Reaching out to youth at risk and NEET

Inclusion Colleague Support Group

Tallinn, Estonia 17-19 Jun 2015

www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/...
...InclusionColleagueSupportGroups/



A collection of **great ideas** from your NA Inclusion Colleagues and SALTO Inclusion about:

- ☆ What are the issues of young people in NEET situation?
- ☆ What can Erasmus+ Youth in Action do? How to use it better?
- ☆ How to involve youth at risk and NEET in E+ Youth in Action programme
- ☆ How to do it? What are success factors?
- ☆ What kind of support NAs can offer?

The SALTO inclusion Resource Centre brought together **12 Inclusion Officers** from 10 National Agencies (FR, TR, BE-FL, HR, EE, LT, DE, FI, RO, CZ) to discuss and exchange on concepts of NEET in different countries, explore the possibilities and make a better use of the Erasmus+ Youth in Action programme, in addressing the issues that youth at risk and NEET are facing.



All photos used in this report are taken from the Inclusion Colleague Support Group in Tallinn, June 2015.

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Programme overview

An overview of what happened when...

Wednesday 17 Jun 2015	Thursday 18 Jun 2015	Friday 19 Jun 2015
	 NEET issues from the European perspective (Statistics, characteristics and policy developments) SALTO Inclusion research on young people in NEET situation (Presenting the first results) by Ian Goldring, consultant Q&A YIA + EVS & KA2 for NEET (What can YiA do? How to use it better? Possibilities, strategies,) 	 Debriefing project visit What kind of support NAs can offer? (How to? Resources, strategies, approaches) Action plans Evaluation
	Lunch	Lunch
 Arrival by 16h in Tallinn Get to know & intros SALTO Inclusion work on NEET issues Your reality (Sharing national concepts and realities) 	 Estonian Open Youth Centre (Project visit) Estonian project: EVS as a tool for NEET Sharing good practices & analysing underlying principles 	Departure after lunch
Dinner	Surprise dinner	

Who was there?

Meaning: who can you contact for more information?

- ☆ Karlien Leroux (Belgium FL) <u>Karlien.Leroux@jint.be</u>
- ☆ Marjolein Vandenbroucke (Belgium FL) Marjolein.Vandenbroucke@jint.be
- ☆ Valerija Posavec (Croatia) valerija.posavec@mobilnost.hr
- ☆ Eva Těthalová (Czech Republic) eva.tethalova@dzs.cz
- ☆ Inge Linne (Germany) linne@jfemail.de
- ☆ Jutta Kivimäki (Finland) jutta.kivimaki@cimo.fi
- ☆ Flavia Giovanelli (France) giovanelli@injep.fr
- ☆ Loreta Eimontaite (Lithuania) loreta@jtba.lt
- Miruna Covaci (Romania) miruna.covaci@anpcdefp.ro
- ☆ Oğuz Emin Çarıkcı (Turkey) oguz.carikci@ua.gov.tr

Organisation and Co-ordination of the Inclusion Colleague Support Group:

- ☆ Marija Kljajic (SALTO Inclusion) marija@salto-youth.net +32-22.09.07.20
- ☆ Marit Kannelmäe-Geerts (Estonia) marit.kannelmae@archimedes.ee
- ☆ Nele Mets (Estonia) nele.mets@archimedes.ee

Guest speaker:

☆ Ian Goldring (Belgium) iangoldring@gmail.com

Who is who?

Participants were asked to say few words about their work in the National Agency and to share their talent(s).

- ★ Karlien Leroux (Belgium FL) has been working at the NA for 8 years. Responsible for youth workers' mobility, KA2 and inclusion. Talent: knows how to fit young people's ideas into Erasmus+ and to push them to think about the possibilities it offers.
- Marjolein Vandenbroucke (Belgium FL) has been working for the NA since 2 months. Responsible for KA1 (EVS and mobility of youth workers) and inclusion. Talent: being flexible.
- ☆ Valerija Posavec (Croatia) has been working for youth since 3 months, but being at the NA for 3 years. Responsible for KA2 projects. Talent: Russian language and phonetics. Studied linguistics.
- ★ Eva Těthalová (Czech Republic) has been working at the NA since 2010, first for the school programme, now working in field of youth on EVS, inclusion and in the IT team. Talent: patience, as she is working on the IT tools.
- ☆ Inge Linne (Germany) has been working for 15 years at the NA, working on KA2 and for next 2 years she will work on a number of different projects. She is not the inclusion officer of the NA. Talent: DJ.
- ☆ Jutta Kivimäki (Finland) is responsible for KA1/EVS and inclusion. Talent: can read Braille.
- ☆ Flavia Giovanelli (France) has been working for about 10 years at the NA, doing everything except EVS. The French NA has a team of various inclusion officers. Talent: motivated and good team player.

- Loreta Eimontaite (Lithuania) has worked in three EU youth programmes. Deputy director, coordinating E+ actions, inclusion and IT tools. Talent: being able to inspire and motivate colleagues, as well as to create short instruction guides for colleagues about the tools.
- Miruna Covaci (Romania) has been working at the NA for 7 years and is inclusion officer since 2 months. Works at the communication department, responsible for events and communication. Talent: cooking.
- ☼ Oğuz Emin Çarıkcı (Turkey) is responsible for KA 1, he is the new inclusion officer, has been working in different sectors and companies. Talent: being able to easily adapt to new circumstances and work in different fields.
- Marija Kljajic (SALTO Inclusion) has been working for 5 years at SALTO. Talent: can easily adapt to different situations and people, especially within international settings.
- Marit Kannelmäe-Geerts (Estonia) has been working at the NA for 11 years, at the moment she is implementing national programs on inclusion topics, besides being the inclusion officer for E+. Talent: being able to find her way through different rules and regulations of ESF and EMP programme.
- Nele Mets (Estonia) is EVS officer and has been working at the NA for 6,5 years. Talent: to make organisations consider involving young people with fewer opportunities in EVS.
- ☆ Ian Goldring (Belgium) is working as a consultant on employment and inclusion. Currently writing a publication for SALTO Inclusion about young people in NEET situation. Talent: drawing and writing publications.

SALTO Inclusion's work on NEET issues

A little bit of background...

The economic crisis hit young people hardest. That's the reason why SALTO Inclusion decided in 2009 to develop a **long-term strategy on combating youth unemployment**. Since then, SALTO Inclusion has organised several training courses and seminars tackling this issue. Two publications, "Working on Work" and "Inclusion through Employability" (see www.salto-youth.net/inclusionpublications/), have been published and in 2011 a big stakeholder conference, "Bridges to Work", took place in Belgium (www.salto-youth.net/BridgesToWork/).

Employment remains one of the big policy priorities of the European Commission. SALTO Inclusion continues its **strategic work on employability**, as we explore how the youth-sector can contribute to this important need, especially for inclusion groups.

In 2014 we decided to take a step further and reach out to those who are off the radar and out of the system...

NEETs, Status Zero, the excluded, alienated, disenfranchised...

Some young people 'fall out of the boat' for different reasons. They are **not in education**, **not in training and don't have a job either**. They have disappeared from the system e.g. school dropouts, unemployed that are thrown from the dole, homeless youngsters who don't find their way to services or help, people living in illegal situations, people alienated from society,...

We are not talking about those who **voluntarily** choose to do something else e.g. gap year, voluntary service, world travel. Or those who are not in the possibility to go to school, training or work e.g. recent mums, caregivers for relatives, health issues,... We focus on those at the margins of society or beyond. (See also "False NEETs and our SALTO focus" on p. 20).

We have started a **longer-term strategic approach** to reach these disenfranchised young people who are excluded from the system and see how we can reconnect them to society and improve their opportunities in life.

This includes a series of logical steps and activities:

2014

 "What is your NEET?" – a cross-sectorial seminar about youth at risk and in NEET situation. The aim was to gain a better understanding of NEET terminology, concepts etc.
 What are we talking about? October 2014, Finland www.salto-youth.net/neetseminar



2015

- "iNEETiative seminar" we went into practice and analysed underlying success factors
 of working with NEET. We explored successful intervention methods to reach out to
 youth at risk and in NEET situation. May 2015, Romania www.salto-youth.net/ineetiativeseminar
- Inclusion Colleague Support Group on how to reach out to young people at risk and NEET. How to reach NEET young people more easily? How to use the tools we have better? June 2015, Estonia (this report).
- "Project Factory" training course putting theory into practice and developing KA2 cross sectoral partnerships and projects. October 2015, Greece www.salto-youth.net/neetprojectfactory
- **NEET research** parallel to all these activities, a consultant draws up the findings and analyses practices in the field. Desk research and conclusions from the previous activities will find their way into a **research publication** by October 2015. The publication is not only about the concepts and theory, but also lists inspirational practices.

2016

- Cross-sectoral conference on NEET issues a mini, 2,5 days conference, addressing the
 NEET issues and showcasing good practices, with the emphasis on cooperation between
 youth work and other sectors (formal education, employment, social and health care...).
 The conference would serve as a platform for dissemination and exploitation of the
 results of the SALTO Inclusion research & publication on NEET issues. April 2016,
 Slovakia.
- "Project Factory" training course 2016 (similar to the one in Greece in 2015). October 2016, Latvia.

Sharing national NEET concepts and realities

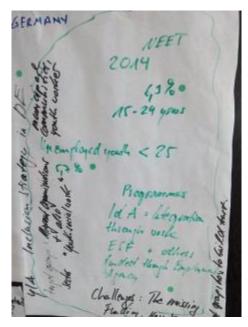
Participants were asked to draw a map of their country and put their national NEET situation on it. What are the differences and similarities across Europe?

Germany

<u>Situation and challenges:</u> 80 million inhabitants, 21% are 15-24 years old. This makes Germany the country in Europe with the **biggest percentage of young people**. The NEET group accounts for 6,3 %: they are not involved in any kind of project or programme (not doing anything). 5,7% of the young people are unemployed (maybe involved in some kind of project, but under 15 hours/week. If they participate over 15 hours/week in a project, then they are not counted as unemployed anymore).

