



YOUTH WORK OPENS EUROPE

First Peer Learning Conference within the frame of
Becoming a part of Europe project – *How youth work can
support young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers*

Lloyd Hotel Amsterdam October 3-5 2017

REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Youth Opens Europe was the first Peer Learning Conference, within the frame of the “Becoming a part of Europe (BpE)¹” project, promoted by a consortium of nine National Agencies of the Erasmus+ programme and nine associated partners². The project has been co-funded by the programme Erasmus+, action KA3 Support for policy reform (Social Inclusion through education, training and youth) and it has a duration of three years, from December 2016 until December 2019.

The main purpose of the project is to develop Youth Work activities, non-formal education methodologies and new inclusion practices, with the aim to promote the integration and the social inclusion of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants as well as to foster understanding, tolerance and respect among people.

The Conference lasted three days (from the 3rd to the 5th of October 2017), and involved all those actors that took part to the previous stages of the project, such as young people, practitioners (NGOs, Public and Private Youth Services, etc.), National Public Bodies, researchers, European Institutions, Networks and Organisations and, of course, National Agencies of the Erasmus+ programme. The initiative was mainly implemented using peer learning approaches and methodologies, in order to favour a constructive dialogue among the participants and define clusters for further cooperation.

Participants had the opportunity to debate about youth work meanings and role in different contexts. **Inclusion is a two ways process** in which young migrants and civil society learn from each other and that requires a mutual commitment. To this regard, **youth work plays an extremely important role**.

Youth work is relevant for young migrants and also for local communities, creating **intercultural bridges** and facilitating **dialogue** among people.

Furthermore, participants underlined that young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers are **young people** and the youth work focus should be more on their “humanity” than on the fact they have a special status in a given context.

After moments of debate and sharing, participants identified the **main areas of interest for the working groups on policy recommendations**, that will be held in 2018 in the frame of Becoming a part of Europe project.

The identified areas were the following: *advocacy and visibility; youth work role, profile and competences; recognition of competences, skills, qualifications and life experiences of young migrants; gender issues;*

¹ “Becoming a part of Europe – How youth work can support young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers” project code n. 580420- EPP-1-2016-1-IT-EPPKA3-IPI-SOC-IN

² The Consortium is composed by: Agence Erasmus+ France Jeunesse & Sport/Agence du service civique (FR), Agencia Nacional Para A Gestao Do Programa Erasmus+ Juventude Em Acao (PT), Agenzia Nazionale Giovani (IT), JINT (BE-FL)JUGEND für Europa (DE), European Union Programmes Agency (MT), MOVIT, Ljubljana (SI), Nederlands Jeugdinstituut, NJi (NL), Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society (MUCF) (SE). Associated partners are Interkulturelles Zentrum (AT), Agencija za Mobilnost I Programe Europske Unije (AMPEU) (HR), Archimedes Foundation (EE), Centre for International Mobility (CIMO) (FI), Agency for International Programmes for Youth (LV), National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility (MK), IUVENTA - Slovak Youth Institute (SK)

Employability; Education and learning processes of young migrants; Emotional intelligence and mental health of young migrants; European dimension.

Next BpE steps will be the definition of the cluster groups for policy recommendations, the testing of innovative approaches and models for youth workers capacity building and a final Conference in Slovenia in 2018 .

For all those who want to contribute to the project research, they still fill in the online questionnaire: <https://pt.surveymonkey.com/r/BpE-Nov2017>

For more information on the project activities and update on the follow up of Youth Opens Europe Conference, the Becoming a part of Europe web site (<http://bpe-project.eu/home/>) can be consulted.

During the Conference, keynote speakers stimulated the discussions and sharing:

- ✚ *Nina Staal* introduced the *International Organisation of Migration (IOM)*, the UN Migration Agency, and its work, providing a frame of reference on migration policies and migration flows.
- ✚ *Alvaro Ribeiro, from University do Minho*, presented the main findings of the draft research, with a specific focus on “How youth work can support young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers”. The research was based on **114 practices, 19 life stories of young migrants, 15 exploratory interviews** with youth workers, collected by the nine project partners. Thanks to the analysis of the practices and to the exploratory interviews with youth workers, the researchers identified some trends in youth work in Europe that will be further analysed thanks to online questionnaire.
- ✚ *Sofie Vriends, on behalf of Nederlands Jeugdinstituut* and *Andrea Chirico, on behalf of the Italian National Agency Agenzia Nazionale Giovani*, underlined the importance of the “**Youth work Opens Europe**” Conference as an opportunity to learn how to **improve the work** of youth workers and Erasmus+ National Agencies on the inclusion of people with migrant background. They reminded also that the Conference had the role to set the basis for **policy recommendations**, to be elaborated in 2018, in the frame of the BpE project.
- ✚ *Michalis Moskovakos policy officer of the European Commission*³ stressed that recognition of youth work is still an ongoing process. European Commission is very interested to follow up the whole BpE because they are planning to elaborate a **practical toolbox** for youth workers and youth organisations, working with young people with a migrant background.
- ✚ Other speakers such as *Minne Huysmans from Vrije Universiteit Brussel*, *Marc Boes, from POYWE*, *Tanya Basarab on behalf of the Council of Europe – European Commission Youth Partnership* stressed the importance of the youth work nowadays **both with the local communities and with young migrants in order to have effective inclusion processes.**

