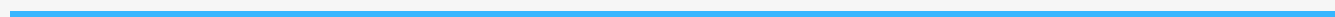


CURRICULUM FOR EUROPEAN YOUTH ANIMATORS

AGREEMENT NUMBER: 2018-3-FR02-KA205-015158
COOPERATION FOR INNOVATION AND THE EXCHANGE OF GOOD PRACTICES

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The European Youth Animators project aims to reinforce knowledge, skills and competences for animators in the field of youth at European level. Funded by the Erasmus+ Programme, the project is carried out by partners from France, Belgium, Germany and Italy.

According to the European policy of recognition of competences, in this field there is no harmonisation between EU members countries and animators from one country are not qualified in others members states. Furthermore, this lack does not support mobility of animators at European level.

Furthermore, the project aims to deliver a European Curriculum for European Animators suitable for all EU countries. It intends to design and deliver an online training course at EU level including the essential root (KSC - knowledge, skills and competences), transversal and personal skills which are fundamental to manage groups of youngsters.

At the end of the project, the European Framework will be delivered, allowing all countries to implement it in their national competences framework.

Europeans Animators for Youth will then set up a modular training where learning objectives are settled to fulfil requirements of the different national diplomas. Training objects will be designed to support development of needed KSC, and learners will be evaluated as required according to European tools: EQF, and they will be awarded by a certificate issued and signed by the partners of European Animators. Of course assessment methodology will be based on practical experiences, such as group workshops, cases studies, and personal presentations. Trainings will be done online and locally with also practical activities.

Main results of the EAFY project

- Curriculum for the European Youth Animator (presented in this publication);
- European Qualification Framework (EQF/CEC) referring to the European Youth Animator;
- eLearning course for European Youth Animators.

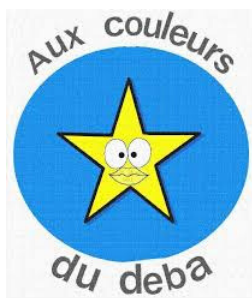
Partners involved in the project implementation

- Commune de Carbon-Blanc (France)
- Aux Couleurs du Deba (France)
- CIAPE Centro Italiano per l'Apprendimento Permanente (Italy)
- Business Training SA (Belgium)
- Stadt Bochum (Germany)



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The information and views set out in this document have been developed by the authors/partners listed above in the framework of the European Animators for Youth project, funded by the European Commission's ERASMUS Plus, Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices, Action - Strategic Partnership. The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained herein.

INTRODUCTION TO THE EUROPEAN YOUTH ANIMATOR PROFILE

When analysing the Youth policy environment from a European perspective, it is necessary to firstly refer to the recently revised EU Youth Strategy, representing the framework for EU youth policy cooperation for 2019-2027 and required to make the most of youth policy's potential. Based on the Council Resolution of 26 November 2018 (2018/C 456/01), it fosters youth participation in democratic life, supports social and civic engagement and aims to ensure that all young people have the necessary resources to take part in society.

Among the main novelties, the Strategy foresees an agenda for youth work to further improve its quality, innovation and recognition and to allow other sectors to capitalise on the potential of non-formal learning. The European Animators for Youth initiative represents thus a valuable contribution in this sense, being the project's main aim to shape and spread a common understanding about knowledge, skills and competences for animators in the field of youth at the European level, through the collection of the available training among the Member States and the subsequent definition of a European Youth Animator professional profile, whose curriculum will be described through the relevant European Qualification Framework, to be developed in accordance.

'Youth work' is a broad term covering a wide range of activities of a social, cultural, educational or political nature by, with and for young people. Increasingly, such activities also include sport and services for young people. Youth work focuses on the personal and social development of young people and has an extended reach which accesses and engages young people based on their needs and interests and takes account of their environment, while preventing social exclusion and enhancing social inclusion. Youth work offers developmental spaces and opportunities for all young people and is mainly based on non-formal and informal learning process and on voluntary participation.

Youth work is not a new concept in the EU and the landscape of youth work continues to evolve as well as its importance to increase along the years. Gaining prominence on the political agenda at both the EU and Member State levels, this implies a growing emphasis on measurable standards and developing educational and labour market skills, as well as an increasing demand in professionalisation and professionalised youth animators. On the other side, not all countries have even a formal definition of youth work and amongst those that do here is a variety of definitions.

Based on a review of a number of relevant studies prepared, among the others, by the European Commission, the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) and the Council of Europe, it is possible to list some core characteristics, frequently cited when describing youth work; these are:

- a focus on young people,
- personal development, and
- voluntary participation.

It is also possible to capture the types of activities and the focus of the youth animators' activity, distinguishing between the objectives (from a broad goal of personal development to very specific issues) and the target group (universal - thus targeting all young people - or focused on specific target groups of young people). Successful youth animator practice can result in a range of positive outcomes (see also the table below) for young people which enable them to:

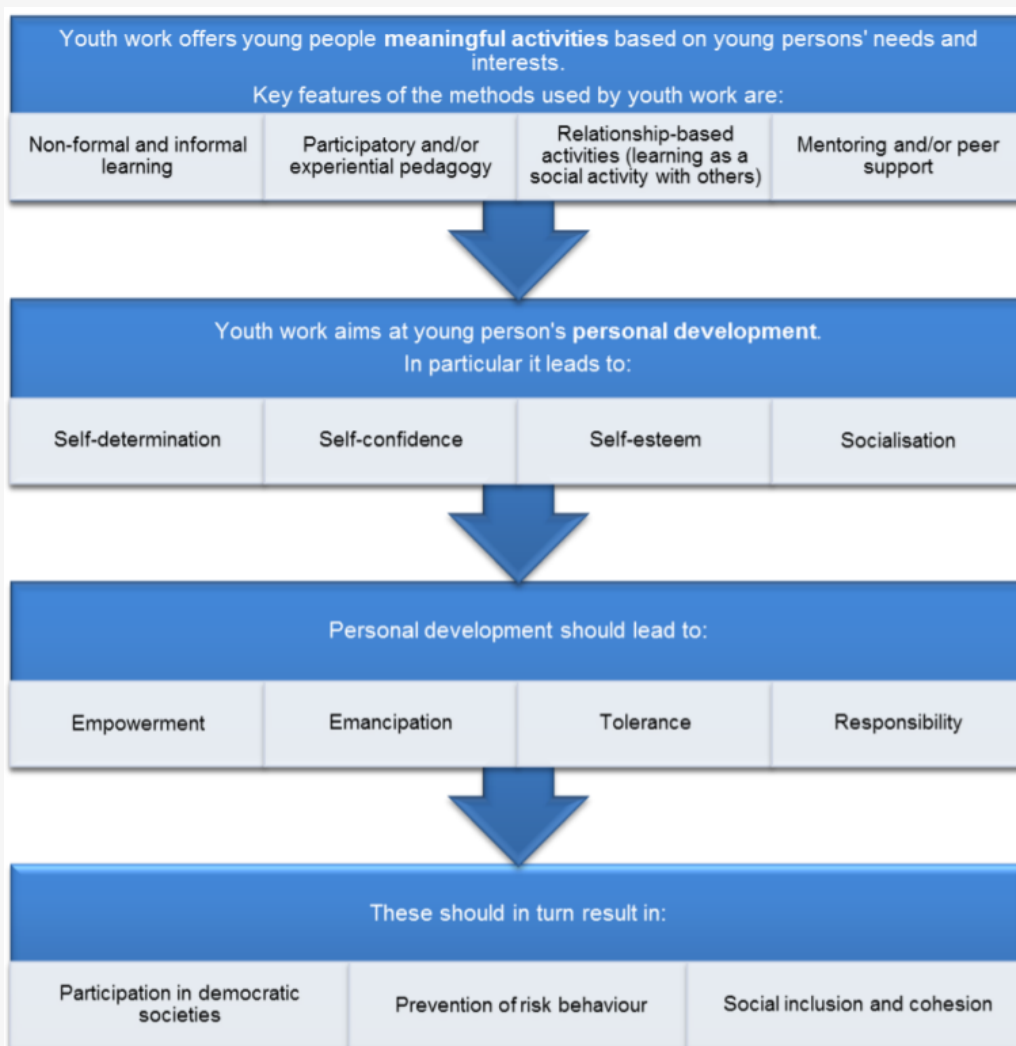
- Develop skills and competences in a diverse range of areas (their human capital);
- Strengthen their network and social capital;
- Change particular behaviours (such as risk behaviours);
- Build positive relationships.

Although, as mentioned before, these professionals (youth workers, youth leaders, social workers...) have greater recognition and visibility today in comparison to the past, still much needs to be done as there is the urgency to recognise youth professionals for the contribution and value they have in the lives of young Europeans.