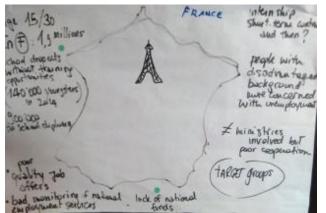
Funding for intervention or prevention is lacking. Another challenge is how to reach this target group and **build trust**, because young people do not find the information about opportunities themselves.

NA work: In YiA we had an inclusion strategy regarding organizations working with migrants, municipalities and communities (local level). Different regions have very different situations (e.g. around Bonn there is a high level of unemployment, because a lot of industry closed down). The new strategy of our NA is to work with umbrella organisations working on NEET, fewer opportunities and young people with disabilities. Immigrant groups have a much higher unemployment rate (around 90%).



<u>Programmes:</u> "IDA" Integration through Work: this international programme has less funding now. Exchanging working places of young people. **ESF** and other funding through the employment agencies.

France



Situation and challenges: 1,9 million people aged 15-30 can be classified as NEET. There were 140 000 school dropouts without training opportunity in 2014. 900 000 young people have no school diploma, but in France there is a culture of diplomas. There is a lack of job offers for unqualified workers. Many only get internships for 6 months or short-term contracts.

Young people are not well followed up, as the **employment agencies** are not performing well due to lacking staff and financial resources. People who are 'different' face difficulties on the labour market: if your name is not French, you'll have more difficulties to find a job.

<u>NA work:</u> The NA is part of the Ministry of Youth and Sports. There is lack of **cooperation between the ministries**. We don't have an inclusion strategy, but we do focus on disability, urban areas (with difficulties) and rural areas.

<u>Programmes:</u> Lack of national funds. Previously there were possibility to do local initiatives, but now these resources were cut.

Romania

<u>Situation and challenges:</u> There are 70 000 young people who are registered at the employment agencies and more than 400 000 who are not registered. 17% of young people are NEET. NEET is most prevalent amongst 25-29 year olds.

The NEET concept is not known in Romania. It is rather new and mainly developed as a response to EU requirements. Only recently some research has been done on NEET issues. There are organizations who work with NEET, but even they do not use the term as such. They talk about unemployment, social obstacles, Roma.



Education is one of the main

reasons why young people end up in NEET situation. Formal education knowledge is not helping young people to get a job. Young people are not involved in NFL either. A number of young people become NEET because of financial reasons.

<u>NA work:</u> We are implementing a more **cross-sectorial approach** in our TCA activities. We had an Inclusion strategy in YiA and used TCP funds to train organisations working with young people with disabilities, rural youth and Roma.

<u>Programme and recommendation:</u> The educational sector focuses on competences, prevention, public investment. And of course we have the **Youth Guarantee**, under the responsibility of the public employment offices. Unfortunately, they are not always working properly. There are some **ESF projects for NEETs** under 24, but there are delays in the programmes and research.

Belgium Flanders

Situation and challenges: How do you count the uncountable? Different parts of the country face different problems and different numbers. In Flanders 9,8% is NEET, in Brussels 15%. Youth unemployment in Flanders equals 15,8% but in Brussels 39,7%. The problems seem higher in the city. French-speaking Belgium has 14,7% NEET.



NEET is connected to a bigger term in Flanders: **social vulnerability** (social risk). Even though there might be an emphasis on employability, the concept of is a lot broader. Socially vulnerable young people might be in some trajectory or training, so they do not always show up in the NEET category. However, they are still the target of social work and are at risk of exclusion/of becoming NEET.

Young people generally do not know where to go, where to find information.

<u>NA work:</u> Our NA looks at NEET from a wider perspective, as there are also no organisations specifically working on NEET in Flanders, but rather on other (related) inclusion issues. The NA promotes and supports **short-term EVS projects** (national and international activities). We deliver the supportive approach (giving in-depth feedback on applications) and give inclusion organisations a **tailor-made** individualized approach. It is easy for us to connect with young people. We go out to them and don't wait for them to come to the NA (the advantage of being a small country).

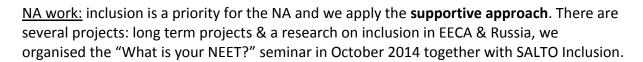
We practice an **active outreach**: We have a look which groups we get and focus on those that are missing?

<u>Programmes:</u> **ESF** has a youth employment initiative, but only for Brussels (to be eligible the youth unemployment rate has to be 25%, and that's not the case in Flanders).

Finland

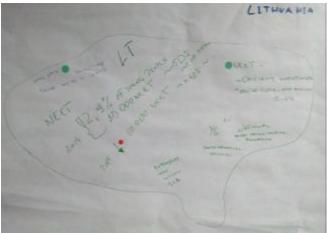
Situation and challenges:

- 60-70% of the country is rural, the distances are quite long and the only international airport is in Helsinki. It's expensive to travel within the country.
- The numbers of young people in **foster care** are increasing.
- 25% of excluded young people are immigrants.
- The youth unemployment has increased to 22% whereas the average for Finland (for all population) is 10%.
- 11% of young people has already some debts.
- Positive is that everyone has an internet connection and a mobile phone, but the problem is that young people easily use it for things that get them into debts.
- 1/3 of all young people in Finland reported to have some kind of depressive feelings.
- Young people with **disability** are also often in NEET situation.

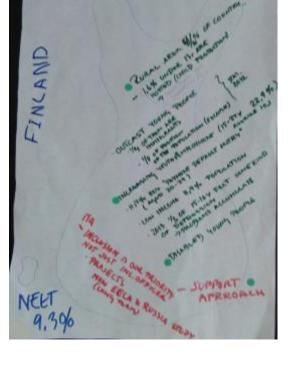


<u>Programmes:</u> **youth work** in Finland has a very high profile and young people know where to go. The structure is good, but the economic situation has deteriorated the last few years.

Lithuania



opportunities for them in smaller town or village.



Situation and challenges: the biggest number of unemployed young people lives in smaller towns and rural areas. We have 12, 9% NEET (Eurostat 2014), but in April 2015 we had a drop from 80,000 to 50,000 NEET. The question is where are those 30,000 young people? It should be mentioned, that quite many young people are also emigrating. The number of young people have no money, and can't afford to go to the city to study, but there are no job

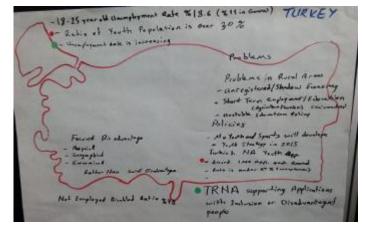
<u>NA work:</u> The NA has **employment** as a priority and uses E+ to address work-related issues and we're getting good results.

<u>Programmes:</u> There is also a **national youth volunteering** programme (developed based on the concept of EVS) and NEET are the main target group of this programme. There is a national inter-institutional working group on NEET.

Turkey

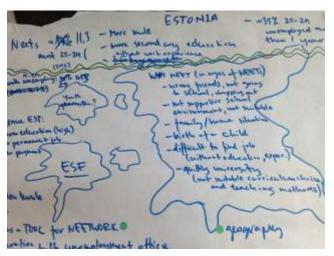
<u>Situation and challenges:</u> Turkey has a **large number of young people**, 30% of population is young. The official unemployment rate is 18,6%, but unofficially it is even higher. The government focus is mostly on young people with **disability**, 75% of those are at home and not working.

The government is not focusing on social inclusion. They rather focus on the **black economy**, non-registered work, e.g. in agriculture, tourism. Rural areas are having more NEETs. **Educational policy** is neither stable nor strategic. The ministry of youth has been created 5 years ago and the youth strategy will be published soon.



<u>NA work:</u> The NA gets a **lot of applications** (1000 applications per deadline, working with external assessors) because we have so many young people. The NA is giving priority to inclusion and trains assessors on this issue. The NA has also done a few trainings on unemployment in cooperation with SALTO Inclusion, but there is no solid strategy. We hope to have it though in a year or two.

Estonia



Situation and challenges: Estonia counts 17% NEET (1 out of 6). The biggest number of them is between 25 and 28 years (35% have been unemployed for more than a year). More males than females are NEET and most of them only have secondary education (finishing at 18) but no work experience.

There was a research asking young people in NEET situation why they were NEET and they gave following answers: wrong friends and dropping out of school

because of that, non-supportive school system, family or home situation (high alcohol abuse), birth of child, difficult to find a job without education or experience, they quit university and vocational education as the curriculum was not suitable for them. One of the consequences is that many people are **emigrating** and doing low-skilled jobs abroad.

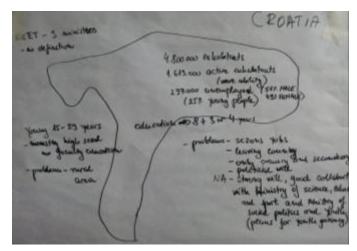
<u>NA work:</u> The NA is cooperating with the **employment offices**, so that they can direct young people to us to do EVS. We are developing a long-term project to use "EVS as a tool for NEET" (we're in the starting phase). Our NA coordinates a big part of the trainings within this **ESF project**.

Programmes: ESF (there is new one coming up) and the Youth Guarantee.

Croatia

Situation and challenges: A definition of NEET doesn't exist, there is no law on young people, the NEET issues are divided between three ministries with no good communication between them.

30% of young people are unemployed, most of them have secondary school as the highest level. Amongst NEET we see almost the same rate of males and females. NEET is a big problem in the rural areas. The **black market** is thriving, there are many seasonal



and short-term jobs e.g. in tourism. The emigration rates are high, especially in last two years. Mainly highly educated people are leaving the country.

NA work: till now the NA didn't do anything specific on this topic.

