

European Academy on Youth Work

Innovation, Current Trends and Developments in Youth Work

2nd edition, 2 – 5 November 2021, Slovenia

What is the European Academy on Youth Work (EAYW)?

The EAYW is an initiative of National Agencies of the EU Programme Erasmus+ Youth and the European Solidarity Corps¹ as well as of SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centres. The EAYW aims to support innovation in youth work and youth work policy, to promote the development of quality youth work and to contribute to creating a common ground on youth work and youth work policy.

The EAYW offers a regular platform for the European youth work community of practice to reflect, exchange and gather knowledge on current European topics, trends and developments with relevance to the youth field. It wants to enable learning about why, when and how innovation in youth work happens and when innovative approaches and practices taken in the youth work field are successful in responding to current developments and challenges faced by young people across Europe.

In this respect, the EAYW responds to the demands expressed in the final Declaration of the 3rd European Youth Work Convention to encourage and support the different stakeholders of the European youth work community of practice to strive “towards the maintenance of the good structures and practices that already exist, their development when the need arises, and the space for innovation in our thinking, our organisation and our practices”. Especially “in a post-pandemic Europe, youth work must seek to innovate and go further than the paths already known”.²

The outcomes of studies, reflections, exchange of views and debates on these questions undertaken in the framework of the EAYW should support the further development of youth work as well as different political frameworks for youth work development in Europe and thus contribute to the European Youth Work Agenda and its implementation through the Bonn process.

The target group of the EAYW are youth workers, paid and/or volunteers, active at all levels (local, regional, national, European) as well as professionals in areas with relevance for the youth sector, such as youth work policy and public services, National Agencies and other youth work structures, [I]NGOs as a well as science and research. Geographically, the EAYW addresses stakeholders from the wider European context, including Europe’s neighbouring countries South of the Mediterranean.

About the 2nd edition of the EAYW

The 2nd EAYW event follows the successful 1st pilot edition, which was organised in May 2019 in Kranjska Gora, Slovenia, and brought together around 170 professionals from youth work practice, research and policy, including institutions supporting youth work at different levels. Following a call for proposals, 36 innovative practices in and related to youth work were presented and discussed in relation to current trends and developments identified by the participants. More information and the final report of the 1st EAYW event are available at www.eayw.net.



¹ National Agencies of Austria, Belgium-FL, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, The Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia and Sweden

² [Final Declaration of the 3rd European Youth Work Convention, Signposts for the Future \(Bonn, 10 December 2020\)](#)

The 2nd edition will build on the experiences of the first EAYW event, but also intends to go a step further by putting a stronger emphasis on learning about the mechanisms that spark and support innovation in youth work as a response to challenges and changing realities faced by societies and young people. It also takes into account the outcomes of current research on innovation in youth work carried out by the EAYW.

The next EAYW event aims to offer a space for knowledge-building through peer learning and exchange, and networking, in particular:

- To jointly **explore what are the main challenges and trends in and of relevance for youth work** that are calling for and leading to new, innovative and creative approaches and developments;
- To **showcase innovative practices, approaches, concepts and strategies** developed in response to these challenges and trends;
- Based on the presented innovative examples and other inputs during the event as well as current research on the topic of innovation in youth work, to **find out more about how innovation has evolved in youth work, and which conditions are needed** by young people, youth workers, organisations working with young people and other relevant stakeholders to **spark and sustain innovative and impactful approaches, practices or strategies** and
- To **produce outcomes** of the reflections and discussions during the event, which will support further developments related to innovation in youth work.



The EAYW aims to be inclusive and participatory in its approach and to give a voice to contributions representing the diverse levels, environments and stakeholders in youth work. Furthermore, it promotes cross-sectorial and multi-perspective approaches involving youth work practice, research, and policy, which have proven vital to successfully address identified developments or challenges. Reflection based on different perspectives should help to identify responses to trends that could be taken up by different roles.

The EAYW further aims to look at what happens outside youth work, what is the specific role of youth work, and how it connects and interacts with other sectors.

Based on this overall approach, the 2nd EAYW wants to offer a forum for presenting and learning from diverse contributions that stimulate and enable reflection, exchange and learning outcomes.

[Note on the potential influence of the Covid-19 pandemic on the EAYW event](#)

In order to allow for ample joint time for exchange, sharing, networking and learning from and with each other, the EAYW is envisaged as an international residential event.

Should it not be possible to hold the event in November 2021 as planned due to the state of the Covid-19 pandemic, the EAYW will be postponed to spring 2022. In this case, in autumn 2021, a series of connected smaller online events will be organised (or blended activities, if possible), which could tackle specific questions or topics and lead up to the main (residential) event in spring 2022.



More information

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