

ID TALKS!

This series of ID Talks is dedicated to social justice and youth work. They reflect on humanistic theories, discuss the type of society we live in now, and what kind of reality we want to create for our common future.



ID Talks:

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND BEING HUMAN
SOCIAL JUSTICE AND YOUTH WORK
SOCIAL JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS
SOCIAL JUSTICE AND ACTIVISM
SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EDUCATION

Download this and other SALTO Inclusion & Diversity booklets for free at www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Inclusion/. This document does not necessarily reflect the official views of the European Commission, the SALTO Inclusion & Diversity Resource Centre or the organisation co-operating with them.



EUROPEAN
SOLIDARITY
CORPS



Erasmus+

ABOUT SALTO

...‘Support and **A**dvanced **L**earning and **T**raining **O**pportunities within the Erasmus+: Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps programmes’. The European Commission has created a network of seven SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centres to enhance the implementation of the EU Erasmus+: Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps programmes, which provide young people with valuable non-formal learning experiences.

SALTO’s aim is to support the implementation of the European Erasmus+: Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps Programmes with regard to priorities such as Social Inclusion, Diversity, Participation, and Solidarity. SALTO also supports co-operation with regions such as EuroMed, South-East Europe, or Eastern Europe and The Caucasus and coordinates all training and co-operation activities, as well as information tools for National Agencies.

In these European priority areas, SALTO-YOUTH provides resources, information, and training for National Agencies and European youth workers. Most of these resources are offered and disseminated at www.SALTO-YOUTH.net. Find online the [European Training Calendar](#), the [Toolbox for Training and Youth Work](#), the database of youth field trainers active at the European level ([Trainers Online for Youth or TOY](#)), links to online resources, and much more.

SALTO-YOUTH actively co-operates with other actors in the European youth field, among them the National Agencies of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes, the Council of Europe, the European Youth Forum, European youth workers and trainers, and training organisers.

THE SALTO-YOUTH INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY RESOURCE CENTRE WWW.SALTO-YOUTH.NET/INCLUSION/

The SALTO-YOUTH Inclusion and Diversity Resource Centre (based in Belgium Flanders) works together with the European Commission to support the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities in the Erasmus+: Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps programmes. Through that, it works to contribute to social cohesion in society at large. SALTO Inclusion and Diversity also supports the National Agencies and youth workers in their inclusion work by providing training, developing youth work methods, disseminating information via the newsletter, etc. By offering opportunities for training, exchange, and reflection on inclusion practice and diversity management, SALTO Inclusion & Diversity works towards the visibility, accessibility, and transparency of its inclusion & diversity work and resources, and towards making ‘inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities’ and ‘positive diversity management’ a widely supported priority.

For more information and resources, have a look at the Inclusion & Diversity pages at www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Inclusion/



DISCLAIMER

This magazine contains pictures as a result of the Graphic Recording which is an integral part of all the ID Talks events. There are four types of styles throughout the whole magazine.

- **General Cover Picture.** It is used for promotional reasons throughout the social media channels and the dissemination materials and it depicts the logo of SALTO Inclusion & Diversity, the title, and the graphic elements of each version of the ID Talks events. It is displayed as a cover picture of each ID Talks version.
- **Portrait of Speaker.** It depicts each speaker and a few graphic recording elements such as written parts of their "speech" and/or any other graphics according to the style of each ID Talks version. It is displayed on top of the speaker's description page.
- **Main Graphic Recording Card.** It is used for promotional reasons throughout the social media channels and the dissemination materials and it depicts the logo of SALTO Inclusion & Diversity, the title, and the graphic elements of each version of the ID Talks events, including the specific name of the event, the portrait of the speaker, written quotes of their "speech" and/or any other graphics. It is displayed on top of the first page of each article.
- **Graphic Recording Elements.** Throughout each article, the graphic recording elements complement the text with essential parts of each speaker's "talk".



I & D Talks

“Social Justice”

What is it all about?

“ID Talks” is a series of 5 online workshops on 5 major topics to promote inclusion & diversity (ID) and quality youth work. It features youth workers, professionals and volunteers, from all over the world to share insights, research findings, food for thought, good practices or inspirational stories. They will guide participants through the pressing matters and challenges affecting Inclusion & Diversity and inspire them to make their programmes and organisations more inclusive, embrace human differences, look ahead and picture how the future of youth work and Inclusion & Diversity might be.

Each workshop begins with an input from a guest speaker. Afterwards, participants have the opportunity to engage in the discussion, ask questions and share about their own realities and experiences.

For whom?

- Youth workers, youth leaders, professionals and volunteers involved in ID in the EU youth programmes, as well as all those interested in youth work and inclusion & diversity topics.

Why should you join?