Similarities across Europe

- Growing rates of youth unemployment, risk of scarring (demotivation) when young people stay unemployed for a long time.
- Focus on **young people with disabilities** as a specific target group, acceptance of disability as a reason for special attention and programme.
- Negative impact of seasonal and short-term jobs and black market (especially south part
 of Europe), precarious employment, without social security cover.
- The inexistent understanding of NEET, a **vague concept** that is not used a lot (in the youth sector), or in different ways, connected to a variety of different other concepts.
- All NAs are trying to do something, there is a common understanding that we need to
 do something for this group of people, to prevent the situation spiralling out of hand.
- Mismatch and mismanagement of employment agency work, they should be bringing
 job opportunities to the young people, but somehow fail to do so e.g. unattractive
 methods and communication, bureaucracy that creates a distance, ignorance of
 opportunities amongst young people,...

Differences between countries

- The realities in different countries are very different and the reasons for being NEET too. The hurdles for young people are context-dependent. What is an obstacle in one country is not necessarily an issue in another.
- Some countries have **high emigration rates** (young people who are educated leave, brain drain), whereas in other countries there are young people who do not want to move at all (Finland).
- Lithuania stands out with a **youth unemployment** rate that is decreasing.
- The local and national possibilities are very different. Some countries come up with all kinds of **social interventions and programmes**, whereas in others the social work looks like a desert.

Coming to terms with the terms

What do we mean when we say...

Being NEET is often confused with being unemployed. Hence a little intro to the different terms and figures and the phenomena they cover.

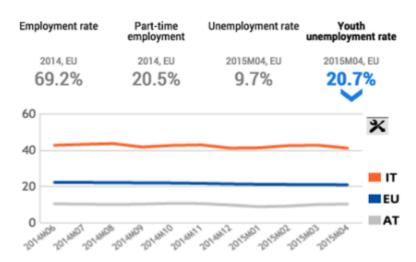
- Working Age Population: all citizens who are in an age to work, depending on the country this varies from 16-18 till retirement at 65-67.
- **(Economically) Active Population**: the people in a working age who are in official paid employment (black work is not counted) OR who are actively seeking employment (often this involves registering at the employment agency and being available for the labour market).
- **Un-Employment rate**: the percentage of each group over the active population.
- Youth Un-Employment rate: the percentage of 15-24 year olds that are registered as un-employed compared to the total number of economically active young people. Youth unemployment rates are normally higher than general unemployment rates because many young people are still in school, thus not available for the labour market.
- **NEET**: all young people (15-24 year olds) who are Not in Employment, Education or Training. This includes not only the 'officially unemployed' (registered job-seekers), but also all young people that are not in school/training but not on the (official) job-market either. So this term englobes more young people than the 'unemployment rate'.

Youth unemployment in Europe

Some numbers from Eurostat...

There are some remarks to be raised as to the validity of these numbers. They depend on reporting by the EU Member States and they often have different ways to qualify someone as unemployed (e.g. in Germany you're out of the unemployment statistics if you participate in a project of more than 15 hours per week...). Nevertheless, these statistics give us a broad idea of the situation.

The (youth) unemployment statistics have been **relatively stable** over time, with the same countries that tend to perform well and others that present less rosy figures. For instance, Italy's youth unemployment rate is over 40% and Austria is among the best performers. The European average is now over 20%.



We list the **youth unemployment rates** of the countries of the participants to get an overview. You can find the statistics for your country at http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat.

- Germany 7,2%
- Estonia 13,9%
- Czech Republic 14,8%
- Lithuania 18,5%
- Ireland 21.4%
- Finland 21,4%
- Belgium 22,6%

- Sweden 22,2%
- Romania 23,6%
- France 24,7%
- Turkey (not in Eurostat, but it is just over 25%)
- Croatia 46,4% (serious problem)

Some explanations and trends

The crisis didn't start in 2007. It is a structural problem that started much earlier. We just tend to think about it as a disaster that suddenly happens, once a threshold has been reached or when media or politicians pick up on the story.

Already in the pre-crisis decade, young people's experiences of employment were characterised by:

- **Precariousness** (on/off, short term jobs...), **Yo-yo** trajectories in and out of short-term work, unemployment, training or education are getting longer. So it takes longer for young people to find economic and financial stability. Which has effects on their life.
- For example: More young people are **living with parents**, the trend is same for both genders. They become independent and start a family at a later age.
- Labour market polarisation (long-term trend): the labour market shifted to providing high-level jobs and low-skilled jobs. It's hard to get quality jobs that are situated in the middle of the spectrum.
- **Hollowing out** of opportunities for quality employment: more bad quality and badly paid jobs, over-qualification (young people, migrants who take jobs below their level), under-employment (e.g. zero contracts in UK)
- All over Europe, we have a shrinking population and high unemployment. Dependency ratios are rising: less people are working to support ever more people. Initiatives need to be taken to keep the solidarity system viable (resulting in benefit cuts, immigration of labour force,...).
- **Euro-crisis:** there is a lack of growth and job creation. A number of people do not find jobs, which in turn does not give them 'spending money' which means that products and services sell less. This leads to long-term economic stagnation.
- Growing ranks of **NEETs** or **Status Zero**: young people not engaged in any kind of work or learning & without any significant personal project for the future.

Damage and costs to society

Hysteresis or scarring: Hysteresis comes from Greek. It refers to lasting damage or scars (e.g. if you pull a tree branch down too far, it will never go fully back to its original position). A similar process happens to (young) people. If they have been unemployed or NEET for a too long time, they are more likely to continue to have problems, even when the economic situation improves e.g. yoyo-employment, bad quality employment, health issues, depression, alcohol abuse, lower income,...

This comes at a great cost for the person but also for society. The Eurofound report (2012) on NEETs calculates that the cost of exclusion of young people amounted to over €100 billion across 21 EU Member States in 2009. It is estimated at €153 billion across the EU in 2011. People who are NEET cost society in social welfare payments and lost contributions to gross national product (GNP). The estimated 14 million NEET in Europe cost society €14,000 per NEET (€11,000 unpaid contributions, €3,000 benefits payments).

Download this report or executive summary at http://eurofound.europa.eu/publications/executive-summary/2012/labourmarket/neets-young-people-not-in-employment-education-or-training-characteristicscosts-and-policy The British ACEVO Commission on Youth Unemployment (UK 2012) calculated that long spells of youth employment now will cost the UK £2.9 billion per year in the future (equivalent to the entire annual budget for the British Jobcentres) and £6.3 billion per year in lost economic output.

Download information on the British case from www.acevo.org.uk/publications/youth-unemployment-crisis-we-cannot-afford

Therefore:

- Governments (societies) need to get as many people to work... as much as and as soon as possible.
- But they should not just do any work. High productivity and earnings are also important.
- This would lead to higher spending power and higher tax income, thus to a wealthier society.

NEET – young people Not in Employment, Education or Training

Who are we talking about...

On the one hand, the term NEET is crystal clear: you can easily see if someone has a paid job or is pursuing education or training. If s/he not, s/he is NEET. Simple... But on the other hand, NEET is a terrible composite of many different kinds of situations.

Eurofound divided the NEET population in **5 different categories**:

Conventionally unemployed: the largest subgroup, those that are officially registered as job-seekers and available for the labour market. They can be further subdivided into long-term (>12 months) and short-term unemployed. Often this group of people receives unemployment benefits and is the target of different kinds of (youth) employment measures.



- **Unavailable**: young people who are mentally, socially or physically unavailable, because of care tasks for family members, because of (mental) health or a disability that prevents them from working, because of homelessness or extreme poverty. They have other things on their minds to take care of.
- **Disengaged**: young people who have given up or do not find their way (anymore) through the system. For some reason they are not (or no longer) seeking jobs or education, even though they are not constrained by other obligations or incapacities (like the Unavailable). This category can be further divided in **discouraged workers** (losers from the system) and other young people who are pursuing 'alternative **lifestyles'** at the margins of society (illegal activities to make a living, living in sects,...).
- Opportunity-seekers: they are actively seeking work or training, but are holding out for
 opportunities that they see as befitting their skills and status. They consciously put their
 working lives on hold to reach their objectives. Their
- Voluntary NEETs: those young people who are travelling (e.g. a gap year) or constructively engaged in other activities such as volunteering (e.g. EVS), art, music and self-directed learning (outside the education & training system)..

These five categories are **not all equally vulnerable**. Some are extremely disadvantaged whereas others choose voluntary to exit from the labour market and education. Even though the *conventionally unemployed* might get unemployment benefits or participate in youth employment programmes, they do involuntarily suffer from a lack of available jobs and be victim of scarring. On the other hand, *opportunity-seekers* tend to come from a more privileged background as they voluntarily decide to remain outside the system in order to wait for the right opportunity. The same probably applies to the *voluntary NEETs* who have simply decided to do something else. The group of *disengaged workers* however have unsuccessfully tried to enter the labour market and have given up their attempts. They are more likely to be vulnerable, with very complex situations and needs. This group is also

more at risk of pursuing income outside the official circuits (crime, prostitution,...). Finally, the *unavailable group* includes a mix of vulnerable and non-vulnerable people: young people with disabilities who need additional support to work or study, young mothers who cannot afford childcare, but just as well young mothers who decide to stay home to take care of their children...

- The term NEET means something only on a **macro level**. It is an indicator of how well society is doing to keep young people in the (economic) system. It is not a particular group, but rather an umbrella term.
- There is no clear-cut answer on what one should do for "NEET" (in general). The responses to NEET should be as varied as there are reasons/causes for being NEET. Using a wheelchair is totally different from being an immigrant. Both are NEET, but need different support to help them.
- What's more, some categories of NEET do not need/want any support at all.

False NEETs and our SALTO focus

It becomes clear that even though some people however are NEET (technically speaking), they are not vulnerable. We would like to call them **false NEETs**, in the sense that they do not need any particular support or attention. They are not at risk of exclusion or hysteresis e.g. the Opportunity-Seekers or Voluntary NEET.

