life and in coping with the implications of the climate crisis. Youth work should also promote the participation of young people in climate policy-making. Education and training for youth workers should be adequately supported. Youth work in the climate crisis should be integrated into the general action plans or new action plans.

Information from the upcoming Croatian Presidency

Ivica Bošnjak, Director-General for Youth, Croatia, informed participants of the upcoming Croatian Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The overarching theme of the Croatian

Presidency is 'A strong Europe in a world of challenges'. The priorities of the Presidency are a Europe that develops, a Europe that connects, a Europe that protects and an influential Europe.

In the youth sector, the priorities of the Croatian Presidency of the Council of the EU are Opportunities for young people in rural and remote areas; Raising awareness of the youth sector by informing and strengthening resources and Fostering the EU Youth Dialogue – results of the 7th Cycle.

In addition, the Croatian Presidency will continue the work on the European Solidarity Corps Regulation.

Closing words

The meeting was closed by *Henni Axelin*. She thanked all participants for their input and mentioned that the discussion on young people and climate change will be continued in the EYCS Council on 22 November.



25.11.2019

**The Finnish Presidency of the Council of the European Union
2019**

How to promote youth participation in the EU?

Good practices and new developments

Brussels, 12 December 2019

14.30 - 17.00

European Committee of the Regions
Jacques Delors building, Rue Belliard 99/101, 1040 Brussels

Draft programme, 15 November 2019

14.30 Welcome

Mr Matteo Bianchi, Member of the European Committee of the Regions

14.45 Young people as co-researchers for promoting youth participation

What kind of youth participation research can be carried out in school classrooms?
Video message from Finland - students from Tampereen Lyseo 'Eurooppalinja'
upper secondary school

**14.55 Introduction to Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB) students'
MasterClass methods**

Professor Harri Kalimo, Institute for European Studies (IES), VUB

**15.00 ALL-YOUTH: Preliminary results based on the research data collected
at the EU Youth Conference in Helsinki, 2 July 2019**

Professor Jukka Viljanen (Tampere University) and post-doctoral research fellows
Niina Meriläinen (Tampere University) and Ferran Davesa (VUB)

15.15 New methods and models for improving youth participation: overcoming obstacles to youth participation with IES-VUB students' ALL-YOUTH MasterClass

To inspire the panel discussion, IES-VUB students will present ALL-YOUTH MasterClass recommendations for youth participation on the following themes:

- 1. Online participation in official processes and public consultation processes and on digital democracy platforms*
- 2. Social media interaction, crowdsourcing and youth participation and activism with civil society*
- 3. Towards equal participation and promoting a non-discriminatory approach to youth participation*
- 4. School education and university courses to activate youth participation*

Panellists (the discussion will be facilitated by VUB students):

Mr Matteo Bianchi, European Committee of the Regions; representative of the European Commission (tbc); Professor Jamal Shahin, IES-VUB; representative of the European Youth Forum (YFJ), tbc; representative of the upcoming Croatian Presidency of the Council of the EU (tbc)

There will be a general discussion on good practices in relation to youth participation in the EU and its Member States.

Questions can be raised throughout the discussion, including via Mentimeter; everyone can participate.

16.50 Concluding remarks by IES-VUB students

17.00 Closing of the event

Ms Henni Axelin, Director of Youth Affairs, Finland



Council of the
European Union

Brussels, 11 November 2019
(OR. en)

13398/19

JEUN 114
EDUC 449
SPORT 100
EMPL 561
SOC 741
DIGIT 166
SUSTDEV 163
CLIMA 295
ENV 914

NOTE

From: Presidency
To: Permanent Representatives Committee/Council

Subject: A vision for youth work in Europe – climate change, young people and youth work
- *Policy debate*
(*Public debate in accordance with Article 8(2) of the Council's Rules of Procedure*)
[proposed by the Presidency]

Following consultation of the Youth Working Party, the Presidency has prepared the attached discussion paper, which is submitted as the basis for the policy debate to take place at the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council meeting on 21-22 November 2019.

Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council

Brussels, 21 and 22 November 2019

- Youth policy debate -

"A vision for youth work in Europe – climate change, young people and youth work"

- Presidency discussion paper -

1. *The climate crisis as the most pressing global issue*

The 2018 Special Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) strongly emphasised that global warming should be limited to 1.5 °C compared to pre-industrial times in order to avoid the most severe consequences of climate change. In May 2019, the United Nations published a Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity, which claimed that the world is ‘on notice’ as one million species face extinction – also linked to climate change. In 2019, the IPCC released special reports on climate change and land and on the ocean and cryosphere. Over the last few years, climate change has surged to the forefront of public awareness and to the top of the political agenda worldwide.

2. *Climate change as a key priority for the European Union*

The European Union has constantly pushed for an increasingly ambitious approach to mitigating climate change, and today preventing the dangerous effects of climate change is one of its key priorities. It has set targets for 2030 for cutting greenhouse gas emissions and increasing renewable energy consumption and energy efficiency. The main EU actions consist of a combination of financial support and regulation. According to the latest Eurobarometer survey, young people consider that protecting the environment and fighting climate change, along with education and training and fighting poverty and social inequalities should be the top priorities for the EU in the years to come.

In the youth field, climate change was mentioned in the Commission communication on a new EU Youth Strategy for 2019-2027. The Commission wanted the strategy to ‘equip young people with life skills to cope in a changing world’ and to ‘pay special attention to’ young people as local and global stakeholders, noting that ‘young people are committed to address global challenges, in particular the sustainable development goals’. While the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027 does not contain specific recommendations as regards the role of youth in relation to climate change, it aims to ‘encourage and equip young people with the necessary resources to become active citizens’. The European Youth Goals, which are part of the strategy and should provide inspiration for EU policy makers, recognise that ‘society needs to act against climate change and the growing environmental threats’.

3. *Young people: the first on the move*

Interestingly, as with many other societal changes, it was young people who first raised their voices.

The youth climate strikers’ ‘Fridays for future’ campaigns started in 2018, months before the publication of the IPCC Special Report in October 2018. Young people’s climate strikes quickly spread all over the world – and started to gain media attention. Despite expectations that the demonstrations would gradually peter out, they actually kept drawing more and more young people to the streets. The September 2019 climate strikes gathered 6 to 8 million demonstrators in 4 500 locations in 150 countries all over the world. Furthermore, public awareness of and political debate about climate change have reached all-time highs, in particular in the EU.

Youth action on climate change is a prime example of how young people have contributed to push the political agenda forward and enlarge the scope of youth work. The landscape that is emerging as a result gives rise to all sorts of new questions and considerations.

4. *Message to be taken from young people's climate activism*

Young people's climate activism is a phenomenon that certainly deserves reflection, including from the viewpoint of youth work. The first thing to discuss is what kind of obligation or message is conveyed to society and decision-makers by the fact that young people, in large numbers and with spectacular energy, are persistently demanding stricter climate policies. In many countries, their voices have been listened to and politicians and decision-makers have praised young people, found their claims legitimate and promised to promote the fight against climate change – even if, overall, people and politicians are still divided on the issue. Political encouragement might not always be enough: although people can appreciate and understand the concerns of young people, when the time comes for people to actually make sacrifices in their personal lives or in the way companies are managed, for instance, nothing much necessarily happens. This is linked to what is perhaps the most essential task of youth work: to motivate young people to be active citizens and support their belief in participation. The young strikers put a great deal of energy and hope into their action, and if it seems to lead nowhere, there might be severe consequences for their belief in active citizenship.

5. *Towards a methodological and educational renewal*

Taking into account the experience gained with regard to climate change and young people's political activism, youth work should respond to the climate concerns of the young while at the same time noting the differences in their opinions. As youth work allows for outreach to a variety of young people, it could encourage them to become interested in climate change and environmental thinking. Youth workers should be able to talk about climate change and be aware of the effects of climate change on human life and the environment. This is a question not only of supporting young people who are already active, but also of promoting critical thinking and creativity, as well as human rights, democratic values and active citizenship, and also reconceptualising and perhaps rediscovering existing practices within youth work.

There are already a lot of youth work methods for education on nature and the environment, as well as NGOs specialising in those areas. Adventure and outdoor education has long been close to youth work. There are youth centres which focus on ecological education. In today's situation, where young people are increasingly raising the topic with youth workers, it may be reasonable to pool our existing knowledge on practices and engage – with young people's help – in developing new activities and working methods.