- Get food for thought and learn from inspirational ID stories.
- Learn about ID topics from the youth work sector and beyond.
- Get information, inspiration, methods to help the youth sector address ID.
- Put some more quality in your (international) youth work.
- Identify and learn how to tackle existing and future challenges within ID.



Event Dates:

- 3 September (13h CET) > **ID Talks Social Justice and Being Human (A Tale of Two Sophias):** What does it mean to be human, who is included and who is excluded? What is social justice? How is the world - our environment, technology etc. - shaping today's young people? Let's look into some modern humanist ideals and theories, debate on societal dilemmas and their implications for youth work practice. Guest speaker: **Maria Pisani**, Malta
- 17 September (13h CET) > **ID Talks Social Justice and Youth Work:** How does social justice translate to youth work? What are the different models to ensure access and equity in youth work? Let's talk about the focus of youth work as a value-based profession - should it be about societal change or individual integration? We will examine youth work on the crossroads of individual needs and structural changes. Guest speaker: **Silvia Volpi**, Italy
- 1 October (13h CET) > **ID Talks Social Justice and Human Rights:** How are human rights regarded in today's society? Are there any new concepts and definitions, and how do they reflect the reality of human rights today? What is the role of youth work in promoting, advocating and defining human rights? Let's see how young people are challenging the existing structures, advocating for new issues and breaking existing patterns. Guest speaker: **Neringa Tumėnaitė**, the UK
- 15 October (13h CET) > **ID Talks Social Justice and Activism:** What is (youth) activism and what forms can it take? Why do young people engage in activism and what issues are they ready to "fight for"? Should youth work be "radical" and "political"? Let's discuss the links between activism and youth work and see how activism contributes to creation of a just society. Guest speaker: **Eimear Manning**, Ireland
- 29 October (13h CET) > **ID Talks Social Justice and Education:** What is the role of (non-formal) education in actively countering injustice and helping to build inclusive democracy for the benefit of all? What kind of tools and resources are needed? Let's discover examples of social justice education and peace education cases, and see how they are contextualised and targeted at young people with fewer opportunities. Guest speaker: **Maria Sakarias**, Estonia

Social Justice and Youth Work

How does social justice translate to youth work? What are the different models to ensure access and equity in youth work?