That's why SALTO Inclusion, within this larger NEET-group, focusses on those who are **underprivileged** or **at risk of scarring**. This particularly brings the '**Disengaged NEETs**' within our scope of work, but also the '**Conventionally Unemployed**' to help them find their road in life, and to prevent scarring should the spell of unemployment persist. Youth/social work can be a motivator for those young people to persevere and get their (working) life back on track.

The 'Unavailable' could benefit from support to take away the reason for their unavailability. The youth/social sector could for instance advocate for adapted work for people with a disability or health condition, and coach both employees and employers towards a successful cooperation. Information/social workers could lead young people to provisions that would take some weight of their shoulders to care for family members. But as long as they are 'unavailable' they are probably also unavailable for our activities, as long as the reason for their unavailability persists.

So if NEET is an imprecise term, why does SALTO Inclusion (and NAs?) use it? More and more policy focus is put on NEET. The term becomes increasingly popular. So we can benefit from the attention, but knowing well that we focus on those NEET-categories that truly need support. Those at risk of exclusion, those exposed to hysteresis.

The reasons for being **NEET**

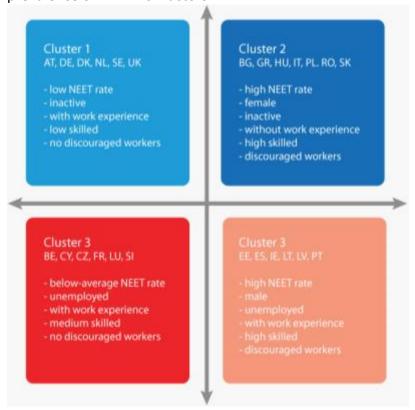
Young people can be NEET (excluded from the labour market and educational system) for so **many different reasons**, as becomes clear from the five categories above: school drop-out, competence mismatch, cultural differences, approach to bureaucracy/the system, mental health, illegal activity, ignorance, substance misuse, geographical disadvantage, care for

family member, dysfunctional social situation, low household income,... and in some cases 'choice'.

Eurofound identified 7 factors that increase the likelihood of becoming NEET:



The most prominent reasons for being NEET vary according to country. But also within a country, certain regions might have a higher presence of some risk factors than others. In some parts of Europe NEET is different according to gender, in others NEET factors apply similarly to young men and women. Eurofound clustered countries according to general prevalence of NEET risk factors.



NEET in numbers

- According to the 2009 EU Youth Report more than 1/3 of young people (15-24) in the EU are NEETs (all types of NEET confounded).
- **Eurofound** estimates the total number of NEETs in Europe at 14 million.
- The International Labour Organisation says NEET levels often are above 10% of the youth population, but it disproportionally hits youth with a low level of education in developed economies. NEET rates rise during periods of economic crises.
- **UK** says it has the highest proportion of NEETS in Europe: e.g. 1 in 10 of **16 year olds** (compulsory schooling stops at 16 in the UK).
- NEET is an important concept & phenomenon. Even though the term was launched in the UK in the 80s, its meaning has been adapted to serve European purposes.
- On European level it is more and more used as a macro-economic measuring stick for the economic health of a society.
- PNEET is a **better indicator than youth unemployment**, because it also encompasses the young people who are not officially unemployed (registered and available for the labour market). The shadow side of the concept is that it also counts the young people that temporarily opt out of the system e.g. false NEETS.

The scarring impact of being NEET

Besides the personal and societal costs listed above, we distinguish some other issues. The **OECD** claims that NEETs show a higher risk of marginalisation and exclusion from the labour market. This effect is **worse the longer they remain outside the world of work.** They indicate a high risk of persistence or growth of NEET in the hard-core group of youth 'who are left behind'. These young people become **more politically and socially alienated.** They tend to have **lower level of political interest, political and social engagement**, and a lower level of trust. In some places – e.g. Hungary & Romania – NEET are closely linked with **Roma.**

- Being NEET has major **economic/social implications**. In some cases, it adversely affects individuals (scarring), but NEET also have a societal costs. These young people do not develop their human capital or contribute to society (e.g. pay taxes) in exchange for the benefits they reap.
- The longer young people are in a NEET situation, the worse their perspectives in life get. The most **effective interventions** are those that happen as soon as possible.

EU Measures and Programmes

European interventions that (indirectly) tackle NEET...

- **EU Youth Strategy** general overarching strategy, probably too underfunded to have significant impact... http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth-strategy
- Youth Opportunities Initiative pushes Member States to do more on youth unemployment. Includes pilot actions on a Youth Guarantee and the 'Your First EURES' job scheme (helps 5 000 people find jobs in other EU countries) http://ec.europa.eu/social/yoi
- Youth Guarantee ensures that all young people up to 25 get job offer, further
 education, apprenticeship or traineeship within 4 months of leaving formal education or
 becoming unemployed. Member States carry it out, with support from EU –
 http://ec.europa.eu/social/youthguarantee
- Youth Employment Package supports the Youth Guarantee and a Quality Framework for Traineeships. There are plans for a European Alliance for Apprenticeships – http://ec.europa.eu/social/youthemployment
- Youth Employment Initiative financial support via the European Structural Funds to regions with youth unemployment rates over 25%. €6 billion for 2014-2020 http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1176
- **European Investment Bank** "Skills and Jobs Investing in Youth" initiative, it boosts "Jobs for Youth" across the EU by improving access to finance for Small and Medium Enterprises and it enhances "Investment in Skills" with educational projects and student finance www.eib.org/projects/priorities/skills and jobs
- **Erasmus** + Education, training, youth, sport €14.7b, 10% for Youth in Action activities, non-formal learning projects to develop young people's competences (and employability) http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/
- **European Voluntary Service** an international possibility to gain competences through volunteering http://ec.europa.eu/youth/programme/mobility/european-voluntary-service en.htm
- Youth employment is a **transversal priority** in all EU programmes, projects.
- JobTown an Urbact project about youth un/employment http://urbact.eu/jobtown

Youth work and the pathway to employment

Where is youth work able to make a difference? (and where not?)

There are different moments of intervention that can lead young people to a successful (working) life:

- Prevention prevent early school leaving. Formal education puts a solid basis for one's
 future career (despite all the complaints about competence mismatch etc.). Dropping
 out of school is a serious indicator of problems at later stages of life. A variety of actors
 can organise interventions well before the risk factors get a chance to jeopardise a
 person's future opportunities.
- Reintegration if young people drop out, a series of measures aim to get young people
 back into education or training. This can be coaching, alternative schooling etc. The main
 aim here is to allow the young people to construct a basis for their future. Even though
 there is a shift towards recruiting on the basis of competences, still basic education and
 a diploma make life (and job applications) easier.
- School to work transition today there are multiple transitions in life. The linear transition from education to employment is increasingly a thing of the past. Young people go from one type of education to another, via a job and spells of unemployment and back again. This increases the possibility that young people get lost in their trajectory. Coaches, social workers, youth workers,... could strengthen young people to find their path.
- Foster employability practical skills and theoretic knowledge are one thing, but work attitude and soft skills is another important part of a young person's employability. Different actors can intervene and polish young people's work attitude, develop their soft skills (social, communication, learning to learn) and why not coach them on the work floor for a limited period.
- Remove practical and logistical barriers to (youth) employment policy measures to
 make hiring young people easier and more attractive. This goes into employment
 bonuses, tax breaks, quota, specific regulations, etc. These measures help groups with
 specific disadvantages (e.g. youth, people with a disability, low skilled people,...).
 However, it is important is to approach these labour market interventions holistically –
 make them part of a bigger strategy.
- We should analyse the situation and see where we can make a difference. Our support for young people should be tailor-made. There is not just one measure that would fit all NEET situations.
- Youth work with its non-formal methodology and strong interpersonal relations can have a big effect on the life of young people. So it can also be a **driver for change** in the lives of young people in NEET.
- However, a young person is not an island. S/he is targeted by many other sectors (health, employment, culture, justice,...). Youth work, for it to be as effective as possible, should **join forces with other sectors** to create a joined-up approach. Doing something in our little youth work corner might be beneficial, but will never be as effective as a holistic approach with e.g. job centres, social work, etc on board.
- It's important to support young people to **prevent and limit any scaring effect**. Youth work can play a role! It gives young people an opportunity to get out of their damaging environment and do something more positive.

- We need to understand why the NEET concept is important (even though it is a contested concept). It is used more and more by European programmes and public administration. These policy priorities and concerns create a momentum to tackle NEET.
- NA's in their linking role between policy and programme, can make sure that the **'right NEETs'** are targeted as opposed to the relatively well-off 'false NEETs' (e.g. voluntary NEET or opportunity-seekers). There is a risk of 'pistachio effect' getting the 'easy NEET' on board, but leaving the most difficult ones in the bowl.
- The concept of NEET is important to get **policy attention**. However, it is less useful in youth work as it lumps together very different situations. It is next to useless as a diagnostic or meaningful description of a person.
- We should **adapt terms to the people**, **and not the other way around**. Don't allow a concept to distort what you see in front of you.

Limits of youth work

- Youth work has many roles and could potentially take on many more. However, it cannot be a mere extension of an employment office or training agency. Youth work is of a very different nature and has specific aims/priorities.
- However, youth work can be a very **powerful partner** in cross-sectoral projects. The work done by youth/social workers is complementary to other sectors. It can be the youth-friendly cement between de different provisions for young people.
- It is important to see youth work **within a larger context**. Like in a car factory analogy: If youth work makes the wheels and tires, it still needs the rest of the factory to create a car. But at the same time the factory will not produce a well-functioning car without wheels and tires.

Recommendations to the NA

- Get an **understanding of the NEET issue**. But do not use NEET as the new holy cow, applying it too rigidly to the target audiences you reach. Do not try to fit as many people as possible in the new "special NEET box".
- Keep in mind the heterogeneity of NEET. Do all the sub-categories of NEET need the same amount of attention and support? Are there NEET-categories you do/don't want/need to address?
- Take into consideration the **bigger picture** as well. What other interventions are there for NEET. Get an overview of what other sectors do already or plan to do for this target group. Find your niche.
- Go behind the idea of NEET: explain to people what NEET actually means, that it's not a category, it's just an umbrella term that covers many issues (e.g. disability, education...). Tackle it also in that way, because different issues require different approaches.
- **Explain** potential applicants how NEET relates to them and how they can benefit from the policy focus on NEET. The NA makes the link **between policy and practice**.
- Create more long-term strategic partnerships addressing specific NEET-related issues or particular NEET categories or risk factors. TCA is a good tool for this.