Also, if it is true that the status of youth animators is increasingly becoming understood as a distinct profession, it is also important to recall that professionalism is not only about formal qualifications. Volunteer youth workers also integrate a professional approach to their work with young people. Youth workers are often qualified and/or specifically trained to carry out the activities they are involved with. As we will see in the next paragraph, whilst there is evidence of some government support through training opportunities, recognition and validation of learning for youth workers, most often it is the youth work organisations themselves which are active in offering training or development opportunities for youth workers.

As a consequence, given the prevalence of in-house training, there is a need for greater external recognition of youth workers skills and competences, based on quality criteria against which knowledge, skills and competences can be recognised. In this sense, moving from a totally national approach to a European dimension is absolutely essential at a time when most young people cross borders to have activities.

The aim of this elaboration is precisely to distil the Youth Animator's available training across the 28 EU countries, in order to gather the commonly required knowledge, competences and skills allowing to mentor a group of youngsters, and integrate it - where necessary - towards the definition of an innovative and comprehensive "European Youth Animator" curriculum.



Source: European Commission | Youth (2014)

YOUTH ANIMATOR – COUNTRY FRAMEWORKS

NOTE: THE LIST OF ANALYSED COUNTRIES CORRESPONDS TO THE ORIGINAL VERSION OF THE PRODUCT, PREPARED IN ENGLISH.

AUSTRIA



General info and definitions

Youth work in Austria is divided into open youth work, youth associations, institutional youth work and commercial youth work. There are also so-called 'youth initiatives', that is, youth services offered by young people to young people. This relatively new kind of youth work can be defined as peer group education, and it is prevalent in the area of prevention in Austria. Open youth work in Austria consists of youth centres, mobile youth work and regional youth information services as well as regional and local initiatives. It essentially focuses on providing young people with space to structure and organise their leisure time on their own. Open youth work is generally open to all young people – hence the name – and there is no membership required or regular participation expected. Open youth work – especially in the area of prevention – focuses more on socially disadvantaged young people, whereas organisationally structured youth work sees the non-deprived youth as their target group.

Youth associations in Austria are quite diverse. There are youth associations with different political or religious backgrounds. In the past, a distinction was made along ideological lines, meaning that there were two different political camps with distinctive cultures and ideologies: one associated with trade unions and the Socialist Party (SPÖ), the other with the Catholic Church and the People's Party (ÖVP). Young people grew up in one or the other 'camps' and also joined organisations affiliated with their 'camps'. Due to socio-structural and cultural change in Austria, this system has somewhat changed over the last ten to 20 years, but there are still a number of organisations which can be characterised as part of the 'camp system'.

The target group of most Austrian youth organisations is quite diverse and often not limited to a specific age group. According to the fourth youth report commissioned by the Austrian government, 93% of all youth groups and youth organisations see school pupils as their main target group, 88% address themselves mainly to apprentices and 80% to university students. 72% of all providers of youth work claim that young adults who work or are unemployed take part in their services.

In Austria, institutional youth work is youth work carried out by state or municipal youth departments. Each one of the nine states of the Austrian federation has its own youth department, which coordinates youth work in the state, offers services and organises activities for young people.

With regard to youth information, there are internet portals affiliated with the federal government that provide information on various topics related to young people. Making youth-relevant information available is a concept encouraged by the European Commission's White Paper on youth. The aim is to provide young people as well as youth workers and parents with helpful information on different issues.

Legislative context and governance

Due to the federal structure of Austria, youth affairs are to a large extent in the competence of the federal provinces (Bundesländer). In each of the nine federal governments, there is a department for youth affairs and a department for youth welfare also exists.

The departments for youth affairs are in charge of extracurricular youth work and for federal youth policy. Their main areas of responsibility are:

- Lobbying initiatives in the area of child and youth work;
- Promotion and support of child and youth institutions, especially those of open youth work. The latter include youth centres, mobile youth work and regional youth information services as well as regional and communal initiatives;
- Services for children and young people and for child and youth work;
- Training and further training courses for youth work staff;
- Public relations;

The departments of youth welfare are in charge of child protection, child care, fostering, adoptions and stationary care and for supporting to families at meeting their tasks in care and upbringing.

Despite their different areas of competence, the Federal Government and the federal provinces (Bundesländer) seek to co-ordinate their measures and activities, which are voted on during the LandesjugendreferentInnenkonferenz (conference of provincial youth departments) and which produce joint initiatives.

The implementation of the policy is being monitored on an annual basis and at the end of the period 2015-2020, an independent evaluation will be conducted on the overall impact of the policy and the benefits accruing for young people, the voluntary youth sector and the wider society.

LEARN MORE...

The Austrian youth information centres (www.jugendinfo.at) are specialised on the preparation and mediation of non-commercial information suitable for young people. Youth information services support young people in their development and provide free, up-to-date, relevant and understandable information around all youth-relevant topics, including work, education and training.

BELGIUM



General info and definitions

Belgium is a federal country and Youth Policy is the responsibility of the three regions: Flanders, Brussels and Wallonia. However, the status of youth work is almost equivalent in the three regions.

Youth work in Belgium is defined by decree as non-commercial, voluntary socio-cultural work organised in the leisure sphere for or by young people between the age of three and thirty years old and under educational guidance. It promotes the advancement of the full development of young people.

The abovementioned definition applies to formal and non-formal youth and generally speaking there exist two sectors: universal youth work provision and targeted youth work provision.

Universal youth work provision refers to those activities that do not distinguish among the target group. This includes youth movements and a large number of other types of youth work (e.g. playground associations, political youth associations, youth centres or clubs, youth amateur art associations, youth workshops).

Targeted youth work includes activities aimed at hard-to-reach groups such as young people with disabilities, young people with a migration or ethnic minority background and socially vulnerable young people. The activities are in general developed through self-organisation and volunteering, often supported by professional youth workers.

Legislative context and governance

Youth work is regulated by decree. The decree includes definitions for “youth work”, “youth worker” and “youth organisation” and it stipulates that the regional government is to produce a youth policy plan with particular emphasis on youth work. In Belgium funding for local youth organisations is mainly organised at local level as part of the local youth policy but the regional government has a separate funding scheme for national organisations and for experimental projects.

Youth work, is governed by the Flemish/Walloon/Brussels Ministry of Culture, Youth, Sport and Media. The Ministry is responsible for setting the legal framework, identifying sector-specific priorities and providing funding to the youth work sector.

Moreover, youth work policy is decentralized to local entities, this allows for a high degree of autonomy and flexibility at municipal level which is by many seen as a positive development in order to tailor to the needs of young people and youth organisations in each municipality.

Youth worker as such is not an officially recognized profession in the Regions but the notion of “youth worker” is however defined by law.

Training and profile

Youth worker as such is not an officially recognised profession in Belgium and therefore no targeted youth work training programmes and qualifications exist. Youth workers are not obliged to take part in training programmes, although it is encouraged by local governments through the allocation of additional funding to such youth organisations.

LEARN MORE...

Non-professional patents

Most youth workers are trained via other professions such as socio-cultural worker (as part of the wider social work bachelor study programme) or pedagogy. Youth workers also have other educational backgrounds, mainly due to the non-existence of a youth worker qualification.

There is no separate educational pathway for youth workers.

Professional certificates of youth work

Flemish Region

“Kadervorming” is a certified training explicitly meant for youngsters who (will) have leadership responsibilities in the context of youth work. The main goal is to strengthen their competences. One trajectory consists of a theoretical part, an internship and an evaluation. The training may lead to a certificate delivered by the Division Youth of the Flemish Ministry:

- Animator – the animator training programme aims to train candidates in supporting young people in youth work.
- Senior animator – the senior animator training programme aims to further train candidates in supporting young people in youth work and to take up responsibilities within a coaching team.
- Instructor – the instructor training programme aims to develop participants in taking up responsibilities in youth organisations.
- Senior instructor - the instructor training programme aims to support participants to take up management-level or final responsibilities in the youth organisation.

Brussels and Walloon Regions

Professional Youth Work trainings are given by accredited youth associations and these training may lead to a certificate delivered by the Division Youth of the Brussels/Walloon Ministries :

- BAGIC : brevet d’aptitude à la gestion d’institutions culturelles,
- BCCV : brevet de coordinateur de centres de vacances,
- BACV : brevet d’animateur de centres de vacances,
- Brevet d’animateur d’école des devoirs.

It is also possible to apply for have a join certificate (BACV/BAFA); giving the opportunity to work either in Belgium (French part) and France.

BULGARIA



General info and definitions

The Bulgarian National Youth Policy is a focused and coherent activity of the state, municipalities, youth organizations and the society. It aims to establish favourable conditions for the full personal development of young people and their participation in the social and economic life as well as the integration of the young in the decision-making process at a local, regional and national level through activities promoting their development in the country.