The participants had the opportunity to listen to the stories of two young refugees **Dominic Ogugua and Amjad Abo Huwajj, that were inspiring and a real intercultural learning moment.**

³ Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture Youth, Volunteer Solidarity and Traineeships Office

The frame of reference: Becoming a part of Europe project

Youth Opens Europe was the title of the first Peer Learning Conference, within the frame of the “Becoming a part of Europe (BpE)⁴” project, promoted by a consortium of nine National Agencies of the Erasmus+ programme and nine associated partners⁵.

The project has been co-funded by the programme Erasmus+, action KA3 Support for policy reform (Social Inclusion through education, training and youth) and it has a duration of three years, from December 2016 until December 2019.

The main purpose of the project is to develop Youth Work activities, non-formal education methodologies and new inclusion practices, with the aim to promote the integration and the social inclusion of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants as well as to foster understanding, tolerance and respect among people.

More specifically the project aims to reach the following results:

- ✓ Identification and collection of consolidated best practices of Youth Work (YW) in the field of integration of young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, by building a constructive dialogue both at national and European level;
- ✓ Design of innovative models, techniques and practices of YW in the field of integration of young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, in order to build up new capacity and enhance youth workers' skills and competences;
- ✓ Support of Youth Work as an instrument for the integration of newly arrived migrants, through the use of informal and non-formal education activities, which directly involve young people and, in particular, young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers;
- ✓ Provision of policy recommendations about integration, informal and non-formal education in Europe, through a structured bottom-up process involving the main actors in the field of YW, Public bodies as well as Associations and NGOs which work on the integration of newly arrived migrants as well as young people and, in particular, young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

During the first year of the project⁶, partners collected youth work practices with YMRA⁷, interviews with youth workers and life stories of YMRA. All the collected materials have been the basis for drafting a European level research on “How youth work can support young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers”.

⁴ “Becoming a part of Europe – How youth work can support young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers” project code n. 580420- EPP-1-2016-1-IT-EPPKA3-IPI-SOC-IN

⁵ The Consortium is composed by: Agence Erasmus+ France Jeunesse & Sport/Agence du service civique (FR), Agencia Nacional Para A Gestao Do Programa Erasmus+ Juventude Em Acao (PT), Agenzia Nazionale Giovani (IT), JINT (BE-FL) JUGEND für Europa (DE), European Union Programmes Agency (MT), MOVIT, Ljubljana (SI), Nederlands Jeugdinstuut, NJi (NL), Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society (MUCF) (SE). Associated partners are Interkulturelles Zentrum (AT), Agencija za Mobilnost I Programe Europske Unije (AMPEU) (HR), Archimedes Foundation (EE), Centre for International Mobility (CIMO) (FI), Agency for International Programmes for Youth (LV), National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility (MK), IUVENTA - Slovak Youth Institute (SK)

⁶ From December 2016 to September 2017

⁷ Young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers

The research will be completed, after the elaboration of data collected through an online questionnaire, and disseminated in the early 2018.

In 2018 and 2019, the project will have a specific focus on drafting policy recommendations and elaborating capacity-building measures to strengthen youth work competences, while working with YMRA.

Youth Opens Europe Conference role within BPE project

Youth Opens Europe was a European level Peer Learning Conference, in which all actors involved in the first two initiatives (National expert groups and Research) met up to share national experiences and practices, discuss, and exchange know-how as well as pinpoint groups of activities that address the same categories of issues at the European level, through peer learning processes.

The Conference lasted three days (from the 3rd to the 5th of October 2017), and involved all those actors that took part to the previous stages of the project, such as young people, practitioners (NGOs, Public and Private Youth Services, etc.), National Public Bodies, researchers, European Institutions, Networks and Organisations and, of course, National Agencies of the Erasmus+ programme.

The initiative was mainly developed using peer learning approaches and methodologies, in order to favour a constructive dialogue among the participants and determine clusters for further cooperation.