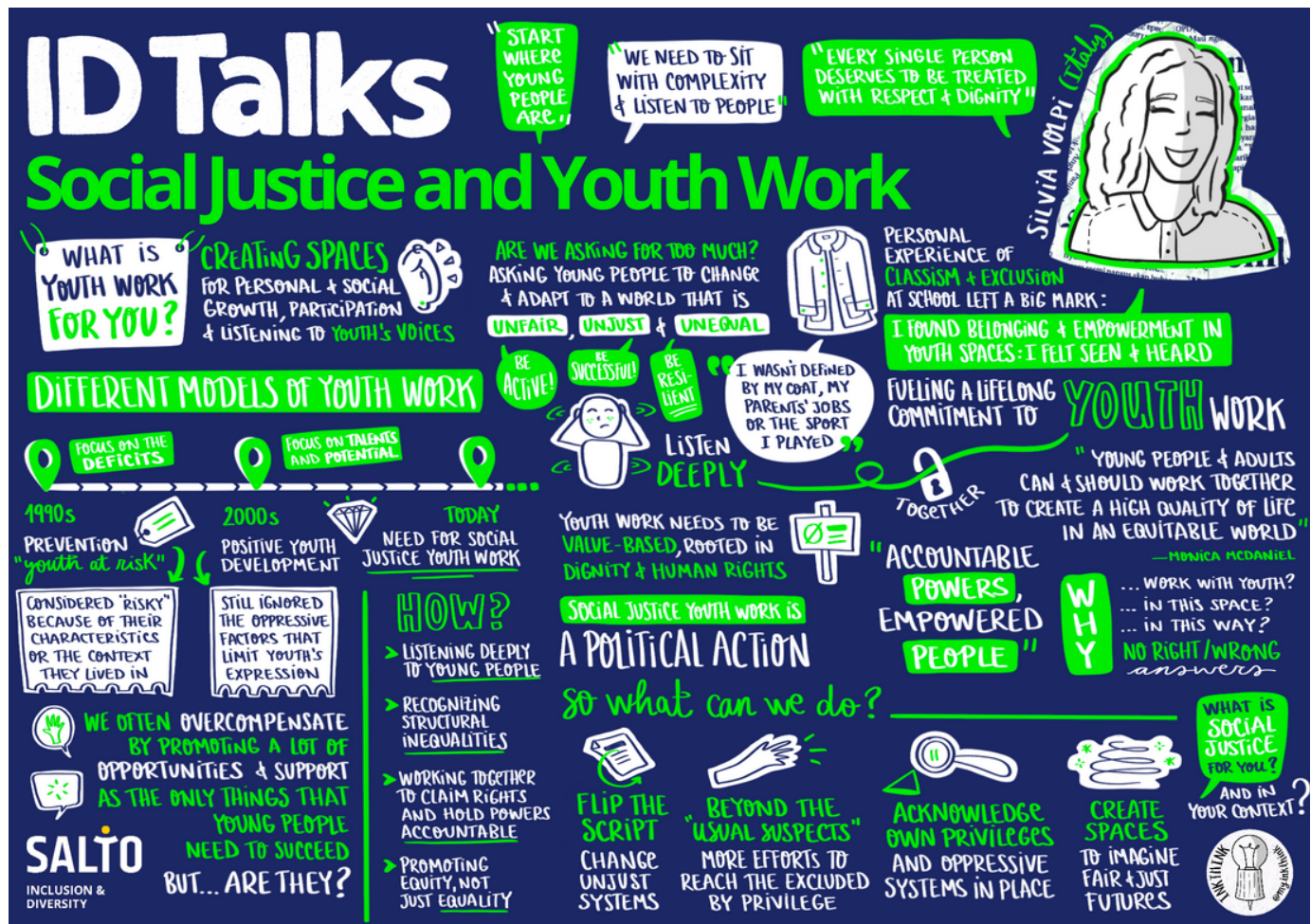
GUEST SPEAKER: SILVIA VOLPI

I am **Silvia**, often called Volpazza by my Italian colleagues, born in Italy and now living in Italy. I have been living in France and Spain and working in different countries, especially in the Caucasus region and in Turkey. I have more than 30 years of experience in youth work and non-formal education. I started volunteering in summer camps and later became a youth worker. Nowadays, I am working mainly as a trainer and coach at the national and international level. I founded REDU – Human Rights Education Network with some Italian colleagues in 2001. I am very interested in the mysteries of the human mind, which is why I am finishing my studies in positive psychology. The common thread that has characterised and continues to characterise my work is the defence of human rights and the fight against social injustice. Outside work I enjoy readings, sailing and a good glass of wine.



Article

Silvia Volpi



Is social justice-based youth work science fiction?

In this article, I will critically examine whether social justice-based youth work—defined as an approach that intentionally addresses inequalities and promotes fairness and rights for all young people—should be considered a distinct form of youth work. I will support this analysis by engaging with the insights of Monica Mac Daniel, particularly from her article "Social Justice Youth Work: Actualising Youth Rights." [1]

Before delving into the subject, I would like to remind us of what we mean by 'youth work' in Europe. Both the ETS Competence Model for youth workers to work internationally [2] and the Council of Europe [3] define youth work as a practice that encompasses a wide range of activities where youth workers connect with young people in various non-formal and informal settings. The activities are implemented by, with, and for young people in groups or one-on-one to enhance individual growth and community development.

As someone who has worked in youth services for many years, I often reflect on what youth work truly means. I've noticed that many youth work activities primarily aim to help young people change but rarely address the broader systems that shape their lives. I strongly believe we are asking young people to change, improve, be active, resilient, and employable in an unjust world that is shaped by those very injustices.



I started working in the field between 1990 and 2000 in Italy. At the beginning of my career, youth workers worked mainly with the so-called young people 'at risk', i.e., those struggling with drug addiction, from a migrant background, or living in poverty. At that time, youth workers were primarily responsible for preventing young people from entering the criminal justice system and supporting positive changes in their lives.

Building on this historical context, the perception of young people underwent a shift. Today, young people are often described as talented and full of potential, with the capacity for positive and healthy development. This change marked a gradual move toward the "positive youth development" approach, emphasizing strengths, talents, and employability while supporting their growth.

In the first case, as some researchers argue, the model overlooks the point because it focuses on the "risky" aspects of young people without considering the "oppressive factors" in their lives—meaning the institutional, social, or systemic barriers that restrict their opportunities—which may be driving them toward negative behaviours and decisions. In the second case, youth work overcompensates by promoting opportunities and support without considering the oppressive factors that may limit the expression of those young people.

This brings us to Monica McDaniel's perspective, where she argues that youth work should be grounded in social justice to address the oppressive factors that shape young people's experiences. Is that a distinct form of youth work?



In my view, it is a comprehensive definition of our practice. In fact, if we understand youth work as rooted in values, it must actively address the social injustices that affect young people, while supporting their growth, positive development, and active participation in society. Youth workers need to adopt social justice lenses, deeply listen, recognize complex contexts, and support youth in identifying rights violations. Only then does youth work fulfil its true purpose: empowering youth to confront injustice and claim their rights in favour of healthy personal growth and community development.

As Monica McDaniel claims, “young people don't have to change to get privileges. Instead, they can build their own identity and story by using their voice to talk about the injustices they've faced and holding the institutions that govern them accountable.” Growth, then, is about building identity, claiming rights, while strengthening communities.