The main principles of the National Youth Policy are:

1. legitimacy, transparency, responsiveness, equality, focused and coherent policies of the state, municipalities and society for the youth development;
 2. the coordination of the youth policy with the educational, social, health, cultural and sport policy as well as their coordination with the justice system, internal affairs and the defense policy;
 3. the coordination of the national youth policy with the youth policies conducted by and within the European Union, Council of Europe and the United Nations;
 4. integration of the Child and Youth Policies;
 5. ensuring the participation of young people in the policy decision making process;
 6. the freedom of the association of young people, youth initiatives as well as self-government of the youth associations;
 7. decentralization of the youth policies.
- The National Youth Strategy 2010-2020 is focused on the building and implementing of a unified, consistent and sustainable, youth policy in Bulgaria based on the sectoral approach, intersectoral cooperation and co-management with the young people at a local, regional and national level.

The National Youth Strategy 2010-2020 is aimed to the young people from the aged of 15 to 29 and it is prepared in accordance with the international and European standards for youth work. The National Youth Strategy 2010-2020 was prepared after an extensive study and analysis of the needs and interests of the young people in the country.

The National Youth Strategy is made up of 9 strategic objectives:

1. Promotion of the economic activity and career development of the young people;
2. Improving the access and quality of information;
3. Promotion of the Healthy lifestyle;
4. Prevention of the social exclusion of the disadvantaged young people;
5. Development of the youth volunteering;
6. Raising the public awareness;
7. Young people development in small towns and rural areas;
8. Development of the intercultural and international dialogue;
9. Increasing the role of young people in crime prevention.

Legislative context and governance

Starting from October 2009, the administration of the National youth programmes has been transferred to the National center for European Youth Programmes and Initiatives – the National Agency for Youth in Action programme. The Directorate General Youth Policy in the State Agency for Youth and Sport has been transformed to Youth Directorate of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Science with the responsibilities of monitoring and controlling of the youth programmes, as well as the planning and development of youth policy papers and new youth programmes and initiatives for the development of the youth sector.

To ensure the implementation of national youth policy in the territory of each regional province the regional governors:

1. work in close cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Science and the young people on issues related to the National Youth Policy;
2. analyse the youth situation in the regional province and formulate priorities, specific goals and measures for the development of Regional Youth Policy.

The Mayors of the municipalities are responsible for conducting the municipal Youth policy in accordance with the National Youth Strategy 2010-2020; they:

1. work in close cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Science, the regional governors and the young people on issues related to the National Youth Policy;
2. analyse the youth situation in the municipalities and formulate priorities, specific goals and measures for the development of Municipality Youth Policy.

The State promotes and facilitates the provisions of youth activities and youth services such as:

1. information and consulting services for supporting the personal, social and career development of the young people;
2. leisure time activities;
3. promoting non-formal education for broadening the knowledge, experience, and the skills of young people for their inclusion in the civil society, science, culture, art, entrepreneurship, healthy lifestyle and preventing of public nuisance;
4. supporting the volunteering activities of the young people.

Training and profile

The profession “youth worker” is not included in the official List of professions for VET and it cannot be provided as vocational training within the formal education system. It only exists as job position (occupation) included in the National classification of occupations. Currently, special trainings for youth workers can be organized in the informal training system.

LEARN MORE...

The Bulgarian List of professions for VET includes the profession “Entertainer in tourism” (4-5 NQF/EQF) with two specialties - Tourist entertainment (4 NQF-EQF) and Entertainment activities organizer (5 NQF-EQF level). Regarding this profession, vocational education and training can be provided by formal educational institutions (VET schools, vocational colleges, etc.). There are VET centers which provide such training only for adults (4 NQF-EQF).

In order to acquire a VET qualification, adult learners study for:

- 960 hours for EQF level 4;
- 260 hours for EQF level 5.

For more information please contact the National Youth Forum. <https://nmf.bg/contacts>

CROATIA



General info and definitions

Despite a relatively well-developed youth policy framework in Croatia, interestingly, youth animator work itself is not so well developed. Croatia currently does not have any official definition of youth animator as it is not officially recognised at government level.

Legislative context and governance

Even though the government often comments on the importance of youth work it has not published any normative and/or strategic document aimed towards protecting it, developing it or stating its importance for young people. On the other hand, there are two aspects of government policy towards youth work which can be stated:

- The government is clearly oriented towards funding youth organisations via special funding schemes. Even though youth work per se has not been mentioned in these calls for proposals, it is evident that by supporting youth organisations, the government is de facto supporting youth work and thus youth animators;
- In 2015 an expert group on youth work has been established within the Ministry for Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy, consisting of experts and professionals from the public and civil sector with the goal of defining and analysing youth work and also youth animator works.

The Institute for Social Research in Zagreb (www.idi.hr) is a focal point for youth data collection and analysis because it is the Youth Wiki contact point for Croatia.

Training and profile

Croatia does not have any type of quality standard in terms of youth work. Youth work is not recognised as a profession in Croatia, meaning that neither in the national registry of professions nor within the Croatian Qualification Framework (CROQF) is there any reference to “youth worker” as a profession.

Key competences necessary for youth animators are: communication and organisation, data analysis, individual and group counselling, human resource management, information technology skills, basic teaching competences. Most necessary key competences: (intercultural) communication, respect for others and openness to other cultures. Most necessary generic skills: responsibility, focus on young people. Most suitable level of education: graduate diploma.

LEARN MORE...

People willing to start a youth animator's career in Croatia should know that youth organisations, youth clubs and youth centres are the three most important places where youth work actually happens. Youth clubs in Croatia are understood as entities at local level, where young people create their activities together based on the needs of the community. Spending some time there while chatting with a senior youth worker could be a valuable source of information!

Apart from these entities, an example of a very well established and developed form of youth work is the information centres for youth. Their goal is to provide information for young people in a youth-friendly way and to advise young people on their career, mobility or leisure time and choices. Most information centres (local and regional) work within the Association of Youth Information Centres in Croatia network, which follows the European Youth Information and Counselling Agency (ERYCA) proposition when it comes to this specific type of youth work.

For youth workers to be specifically targeting young people with fewer opportunities, it is important to stress the fact that there are youth organisations providing services in that area. The state financially supports this organisation and the Ministry for Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy is in charge of this type of funding scheme.

Youth workers are encouraged to use Erasmus + and European Solidarity Corps opportunities. Apart from this, there are almost no other options when it comes to European and international dimension of youth work in the country.

CYPRUS



General info and definitions

There is no definition of youth animator work in Cyprus; there is not even a commonly used term in the national language (Greek) to describe youth animator work. The terms used for youth are descriptive 'working with youth' (ergasia me tin neolaia) and 'people occupied with youth' (anthropoi pou asholountai me ti neolaia) for youth workers.

According to the literature, youth work is seen as a way to promote non-formal learning but since non-formal learning is itself not well developed in Cyprus, there is little realisation of the value of youth work.

Elements of 'youth work' have been carried out in Cyprus for about 20 years i.e. since the early 1990s. Youth animator work has taken place mostly on a voluntary basis, usually by primary school teachers who in their leisure time or during their summer holidays work with young people in sport, cultural and other leisure time activities. There is no formal / professional youth work tradition in Cyprus.

Formal/professional/statutory youth work does not exist currently in Cyprus. The closest occupation to a youth animator worker would be a social worker. On the other hand, non-formal / non-professional / third sector led youth animator work is provided by:

- Individuals who elect or decide to organise activities with young people outside a youth structure.
- Volunteers within youth NGOs who work or are involved with young people.
- A pool of volunteers of the Cyprus Youth Council, however this pool of volunteers does not exist explicitly or exclusively for youth work.

Legislative context and governance

Youth animator work is not regulated by law in Cyprus. The key reasons for this are: the lack of a tradition of youth animator work; and the lack of recognition for the value of youth work and the potential it offers for supporting young people.

The Youth Board of Cyprus (Organismos Neolaias Kyprou) is the body responsible for youth work in the country, even though it does not have explicit responsibility for youth work and the specific youth animator work. Responsibility is implied since the Youth Board of Cyprus (YBC) oversees all youth policy issues in Cyprus. The YBC operates under the aegis of the Ministry of Education.

Training and profile

There are no formally defined minimum qualification standards for youth animator workers in Cyprus and there is no relevant course being offered in academic institutions. However, there are some tacitly agreed standards for youth animators that are used in practice in the context of the Youth in Action programme by the youth organisation community in Cyprus. These are: basic knowledge of English; NGO experience; being aged up to 35-38 years - above that age, individuals change role and they become youth coaches, coordinators etc.

LEARN MORE...