The main aims of the Conference were:

- ✓ To up-scale good practices at European level
- ✓ To share the first findings of the research
- ✓ To identify, at least, four main topics of discussion for the next phases of the project

Conference Agenda

Tuesday October 3rd 2017

Morning: Arrival participants

12.30-14.30 Lunch

15.00 Opening of the conference and activity "Exploring Realities"

17.00 Overview of the BpE project and conference Silvia Volpi – Project General Manager BPE Project - Agenzia Nazionale per i Giovani

17.15 Migration in Europe - Nina Staal International Organisation of Migration

17.45 Presentation of the draft research: Main findings and open questions - Alvaro Chaves Ribeiro – University do Minho

19.30 Dinner

21.00 Knot for net: time for consultations and talks with SALTO INCLUSION, EU COMMISSION, COE-EU YOUTH PARTNERSHIP representatives

Wednesday October 4th 2017

- 9.15 Opening of the day & exploration of different views on the topic
- 9.30 Working groups on “How would you describe youth work to a person that you never met before”
- 10.00 Official welcome to the Peer Learning Conference by *Sofie Vriends – Programme Director Nederlands Jeugdinstituut*
- 10.15 The European frame of the BpE project – *Michail Moskovakos Policy Officer European Commission Directorate General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, Youth volunteer Solidarity and Traineeship Office.*
- 10.30 BpE project, its aims and expected results. The work done so far and the expectations towards the Peer Learning Conference – *Andrea Chirico Administrative Director Agenzia Nazionale per i Giovani*
- 11.00 Group photo
- 11.30 “Young newcomers with a refugee background: a contextual framework on aspirations, expectations and experiences” – *Minne Huysmans Vrije Universiteit Brussel Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences Department of Educational Sciences*
- 11.45 “Why Youth Work is the perfect answer?” *Marc Boes – Poiwe*
- 12.00 Working groups on Youth Work and its importance to support young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, with Alvaro Chaves Ribeiro, Marc Boes and Minne Huysmans
- 13.15 *Lunch*
- 15.00 Peer Exchange of practices and experiences: areas of interest for the continuation of the BpE project
- 20.30 *Dinner out*

Thursday October 5th 2017

- 9.15 Opening of the day & presentation of the Key messages from the policy paper “Journeys to a New life – Understanding the role of youth work in integrating young refugees in Europe” Tanya Basarab – COE-EU Youth Partnership
- 09:45 Two life stories: Dominic Ogugua and Amjad Abo Huwajj
- 11.30 Identification of European clusters topics for continuation of the project
- 12.30 Closure of the Conference by the National Agencies representatives
- 13.00 *Lunch and participants departure*

Main contributions

October 3rd 2017

The first day was devoted to get to know each other and to be build a safe atmosphere of the Conference. It was the day to lay the foundations for the entire Conference, based on the plurality of stories from different stakeholders and from different perspectives.

It was also the day in which the first draft of the BPE European level research was shared with all participants, raising curiosity, challenging the usual way of thinking and debate about youth work within the youth work field.

After participants got to know each other with an interactive and playful team building activity, **Silvia Volpi**, as project manager of the BPE project and on behalf of the **Italian National Agency**, welcomed informally all participants, introducing the frame of the Conference and its aims, activities and methodology.

To enter into the topic of the Conference, **Nina Staal** introduced the **International Organisation of Migration** (IOM), the UN Migration Agency, and **its work**, providing a frame of reference on migration policies and migration flows.

IOM was founded in 1951 to assist in the resettlement of Europeans displaced in the aftermath of World War II. IOM has provided essential services in support of refugee resettlement operations for over six decades. Between 2004 and 2014, IOM has organized the resettlement movements of 1.024.152 refugees and other vulnerable persons of concern from 186 locations around the world.

The core activities aims to:

- ✓ Re-unification
- ✓ Re-conciliation
- ✓ Re-location
- ✓ Re-settlement

IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society

The core activities are related to:

- ✓ Migration and development
- ✓ Facilitating migration
- ✓ Regulating migration
- ✓ Forced migration
- ✓ Promotion of international migration law & protection of migrants' rights
- ✓ Data collection⁸

⁸ <http://missingmigrants.iom.int/>; <http://migration.iom.int/europe/>; <http://www.globaldtm.info/>

After introducing IOM work at international level and in The Netherlands, some figures were shared to understand the migration flows to Europe in the last 3 years:

- ✓ 143.271 Arrivals to Europe in 2017⁹
- ✓ 135.956 by sea
- ✓ 7.315 by land
- ✓ 2.655 dead/missing in the Mediterranean sea in 2017
- ✓ 387.739 arrivals to Europe in 2016
- ✓ 5143 dead/missing in the Mediterranean sea in 2016
- ✓ Over 1 million arrivals to Europe in 2015

Nina Staal concluded her presentation, reminding the following, while speaking about integration:

- ✓ Integration is a 2-way process, engaging migrants as well as the host communities
- ✓ Integration is a continuum, ranging from pre-departure measures to initiatives designed to facilitate integration post-arrival
- ✓ Highlighting the positive contribution of migrants in hosting societies
- ✓ (early) Labour market integration is key issue in the integration process

Integration is a two-way process

As for labour integration, she focused on two main recommendations:

- ✓ Increase labour market readiness of refugees and positive labour market outcomes
- ✓ Engagement and capacity building of the private sector

To close the first afternoon, **Alvaro Chaves Ribeiro, from University do Minho in Portugal**, introduced the main findings of the draft research elaborated, together with **José Palhares¹⁰**, into the frame of BPE project, with a specific focus on “How youth work can support young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers”. The research was based on **114 practices, 19 life stories of young migrants, 15 exploratory interviews** with youth workers, collected by the nine project partners. Moreover, the researchers have observed some Portuguese projects and have critically investigated on existing materials and researchers¹¹ related to the BPE topics.