Another question is how to organise training and education for youth workers to help them meet young people's expectations. This new situation opens up possibilities for educational renewal. The transition to a more sustainable world can be accomplished only if we do not lose hope that we will find alternative solutions. Young people's active use of digital media (social media, art, video) offers an opportunity for alternative climate imagery, raising awareness of the effects of climate change and suggesting ways to counteract it.

6. *Learning from young people's new forms of active citizenship*

School strikes for climate change attest to the emergence of new forms of youth agency. The movement is not a youth organisation, it is not a youth political party, it is not organised through youth work, it is not a small-group conspiracy and it is not a one-off youth event. School strikes show that if young people are motivated enough, they find a way to express themselves. It might be useful for those involved in youth work to reflect on their own activities and methods in the light of young people's climate action, as well as on what kind of measures we need to complement the existing youth representation models of participation to fit with the emerging forms of active citizenship among young people.

7. *Climate change in youth work as a cross-sectoral challenge*

Climate change is a broad societal issue covering both the public and private sectors, as well as civil society. Cross-sectoral youth policy has been on the youth field agenda for a very long time and is emphasized in the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027. Cross-sectoral cooperation on climate change needs to happen at least at three levels: European, national and local. In the EU, climate change action in the youth field has the potential to be linked with action in any sector working on climate change. At government level, any youth policy activity on climate change should be linked with the respective general action plans. As cross-sectoral cooperation seems to be most successful at local level, it might be advisable to create climate change activities which link young people, youth work, other relevant sectors (such as schools), environmental organisations, youth organisations and interested private companies. In municipal youth work, youth services have an opportunity to function as mediators between young people, their activities and decision makers. Often young people express their concerns outside the established structures of representative democracy, through social media, digital communities, artistic expression, music or collective movements (such as school strikes), which might also require further mediation.

8. *Questions for the debate*

In the light of the above, ministers are invited to reflect on one or more of the three following questions (maximum three minutes).

- 1) *How can we strengthen the capacity of youth work to respond to emerging challenges faced by young people in the context of climate change?***
- 2) *How can youth work support young people in their climate activism and in building a sustainable future?***
- 3) *Climate change is a cross-sectoral challenge. How can the youth sector act as a partner in cross-sectoral cooperation?***

14.2.2020

EU Youth Dialogue
-Informal breakfast with youth representatives
Brussels, 22 November 2019 (8:30-9:45 am) - Europa Building, room S 10
Discussion topic: "Mobility of young people"
- Presidency background paper -

1. *Introduction*

The informal breakfast with youth representatives organised by the Finnish Presidency back to back with the EYCS Council meeting is an important feature of the EU Youth Dialogue, and aims to stimulate a dialogue between youth representatives and ministers responsible for youth from the current Trio Presidency and the incoming German Presidency, as well as representatives from the European Commission.

2. *The EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027*

The EU Youth Strategy for 2019-2027, adopted by the Council in November 2018, sets out the framework for European cooperation in the youth field. The strategy promotes cooperation in core youth policy areas in order to engage, connect and empower young people. The strategy is implemented through two EU programmes supporting youth: Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps.

3. *The Erasmus+ Programme 2014-2020*

The current Erasmus+ programme aims to give over four million Europeans the opportunity to gain competences and to experience personal, socio-educational and professional development through studies, training, work experience or volunteering abroad. It also fosters quality improvements, innovation excellence and internationalisation in organisations active in education and training, youth and sport, and promotes initiatives that support policy reforms at all levels. The total expenditure under the 2020 work programme amounts to EUR 3,384 million. In the field of youth, the specific objectives of the programme include: to improve the level of key competences and skills of young people, including those with fewer opportunities; to promote

young people's active citizenship and participation in democratic life and in the labour market; and to foster social inclusion and solidarity.

The Erasmus+ programme aims to support, across all sectors, awareness-raising about environmental and climate-change challenges and support the testing of innovative practices to prepare young people and youth workers to make sustainable mobility choices and change consumption habits and lifestyles. The programme will also support the taking up of digital technologies and innovative methods and tools in education, training, youth and sport.

4. *The European Solidarity Corps Regulation 2018-2020*

The European Solidarity Corps was launched in December 2016 to create new opportunities for young people (18-30 years old) to engage in solidarity activities through volunteering, jobs or traineeships for the benefit of communities and people around Europe. The European Solidarity Corps Regulation 2018-2020 provides a coherent framework for solidarity activities. The annual budget of the European Solidarity Corps for 2020 amounts to EUR 173 million.