A common profile of a youth animator in Cyprus would be a primary teacher, female, 28+, tertiary educated. Most of those delivering youth work activities do so in their leisure time as volunteers and have been trained via other professional routes (the most common route is teaching).

There is also a notable lack of non-formal training and qualification opportunities in Cyprus. Until 2013, the only training opportunities available were provided by the Youth in Action programme for training courses abroad. Since 2014, Erasmus+, the EU programme for education, training, youth and sport, continues to offer similar opportunities in the areas of youth and non-formal learning.

CZECH REPUBLIC



General info and definitions

There is a specific situation in the Czech Republic: youth work based on so-called leisure-time-based education is provided by the network of Leisure Time Centres (Střediska volného času, SVČ), school clubs (školní kluby, ŠK) and after-school childcare facilities (školní družina, ŠD). These facilities providing leisure-time-based education are not obligatory but they are registered in the formal educational system. They are set up by the state, regions or municipalities, and to a lesser extent by private entities. They are funded from public sources depending on the number of children in regular free-time activities. Individual participants in the learning activities (children and young people) also cover part of the financial cost of overheads.

Apart from leisure-time-based education seen as a form of youth work, youth work based on non-formal education is provided by non-governmental organisations (NGOs), whose umbrella organisation is called the Czech Council for Children and Youth (Česká rada dětí a mládeže, ČRDM), with 98 member organisations.

Legislative context and governance

In the national context, youth work is covered by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports while social work is covered by the Ministry of Labour and Social Issues. Since 2015, the Youth Department of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports has experienced a new situation when youth workers deal more and more with young people's needs for being provided with social services during youth work activities while social workers deal with a challenge to provide non-formal education to their clients. Moreover, youth workers urgently need social workers' experience of reaching out to excluded young people. In order to examine possibilities of a close co-operation between youth work and social work and facilitate recognition of results of both works, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic created in May 2015 the Expert Group reflecting interconnection between youth work and social work. The Expert Group is functioning under the Youth Chamber, a cross-sectoral advisory body of the minister responsible for youth.

The Youth Department of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic takes responsibility for drafting, implementing and evaluating national youth policy which also covers general support to youth work. The Youth Department is responsible for cross-sectoral co-ordination of youth policy and youth work, submits national strategic documents and their mid-term and final evaluation reports for governmental approval.

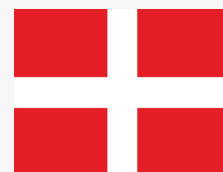
Training and profile

There is no Youth Act in the Czech Republic. The Act gives standards for qualification, scope of professional work and in-service training of different pedagogical workers including so-called “leisure-time-based educators” who provide so-called leisure-time-based education, which is a specific part of non-formal education in the Czech Republic.

LEARN MORE...

The National Register of Qualifications – Recognition and Validation of Learning Outcomes (Národní soustava kvalifikací, NSK) <https://www.narodnikvalifikace.cz/en-us/> is a publicly accessible register of recognised professional qualifications as well as their assessment standards. The NSK provides a collection of standards (<http://www.narodnikvalifikace.cz/>), allowing verification and recognition of abilities. Professional qualifications are awarded by authorised bodies which must be an agency of the Czech Government, either a ministry or the Czech National Bank according to the Act 179/2006. They are listed in the NSK in accordance with the relevant evaluation standards. Conditions for the granting of authorisation are governed by the Act 179/2006. A list of authorised bodies, including contact information, is included in the NSK web page (www.narodnikvalifikace.cz) as well as each vocational qualification in the NSK, where authorisation has been granted. During examinations applicants must demonstrate all the competences listed in the qualifications standard according to the criteria in the assessment standard. Successful applicants receive the Vocational Qualification Certificate, which is a nationwide valid certificate that contains personal data of the applicant, authorised body data, the exam report and a list of verified and validated competences. The certificate and the exam report are stored as required by the law on archiving.

- Co-ordinator of Volunteers <https://www.narodnikvalifikace.cz/en-us/qualification-752>
- Youth leader of activities aiming at improving state of health of children and youth (hlavní vedoucí zotavovací akce dětí a mládeže) <https://www.narodnikvalifikace.cz/en-us/qualification-749>
- Self-reliant youth leader for leisure-time-based activities (samostatný vedoucí volnočasových aktivit dětí a mládeže) <https://www.narodnikvalifikace.cz/en-us/qualification-750>
- Youth leader for leisure-time-based activities for children and youth (vedoucí volnočasových aktivit dětí a mládeže) <https://www.narodnikvalifikace.cz/en-us/qualification-751>
- Expert in the area of international co-operation with children and youth <https://www.narodnikvalifikace.cz/en-us/qualification-1291>
- Guarantor of safety of children and youth in non-formal and leisure-time-based education (Garant bezpečnosti pro oblast práce s dětmi a mládeží v zájmovém a neformálním vzdělávání) <https://www.narodnikvalifikace.cz/en-us/qualification-1289>



DENMARK

General info and definitions

There is no formal definition for youth work in Denmark and the term 'youth work' is not widely used. Youth work is however a very well established concept in Denmark. Youth work is being carried out by public sector bodies (various national, regional and local authorities) as well as an active third sector (youth NGOs). There is no specific ministry in charge of youth affairs or a single piece of legislation/policy dealing with youth affairs. Instead, youth work and other areas of youth policy are managed by a range of different ministries, laws, policies and programmes.

In generic terms, the main notions behind youth work in Denmark are as follows:

- The aim of youth work is to increase the participation of all young people in democratic society, active citizenship is at the heart of the Danish concept of youth work.
- Youth work is inclusive and seeks to support and enrich lives of all young people, not only the lives of specific groups of young people – even if there has been a tendency in recent years to invest more in targeted activities, for example, aimed at supporting at-risk groups such as migrant youth or young people without an education.
- Volunteers and third sector youth organisations are very important for the delivery of youth work.

Legislative context and governance

There is no one, specific youth law in Denmark. Instead, matters related to youth work are governed by a range of different laws, for example from the fields of education, training, employment, integration and social affairs.

Youth policy is the responsibility of the different national, regional and local authorities and youth organisations that receive funding from the government. In several areas, the youth issue is divided among different ministries and usually different programmes are delivered through cooperation between a number of ministries. An inter- departmental youth council coordinates the policy work in the youth area.

The main ministries involved in youth work are:

- Ministry of Children and Education,
- Ministry of Social Affairs and Integration,
- Ministry of Employment,
- Ministry of Science, innovation and higher education.

As mentioned above, there is no single dedicated policy or youth strategy in place in Denmark. However, the Danish Government does acknowledge and is aware of the role of youth work in society and has expressed this through political, structural and financial support of youth work for many years.

Training and profile

There is no dedicated qualification for youth workers covering all types of youth work. There is only one single criterion that applies to everyone - both public workers and volunteers - in contact with children and young people under the age of 15: they cannot have any previous convictions of sexual offence.

The implementation of public sector youth work performed by Job Centres, social services departments and youth clubs is the responsibility of the municipalities who specify the qualification requirements for the youth workers they employ. For the counsellors in the youth guidance centres however, the legislation governing the work specifies minimum qualifications in the form of a specific guidance education. There are no minimum training/qualification standards for volunteer youth workers.

LEARN MORE...

Non-professional patents

The Danish organisation of Youth Clubs, which is an umbrella organisation for the various types of youth clubs, has insight into the actual challenges of the youth culture of today – and many years' experience in offering relevant and tailored competency development for both leaders and employees in the youth area. It has a number of offers for competency development for all people who work professionally or voluntarily with older children and young people in the clubs.

There are offers targeting leaders in the youth area, seminars and short courses for the employees who are not pedagogically educated, presentations and project days about youth democracy and youth involvement and much more.

The Church of Denmark trains around 100 social workers ('deaconesses') each year who carry out some work with young people, but mostly work with vulnerable members of society.

The SSP-cooperation in municipalities (S=school, S=social services department, P=police) offers education to youth workers at youth clubs on influencing the mind-set of young people on subjects like substance abuse, handling of fireworks etc.

Professional certificates of youth work

Many youth workers are social workers and pedagogues both of which are broad generalist educations and which are both qualified to further educational programmes and thus specialising in youth work.

At University level, the education programme for a Bachelor Degree in Social Education is geared towards the entire educational occupational area, with specialisation within a specific occupational, functional or academic field. The program provides students with the foundation for further education and training, for example in a range of educational diploma programmes within, for example, psychology, educational work, social psychiatry, social work, special needs and youth education.

The programme lasts 3½ years, amounting to 210 ECTS credits, and consists of two parts: a common part on basic professional competences and a specialization part. The social educator training programme is a professional bachelor programme, and it is a typical characteristic that the teaching staff of the programme as a whole must have a level of qualification that is higher than that of the final level of the programme.