Using Erasmus+ Youth in Action for NEET

Try to walk in their shoes – Getting into the role of beneficiary

NAs expect from beneficiaries to organise great inclusion projects, but few NA officers have experience in setting up inclusion projects themselves. To go a step **beyond 'programme criteria'**, we asked our NA participants to develop a specific NEET-project themselves, taking into account all the advice above.

They were asked to define: aim, target group (including a question on how to reach them), activities (the whole process – before, during & after), specifics for NEETs (how to adapt the project to certain special needs).

A youth exchange for early school leavers

<u>Target group:</u> early school leavers aged 15-18, might be afraid of their poor linguistic skills, have some social and attitude problems, low self-esteem and non-supportive environment (parents).

<u>Partners:</u> youth club from France; NGO from Brussels working with urban youth ("Youth in the city"); youth club from Czech Republic; informal group of young people from Finland.



Venue: Nature park in Finland

<u>Aim of the young people</u>: to meet new young people, to learn new skills needed for surviving in the nature; to make a survival kit; to learn about other cultures.

<u>Aim of the organisations:</u> to motivate them to be more active, to get them out of their routine; to learn how to adapt nature survivals skill to their everyday life, to encourage different life styles.

How to do it - activities before:

- Think what they want to do on a youth exchange! Often your aim for youth exchange is different form why young people want to do it.
- Important to think of activities that would be appealing to them, something new (eg. For young people from the city might be interesting of going to the nature).
- Reaching out:
 - Talk about international project in the club, to make them interested in.
 - Involve them in the preparation & create the programme together.
 - Do something with the group before the youth exchange, to create the connection, the youth exchange shouldn't be the first activity you are doing together.
- Talk about their problems with them (their situation) but do not talk about hem as NEET.
- There shouldn't be a long time between the preparation and the actual start of the youth exchange, otherwise they would lose the interest.

- Present mobility in a catchy way: former participants of a youth exchange could share their experience to motivate them to participate.
- Ask participants how they would like to present themselves and their country during the exchange.
- Work on attitudes and be prepared to ask the questions.
- Think with the partners how to overcome the language barrier and take this into account when deciding on methods & reassure the group that language won't be a problem.

How to do it - Activities during exchange:

- Be supportive, encourage them.
- Use methods like: music, nonverbal communication, use sport activities (like climbing) to overcome the language barrier.
- Young people should be leading and have a strong input with support of the leader. See what are their abilities (like they could put together a dance choreography).
- Encourage their talents (if you know they are good in cooking, ask them to give a cooking workshop or prepare a meal for others).
- Build in some reflection on learning, some small simple things, like just asking what did you do today.

<u>How to – activities after the exchange:</u>

- The youth exchange is not over when you are back home.
- Do something together with your group, some follow up activity.
- Organise showcase moments.
- Help them to name their own learning.
- Make official ceremony for delivering Youthpass and involve parents in it (it might be the first certificate they have ever got).
- Think of other youth exchange or international experience, it shouldn't be just one off thing.

Youth workers mobility - Study Visit "Be Part"

Aim: To increase competences of the youth workers in using participative methods.

<u>Partners:</u> Organisations working with Roma (Turkey, Romania, Belgium-Fl).

<u>Target group:</u> youth workers working with Roma.

<u>Target group of the youth workers</u>: immigrants, school drop outs, excluded youth, who are NEET, with no positive experience in participating in the community life.

Preparation activities:

- Online sharing platform of participative methods.
- Discuss methods to be used during the study visit.
- Get digital experience.

During the activity:

- Make on-site visits in Belgium, visit the neighbourhoods, discuss the problems.
- Two days to evaluate the situation and think of implementation back home.
- Use peer learning methods.

After the study visit:

- Share results on local level.
- Plan follow-up.

KA2 Strategic partnership - Young mothers

Budget: 450 000 euros.

<u>Target group:</u> very young teen mothers.

<u>Partners:</u> 4 partners, cross-sectoral partnership, partner organizations would be social organizations (umbrella/roof organization).



<u>Aim:</u> to help them with their situations short term and long term in order not to not be dependent on welfare.

Activities:

- Reach the target group via specialised or umbrella organisations. They would construct the local partnerships (with NGOs, schools, day care centres etc).
- Innovative approaches to support the child care, work training etc –find inspiration in European level examples and implement them on local level.
- To identify the real needs and the implement those services that would make a difference in their lives. Formal issues, social attitudes (discrimination) etc.

<u>Challenges:</u> How to keep the KA2 project connected to youth sector? Youth work can work a lot with social stigma, discrimination and social attitudes etc.

Important for NAs to point out to youth organisations

- Know your target group, as your project should start from their needs.
- Applicants can't just elaborate a general project for NEET and then hope they will find a group later on. In the ideal case, you first need to know your group and then create the project accordingly, together with them, **tailor-made** to their needs.
- However, the lives of young people in NEET situations can be very volatile. They might not be able to commit to the whole preparation process. For those cases, 'open applications' (with the group or volunteer not know yet) are a possibility. The applicant has to specify though what type of participants they expect, and specify how they will adapt the project and its methods to the needs of the participants that will finally be attending.
- Advice the organisation first to do a smaller scale KA1 activity, before doing a KA2 project.
- **Do not limit organisations too much** and do not push them too much in certain directions. Often we say things like EVS is good for NEET, but a youth exchange or other type of activity can be even be a better option for them. For example using KA3 to encourage excluded young people to make their voice heard. For example Estonia has a national project in prisons, about rights in the structure of the prison.
- It is also important to know when a type of activity is not suited or when the project doesn't fit the organisation or target group. Erasmus+ is only one of many possibilities.

Estonian reality – Open Youth Centres

A session hosted by the municipality department for youth and sport.

Association of the Estonian Open Youth Centres

The Association is a national non-governmental umbrella organisation, which unites the open youth centres in different regions of Estonia. It has 83 members with 145 youth centres.

4 main pillars of work:

- Strategic communication (planning with other org)
- Lobbing and advocacy (for the needs of the members and young people)
- Education/trainings
- Projects on local and Estonian level. Offering more calcification to the y workers and more activities to the young people.

The association has a good overview of what is going on in youth work, as well as in the youth centres.

Estonian youth work

There is a youth law and a youth field development plan. On a state level there are more institutions which help to implement development plan. There is a quite good cooperation on the national plan and the Ministry involves the Association in different processes.

The money comes from the state and youth work is responsibility of the local municipality, which decides what they want to do: hobby centres, youth house, centres... There are about 200 local municipalities. Sometimes they cooperate to provide some activities together.

The main focus is **open youth work**, which is accessible for all. Their focus is on **inclusion and outreach**. They are close to young people.

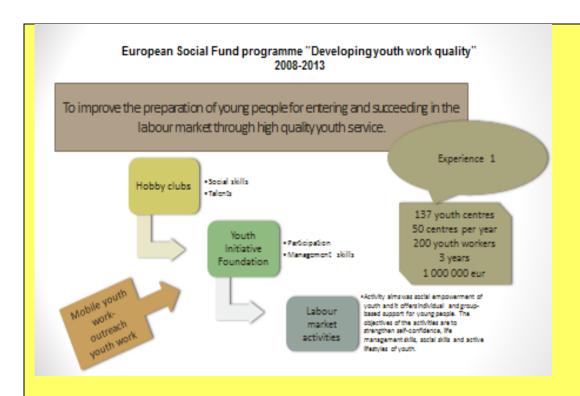
Impact

Documentation of youth work is important. We collect information on young people's participation: how are involved and what kind of activities are they participating in? Through the analysis of these statistics, the Association can show how much they support other sector(s) and why it's good to cooperate with the Association.

Do not stay in your own bubble, it's also important to **create links** between different projects, not only between the sectors.

ESF programme "Developing y work quality" 2008-2013

The Association got a million euro for three years to support 137 youth centres and 200 youth workers. The aim is to train youth workers about reaching out to young people and how to work better with them. The youth centres could decide which activities they wanted to organise.



Experience 2

This project was followed up by a project for NEET to offer them volunteering experience in youth centres.

- A programme for NEET-youngsters in youth centres 2013-2014.
- 18 institutions with 33 youth centres in 12 counties participated in this program.
- The main idea was to offer individual coaching for NEET-youngsters, workshops, trainings, taking part in volunteering.
- **Result:** Through volunteering young people (7-23, ~30 per centre, 609 in total) got a more realistic view of the world of work, they found out about their strengths, they developed social skills and got new contacts.

Process:

- Analysing the social space (who could host volunteers, what were the capacities).
- Networking.
- Mobile youth work outreach could now be practiced (as they were train for that through the first project).
- Individual coaching & trainings for youth workers and network specialists.
- Youth involvement in youth clubs or partner institutions.
- Analyse statistical material.

Thanks to our analyses, it was easier to involve young people, for instance:

- Young people who needed attention;
- Short time unemployed;
- Youngster waiting for army service;
- Young mothers/fathers staying at home with children;
- Long-time unemployed through public unemployed office;
- "Usual" youngsters that prevention work reaches out to.

Strengths of youth centres to support NEET young people

- Young persons find the way to public services through youth centre;
- Youth centres work propose a large variety of activities so that mostly everyone finds something to their interest;
- Youth centre is very close to the young people, trustful and equal relationship;
- Good partnership with unemployed office;
- Youth centre openness;
- Youth work specialist work is aimed to support youth initiative, it is flexible and without a concrete curriculum;
- Youth feel that the youth centre is their second home;
- Some NEET have found their way to youth centre, which makes it much easier to involve others in the same or similar situation.