Researchers, while analysing all materials, were striving to elaborate more or less complex and consensual concepts relate to youth work and its role while supporting young migrant, refugees and asylum seekers. While **designing the research**:

⁹ Updated in September 2017

¹⁰ From University do Minho in Portugal

¹¹ Desk research was taking into consideration mainly the following authors: Linda Morris, Lutine Wal Pastoor, Alan Rogers, Thomas La Belle

- ✓ They described the data and established categories of analysis to be able to code, systematize, compare and group data
- ✓ They studied the meanings of the reality in which youth workers interact with YMRA
- ✓ They developed reasoning from indicators to general concepts
- ✓ They interpreted the reality accordingly to the perspectives of the authors
- ✓ They elaborated summary tables to give meanings and logical coherence to the data

114 practices

19 life stories

15 interviews

Among the main findings, Alvaro Ribeiro stated that:

- ✓ **Youth work does not exist as such!** What we can appreciate are different ways, approaches to do youth work in different contexts and different meanings attributed to youth work by youth workers, YMRA and wider communities.
- ✓ Youth workers as social actors **interact with YMRA** and mutually influence each other. Youth workers and “YMRA” are confronted by different meanings.
- ✓ Youth work support young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers because it activates
 - Re- habilitation processes
 - Re-education processes
 - Re-preparation to life processes and re-store life

Actually, youth work is meant to support YMRA to re-define their lives, to stimulate a dialogue between communities and YMRA.

Youth work, as described in the practices, helps also youth workers to open their mind maps and becoming more “human”.

As for **youth work achievements**, the following table was presented:

Not so achieved	In between	Somehow achieved
Exchange Sharing knowledge	Advocacy Social Innovation Responsive environment	Situational partnership Cooperation, collaboration Creative, critical thinking
Sustainability Constant Assessment	New Social business models Community work, being together, solidarity, tolerance	Social networks Satisfaction of personal and social needs New social meanings
Mental health Common ground	Adequate opportunities Whole emotional life Self-trust, self-esteem	Personal development Mutual understanding Support, communication

Thanks to the analysis of the practices and to the exploratory interviews with youth workers, the researchers identified some **barriers youth workers face in relation to social innovation**:

	Belgium/ Flanders	France	Germany	Italy	Malta	Portugal	Slovenia	Sweden	The Netherlands
Language, Communication Translation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lack of recognition of qualifications	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Insufficient social business/financial and entrepreneur environment	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓
Social intolerance Cultural mistrust Facing the unknown	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Difficulties to cope with personal fears	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	
Short and inadequate timeline	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓
Lack of sustainability	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	

Other barriers youth workers face, as in the practices and interviews, are the following:

- Lack of capacity to address primary needs
- Mental health issues
- Lack of motivation, lack of will to be flexible and to adapt,
- Technical pitfalls,
- Lack of school participation/willing to adapt,
- Poor quality of human resources,
- Heavy bureaucracy,
- Lack of knowledge and understanding,
- Legal issues and lack of international protection,
- Lack of family support and insufficient funds.

Finally, youth workers are those workers that can accompany YMRA in their **emancipation process**, in order to become agent of their own development. To improve and to emancipate YMRA need to be ware and to have the will to do so: in this frame, youth workers play a very important role.

To be effective, youth workers cannot be self-referential, they have to use a **dialogical approach**, understanding the needs and challenges YMRA are facing in the hosting countries.

Alvaro Ribeiro concluded his speech saying that for a real and full inclusion, **employment is necessary**, as it provides not only economic sustainability, but also self-esteem, recognition of competences and experiences, equal dignity and opportunities.

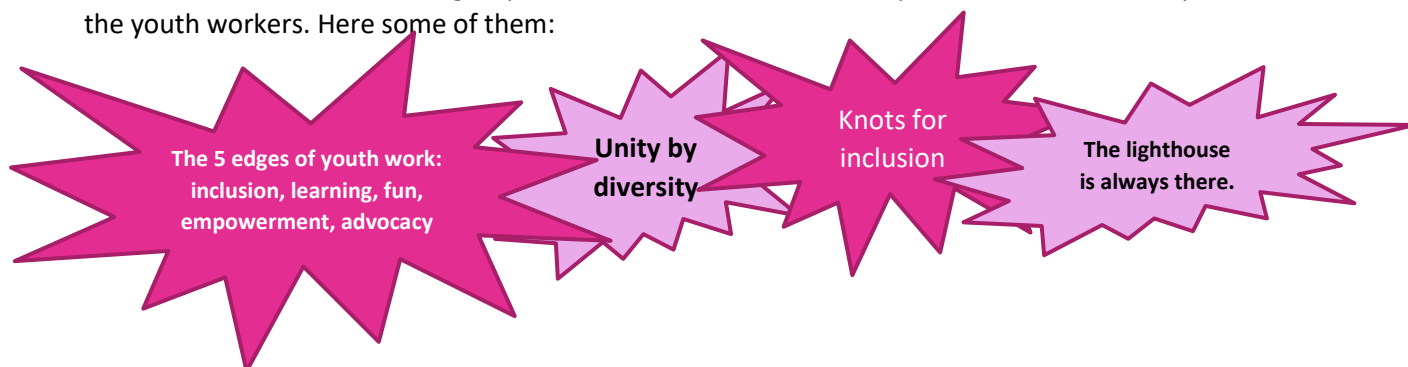
The day continued with informal talks on the Conference topics during and after dinner, supporting the idea to **knot for net**, as launched in the programme by the facilitators.