ESTONIA



General info and definitions

Youth work in Estonia has a long tradition, which can be traced back to the national awakening in the 19th century, when Estonia was part of the Tsarist Russian Empire and the first youth movements and organisations (such as national student organisations and working-class youth movements) started to form.

Youth worker training programmes were launched in 1992. The turn of the millennium marks the beginning of open youth work in Estonia: the very first open youth centre was established in 1998 in Narva. The importance of youth work in Estonia has increased considerably and now it can be claimed that modern youth work in Estonia was created as an independent sector (different from social work or education) during the last 15-20 years. Most of the modern infrastructure has been developed during that time. In the 2000s there was a boom in opening open youth centres all over Estonia (one open youth centre in 1998, and about 263 open youth centres in 2016). In recent years, the focus of youth work is increasingly moving away from developing the infrastructure and concrete services towards the pedagogical aims to support the formation of an active and conscious citizen and co-operation between different sub-sectors inside youth work (youth info, open youth work etc.)

Legislative context and governance

Youth work is regulated by law at the national level in Estonia. A number of legislative acts which regulate the youth work field were adopted from the beginning of the 1990s, including the Hobby Schools Act (1995, a new version in 2007), the Juvenile Sanctions.

Training and profile

The clear sign of professionalisation of youth work in Estonia is the fact that there is an occupational standard for youth workers. An occupational standard applies for a range of specialists who work with young people (e.g. youth worker, career counsellor, youth information specialist, youth camp manager-teacher). The professional standard for youth workers was approved in 2006. It was developed by the working group of youth work experts from different organisations and administered by the Estonian Qualifications Authority. The standard describes youth work as a profession and states the qualification requirements for the professional qualification of youth workers at Levels III, IV and V. A new professional standard for youth workers was approved in 2012 and amended in November 2017. It defines the qualification requirements for youth workers at Levels IV, VI and VII. However, obtaining the qualification standard is not mandatory and only 106 youth workers were in the lists of the Estonian Qualifications Authority as of June 2017.

Many more (nearly 4 000) have obtained partial qualification of youth camp teams, which is mandatory to work in the youth camp. Some youth work experts argue that almost anyone can be a youth worker in Estonia; a professional qualification is not always required (especially in smaller municipalities on the periphery). However, it is important to mention that despite the fact that only very few youth workers have applied to obtain the professional qualification standard, many more have graduated from higher education institutions as trained youth workers.

LEARN MORE...

The first youth worker training programme was launched in 1992. Today, youth work is taught in different institutions in Estonia. There have been BA-level youth work curricula in the University of Tartu, Narva College (applied higher education, four years) since 2004, BA-level curricula in leisure time manager-teacher (applied higher education) in the Viljandi Culture Academy of the University of Tartu, and BA-level youth work curricula in Tallinn University (applied higher education, three years) since 1994. Furthermore, there have been MA-level youth work management curricula in Tallinn University since 2015, but the programme is not open every year.

There are also non-formal training opportunities available for both novice and experienced youth workers. Nevertheless, many youth workers learn on the job. Non-formal education and acquired work experiences are recognised in the occupational standard as well. The need for training is monitored among the youth workers to find out what kind of training and courses they need the most. A wide range of non-degree training courses are provided by the Archimedes Foundation Youth Agency (Estonian National Agency for Erasmus+), for example, in Estonia and abroad. The Association of Open Youth Centres shares information about different non-formal training courses as well as field-related seminars and conferences. Youth organisations themselves organise trainings for volunteer youth workers and youth leaders. There are no minimum qualification standards for volunteer youth workers. Usually volunteer youth workers are trained on the spot by youth work organisations. However, they also have an opportunity to participate in non-formal training for youth workers provided by the Estonian Youth Work Centre or other relevant agency.

FINLAND



General info and definitions

According to the Finnish Youth Act 1285/2016 (Nuorisolaki, §3):

- young people are those under 29 years old;
- youth work is about supporting the growth of the young and helping them to become independent and encouraging participation of the young in society;
- youth policy is about improving the growth conditions and the living conditions of the young and interaction between generations.

Legislative context and governance

Youth work structures in Finland are rather strong. There is a legislation in Finland for youth work, and has been since 1972. The new Youth Act was passed on 21 December 2016 and will set the norms for around 10 years. The Youth Act is of framework law type, and leaves relatively many decisions about the organisation of youth work to the actual organisers of youth work (local authorities). According to the law, municipalities are required to provide opportunities to both youth work and youth activities.

The Ministry of Education and Culture subsidises youth work carried out by municipalities and NGOs and its development by means of central government transfers or discretionary transfers, and steers and supports regional youth work through performance guidance. The Ministry also wishes to promote young people's participation and inclusion by its activities. The municipalities are responsible for local youth work, such as maintaining youth facilities, supporting young people's associations and groups and special youth work. Associations and organisations that engage in youth work also operate in municipalities. In regional government, youth sector tasks are handled by the Regional State Administrative Agencies. Local youth councils are mandatory in Finland.

Training and profile

There is youth worker education in vocational education, in universities of applied sciences and on the university level. Youth work is mentioned in the National Core Curriculum as one of the co-operating partners for schools. There are many policy programmes in different policy levels integrating youth work services to service systems. Youth workers have associations. There is a state-sponsored network of centres of excellence for promoting youth work and youth animator works.

There are no national competency descriptions, nor are there legal requirements for youth workers. This is due to the emphasis on the professional autonomy and decentralisation policies, which together mean that the core decisions are made on the local level.

The ethical code of youth work was prepared in co-operation with youth work associations, youth organisations, youth work education and research. Quality standards have been developed using bottom-up strategies. The quality model for youth work was first developed in the capital region. This model has within the last decade been implemented in municipal youth work all over Finland. However, it is important to emphasise that this has been due to the independent decisions made by local youth work professionals, not by top-down state decisions.

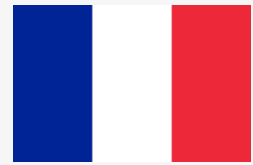
LEARN MORE...

In Finland, the Bachelor level is called Civic Activities and Youth Work and lasts 3 years and ½, for a number of credits corresponding to 210 ECTS.

Graduate students should then work in the relevant field during a minimum of 3 years before being able to take part in a Master degree. They also do internships abroad during the Bachelor period, focusing e.g. on intercultural and digital skills, so this would not be the first approach to the professional world.

The Master is called NGO and Youth Work and is run by Universities of applied sciences (Helsinki, for example, is the seat of the HUMAK University of applied sciences). Even a doctoral program in the University of Tampere exists.

FRANCE



General info and definitions

In France, youth work does not have one single definition and is not governed by a single law. It refers to different realities and professional practices. However, it is most often associated to the field of socio-cultural/educational activities.

Socio-cultural activities can be aimed at all audiences: adults, the elderly and young people. However, most of the co-ordinators of such activities work with children, particularly in the out-of-school activities for minors (Accueil Collectif de Mineurs/ACM), organised outside school time (holidays, leisure time) and regulated by the state.

In this case, these activities are both social work and educational, they are part of the policy of childhood and youth, which refers to the European concept of "youth work". In France, moreover, socio-cultural activities, especially for youth, are closely associated with popular education (éducation populaire).

Legislative context and governance

If socio-cultural activities do not have a single legislative definition, the function and activity of socio-cultural activities co-ordinators relies upon an important legislative arsenal (decrees, circulars, etc.). The state also imposes norms and legislative regulations with regard to the out-of-school leisure activities for minors (leisure centres, holiday camps) where youth work takes place. These laws include protecting minors and imposing supervisory standards. The Ministry in charge of the youth and more precisely its Directorate for youth, non-formal education and voluntary organisations are in charge of developing the laws concerning the diplomas relating to these activities and the rules on the supervision of minors.

The Ministry in charge of youth, through its Directorate for youth, non-formal education and voluntary organisations, imposes a regulatory framework in the field of youth work. It establishes the conditions of access to the functions of youth work and director, elaborates the regulatory framework of the out-of-school activities for minors and ensures its implementation, notably by carrying out controls and evaluations. The mission of the Ministry in charge of youth is to ensure the protection of minors hosted in structures (recreation centres without accommodation or with accommodation, also called summer camps) and to promote quality youth work.

It is the directorates of the Ministry in charge of youth present within the territories which can carry out checks on these reception centres at any time. They also have an advisory role to the organisers and the management team of the collective reception of minors.

Training and profile

Youth work is a professional sector but it is not unified, bringing together different and unequally recognised professional statuses. Various trainings prepare people for youth work and its different professions. Some train for non-professional degrees which do allow people to work for short periods (holidays) and to acquire a professional initiation. These trainings are supervised and managed by the ministry in charge of youth.

LEARN MORE...