Partners

- The partners from this program were local entrepreneurs, NGOs, public unemployment office, local social department, education institutions.
- 50% of supported activities were organized in youth centres, 50% in other institutions (schools, community centres, libraries, NGOs, entrepreneurs, etc).

Partners had a hosting role (hosting volunteers/organising activities) and offering information to young people. Many institutions like schools, kindergarten discovered during the process that they also can be part of youth work.

Work with young people in NEET situation is **successful** if:

- youth work is part of the community network;
- there is a big enough qualified team with a coordinator;
- youth workers are experienced and qualified (1 youth worker = 50/70 youth per year);
- individual coaching is possible;
- the budget is flexible,
- recognition through Youthpass or voluntary pass.

Through youth work we can support

Individual level

- Find their identity (Who am I? Who do I want to be?)
- Having a future perspective
- Using their resources
- Taking initiative
- Being autonomous

Relational level

- Having friends they can trust
- Having a good relationship with parents, family and/or significant others
- Creating a social network

Society level

- Having access to quality education and training
- Finding quality guidance

- Finding a quality job
- Finding a place in society
- Being accepted as (positive) part of society
- Having social security

Future plans

We plan for the programme to become part of the Youth guarantee in the future. We want to open up to 20 more youth centres in municipalities which already have experience with those young people.

Who needs support in small places or it's still difficult to detect the target group?

The social worker knows, but you need more people to do the outreach, especially as they are in remote places, like living in the forest. More human resources are needed. You need to think not only about today's issues, but also about the next 5 years. We want to have a sustainable system in which we develop support in different places, so that young people do not think "I'm living in a wrong place, I should move to the city".

Analyses have also shown that the places in Estonia with less services and local initiatives have more E+ projects.

- Avoid investing all the money in the big cities, but **also cater for small villages**, where there are many young people, but no possibilities. For the ministries however it tends to be easier to give money to big cities, because of the big number of young people.
- Do not force a young person into the system, but create a system around the young person.

Do you have any activities involving parents?

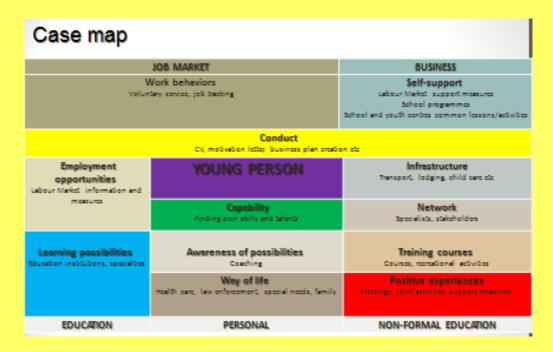
Parents are still not much involved in life of the schools and are usually invited only if there is a problem with their child in school. This is one of the reasons that they would feel more comfortable going to a youth centre. Parents are more flexible to come and easier to involve if it's out-of-school and less formal. Building a relationship with the parents takes time, but parents already understand what youth centres are doing and there is a trust relationship.

We can help young people in NEET situation better if we are part of the community.

A recent conference on the **Youth Guarantee** has shown that in many countries youth work does not play a big part in the Youth Guarantee. We have to do more! Youth work has the power to reach out to young people, whereas the other sectors have more resources. In Estonia, youth work is:

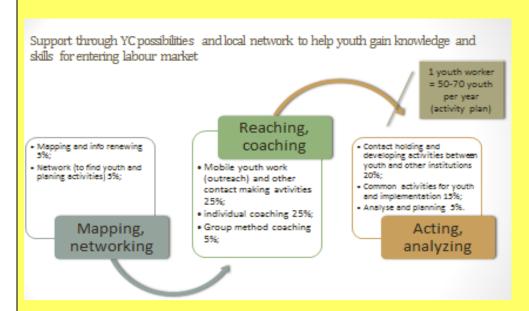
- Creating digital opportunities
- Organising activities on local level and
- activities on Estonian level, e.g. support EVS hosting and sending volunteers (involving also prisons and care institutions)
- Before planning any activities it is important to **understand the young person's life** and to **map the possibilities** in the municipality (in the environment of the young person) and who offers those. After that, you match the young person's needs and the available opportunities.
- Do not talk in general terms to your stakeholders. Do not start your "mapping" meeting

with question like "Who offers something to young people in NEET situation?", but ask instead "Do you offer some positive experiences to young people?". This is what they understand and in this way you can create a map with hundreds of activities which are also free of charge (including library, transport companies, etc).



- When you have limited resources, it is really beneficial to work with a network of different stakeholders.
- Another advantage is that a **coordinated integrated approach** avoids that a young person has to go from one institution to another. The young person will meet only one professional, who will connect the young person to the care network and develops a support plan together with them.

After mapping comes reaching out, coaching, acting and analysing.



It is often **difficult to measure success** because getting them in employment is just one part of the whole picture. Going on an EVS project could be a success as well.

It is difficult to keep the track and know what is happening with a young person after the programme, because in youth work we are not allowed to keep any personal data on former participants.

Contacts:
Kerli Kõiv
Chairman of the board
Ph. +372
kerli.koiv@ank.ee

Heidi Paabort Executive director Ph. +372 5809 1010 heidi.paabort@ank.ee

EVS as a Tool for NEETwork

The Estonian NA initiated a long-term TCA project, using EVS as a tool to address NEET-issues. It started in 2014 and it will run till 2016.

Why do we need this?

- Most of the young people who were doing EVS went to high school or studied, in other
 words, they had lots of opportunities already. There were very few young people from
 inclusion groups. The NA wanted more inclusion projects, specifically for those who are
 unemployed and not in school.
- EVS should be part of a process, instead one-off activity. It should be followed up and part of a **broader pathway** for the young people.
- Even if some organisations wanted to send young people with fewer opportunities, they
 didn't have a hosting place where to send them, because they need reliable and strong
 partners.

Who is involved?

- NA Estonia
- NA Latvia
- NA Belgium-FL
- NA Netherlands
- NA Italy
- NA Ireland
- NA Slovenia
- SALTO Inclusion

Target group

On the one hand organisations that do EVS projects, but not necessarily for inclusion groups and on the other hand, organisations which never did EVS, but are experienced in working with young unemployed people or NEET.

The number of organisations involved per country is different from country to country, depending of what the NAs want to reach also on a national level.

What did we do?

All the activities were covered by the TCA money.

- Prep meeting in 2014 to develop the process.
- Each NA has to detect the organisations that would be interested.
- The first possibility to get involved was a national meeting.
- Training course in Latvia to create the understanding of the process, target group and the importance of the EVS being seen as a part of the bigger pathway.
- Not all org involved on the national level went to the TC in Latvia (in December of 2014) and that's why after the TC there was again a national meeting to share the experience.
- Study visits in first half of 2015.
- TC in Estonia: how to build up the process, it it's about how do we actually do it.
 (October 2015)

- Study visit: starting from October 2015. Followed up again by the national meeting or another study visit.
- Evaluation meeting: in June of 2016 in Belgium-Flanders: to evaluate the whole process, as well as the projects that participants have been developing (those were not financed by the TCA money).

Hopefully all those activities will also stimulate the **creation of informal network of sending and hosting EVS organisations specifically in the inclusion field**, that will live on and that is open for new partners too that were not involved in the process.

Challenges

- Not all the NAs could organise the national meetings before the TC in Latvia. It's up to
 the NAs to decide if they want to organise national meetings and study visits. Only the
 training courses were compulsory.
- In the TC in Latvia there were also participants from other countries which took part only in the TC and who were not involved in the rest of the process.
- The TCA budget timeline and coordination of the TCA's budgets of the different NAs.
- New systems/ways: working in a long-term perspective. How to use the study visits, as
 participants are given the money and have to organise them themselves (important for
 strengthening the partnerships and management skills of participants).
- NA partners, as most of the time NAs are just sending participants or giving financial contribution. This project demands more effort and investment, which often is difficult to combine with all other work at the NA.
- Reaching out to organisations which are working with young people in NEET situation and organisations which are ready to be involved in the long-term process, as they do not have much time either.
- Organisations need much more support to be able to do EVS with their target group.

First positive outcomes

- Stronger inclusion focus and raised inclusion quality in the projects.
- Partnerships were created.
- Thanks to long-term process you can follow up the development of the organisations.
- Several ideas for future projects, which were mostly triggered by the study visits.

Tallinn's sport and youth department - "The soil of your foot" programme

Participating in the "EVS as a tool for NEET" programme motivated them to work more on NEET issues. During the national meetings, they got in touch with organisations who were already working for a long time on this topic and the department got a good idea on how to tackle this particular target group. At the TC in Latvia an EVS project was created with partners from the Netherlands. In September, a first young person will be sent to Holland.

The department has created its own project in the framework of this NEET network. It aims to give young people different tools that help them succeed in life and do something more after taking part in the programme. The goal is to get them engaged in employment, education or training and to improve their social environment.

Target group

There are 10 participants, aged 15 to 18, Estonian & Russian speaking mixed group. Some of the young people are coming from industrial vocational schools and they are often on the "school's black list" are at risk of dropping out. Some have problems with drug/alcohol abuse and are in the rehabilitation centres.

Reaching out

Through contact with a social worker form the vocational school and rehabilitation centre. After that, young people were invited to the presentation of the programme and all of them wanted to take part in. A youth exchange sounded really attractive to them.

Phases

- 1. Preparatory: April august 2015
- Personal mentor (continuous, weekly meetings with the young person)
- Career / psychological counselling (individual + some group meetings)
- Group meetings (talking about the labour market, entrepreneurship, how to write a CV, what social skills are needed, living in another country)
- Youth exchange: there are already two exchanges planned. The group will be split in two smaller groups. The department is investing some extra money needed for their travel, as they can't afford it otherwise.

For some of them the programme will end with the first phase, with the youth exchange.

- 2. EVS in Netherlands: September July 2016.
- 3. Follow-up phase: 6 months to one year.