According to the European Solidarity Corps Regulation, the European Solidarity Corps aims to promote solidarity as a value, mainly through volunteering, enhance the engagement of young people and organisations in accessible and high-quality solidarity activities as a means to contribute to strengthening cohesion and solidarity, democracy and citizenship in Europe, while also responding to societal challenges and strengthening communities, with particular effort to promote social inclusion and equal opportunities, in particular for the participation of young people with fewer opportunities. The European Solidarity Corps activities aim to contribute to the achievement of several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In particular, the policy priority on "environmental and climate challenges", is in line with SDG 13 on Climate Action.

5. *Youth mobility and inclusion*

Youth mobility is closely linked with the objective of social inclusion. From the outset, EU mobility programmes have focused on the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities. Social inclusion is an overarching priority across all sectors of the Erasmus+ programme. The Erasmus+ Inclusion and Diversity Strategy in the field of Youth defines young people with fewer opportunities as people who face obstacles that prevent them from participation in employment, formal and non-formal education, transnational mobility, democratic process and society at large due to disability, health problems, educational difficulties, cultural differences, economic, social and geographical obstacles. The European Solidarity Corps has a strong focus on inclusion, and according to the European Commission, 30% of the participants in the European Solidarity Corps are young people with fewer opportunities.

6. *Young people's participation in European youth programmes: recent trends*

The Research-based analysis of European youth programmes (RAY) report¹ reveals that the number of newcomers among the participants in the programme is decreasing (in 2015, 51%; in 2017, 37%) and so, too, is the share of participants from ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic minorities (ethnic or cultural minorities: 37% in 2015, 27% in 2017; religious minorities: 28% in 2015, 22% in 2017, and linguistic minorities: 27% in 2015, 23% in 2017). Whether under the title of Youth in Action (2007-2013) or subsequently Erasmus+/Youth in Action (2014-2020), the programme has always had a much higher level of educational attainment among its participants than the average European population. The educational attainment has grown roughly twice as fast as on average across Europe.

According to the Flash Eurobarometer 478, amongst respondents who have not experienced a stay abroad for learning purposes but have considered doing so, lack of financial means (42%) is the main reason for not doing so, closely followed by family, personal or work-related reasons (41%). Only one in five (19%) say there was a lack of information on how to apply, or that they had insufficient language skills. A similar share (18%) say there was a lack of opportunities abroad that would match their interests. Respondents living in urban areas are much more likely to think about opportunities abroad than those in rural areas.

7. *Fostering young people's mobility: the way forward*

The Presidency proposes the following questions to help guide the discussions:

1) How can we ensure that the next multiannual framework programme (MFF) 2021-2027 be more inclusive and accessible for more diverse groups of young people? How can we increase the mobility opportunities for young people with fewer opportunities and to reach out to a wider target group of young people?

2) What kind of impact should the climate change activism of young people have on the mobility programmes? How can we address the legitimate concerns of young people about the climate crisis? How could the youth programmes respond to young people's expectations?

¹ RAY-MON Key findings, Second survey wave of the current programme generation: autumn 2017/spring 2018

IV

*(Notices)*NOTICES FROM EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS, BODIES, OFFICES AND
AGENCIES

COUNCIL

**Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States
meeting within the Council on Digital Youth Work**

(2019/C 414/02)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE MEMBER STATES
MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL

RECOGNISING THAT:

1. The Council conclusions on smart youth work contribute to the innovative development of youth work in Europe and enhanced efforts should be made to continue on this path.
2. Digital literacy and other 21st-century skills play a crucial role in young people's independence, social inclusion, employability and daily lives. Young people have diverse competences enabling them to operate in a digitalised environment. However, all young people will need an agile, flexible and critical approach to digital technology in their future work and everyday lives.
3. The digital divide needs to be bridged ⁽¹⁾. All young people should have equal opportunities to enhance their digital competences, regardless of their background ⁽²⁾.
4. Digital youth work can help to achieve the European Youth Goals ⁽³⁾.
5. Gender gaps in digital competences and in engagement in digital activities need to be addressed, as do stereotypes related to the use of digital technologies.
6. Youth work has a great potential to allow for experiential learning in a non-formal setting and to involve young people in activities to strengthen their digital competences and media literacy. Youth work can also engage young people who are at risk of being left behind in a digitalised society.
7. Youth work approaches, goals, principles and professional boundaries should be considered in the context of digitalisation and their impact should be assessed in this light.
8. Youth work empowers young people to be active and creative in digital society, to make informed and reasoned decisions, and to take responsibility and control of their digital identity. Youth work may also help young people to face online risks related to conduct, content, contact and commercialism ⁽⁴⁾, including hate speech, cyberbullying, disinformation and propaganda.