Non professional patents

The Trainer's Qualification Certificate (Brevet d'aptitude aux fonctions d'animateur - BAFA). No degree is required to prepare for the BAFA. The training sessions are authorised from the age of 17 and are implemented by associations. It is a non-professional diploma that permits the supervision of young people in holiday and leisure centres. The Director's Qualification Certificate (Brevet d'aptitude aux fonctions de directeur - BAFD). This certificate is intended for holders of the BAFA. It allows the supervision of children and teenagers and provides the skills to run a holiday and leisure centre with a team. It is accessible from age 21 for BAFA holders.

Professional certificates of youth work

First, there is the Professional Certificate of Youth, Popular Education and Sport (CPJEPS). This certificate is the first level of qualification for the youth work and framing of sports and socio-cultural activities. It is accessible from 16 years old without condition of diploma. The candidate is expected to have experience and professional practice in youth work.

Another certificate is the Professional Certificate of Youth, Popular Education and Sport (BPJEPS). The BPJEPS is a Level IV professional diploma accessible from the age of 18 and those obtaining it can then carry out an educational or social activity in the sports, socioeducational or cultural field. The BPJEPS has two specialities: youth worker and sport trainer.

Another one is the Higher State Diploma in Youth, Popular Education (DEJEPS). Those wishing to run socio-cultural centres or co-ordinate projects can take training courses for being directors, including the Higher State Diploma in Youth and Popular Education. Preparation for this diploma is provided by public or private training centres authorised by the regional directorates for youth. It is, in part, the youth work diplomas developed by the state that define the skills and expectations of a youth worker. According to the decree of 15 July 2015 relating to certificates of aptitude to the functions of youth worker and director in out-of-school activities for minors, the youth worker must conceive, propose and implement personalised activities after having defined the needs and expectations of young people with whom they work. More concretely, the youth worker is expected to know how: to ensure the physical and moral security of minors, and in particular, make them aware, as part of the implementation of an educational project, of the risks associated with addictive behaviour; to encourage and animate daily life and activities; to participate in welcoming, communicating and developing relations between the different actors; to participate, within a team, in the implementation of a pedagogical project in coherence with the educational project in the respect of the regulatory framework of out-of-school activities for minors; to accompany the minors in the realisation of their projects.

In addition, their mission has also a citizenship dimension because they must also: transmit and share the values of the Republic, including secularism; build a quality relationship with members of the co-ordination team and minors, whether individual or collective, and to ensure in particular prevention of any form of discrimination; - provide, where appropriate, an appropriate response to situations faced by minors.

In addition, they organise their activity around "projects" whose principles are set by article R227-23 of the Code on Social Action and Families. Guides to help develop "educational projects", prepared by the ministry in charge of youth, are offered to the youth workers.

GERMANY



General info and definitions

After the reunification of the two German states in 1990, the Reich Youth Welfare Act was replaced by a new legal basis for child and youth welfare: the Social Code Book VIII – Child and Youth Services. It came into force on 1 January 1991 in the newly formed German federal states after the reunification on 3 October 1990.

Youth work, especially open youth work, is based on the principles of voluntariness, participation, low-threshold offers, openness and flexibility. Different approaches are applied in terms of concepts of youth work: gender-specific, anti-racist, intercultural, media- or culture-related, subject- or group-oriented. There is peer-group education and adventure pedagogy and democracy education. Current issues that affect young people and youth policy are, for example, demographic change, digitalisation, migration/young refugees, children's rights and protection, radicalisation/extremism, limited time frames of young people, global developments.

Legislative context and governance

The legislative framework for youth work in Germany is the Social Code Book Eight – Child and youth services (Sozialgesetzbuch - Achtes Buch - Kinder- und Jugendhilfe, SGB VIII). It is also called the Child and Youth Services Act (Kinder- und Jugendhilfegesetz (KJHG)). It came into force on 1 January 1991 (in the newly formed German federal states on 3 October 1990). In the federal states, there are implementation acts pertaining to the Child and Youth Services Act which are the basis for the work of the local authorities.

Several sections of SGB VIII are of importance regarding youth work:

- Section 11 defines the scope, key aspects and providers of youth work. It is an own field of work within the field of child and youth services. It is a field of social learning. Youth work is based on the principle of “voluntariness” and is focusing on the needs and interests of young people. Key aspects of youth work include for example extracurricular political, cultural, health, social, scientific and technical education, youth work in sports, related youth work that takes place in schools (co-operation school-youth work), international youth work, child and youth recreation, youth counselling. See also Infosystem “Child and Youth Services in Germany”.
- Section 12 covers the support of youth associations according to the provisions set in section 74 (Support of voluntary youth service providers). Youth work, carried out by young people, in youth associations and youth groups is based on self-organisation, co-operation and joint responsibility.
- Section 13 deals with youth social work. It is about the provision of support and help to young people from underprivileged social backgrounds or with individual handicaps. See also Infosystem “Child and Youth Services in Germany”.

In Germany the more general initiatives for the support of young people are being considered as youth work. Services that include social education assistance for the promotion of school and vocational training fall under youth social work. According to Christoph Honisch, youth work is a “practice-oriented field of action”. It provides many opportunities to pick up self-determined topics and is the place for independent learning.

There is no legal definition for the profession of youth work. Youth workers have mostly studied subjects such as social work, (social) pedagogy or educational sciences.

The portal for specialists in child and youth services (Fachkräfteportal der Kinder- und Jugendhilfe) provides a space for networking and a communication platform for experts and specialists in child and youth services.

Training and profile

Youth work and the work of youth workers is to a certain extent lacking social and political recognition. Other fields such as socio-educational support services and child day care have gained more recognition. Youth work is often carried out by volunteers or youth workers who often have temporary contracts. Compared to graduates in medicine, psychology, social sciences or teachers, graduates in educational sciences and social pedagogy earn considerably less.

Basically, social workers earn more than kindergarten teachers or social pedagogues, also depending on several factors, for example the federal state you work and live in, the institution you work with, the professional experience you have.

There is no general formal validation system of non-formal education and learning in youth work implemented in Germany. There are several concepts and procedures to recognise non-formal education and learning in youth work. These include, for example, certificates of participation, commitment and competences obtained, reflection in dialogue processes, tests or assessments. There is no legal definition or comprehensive description for the profession of youth work or respectively a youth worker. Youth work as a study course is mostly included in social work or social pedagogy programmes.

LEARN MORE...

Germany is involved in many European initiatives supporting youth work. It is implementing the Erasmus+ programme including the Youthpass as the instrument for recognition of non-formal and informal learning within the Youth in Action section of the Erasmus+ programme. The Council of Europe Youth Work Portfolio is open to youth workers from Germany.

In 2009, the conference of ministers for youth of the federal states adopted a catalogue of minimum requirements around training across Germany. The federal states also set supplementary quality standards on aspects such as the duration of training (nationwide: at least 30 hours, in some states up to 50 hours). Anyone who has completed training in line with the applicable standards can apply for the youth leader card (Jugendleiter/In-Card, Juleica which is a national standardised card for voluntary youth workers); it serves as a proof of qualification for the bearer. Additionally, Juleica expresses the social recognition of the voluntary work. It is a document that is recognised by the youth offices. Juleica card holders are thus certified as meeting the quality and qualification requirements for voluntary youth work. The card can also be used as authentication to public bodies such as information and advice centres, youth institutions, the police and consulates.

GREECE



General info and definitions

Youth work does exist as a social practice; it constitutes an integral part of educational and welfare work and plays a significant role in supporting young people's safe and healthy transition to adult life. The range of activities described as youth work is extensive, and includes health, social support, counselling, education, training, personal development, and so on. However, it seems that youth work is mainly related to leisure time activity – that is, artistic and cultural programmes, outdoor recreation, sports, etc. – providing a space for youthful experimentation and cultural development. Most youth services provide a mixture of 'open' youth work, intended for all young people in the area, and youth work targeting particular groups of young people, usually those who are disadvantaged or socially excluded.

Youth policy in Greece is targeted at young people aged 15 – 35 years, while in some cases extended till the age of 40. At the same time actions are taken for young people with fewer opportunities and those belonging to specific groups.

The "Youth 2017-2027: Strategic Framework for the Empowerment of Youth" is:

- The text that specifies the principles and the objectives of Youth Policy in Greece considering current youth transformations and their social, economic and cultural dimensions.
- The processes that secure active participation of youth in policy making.
- All available (and potential) tools and programs that could be utilized towards the achievement of the objectives, as well as, the planning for the next decade.
- The indicators, mechanisms and monitoring processes that will be adopted by the Hellenic Republic in order to develop the capacity to (i) evaluate the performance and effectiveness of the actions, tools and programs; and (ii) adjust the implemented policies accordingly, in order to achieve optimal results.
- The particularization and adjustment of the general European decisions, guidance, and priorities for the youth according to the circumstances in our country. It also includes, though, at the same time, the directions that target young people's needs at a local level.