October 4th 2017

The second day started with an implicit reflection on the Alvaro Ribeiro presentation as far as it concerned youth worker role and profile.

Initially, participants were divided in groups with the tasks to “**Describe youth work to a person they have never met before**”.

At the end of the exercise, the groups were asked to find out a metaphora that could identify the role of the youth workers. Here some of them:



The exercise gave the opportunity to the participants to reconnect with the topic of the Conference and to experience how many different meanings are attributed to the work done by youth workers and how many different narratives exist in different contexts and cultures.

After the inspiring exercise, **Sofie Vriends** on behalf of **Nederlands Jeugdinstuut** opened officially the Conference. She welcomed all participants and organisations, partner and official representatives of the European Institutions. She underlined the importance of the “**Youth work Opens Europe**” Conference as an opportunity to learn how to **improve our work** both as youth workers and as Erasmus+ National Agencies. She reminded also that the Conference had the role to set the basis for **policy recommendations**, to be elaborated in 2018, in the frame of the BpE project. Finally, she pointed out the importance of having a Conference on such topics in Lloyd Hotel, as it was a hostel for migrants, a youth detention centre, an art centre and nowadays a 1 to 5 stars hotel in which different people meet in a very open and intercultural atmosphere.

After Sofie Vriends speech, **Michalis Moskovakos policy officer of the European Commission**¹² reminded our youth work is important and how much it does contributes to “**personal development**”. Nevertheless, he underlined that recognition of youth work is still an ongoing process. To contribute to the contextualisation of the Conference, he reminded that BpE project is one of the three projects managed by the Erasmus+ National Agencies and related to the 2016 Call on **Social Inclusion through Education, Training and Youth – KA3 Support for policy reform** and that the European Commission is very interested to follow up the all process. He concluded his speech, saying that the one of the topics of the European Youth Strategy is “radicalisation” and soon a **toolbox** to work with migrants will be ready.

Andrea Chirico on behalf of the **Italian National Agency**, leading partner of the BpE project, recalled the aims and objectives of the project, the role of the Conference and the next steps in the frame of the entire project.

¹² Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture Youth, Volunteer Solidarity and Traineeships Office

In his speech, he underlined the importance of the strong relationship with all Consortium members. Those relations were the **knots to establish a real network** in which responsibilities and tasks were equally divided since the project design. He underlined that the Conference happens at the end of the 1st year, to close the experiences of the National Expert Groups¹³ and to create the ground for next activities that will be mainly to define policy recommendations and design capacity building models for youth workers.

After the official opening, the Conference welcomed the presentation of **Minne Huysmans from Vrije Universiteit Brussel** introduced the **“On the doorstep to society – Young Newcomers with a refugee background: a contextual framework on aspirations, expectations and experiences”** research run in Belgium.

The research was based on the **input of 55 organisations & literature**.

The research topics were:

- Aspirations, expectations & experiences of young newcomers (13-18 years old)
- The urban context as a scope
- Citizenship
- Social support & social networks

The qualitative research was to not to extrapolate but to **understand**, using semi-structured interviews and having a general preliminary overview.

The qualitative interviews were implemented with 63 young newcomers with the following characteristics:

- Average age: 15,9 (youngest 13, oldest 18)
- Average period in Belgium: 1 year (min. 4 months, max. 18 months)
- Representing the diversity of young newcomers, coming from different countries as for instance Afghanistan, Syria, Eritrea, Palestine, Albania, Iraq, Indonesia, Romania, Iran, and so on.
- 75% male and 25% female
- 54% unaccompanied, 46% accompanied
- Most of them got the refugees status, the rest were in the process to obtain the status, some few others were under subsidiary protection or had their status not granted or under the procedure for human trafficking.

The research background was based on:

- **Social support and social networks**

*People exist in the interaction
with one another, not standing
by themselves*

¹³ NEG = National Expert Groups were organised by the nine partners in the respective countries. The function of the NEG was to enable the Consortium to collect youth work practices and life stories of people with a migrant background. That material was the basis for the stocktaking activity and the research elaborated by the researchers, appointed by the Portuguese National Agency.