During EVS the young people get a lot of energy and motivation, but coming back to their old environment can have some negative impact. That's why it is important to **continue** working with them, e.g. the mentors could help them with housing, looking for a job, etc.

Partners

- Vocational schools
- Rehabilitation centres for drug/alcohol abuse

Good practice and underlying success criteria

Project examples

Germany: KA2 project (still in the preparation phase, has not yet been granted, but the NA did a lot of counselling). Target group are ex-prisoners, mostly men. The focus lies on using **pilgrimage** as a method and all partners are experienced in it. The organisations are exchanging practices, developing the curricula and methods. There is a good mix of organisations, e.g. Ministry of Justice from Italy. The outcome will be a guide book on the methodology they use.

Challenges were the E+ application and different laws in different countries. In some countries, such a pilgrimage project coached by a social/youth worker is also used as an alternative sanction for juvenile delinquents, e.g. in Spain and Belgium.

Belgium-FI: JINT organised a three day **study visit on employability** in Helsinki. It included some schools, employment agencies, youth organisations involved in youth care,... The aim was to get inspiration and find international as well national partners, as there were different sectors involved. It resulted in several granted projects.

Belgium-FI: International **Youth initiative** (YiA) "Do it yourself"- an informal group of youngsters from Belgium went to Portugal (Cascais) to teach youngsters on the streets, how to make furniture from scrapwood.

Lithuania: The **National Volunteering** Programme is targeting young people in NEET situation. The volunteer has to prove that he/she is officially unemployed and not in any educational system. The role of NA is to prepare organisations to host NEET volunteers. These organisations have experience in working with NEET and hopefully after a national service they will be sending the young people to EVS.

NA as a partner implementing this national programme, promotes EVS as well and the result - 30% of the newly accredited EVS organisations in 2014 were also involved in National Volunteering programme.. The national service also includes mentors and a support system like in EVS, but it has much less money. It's important to get those young people out of their regular environment and routine.

Finland: Bilateral youth exchange with Bulgaria. One took place in Finland and one in Bulgaria (both included in one application). This gives the groups the possibility to build up a more intense process. Both groups are young people with mental disability. They are not looking for a job, but they are seeking to be active part of the society.

The organisers needed to take care that young people are not afraid to go away from home and those who were afraid, they took part in youth exchange in their own country. Some examples of activities: making video's about their country. It was challenging, but they did the effort. They also did a flash mob.

Romania: "Photovoice" (YIA, democracy project). This was a project including Roma young people. It was a longer-term process with several meetings. Learning methods used: Romayoungsters received camera's to take pictures in their home situations and create messages

which were linked and then presented in a form of exhibition. For the exhibition they also made postcards of the pictures. These were sent to the municipalities to open up discussions on important topics on local level.

The Netherlands: street kids in Amsterdam get involved and trained in fashion design. They design and make clothes: **street wear from street kids**. They also opened a shop in Berlin.

Extracting success factors

- Employment is part of the eco-system of the person. People will not be independent, fulfilled, happy if they are excluded from the labour market.
- Ask yourself the question: "who needs this project?" and "would it make a difference?".
- **Co-production**: involve young people in the process.
- The programme (of the project) should be **adapted** to the profile of participants, taking care of their needs, tailored to their abilities and aspirations. Take into account the needs of the young people and their aspirations when creating the EVS activities.
- The youth worker has to know when is **the right time** to talk to young person about the EVS and when is the time for his/her to go on short-term project. Being able "to smell" this
- **Don't mix** work-ready young people and those who are not ready for work yet − the skills they need are very different. Young people who are not ready to work yet do not need CV or motivation letter training. Other training/coaching is needed first to make them employable and ready for work.
- Build on previous activities and create a pathway (e.g. submitting more activities in one application can serve this purpose). Create a step-by-step pathway for young people and help the young persons to see their evolution in a longer-term perspective.
- Use national activities to support international ones and the other way around. In case of NEET, it is crucial to start with national activities. Or use an international activity to support another international activity.
- You need to **involve professionals** that are experts in their particular fields. A youth worker cannot do everything.
- Do not do it on your own! **Create partnerships**. Involve important stakeholders in your project, even if it is not so obvious to do so. A good partnership is vital. Find the right organisations that you can cooperate with, with whom you are on the same wavelength, whom you can trust, etc. Plan your project and application together with your project partners.
- Financial sustainability is important for effective inclusion projects. However, many good projects start without big resources money is not the most important.
- It is important to make the **profile of the target group** clear in the application form. Organisations should list the obstacles the target group is facing and make it clear what kind of extra support/mentoring the young people need and the organisation(s) can offer. In an application: if you do not ask it, you won't get it (e.g. special needs, exceptional costs). Justify, make your case.
- NA should inform the assessors that they can grant extra points to first time applicants and organisations working with inclusion groups.
- Follow-up is key.
- *****

Debriefing project visit - what did we learn?

Meeting organisations from Estonia went beyond 'a visit to the zoo'. We discussed what we can actually learn and adopt from the Estonian practices.

A project is more effective if you work as one structure towards an individual young person. It was impressive to see that an umbrella organisation organizes the whole process and can reach out directly to young people. They are working as one network. Comparison with Germany –umbrellas often claim to work with individuals and there is a



- competition between the different members. In France, this one-stop shop approach could possibly work regionally.
- Let applicants know if their project was selected as a **good practice**. In the Finnish NA we write a note in the application/feedback.
- ☼ Projects like "EVS as a tool for NEETwork" are great examples for creating partnerships between different organisations, especially dealing with young people in difficult situations. It also helps organisations to be surrounded by trustful organisations and find reliable partners. It is a lot of work for one coordinating NA maybe NAs could take turns to coordinate the project. It's good to look at EVS and Erasmus+ as a tool, as part of what organisations are doing.
- NAs should stimulate more **peer-learning** between organisations on national level. TCA could be used for this (with a link to an international activity).
- Use the NA network and the TCA budget in a **more strategic** way. It would be good to mainstream these strategic cooperation projects.
- There is a real **appetite for best practices** to spread TCA experience amongst other organisations (applicants) and get project organisers together to analyse their practice and spread their learning.
- NA activities should have more **cross-sectorial approach** to increase their impact.

What kind of support can NAs offer

NAs don't organise inclusion projects, but can support inclusion organisations in doing so.

WHAT would you like to achieve for the young people in NEET situation or the organisations working with them?

There are of course limits to what we can do and what not. NAs can't give jobs or can't support young people directly, on a personal level. But what would you see as the ideal role for the NA in the field of NEET?

- **Intermediary** between different sectors.
- Create and support more connections between youth, employment and training sector. In CZ the unemployment offices are very bureaucratic, so cooperation with them is difficult, even though it is needed.
- Volunteer is not a recognized status, maybe NAs can support creating this on the national and international level. And support visa process etc. related to volunteering abroad. EVS should be officially recognized as a method to support long-term unemployed youngsters.
- Address organisations directly to introduce the opportunities to work with NEETS.
 National round table meetings with organisations who work with inclusion groups. To find out what they want to achieve and what help they would need from the NA.
- NA staff should try to help organisations to deal with the bureaucracy of Erasmus+ projects, so that they could concentrate on mentoring and supporting the volunteer(s).
- NAs could put national priorities to support inclusion or put more emphasis on NEET projects, within the possibilities of the assessment process.
- To gain an **overview** on who are NEET in your country.
- To improve the **quality of projects** that involve NEETs (or other inclusion target groups). Usually organisations only describe a very broad target group and do not go into details about quality assurance and how to serve particular group of young people better. A single 'regular' youth exchange should not be targeted to NEET young people. But it can be a valuable tool if it is a part of long term activities. (Lithuania)
- To achieve strong partnerships and networks for inclusion.
- Raise the understanding of NEET, so that NGOs see where they could make a
 contribution and benefit from this (funding) focus on NEET. To increase awareness of
 NEET and to change organisations' attitude towards this heterogeneous target group.
- To develop national ID strategy for all parts of E+ / YiA strategy in cooperation with big umbrella organisations (Germany, focus on inclusion and young people with disability).
- Belgium FI: To have a **yearly priority** (next year is young people with disability).
- To use TCA for inclusion and create opportunities to **follow-up** up on big activities for all those who took part in such a large-scale inclusion event.
- To be more active as NA in **Corporate Social Responsibility**, especially on inclusion (Romania).
- To increase the **competences** of the institutions working on inclusion, which could make use of E+.

HOW are you going to approach the situation and what methods, resources, strategies, approaches you might use?

- Round table meetings with relevant actors in the NEET field.
- **TCA activities** addressing the issues, including dissemination events to share achievements and good practices.
- Informing and training **assessors** on the possibilities to grant more points within the assessment system to inclusion/NEET projects.
- The 20th anniversary of EVS will be celebrated in 2016. There will be an international event in FR. This would be a good **forum** to highlight all the positive points but also the remaining obstacles towards EVS. Invite policy makers + business sector to play their part.
- Valorisation training (CIMO): learn how Erasmus+ activities contribute to inclusion.
- **Lobby** together with other (umbrella) organisations who have a lot volunteers or work with them to create better (employment) opportunities for different NEET groups.
- Sharing **successful stories of NEETs** who have taken part in Erasmus+ and improved their situation considerably.
- **Think strategically** and develop a longer process. Develop an operational strategy within timeframe (1-2 years) to address specific target groups with certain actions and goals.
- **Webinars** (especially in bigger countries) on the possibilities of the programme for specific target groups.
- Map the organisations working with specific inclusion groups.
- Create a **network of inclusion organisations**, by creating a pathway and giving them a space to create something for themselves.
- Romania: to reach young people through working with umbrella organisations.
- Cooperate with different funding programmes.

WITH WHOM will you work?