Legislative context and governance

Despite the existence of legal provisions regarding youth issues, there is no special official definition or legal framework for youth work in Greece.

The General Secretariat for Youth is the governmental body responsible for making and implementing youth policy. Nevertheless, youth policy is a horizontal one, as it reaches many fields that lie in the responsibility of different Ministries and as a result is exercised by all Ministries according to their thematic responsibilities. This is the reason why, there is a Ministerial Committee headed by the General Secretariat for Youth whose role is to coordinate actions targeted at young people.

The General Secretariat for Youth of the Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs is responsible for planning and implementing the national youth policy. The General Secretariat for Youth, being the only state organisation responsible for planning, developing and implementing the youth policy, works for the mainstreaming of the youth dimension in other governmental policies, given that all governmental organisations may develop policies that ultimately touch upon some needs of the younger generation. In this respect, the General Secretariat for Youth comprises departments covering employment and development, culture and leisure, education and social participation, international cooperation and information. Its main role is to promote a cross-sectoral youth policy taking also into consideration all the relevant developments in the youth sector at European and International level.

Training and profile

Youth work in Greece involves a complex network of providers, community groups, non governmental organisations and local authorities supported by a large number of adults working as full-time or part-time paid staff or as unpaid volunteers. All these different organisations share a more or less common set of youth work values. These include: working with young people because they are young people, and not because they have been labelled or are considered deviant; starting with young people's view of the world; helping young people develop stronger relationships and collective identities; respecting and valuing difference; and promoting the voice of young people.

Youth work is of great social value. It connects with young people's leisure and recreational interests, complements formal educational processes, addresses contemporary social issues such as unemployment, and reflects the particular needs and tasks of young people as they move through the transitions of adolescence and young adulthood. Other types of youth work, both formal and informal, address issues relevant to young people such as drugs, sexual health or discrimination. In many instances, youth workers help young people to gain the skills to develop and lead sessions for other young people, an approach known as peer education. A non-exhaustive list of youth services in Greece includes, for example, career services, youth information, youth associations and participation education for young people with fewer opportunities, cultural education/cultural programmes, and social care services.

HUNGARY



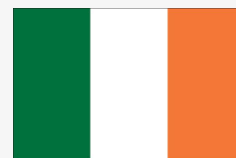
General info and definitions

The acceptance of the National Youth Strategy, in 2009, is a significant step towards a comprehensive and transparent approach of youth policy. This is much more than agenda-setting, but still there is no official, unambiguous definition of youth policy in Hungary, so the priorities can change easily (though the strategy balances this). The harmonization of state policies with institutions and NGOs is still an ongoing process. The division of tasks between the local and regional levels is not clearly defined, which can lead to interpretational difficulties.

Legislative context and governance

On the governmental level, youth policy belongs under the Ministry of National Resources. This Ministry has state ministries for education, culture, health, sport and social, family and youth affairs. The fact that all these areas belong under one ministry shows that youth policy is part of a comprehensive social policy. The optimistic beholders hope that this structure can replace the slow and less effective cross-sectoral decision-making processes in the above mentioned fields.

IRELAND



General info and definitions

The most important national plans or policies concerned specifically with young people include:

- National Youth Work Development Plan, which goals are to facilitate young people and adults to participate more fully in, and to gain optimum benefit from, youth work programmes and services and to enhance the contribution of youth work to social inclusion, social cohesion and active citizenship in a rapidly changing national and global context;

- National Recreation Policy for Young People.

The National Recreation Policy for Young People has seven objectives:

1. Give young people a voice in the design, implementation and monitoring of recreation policies and facilities.
2. Promote organised activities for young people and examine ways to motivate them to be involved.
3. Ensure that the recreational needs of young people are met through the development of youth friendly and safe environments.
4. Maximise the range of recreational opportunities available for young people who are marginalised, disadvantaged or who have a disability.
5. Promote relevant qualifications/standards in the provision of recreational activities.
6. Develop a partnership approach in developing and funding recreational opportunities across the statutory, community and voluntary sectors.
7. Improve information on, evaluation and monitoring of recreational provision for young people in Ireland.

Legislative context and governance

The Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs is part of the Department of Health and Children. It was established as the Office of the Minister for Children (OMC) in December 2005, and in mid-2008 the Government announced that the Youth Affairs section of the Department of Education and Science was to be integrated within the OMC and the name changed to OMCYA.

The youth work objectives of the OMCYA are:

1. To develop youth work policies and strategies which develop and enhance young people's personal and social development (Youth Work Act, 2001);
2. To support the youth work sector in providing effective youth work opportunities for young people and to consolidate existing provision of youth work services and initiatives to ensure both quality of service and value for money;
3. To support the alignment of youth work policies and services with other OMCYA policies and services and the broader policy and services field to help ensure an integrated and coordinated approach to the needs of young people;
4. To liaise with EU/Council of Europe on youth policy and the implementation of EU programmes for youth.

The regional authorities do not have specific competencies in the youth field.

Local authorities have the key role of nominating members of Vocational Education Committees (VECs), which are the local bodies with the most explicit statutory and legislative responsibility relating to youth in Ireland. The collective representative body for the VECs is the Irish Vocational Education Association.

The VECs have responsibility under the terms of the Youth Work Act 2001 for ensuring the provision and coordination of youth work programmes and services at local level by (among other things) providing assistance to voluntary youth organisations within their areas of operation. Under the terms of the Act, VECs will be assisted in their work by youth work committees (sub-committees of the VECs) and by local voluntary youth councils.

The National Youth Council of Ireland is the representative body for national voluntary youth work organisations (youth NGOs) in Ireland. It represents and supports the interests of 50 voluntary youth organisations and uses its collective experience to act on issues that impact on young people. It seeks to ensure that all young people are empowered to develop the skills and confidence to fully participate as active citizens in an inclusive society. NYCI is the national 'prescribed representative organisation' under the Youth Work Act 2001 and is recognised as a Social Partner (within the the Community and Voluntary Pillar) in the partnership framework for drawing up national agreements (including the current agreement Towards 2016).

Training and profile

The North South Education and Training Standards Committee for Youth Work (NSETS - <https://www.youth.ie/programmes/projects-initiatives/nsets/>) was established on a cross-border basis in 2006 by the Department of Education for Northern Ireland and the Youth Affairs Unit of the Department of Education and Science (now the Department of Children and Youth Affairs).

NSETS works to ensure and promote quality standards in the education and training of youth workers through an endorsement process based on a rigorous assessment of all aspects of programme content and delivery. NSETS professional endorsement represents a formal recognition by the youth work sector that programmes of study in youth work have met prescribed criteria and are fit-for purpose.

Graduates who hold a professional youth work qualification endorsed by one of the members of Joint ETS will automatically have their qualification recognized throughout the UK and Ireland via a Mutual Recognition Protocol agreed by Joint ETS. It is important to distinguish between professional endorsement, as dealt with in this context, and academic validation. "Endorsement" in this context signifies that specific education programmes have met the minimum standards and prescribed criteria as set out by the youth work sector through NSETS. This is not the same as academic validation which is carried out by the appropriate higher education institutions and authorities. The qualifications obtained by graduates of professionally validated programmes in Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and Wales are all recognised by the JNC, and entitle the graduates to work in England.

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Most people enter youth work as either a volunteer or a paid worker/apprentice and are typically called youth support workers. Youth support workers is a youth worker who has achieved a level 2 or 3 qualification or a diploma in youth work practice. These are qualifications for people who work with young people using youth work principles and practice. The level 2 is for 16+ age group and the level 3 is aimed at the 18+ age group.

If you have gained a qualification that enables access to degree level learning, you can move on to gain a professional level youth work qualification such as:

- BA (Hons): three years full time (and part time equivalent) - level 6
- PG Dip: one year full time (and part time equivalent) - level 7
- MA: one year (and part time equivalent) - level 7
- Graduate Diploma: two years full time - level 6

These courses are offered by universities or colleges of higher education. Your course will need to be 'JNC recognised' and validated by the National Youth Agency for you to gain the status of qualified youth worker.

JNC recognition ensures your degree reflects the current demands of the role and that the course delivers a suitable level of work experience too. You cannot change the status of your degree later so think carefully before embarking on a course of study which is not JNC recognised.

The courses reflect different occupational needs, and have a range of titles, including:

- youth and community
- community and youth studies
- youth and theology
- informal and community education.

Whilst most universities will have entry requirements, all institutions offering youth and community courses will welcome applications from those without academic qualifications providing they have relevant experience and interest in working with young people.