- Convoy model of social support (Kahn & Antonucci, 1980)

This models and background underline that:

- People exist in the interaction to one another, not standing by themselves
- Social relations are conceptualized as multidimensional. In their most basic form, they include **structure** (size, composition, contact frequency, geographic proximity), **type or function** (aid, affect, information, instrumental,...), and **quality** (positive, negative) dimensions.
- The social convoy is viewed as a network of relationships that moves with a person throughout his or her lifetime, changing in structure but providing continuity in the exchange of support. The convoy is represented as a series of concentric circles surrounding an individual.
- Social networks are the vehicle through which social support is provided.
 - Social network is the structure
 - Social support is the function
- Important not only the role social networks play -> giving support also in their outcome: resilience & sense of belonging & social embeddedness (depth and strength of ties)
- Informal networks and social support are particularly relevant for migrants, playing an essential role in the process of adjustment. Migration may be considered a process of ecological transition). Immigrants have to adapt to a new physical, institutional and socio-cultural context, facing changes in prevailing social norms and values. Migration also modifies individuals' status and social position, and transforms their social networks as a result of the need to establish new relationships in the receiving context.

The **preliminary results** of the research showed that YMRA live segregated lives and also...

- Professional network: informational, practical not always affective
- Small but strong network within centre community
- No links to broader society
- Informal networks of migrant communities: non existing
- Willingness to connect with native Belgian youth
- Willingness to participate
- Need to break out the walls between centre, neighbourhood & city
- Situation of AM is comparable but even more segregated

The **role of the youth work** could be the following:

- Focus on young people instead of refugees
- Connection with broader society

Focus on
young people
instead of
refugees

- New network
- Ability to find their place in society
- Why is this important? A vast majority aspires to stay in urban Belgium → Creating a connection to the broader society therefore is crucial
- No need for specially adapted activities
- Need for inclusion of young newcomers in regular activities
- Sensitiveness for their difficult journey so far
- Organized in the locality with support of the local government & local stakeholders

Marc Boes, from Poywe, spoke about the importance of **mobility** and of the challenges brought by **forced mobility**. More in details, he presented recent facts in Austria, where people were not sufficiently prepared to welcome migrants arrived via Budapest. Everyone had to improvise, collecting basic tools and materials to support migrants. While bringing materials, clothes and goods people were establishing a relation with migrants, talked to them. The fact to face real people, real human beings made people stop **to fear about the unknown**. In his opinion, youth work is not yet enough involved in welcoming migrants. In order to bring a consistent contribution to the migrants inclusion, youth workers should start **thinking out of the box**. Marc Boes ended his speech with two open questions for the public:

- **Why we do need specialised youth work to work with YMRA?**
Why we do not include YMRA in the daily activities we run?

When you meet real people, you stop to fear!

At the end of Marc Boes speech, participants were invited to attend a working group with Alvaro Ribeiro to deep the understanding of the BpE draft research, or with Minne Huysmans and Marc Boes to better understand their experiences and researches.

The morning session ended in plenary with a group picture and the introduction to the Lloyd Hotel by the director that reminded the importance **“to be curious to be hospital”**.

The afternoon was entirely dedicated to the **Peer exchange of Practices** among participants. The Peer Exchange of practices was organised in different areas such as Cultural activities and Sport, Schooling, Advocacy, Health issues and wellbeing, Housing, Employability.

In the different groups, participants could share their experiences and practices and identify the **main areas of interest** for the cluster groups that, in 2019, will work on policy recommendations.

October 5th 2017

The day started with the presentation of the **Key messages** from the policy paper “Journeys to a New life – Understanding the role of youth work in integrating young refugees in Europe expert seminar” by **Tanya Basarab on behalf of the Council of Europe – European Commission Youth Partnership**.

First, she underlined the importance to speak about migration and migrants' needs with migrants, including them in the discourse. She pointed out the importance to work for **inclusion since the first day of arrival** and how youth workers can contribute to that process.

Youth workers have a role not only in the hosting countries, but also in the transit countries, supporting YMRA in the "waiting moments". Youth work can offer participation opportunities that help to establish trust relations, empower people to a new life. Youth work can be seriously consider how to involve **young women** that most of the time are invisible.

Youth workers in the recent years are assuming on themselves different roles, most of them are at risk of burn-out. Youth work needs recognition, supervision, **assume limitations** as for the role/s played, structural support and learning opportunities. Youth work should be more accountable and re-discover his **political voice**. To be more effective youth workers should foster **cross-sectoral** cooperation. Furthermore, research and practice should come together.

After Tanya Basarab speech, **Dominic Ogugua and Amjad Abo Huwaj** presented their **inspiring life stories** and their inclusion paths, in the hosting countries.

The participants had the opportunity to listen to two young migrants and their stories. Both the stories underlined the importance to consider migrants as human being with their multiple identities. In their opinion, youth workers can play a role supporting young migrants to **discover their own identities**, to explore their own potential and competences, to support and **empower** them. Youth workers should ask young people to help them, as young people need to be appreciated, to feel useful for the hosting community, to be part of.