⁽¹⁾ 'Digital divide' explicitly includes access to ICTs, as well as the related skills that are needed to take part in the information society.

⁽²⁾ 'Digital divide' can be classified according to gender, age, education, income, social groups or geographic location.

⁽³⁾ Annex 3 to the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027.

⁽⁴⁾ <https://www.childnet.com/ufiles/Supporting-Young-People-Online.pdf>

9. Digitalisation of youth work has often been understood as the use of social media. However, new digital technologies are emerging rapidly. Artificial intelligence, virtual reality, robotics and block-chain technology, inter alia, are affecting our societies beyond the sphere of communication. Not only basic digital competencies are required, but also specific digital competencies enhancing the employability of young people are important. Youth work should be able to address the challenges of convergence between the digital and physical environments and benefit from the opportunities offered by the digital transformation, while at the same time facing challenges in regard to services.
10. The rapid advances in digital media and technology in recent years have also influenced youth work. However, a significant number of youth work practitioners lack digital competences and knowledge to make the best possible use of digital technologies in delivering high-quality youth work due to financial, structural, material or administrative reasons.
11. Many youth policy documents lack foresight about the ways in which digitalisation will affect society, young people and youth work. Many strategies also lack a holistic approach to developing youth work in the digital era.

INVITE THE MEMBER STATES, IN LINE WITH THE SUBSIDIARITY PRINCIPLE AND AT THE APPROPRIATE LEVELS, TO:

12. Promote and develop youth policies and strategies that strive to be proactive with regard to technological development and digitalisation. When designing policies that affect young people's lives, the impact of digitalisation on societies, including youth work practices and services, should be taken into account and assessed. To that end, cross-sectoral cooperation between relevant policy sectors and stakeholders should be intensified.
13. Include, where applicable, in their youth strategies or other relevant policy plans, clear goals and concrete steps for developing and implementing digital youth work and assessing its impact on young people and youth work. These goals should be based on knowledge, evidence and data regarding young people's digital competences, and the needs for youth work services.
14. Encourage youth work and youth organisations to pursue these goals while developing their digital activities and services in accordance with their specific interests and needs, and to use innovative methodologies to support the achievement of youth work outcomes, including through digital youth work.
15. Consider, where appropriate, experimental and innovative approaches and new co-operation models, to deliver digital youth work activities and services.
16. Invest in and set up guidelines for building digital capacity among youth workers, youth organisations and organisations doing youth work, where needed. Digital youth work could be embedded in both professional curricula for youth workers and training for volunteers, and incorporated into youth workers' continuing education and training.
17. Encourage youth workers and young people to increase and improve their digital competences in a co-learning process.
18. Promote the use of existing materials ⁽⁵⁾ and develop new digital youth work materials and training for youth workers by making use inter alia of the training needs list proposed by the expert group ⁽⁶⁾ set up under the European Union Work Plan for Youth for 2016-2018. In addition, organise training on the strategic development of digital youth work.

⁽⁵⁾ E.g. the Salto toolbox for training and youth work, <https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/toolbox/>

⁽⁶⁾ The training needs defined by the expert group on 'Risks, opportunities and implications of digitalisation for youth, youth work and youth policy' include 1. Digitalisation of society, 2. Planning, designing and evaluating digital youth work, 3. Information and data literacy, 4. Communication, 5. Digital creativity, 6. Safety and 7. Reflection and evaluation (<https://publications.europa.eu/s/fouj>).