- Policy makers, key stakeholders.
- Other E+ Youth NAs but also the E+ NAs of the educational/vocational sector: they reach other target groups whom we would not get in touch with (universities, companies).
 Combine resources together to have more impact.
- Representatives of youth and inclusion organisations, umbrella organisations.
- **Employment offices**: they can be rather reluctant to be involved in projects, as they often focus on implementing only their own obligations/objectives. They can promote EVS as opportunity for unemployed youngsters (it works in Lithuania).
- Other organisations who work with volunteers.
- Steering group of the Inclusion & Diversity Strategy for the E+ programme Youth.
- Strategic cooperation (partnership) between NAs on Inclusion & Diversity.
- **Trainers** on inclusion, pool of trainers.
- TCA colleagues.
- European Social Policy Network get in touch with their experts from your own country
- Local authorities (establish local networks).
- Educational authorities.



P	The size of the challenge also depends on the size of the country and the resources and
	resourcefulness of the NA officers.

NAs are primarily involved with projects and applications, so it is important to cooperate with other partners, because we can't start/steer policy processes on our own.

Action Plans & support needed

Taking quality time to reflect on NEET issues is only a first step. The real work starts after the Inclusion Colleague Support Group. So we asked participants what action they were going to take.

Karlien Leroux & Marjolein Vandenbroucke (Belgium FL)

- Have a meeting with colleagues to find out about the "EVS as a Tool for NEETwork" project and also discuss NEET issues in general.
- Put a concrete inclusion strategy (on paper) to prepare for March 2016 ICSG.
- Focus on young people with disability (contact person in France and cooperate during 2016).

Flavia Giovanelli (France)

- Inform colleagues.
- Take time to discuss strategic partnership and focus on inclusion.
- Work together with the other E+ agencies in France on inclusion issues.

Miruna Covaci (Romania)

- Wait for the information to settle down.
- Collect the needs from the colleagues who work with beneficiaries and projects.
- Develop an inclusion strategy (work plan) with cross-sectorial elements.
- Use TCA budget in a different way and think more about long-term projects, study visits and follow-up activities.
- Use our networks, partners and umbrella organisations to reach NEET young people directly.
- Use our pool of trainers.
- Connect our promotion tools more strategically with Inclusion.

Eva Těthalová (Czech Republic)

- Talk to TCA officer to include inclusion to each event (to invite the organisations working with the target group).
- Focus on follow-up.
- Share good practices.

Loreta Eimontaite (Lithuania)

- Meeting with colleagues.
- Facebook posts in July dedicated to inclusion.
- Meeting of main actors in the youth fields (who is doing what and how to have more synergy).
- International training organized by the ministry (NEET and youth guarantee?).
- Use the SALTO publication on NEET once it is ready.

Inge Linne (Germany)

- Be part of the ID steering group of the COM.
- Bring together all the relevant stakeholders at a round table (on NEET and people with disability).

- Clarify the roles at the NA (who is working in the inclusion group).
- Plan with the other NAs in Germany to have common conferences on inclusion topics.
- Participate in the next ICSG.

Oğuz Emin Çarıkcı (Turkey)

- Attend the future events on NEET and inclusion.
- Use SALTO's inclusion strategy booklet.
- Inform the colleagues about the meeting.
- Identify possible applicants and beneficiaries (which groups have been reached and where are the gaps).
- Find local/national statistics.
- Apply the learning from the good practice examples from this meeting.

Valerija Posavec (Croatia)

- Share with colleagues and the whole NA.
- Define NEET's in the national level (in cooperation with other sectors employment centers, social centres, ministry etc).
- Take home the good practice about EVS and employment office.
- Make a bigger inclusion group at the NA.
- Work out a short-time strategy towards the NEET that turns out to be the biggest group.

Jutta Kivimäki (Finland)

- Shaping NA national inclusion strategy.
- National cross-sectoral seminar about benefits of international work for NEET (organising inclusion workshop) and national round table with inclusion NGOs.
- Taking part in the prep meeting of the TC Taster for inclusion organisations.
- ID inclusion steering group meeting.

Marit Kannelmäe-Geerts & Nele Mets (Estonia)

- Put a concrete inclusion strategy on paper.
- Make sure how we tackle inclusion statistics (in the mobility tool, when we change and share it with the ID Steering Group!
- Track how we are reaching our aims.
- Map which target groups we reach and which not.
- Continue to develop our TCA strategically in the light of inclusion (continue "EVS as a Tool for NEETwork" and the next steps after this) - suggestions are welcome from the steering group.

What can SALTO Inclusion do for you?

- Report of the inclusion colleague support group –and put online spread to Inclusion officers.
- Next ICSG will be about how to develop your own NA national ID strategy. It will take place from 15th till 18th of March, 2016 in Portugal.
- Here you can find a link to our **publication "Shaping Inclusion"**, which can help you to make first steps towards your NA ID strategy: www.salto-youth.net/shapinginclusion/
- Resend survey on NAs national ID strategies.
- **NEET research booklet** should be ready in October 2015.
- Send "Inclusion Officers List 2015" to make communication about Inclusion topics with other NAs easier.
- Send report from the 1st meeting of the **ID Strategy Steering Group**. Information should be shared with all inclusion officers.

Evaluation - K A T Ch

What should we Keep, Add, Throw or Change for the next Inclusion Colleague Support Groups?

Keep

- Having resources table in the meeting room (2x).
- Good and useful content.
- Project visit (5x) and presentations from "outside".
- Work on concrete projects between NAs.
- Sharing good practices from different countries (4x).
- Close cooperation with hosting NA.
- Very effective meeting.
- Statistical presentation with analysis.
- Session on 'mapping your NEET situation'.
- Sharing about countries realities.
- Action plans.
- Everything.
- Small group of 10-15 people.
- One field YiA (not needed to invite other E+ fields).
- Great people.
- Participative approach.
- The structure of the meeting.
- Clearly shared focus and interest of participants.
- Lots of good ideas in NEET area.
- Good collaboration with other stakeholders.
- Good organisation.
- Publication on NEET.
- Informal aspects of the meeting.
- Input of expert(s).
- Thematic approach.

Add

- Cross-sectoral approach (2x).
- Job shadowing.
- Colleagues from school sectors who work with those projects.
- More NAs present.
- An informal (optional) activity.
- More veggie options.

Throw Away

Change

• The 2nd day afternoon was quite heavy (2x).

Where do the Inclusion Colleague Support Groups come from?

The Inclusion Colleague Support Groups (formerly called 'Intervision') are an **follow-up from the Staff Training for NA Inclusion Officers** organised by SALTO in July 2007 (www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InclusionStaffTraining/). The NA Inclusion Officers appreciated the possibility they had to meet and discuss how to develop their inclusion work.

The Inclusion Staff Training (2007) focussed mainly on **how to develop an Inclusion Strategy (on the national/NA level)** – and led to the "Shaping Inclusion" booklet which is a manual supporting NAs to develop their national inclusion strategy. (www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/ShapingInclusion/).

The National Agencies' Inclusion Officers felt the need to have **more time to exchange experiences** about how they were approaching inclusion in different countries, and go more into the practical details. That's when the idea was born to bring together a limited number of inclusion colleagues around a specific inclusion topic or practice: e.g. how to select and reach specific target groups, how to involve stakeholders in the inclusion work, etc.

More about the Inclusion Colleague Support Groups at www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InclusionColleagueSupportGroups/

What are the Colleague Support Groups

Small groups of Inclusion Officers meet peer-to-peer and reflect and support each other regarding common problems, questions, etc. related to inclusion issues on NA level. This process is facilitated and enriched by SALTO Inclusion experience.

General objectives – what you can expect to get out of it

- The (inclusion) officer will be inspired for the steps to take in order to address the problem or question
- ☆ The (inclusion) officer has considered the usefulness of developing an inclusion strategy
- ☆ The (inclusion) officer was able to exchange experience on inclusion issues with colleagues
- The (inclusion) officer was able to use the Shaping Inclusion booklet (and other resources) as a tool to move forward/deal with inclusion issues
- ☆ The (inclusion) officer is aware of the support of SALTO Inclusion

Who - profile of participants:

- ☆ Inclusion officers of NAs the colleagues dealing with inclusion projects and the development AND implementation of the national inclusion strategy
- NA staff with specific focus/tasks on inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities
- ☆ Officers with different levels of experience to have fruitful interactions and mutual learning
- ☆ In the ideal case, a maximum of 8 to 10 participants per Colleague Support Group to allow lots of interaction and in depth discussions

- ☆ The (inclusion) officer is willing to share with colleagues back home and with other (inclusion) colleagues that were not present
- ☆ SALTO Inclusion can invite (at SALTO's expenses) some NAs or experts with relevant expertise for the topic of the Colleague Support Group

When and where?

Every Inclusion Colleague Support Group has a different composition of participants. Each Colleague Support Groups concentrates on one specific inclusion theme. The participants will be asked to prepare some (home)work beforehand to make most of the 2 days together.

In 2014 there was 1 Colleague Support Group: "Ideas for the new Inclusion & Diversity Strategy". In case your NA would be interested to host one in coming years, please do not hesitate to contact SALTO Inclusion RC.

The **format** looks as follows:

- day 1 arrival day (by 16h) introduction welcome evening
- ☆ day 2 full working day
- day 3 continue working in the morning departure after lunch

Finances & practicalities

- ☆ Participating NAs pay their own travel and subsistence costs (food and lodging costs)
- ☆ SALTO pays own travel and subsistence costs (and of any invited experts)
- The hosting NA is only asked to cover the venue (meeting room and material), and their own participation costs. They can decide to offer a dinner in town, a reception, etc.

All other costs will be carried by the participating NAs and SALTO Inclusion. The hosting NA books the accommodation, food and working place.

Follow-up & Support:

The content of each colleague support group will be documented and shared in a practical report: methods, problems, questions, answers ... Depending on the specific questions and problems discussed in the Inclusion Colleague Support Group, SALTO Inclusion will offer tailor-made support (e.g. to deliver tools, training, etc.)

For any further questions and suggestions, feel free to contact SALTO Inclusion via inclusion@salto-youth.net