After such an inspiring and touching sessions, participants had time to work on the main areas of interest for the BpE cluster groups.

Youth workers should support young migrants to discover their multiple identities

The identified areas were the following:

1. **ADVOCACY AND VISIBILITY**

The key elements to be consider, while working on policy recommendations, are:

- To advocate means: bring migrant young people on the main agenda and doing a big evetn but in a very youth work way.
- Advocacy happens only by equal collaboration and co-creation with young migrants themselves.
- Visibility: Story telling is important to share with communities (including decision makers) migrant life stories and to stimulate common solutions
- Pluralities of stories should be considered while working with young migrants
- Youth workers could be seen as bridges making,bonding different actors working about the same topic. They play a role in political/civic society.
- It is important to consider the role of Human Rights.

2. YOUTH WORKER ROLE, PROFILE AND COMPETENCES

Hereafter, some key concepts and open questions about youth worker role, profile and competences, while working with young migrants:

- Specialised or universal
- Support of/for youth workers
- Cross-sectoral co-ownership
- Community development

Youth work should be universal or specialised?

Youth workers:

- Need to reflect among themselves on the issues mentioned above
- Should share work (they have not do all by themselves) with other professionals
- Do not need to possess all competences in one
- Need to network, to work with a bigger community and not only with young migrants
- Need to interact with “Unusual suspects” in order to create an alternative source of resources, connections
- Should have advocacy capacities, ability in marketing and lobby
- Should be able to establish equal partnership
- Should be able to link with youngsters and empathise with them
- As intercultural tools, they may use role models from different backgrounds
- Should be good listener and supportive

3. RECOGNITION OF COMPETENCIES, SKILLS, QUALIFICATIONS AND LIFE EXPERIENCES OF YMRA

The focus is on the interest of young migrants and their skills, as in the real world it is important the validation of the diplomas they have got in their home countries.

Speaking about YMRA, the problem is still there. This implies the “circular” dimension of the problem that involves both YMRA as a specific target group and their connections with other groups.

It may be a transversal recommendation, not only for this specific target group, but valid also for other groups:

- Adapting the educational system to different methods of learning (doing, studying, experiencing,...)
- Consider the dilemma between having a recognition of a diploma (certificate) and being able to work. The official papers do not guarantee the ability to work and the competences.

It is important to

- check if past of the former diplomas can be accepted
- to recognise already existing competences
- define assessment procedures

Consider the dilemma between having a recognition of a diploma (certificate) and being able to work

From day 1, there should be social activities, language courses, cultural activities. That's first step to inclusion and a sense of belonging from YMRA. A way to measure/recognise skills and competences could be implemented at an early stage.

If you don't have a diploma or evidence of your education background in a practical sector YMRA should work for approximately 2 months with a mentor that can check what they are know and what they need to learn. In this way they can identify a complementary educational path. In this way the recognition process can be quicker.

4. GENDER ISSUES

It was noticed that we should learn from the past, for example Erasmus+ programme ans support projects.

Youth workers should care and reflect on how to support YMRA (Dispite their gender) in participation, learning and sport activities?

Youth workers should take care of

- Gender balance in groups
- Supporting activities for the inclusion od young women
- Integrate a gender sensitive approach
- Considering not only male/female division but gender in a broader sense
- Looking first into own organisations and relations within
- Organising safe spaces with different gender groups
- Raising awareness about YMRA gender related rights
- Organising different types of body-image activities (cultural, educational,...)
- Providing particular youth work activities fir female YMRA (open youth work, sport and cultural activities) by/with female youth workers

It is important to have tools for addressing gender issues and also health, sexual orientation etc..., provided for YMRA and also developed together with YMRA themselves. In different languages see youmo.se for a perfect example.

Gender issues should be tackled in a broad sense and should be human rights based.

5. EMPLOYABILITY IS MORE THAN A JOB

Employability is:

- supporting a new cycle in working life
- related to economic and social inclusion
- foster real activities in real world
- supporting the development of soft skills
- an opportunity for socialising

Youth workers should support a new cycle of YMRA working life

To develop/improve employability, the following elements/actions may be important:

- internships
- passing through experiences/expertise/knowledge from the retired CEO of small companies towards YMRA (See duoforajob.be)
- influential networks
- intergenerational coaching
- linking with business incubators

- efficient documentation on both good and bad experiences
- sharing not only good and perfect practices, but also failures

Youth workers should

- try to give young people a place where to learn the language, the culture, entrepreneurship in real life with locals.
- avoid modern slavery (protection from exploitation, informing about rights, raising awareness)
- support YMRA to plan future paths, in a longer term perspective
- address their needs before YMRA can think about a longer term perspective
- create opportunities for YMRA to shape their future
- facilitate their access to employment
- outreach: show the way, get connected
- show the importance of networks, connections
- promote voluntary work as an opportunity to do real activities in the real world
- promote mentoring programmes
- promote job as a starting point

Gender in employment should be carefully considered.