19. Create the space and conditions for experimentation to develop digital tools and services in youth work, and to bring together youth work, youth research and the ICT sector in developing successful digital youth work practices and sharing experiences.
20. Provide opportunities for young people to practise and improve digital competences in various youth work settings, including key areas of digital competence as listed in the Digital Competence Framework DigComp 2.1: information and data literacy; communication and collaboration; content creation; safety; and problem solving. Learning modalities can include experiential learning, reverse mentoring and intergenerational cooperation.
21. Empower young people, including those who feel they are not-listened-to and/or who have fewer opportunities, to actively participate in democratic decision-making processes, including EU Youth Dialogue, by engaging them in digital and other innovative and alternative forms of democratic participation.
22. Consider all barriers, including all forms of discrimination and gender stereotyping, that could negatively affect young people's opportunities and motivation to acquire digital competence throughout their education, training and professional pathways, and to take up science, technology, art, engineering and mathematics (STEAM) studies and careers.
23. Strengthen the role of youth work in supporting young people's creative use of technology and give them the skills to be both critical consumers and active creators in technological terms.
24. Promote better access for young people, in particular those with fewer opportunities and those living in rural and remote areas, or where face-to-face access is not feasible, to youth work services through the use of digital technologies.

INVITE THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION, WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE SPHERES OF COMPETENCE, TO:

25. Encourage the exchange of best practices with regard to the implementation and development of digital strategies, including by making use of the opportunities provided by Erasmus+ and other relevant EU funding instruments.
 26. Promote and make use of existing digital and physical platforms for peer-learning activities on using digital technology in youth work as a tool, an activity or as content.
 27. Organise events bringing young people, youth workers, experts, researchers and ICT sector figures together to innovate new ways and approaches to using technology in youth work.
 28. Encourage and support Europe-wide research to increase the knowledge on the impact of digitalisation on young people and youth work.
 29. Improve the digital competences through non-formal learning and training, taking into account the updating process of the Digital Education Action Plan in view of extending it to youth work.
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ANNEX

A. References

In adopting these conclusions, the Council takes note of the following documents:

1. Council Conclusions on smart youth work (OJ C 418, 7.12.2017, p. 2);
2. Council conclusions on the protection of children in the digital world (OJ C 372, 20.12.2011, p. 15);
3. Expert group set up under the European Union Work Plan for Youth for 2016-2018 on Risks, opportunities and implications of digitalisation for youth, youth work and youth policy: Developing digital youth work — Policy recommendations and training needs (2017);
4. European Commission. DigComp 2.1: The Digital Competence Framework for Citizens with eight proficiency levels and examples of use (2017);
5. Communication from the Commission on the Digital Education Action Plan, COM(2018) 22 final;
6. Communication from the Commission on a European Strategy for a Better Internet for Children (COM(2012) 196 final);
7. European Commission. Study on the Impact of the Internet and Social Media on Youth Participation and Youth Work (2018);
8. Resolution of the Council of the European Union and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on a framework for European Cooperation in the youth field: The European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027 (2018/C 456/01);
9. Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation — GDPR) (OJ L 119, 4.5.2016, p. 1);
10. Council recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning (OJ C 189, 4.6.2018, p. 1);
11. EIGE's report 'Gender equality and youth: opportunities and risks of digitalization' (14348/18 ADD 2);
12. Screenagers: Using ICT, digital and social media in youth work. A review of research findings from Austria, Denmark, Finland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland (2016);
13. EU-CoE Youth Partnership Symposium Report — 'Connecting the dots: Young people, social inclusion and digitalization' (Tallinn, 26-28 June 2018).

B. Definitions

For the purpose of these Council conclusions:

- 'Digital competences' involve the confident, critical and responsible use of, and engagement with, digital technologies for learning, at work, and for participation in society. It includes [...] information and data literacy, communication and collaboration, media literacy, digital content creation (including programming), safety (including digital well-being and competences related to cybersecurity), intellectual property-related questions, [...] problem solving and critical thinking. (Source: Council recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning (OJ C 189, 4.6.2018, p. 1))
- 'Digital youth work' means proactively using or addressing digital media and technology in youth work. Digital media and technology can be either a tool, an activity or a content in youth work. Digital youth work is not a youth work method. Digital youth work can be included in any youth work setting and it has the same goals as youth work in general. Digital youth work can happen in face-to-face situations as well as in online environments, or in a mixture of the two. Digital youth work is underpinned by the same ethics, values and principles as youth work. (Source: <https://publications.europa.eu/publication-detail/-/publication/fbc18822-07cb-11e8-b8f5-01aa75ed71a1>)