Youth work must explicitly stand for social justice, treating all with dignity instead of defining them by disadvantage. Mac Daniel writes: “In a social justice youth work model, young people and adults work together as partners to become aware of how institutional, historical, and systemic forces limit and promote the life opportunities for particular groups and take social action against oppressive forces. Even if a more equitable world is currently science fiction, it does not mean that youth and adults should continue to ignore injustice...”.

**“ YOUNG PEOPLE & ADULTS
CAN & SHOULD WORK TOGETHER
TO CREATE A HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE
IN AN EQUITABLE WORLD ”**
—MONICA MCDANIEL

Some of you may see social justice-based youth work as adding extra complexity—requiring new skills and interventions. At times, youth workers might feel like superheroes in a world that too often doesn't recognise their work or offer fair pay.

For me, social justice-based youth work enables us to clearly articulate and explicitly state the essence and values of youth work. A social justice-based approach compels us to acknowledge our core values, understand the concepts of social justice and injustice, their underlying causes and consequences, and the actions that can be taken to address them. It forces us to recognise the political role of our practice.

**YOUTH WORK NEEDS TO BE
VALUE-BASED, ROOTED IN
DIGNITY & HUMAN RIGHTS**



**SOCIAL JUSTICE YOUTH WORK IS
A POLITICAL ACTION**

Social justice-based youth work focuses on the present moment, where young people are, analysing oppressive factors and creating opportunities relevant to their needs, fostering growth, and supporting them in advocating for their rights to build an equitable world.

Is it science fiction? I encourage you to consider how, as a practitioner, you can contribute to making social justice-based youth work a reality. What concrete steps can you take to help youth challenge injustice and promote fairness today? What do you think?

so what can we do?



**FLIP THE
SCRIPT**
CHANGE
UNJUST
SYSTEMS



**"BEYOND THE
USUAL SUSPECTS"**
MORE EFFORTS TO
REACH THE EXCLUDED
BY PRIVILEGE



**ACKNOWLEDGE
OWN PRIVILEGES
AND OPPRESSIVE
SYSTEMS IN PLACE**



**CREATE
SPACES
TO IMAGINE
FAIR & JUST
FUTURES**

References:

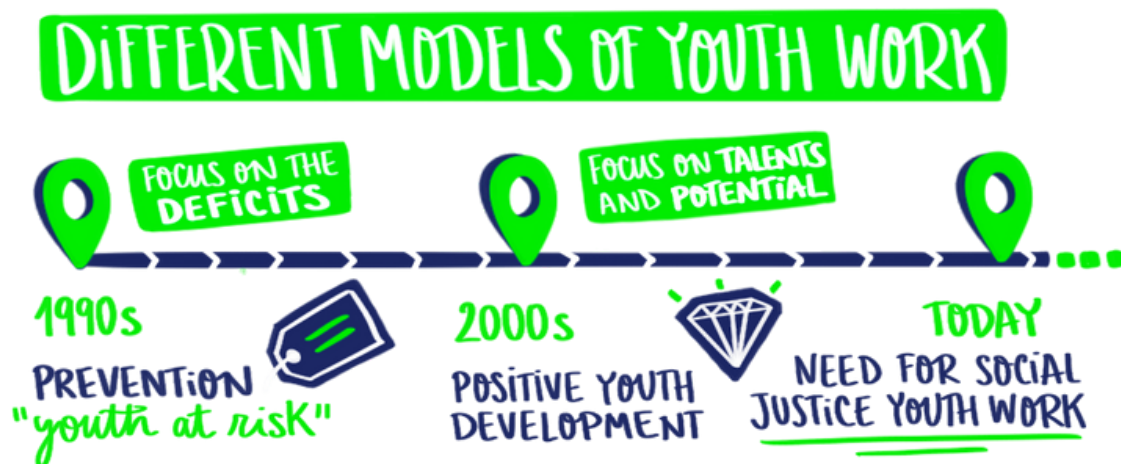
- Monica McDaniel: [Social Justice Youth Work Actualizing Youth Rights.pdf](#)
- Alan Mackie: Young People, Youth Work and Social Justice: A Participatory Parity Perspective
- Shawn Ginwright and Julio Cammarota: New Terrain in Youth Development: The Promise of a Social Justice Approach.
- ETS Competence Model: [ETS Competence Model Youth Workers final 2023.pdf](#)
- Council of Europe: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/youth-work>

In-text references:

[1] Monica McDaniel "Social Justice Youth Work: Actualising Youth Rights"

[2] ETS Competence Model for youth workers working internationally

[3] Council of Europe – Youth Work



EDITORIAL INFORMATION

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On behalf of the SALTO Inclusion & Diversity!