Social entrepreneurship training for YMRA to develop towards employment. For example:

- Youthstart EU network (NGOs based on informal entrepreneurship training, global goals, inclusion,
- One worldreams: to create new jobs (in Europe and home countries for YMRA) that could be done by YMRA

New ways to employment for YMRA by young people recommendations.

6. EDUCATION AND LEARNING PROCESSES OF YMRA

The working group underlined that:

- Education is meant as a long term process and needs time that may be not available
- Foster Peer to Peer Learning and consider that Peer influence can be sometimes negative
- Creation of alternative options or to mediate

Participants noticed that in education, it is important:

- To consider that language comes first
- To recognise multiple languages culturally oriented (Dialects, body language, specific terms)
- To accelerate language courses (possibility to get intensive language courses depending on the situation)
- To create opportunities to learn language in the real world
- To provide support YMRA to learn to learn
- To create a space for intermediation between the different actors and associations (schools, youth workers,...)
- To foresee digital ways of learning should be promoted
- To consider different pathways to educate (formal and non formal education including community (for instance elder people)

To remember the power of non-formal learning

- To recognise the importance of non formal learning to get connected
- To provide tailormade solutions
- To train educators (capacity building)

Finally, education for YMRA stands for:

- Good talk/questions about interests, talents, skills that one already has
- Informal learning
- Affirmate the language and culture of migrants because it helps them learning new things

7. EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND MENTAL HEALTH OF YMRA

Youth work should consider:

- How to create relations inside the community and how we can create genuine curiosity towards YMRA.
- To help the community to overcome the fears of the unknown
- To create a safe environment
- To use YMRA existing skills as something to learn from
- How to recognise the different multidimensional “identities”, which can change fast
- How to facilitate new ways to live together
- To use personal stories as resources to enter in connection with the local community
- To create a network to rely on (make use of the safe environment and the group to address and discuss problems of mental health)
- To invite experts to the “safe space”
- To connect with different services to help to solve the issues

To help the community to overcome the fears of the unknown

The affective aspects should be dealt by youth workers, activists, supported by social workers, long-term migrants.

Participants underlined that it is important to:

- develop meaningful relationships
- keep having enthusiasm
- organize reflective sessions for youth workers
- estimate and define precariat or precarious situations
- consider time-lapse: different levels, time for adjusting
- recognize different types of needs (existential needs, a need for expression, habitual environment)
- build trust, create or build self-esteem

8. EUROPEAN DIMENSION

Talking about the European dimension of youth work with YMRA, some questions emerged, such as:

- What do we mean with European Dimension? Young people that live in Europe or people that live in Europe with a European Passport?
- Is the European dimension only the Erasmus+ programme?
- How to use the Erasmus+ programme, working with YMRA?

Is the European dimension only the Erasmus+ programme?

- Can we change the system?
- TCA budget could be used to offer training at national level?

Nevertheless, participants noticed that it is important to promote:

- Volunteering both ways
- Local initiatives
- Simplification of procedures/support for VISA (for instance)
- Solidarity initiatives at local level
- Information + training (capacity building) of NGOs, working with YMRA on EU programmes
- Migrants led initiatives
- Flexibility/adaptability
- Cross-sectoral projects at local and international level

It is also important to:

- Use mobility for youth workers for trainings, peer seminars and study visits for youth workers or other workers (volunteers and professionals) in other sectors
- Work on an overview of professional standards in countries of origin of refugees (CEDEFOP) for better recognition
- Next generation of Erasmus+ should feature more on YMRA.

Main conclusions for the next steps of the project

Becoming a part of Europe project should define the thematic areas of the groups that are going to elaborate policy recommendations, according to what participants have suggested during the Youth Opens Europe Peer Learning Conference in Amsterdam.

Other key elements have to be taken into consideration in the next steps of the project:

- **Research and practice** should enrich each other work and language, to avoid self-referential reflections and debates and building on effective recommendations and suggestions;
- Youth work play a very important role in the YMRA inclusion: to be more effective it should establish strong **knots** and **cross-sectoral networks**
- **Youth workers should be seen as agents of change** while working with YMRA and local communities: they should enable both parts to enter in dialogue with each other and build on new societal concepts
- **Youth work does not exist as such.** What exist are different meanings given to the same word, in different contexts and frames
- **Life stories** are making both migrants and locals more human and able to listen to each other as human beings, entitled of human dignity
- Youth workers should work more on their **visibility and accountability**, for the essential role they do, while supporting YMRA
- It is important to create a **safe space** for expression both for YMRA and locals, in order to overcome fears
- Youth work should start to play a **political role**, supporting people to build their own "Polis"

Youth
workers are
agent of
change

- Youth workers cannot be **alone**, while working with YMRA. They should be supported by other professionals that complement their work
- Youth work should focus on **multiple identities** of people and not only on one of them: YMRA being young or being migrants
- Youth workers should support **YMRA employability**, to foster their inclusion process in the new contexts

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