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- 'Digital divide' refers to the distinction between those who have internet access and are able to make use of new services offered on the World Wide Web, and those who are excluded from these services. At a basic level, the participation of citizens and enterprises in the information society depends on access to information and communication technology (ICT), i.e. the presence of electronic devices, such as computers, and internet connections. The term explicitly includes access to ICTs, as well as the related skills that are needed to take part in the information society. The digital divide can be classified according to criteria that describe the difference in participation according to gender, age, education, income, social groups or geographic location. (Source: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary:Digital_divide)
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IV

(Notices)

NOTICES FROM EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS, BODIES, OFFICES AND
AGENCIES

COUNCIL

**Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States
meeting within the Council on education and training of youth workers**

(2019/C 412/03)

THE COUNCIL AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE MEMBER STATES MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL,

RECOGNISING THAT:

1. The Council Resolution on the European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027 invites the Member States and the European Commission *inter alia* to support the development of quality youth work at local, regional, national and European level, including training for youth workers.
2. The variety and specific features of youth work in the Member States are a reflection of the Member States' respective histories, socio-economic conditions and cultural contexts, as well as their national, regional and local priorities.
3. Despite the differences, there is common ground as regards the educational and training needs of youth workers, based on long-standing cooperation in the European youth field, on shared values and a large number of studies, declarations, programmes, conclusions and recommendations on youth work ⁽¹⁾. Activities aiming *inter alia* at providing a European classification of occupational standards, mapping the educational and career paths of youth workers, increasing the quality of youth work provision, providing information on youth work and supporting the professional development of youth workers through the EU programmes and the Council of Europe's Youth Work portfolio bring useful elements to this common ground.
4. The education and training of youth workers should be adapted to meet the particular needs and conditions in individual Member States. Accordingly, the education and training of youth workers requires a flexible, user-driven, multi-level and cross-sectorial approach.
5. The education and training of youth workers can be carried out by, *inter alia*, youth organisations, youth work organisations, municipal or regional youth work and other civil society organisations, as well as by education and training institutions which provide youth work-related studies.
6. Since the education and training of youth workers need to be adapted to national conditions, the resulting models and practices are not necessarily directly transferable to other Member States.

⁽¹⁾ See references in the Annex.

7. Recent studies and surveys ^(?) suggest that there is a shortage of quality education in the field of youth work and a shortage of training for youth workers in Europe. There is also a lack of information and data about the educational and training needs and about the existing provision in the various Member States.
8. High-quality, flexible and practice-oriented education and training for youth workers, supported by regular research, is a crucial precondition and a driver for promoting both the quality and the recognition of youth work.

EMPHASISING:

9. The need to develop and deliver quality education and training for youth workers, building on the diversity of youth work in Europe.
10. The need to further explore the educational and learning pathways of paid and voluntary youth workers. There is a lack of knowledge on how formal education and non-formal learning connects with and prepares youth workers for the actual practice of youth work. There is also a need to map the career paths of youth workers and provide a deeper insight into the management of youth organisations, youth work organisations and municipal or regional youth work in order to support on-the-job learning and training. Further information is also needed on how associations and networks of youth workers can be empowered and strengthened for peer learning, peer counselling and peer support.
11. The essential role of research, practice-based and bottom-up perspectives and approaches to the education and training of youth workers.
12. The importance and potential of peer learning, peer coaching, mentoring and supervised and reflective practice in the education and training of youth workers.
13. The recognition of the variety of competences ^(?) that youth workers need for working with young people as their life situations evolve.
14. The importance of initial and continuous youth worker education and training to meet and adequately address emerging issues that are relevant to young people, such as digitalisation, migration, climate change, a changing labour market, threats to democracy and human rights, and increased uncertainty.
15. The opportunity to consider youth worker education and training as a tool for the implementation of European youth policy objectives and youth work strategies, in particular the European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027.
16. The importance of setting up or enhancing, as appropriate, sustainable structures and resources for the development of the education and training of youth workers in Europe.

INVITE THE MEMBER STATES AND THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION, IN THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS OF COMPETENCE AND AT THE APPROPRIATE LEVELS, WITH DUE REGARD FOR THE PRINCIPLE OF SUBSIDIARITY, TO:

17. Building on existing mapping exercise, carry out further research on current youth worker education and training systems in Europe, in order to deepen the knowledge on the impact of the policies, methods and tools developed at European level on education and training of youth workers in the Member States. Wherever possible, the information gathering should be carried out through the available instruments, such as the European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy and Youth Wiki.

^(?) See reference 4 in the Annex.

^(?) Youth work (education) in flux: contemporary challenges in an erratic Europe, Report on the EU youth conference, Helsinki, 1-3 July 2019 by Tomi Kiilakoski & Marko Kovacic.

18. Develop a shared understanding between Member States of quality youth worker education and training and their objectives, fostering the development of flexible, practice-based and multi-level approaches for the education and training of youth workers that can be adapted to meet national, regional and local needs and expectations in each Member State.
19. Create a competence-based framework for formal and non-formal youth work education and training which is sensitive to the differences in training needs of employed/paid youth workers, those wishing to pursue a career in youth work and volunteer youth workers and youth leaders, which relies on peer-learning and uses digital learning and other innovative methods. Such a framework does not impose any formal requirements on national education programmes and will fully respect national competences.
20. Encourage Member States to carry out, where appropriate, a country-specific mapping of the competences needed in youth work, as well as of their key elements, and accordingly to evaluate, update and further develop youth worker training and education programmes run by local, regional or national level educational or training institutes, or by organisations providing youth work training, for both initial and continuous learning.
21. Encourage the Member States, the European Commission and relevant national institutions and stakeholders in the youth field to work together with the Council of Europe, youth organisations and other relevant organisations and networks in further developing the education and training of youth workers at European level.
22. Promote and facilitate bilateral and multilateral cooperation, in particular at interdisciplinary level, between public administrations in the Member States, universities, educational institutions, including vocational education institutions and organisations with established education and training programmes for youth workers and those seeking to develop such programmes.
23. Promote continuous cooperation between public youth work providers and civil society organisations engaged in youth worker education and training for the purpose of exchanging experiences and sharing inspiration across Europe. To that end, the opportunities provided by relevant EU programmes, such as Erasmus+, should be made use of, as appropriate.
24. Enhance the education and training of youth workers, youth work related research and the recognition of non-formal learning in youth work by providing opportunities for exchange, cooperation and networking through effective use of the opportunities provided by EU programmes and funds, such as Erasmus+, the European Solidarity Corps, the European Structural and Investment Funds, Horizon 2020 and Creative Europe.

INVITE THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION TO:

25. Explore the options, by the end of 2021, for further developing the education and training of youth workers, including the preparation of a Council Recommendation on this topic.
26. Improve digital competences through non-formal learning and training, taking into account the process of updating the existing Digital Education Action Plan in view of extending it to youth work.

ANNEX

1. References

In adopting these conclusions, the Council recalls in particular the following:

1. Council Conclusions on access of young people to culture (2010/C 326/02);
2. Resolution of the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on youth work (2010/C 327/01);
3. Council Conclusions on the eastern dimension of youth participation and mobility (2011/C 372/03);
4. European Commission, Working with young people: the value of youth work in the European Union, 2014;
5. Council Conclusions on reinforcing youth work to ensure cohesive societies (2015/C 170/02);
6. Council Resolution on encouraging political participation of young people in democratic life in Europe (2015/C 417/02);
7. Declaration of the 2nd European Youth Work Convention, 27-30 April 2015;
8. Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on the role of the youth sector in an integrated and cross-sectoral approach to preventing and combating violent radicalisation of young people (2016/C 213/01);
9. Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on promoting new approaches in youth work to uncover and develop the potential of young people (2016/C 467/03);
10. Council Conclusions on the role of youth work in supporting young people's development of essential life skills that facilitate their successful transition to adulthood, active citizenship and working life (2017/C 189/06);
11. Council conclusions on smart youth work (2017/C 418/02);
12. Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec(2017) 4 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on youth work;
13. Resolution of the Council of the European Union and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on a framework for European Cooperation in the youth field: The European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027 (2018/C 456/01);
14. Communication from the Commission on the Digital Education Action Plan, COM(2018) 22 final;
15. Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of Youth: Mapping the educational and career paths of youth workers, Part I. Report.

2. Definition

For the purpose of these Council Conclusions,

'Youth worker' is a professional, volunteer or youth leader who facilitates young people's learning, personal and social development and motivates and supports them in becoming autonomous, active and responsible individuals and citizens. The delivery of youth work is underpinned by the principles of voluntary and active participation of young people.