ITALY



General info and definitions

There is not a definition of youth work and not even a clear definition of “young people” in Italy. According to the situation described in the report on Socio-Economic Value of Youth Work (2006), in Italy youth policies have a vast focus, since laws dealing with these issues have different concepts of what young people are.

Regarding their focus, Italian youth policies have been oriented towards two main directions:

- they deal with young people involved in the labour market;
- they were oriented towards prevention of crime, delinquency and drug abuse.

Consequently, there is no common agreed definition and translation of the term ‘youth work’ used by public authorities and NGOs.

“Operatore giovanile” is not an official translation of youth worker; it is a professional profile that can be approximated to the youth worker profile and the majority of youth work activities are delivered by the third sector rather than by public institutions.

Legislative context and governance

The importance of youth work had been growing at institutional level up to 2006 when the Ministry of Youth and Sport was created, but youth work is currently less of a government priority, the emphasis being more on employment and education for young people. Youth work is not regulated in Italy and currently there is no national law defining youth work. A key reason is the lack of awareness about youth work among the policy makers at national level and the fact that youth work is not perceived as a policy priority.

Since there is not a definition and the concept has been endorsed in various programmes and policies, competences around youth work are splatted among different ministry departments and other agencies:

- Department of Youth within the Presidency of the Council of Ministries is the body that coordinates and defines youth policy in Italy (before 2008 there was a Ministry for Youth Policies and Sport);
- Italian National Youth Council and National Agency for Youth (a platform of Italian youth organizations and NGOs);
- The Ministry for labour and Social Policies, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and EU Affairs Ministry have also responsibilities in the youth field;

Although it has to be noted that the main players in the implementation of youth policies in general and youth work in particular are the regional and local authorities. There are Local Departments for Youth Policies in the Municipalities that promote different types of youth work depending on local needs cooperating with third sector organizations. Moreover, the third sector has become a pivotal player in the delivery of youth work. In order to support this process, several laws can be considered as having to some extent, supported the development of youth work activities.

Training and profile

In Italy, there are no qualification standards for youth workers and youth animators at national level. Some regions, such as Piedmont and Lombardy, have stipulated regional laws between 2004 and 2008 that define minimum standard requirements for youth workers. Conversely, other regions do not define minimum standard requirements.

Furthermore, it has to be noted that the vast majority of persons involved as youth workers are voluntary and therefore many of them do not have any formal educational background in youth work activities: there is a broad range of short and longer training courses organised by voluntary organisations.

Anyway, there is a need to increase the professionalization of the sector.

Regarding the availability of formal qualifications for youth workers, several tertiary education programmes provide such qualifications across the country. In particular, university courses in Educational Sciences provide qualifications for youth workers. The University courses usually last three years for the bachelor degree and 2 years to specialise.

LEARN MORE...

Although there is no specific training path for Youth Workers in Italy, the main reference remains the Degree in Educational Sciences. The adequacy of these paths, as well as the need to introduce more specific training opportunities, are today the subject of debate among operators and institution, especially after the introduction of the Law 205/2017, Commi 594-601, which establishes the obligation to obtain a university degree in order to work in the educational field.

After the Bologna Process came to end, the Degree in Educational Sciences has been converted in Bachelor Degree, lasting 3 years with a number of credits corresponding at 180 ECTS.

As youth work activities are mainly developed on voluntary basis, most of the information can be found on Informagiovani Network (<http://www.informagiovaniroma.it/>), Clicklavoro (<https://www.cliclavoro.gov.it/approfondimenti/Pagine/Youth-Work.aspx>), Agenzia Nazionale per i Giovani (<http://www.agenziagiovani.it/>) and SALTO-YOUTH (<https://www.salto-youth.net/>)

LATVIA



General info and definitions

In Latvia, the Youth Law of 2009, defines the status of formal youth work in the country “with the goal to improve the quality of life of young persons (aged 13-25), to encourage youth initiatives, work habits, patriotism, participation in decision making and public life, and in order to support youth work”.

The Law speaks only about formal youth work implemented by the state, local institutions, youth organisations and other NGOs. Youth work is “a set of planned practical activities with youth as target group, aimed at youth policy implementation, supporting value orientation of young people and strengthening their universal human values”.

But much of youth work in Latvia happens outside the formal structure of “youth policy”.

Status and competences of persons involved in youth policy implementation, forms of youth participation in formulating and implementing policies concerning youth, as well as the basic principles of funding youth initiatives (from public funds) are defined by this Law.

Legislative context and governance

The Ministry of Education and Science gives a less formal definition of youth work: “Youth work is a set of planned practical activities with youth as the target group, aimed at improving the quality of young people’s life”.

Some Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers (2008), define the training requirements for formal youth workers, also approved by the Tripartite Council on Vocational Education and Training. So, the profession of “youth issues specialist” was established accordingly (ISCED 5). The Regulations state that the formal qualification requirements for a “youth issues specialist” have to be completed no later than in 2 years’ time from the day he/she is recruited. They must have completed tertiary education. The length of the training is 80 academic hours, where theoretical training should be no more than 70%. The training can be provided by any registered provider with a relevant training programme.

One of the most innovative characteristic in Latvia is that at local level there are Municipal youth work coordinators (“youth issues specialists”) with professional qualifications. Moreover, they have to ensure non-formal education and youth activities, projects and programmes in the field of youth policy, developing recommendations to improve state and municipal youth policy, promoting citizenship education and youth voluntary work and activities supporting young people’s personality development. In Latvian municipalities, there are 63 municipal youth work coordinators.

There is also a Latvian Youth Council, a civil society platform for youth NGOs.

Training and profile

Training curriculum has to include pedagogy, psychology, youth health issues, business basics, human rights and legal basics, youth policy, communication basics, project management, environmental knowledge basics, and understanding how non-formal education and voluntary work is organised.

In Latvia 'youth issues specialist' is also a recognised profession with a professional standard. It was included in the list of recognised professions in 2008/9. Professional Standard for youth issues specialists states that they can work in local governments, state institutions and NGOs; however, in practice NGOs do not require this qualification for youth work in the third sector.

LEARN MORE...

Another option is professional degree training for career consultants and youth workers. The relevant degree programme is currently offered by Daugavpils University and Liepaja University (Master's degree programme in Career Consultancy and Youth Work, <https://du.lv/en/studies-admission/study-programmes/professional-masters-study-programmes/career-counsellor-and-specialist-in-youth-affairs/>). The length of studies is 2 years if full time, or 2.6 years if undertaken on a part-time basis. The programme includes courses in career development, theory and methodology of consulting; organisation of youth work; organisational culture and professional ethics; strategic planning and management of resources, and other subjects. Only persons with 2nd level of professional higher education and a teacher's qualification and 2 years' work experience in youth work or consultancy can be enrolled in this programme.

For youth work in the third sector, no special training is formally required. The Ministry of Education and Science is planning to create a separate professional standard and qualification requirements for 'youth worker' (at ISCED 4).

LITHUANIA



General info and definitions

Youth policy in Lithuania is legally defined as a purposeful activity aimed to solve youth problems and to create favourable conditions for the formation of the personality of a young person and his integration into public life, as well as an activity which has the purpose of achieving understanding and tolerance of society and individual groups thereof towards young people. It is understood as the entirety of systems and measures, aspiring after the most favourable terms for personal maturity of a young person and successful integration into society.

Youth policy in Lithuania is developed in two directions: first, ensuring the interests of youth in individual fields of public policy – education and science, culture, sports, work and employment, housing, health care, etc.; second, youth activities aimed at enabling young people to learn from experience and experiment (voluntariness, independence, autonomy).

Legislative context and governance

The youth policy is shaped by the Lithuanian Ministry of Social Security and Labour; in the field of social security and labour, it is implemented by the Department of Youth Affairs, municipal authorities, other establishments and institutions in cooperation with non-governmental sector. The Agency of International Youth Cooperation is a public non-profit institution with the aim to ensure the development of international youth cooperation and successful participation of Lithuanian youth in European Union programmes for young people.

Due to the dramatic changes in the Lithuanian society after it gained independence, Lithuanian youth policy has to be shaped almost from scratch due to the changes in social and economic structure of the Lithuanian society, shift from planned towards the market economy, building of the nation state and establishing youth policy including the institutions which support it. Taking this into account it can be stated that youth policy in Lithuania is successfully developed.

In accordance with Article 4 of the Law on Youth Policy Framework of the Republic of Lithuania, youth policy means a purposeful activity intended to resolve youth problems and to seek to create favourable conditions for the formation of a young person and his integration into public life, as well as an activity, which has the purpose of achieving understanding and tolerance of society and individual groups thereof towards young people. Youth policy is developed in multi-year programmes. The current National Youth Policy Development Programme covers the period 2011 to 2019. It aims to create a sustainable environment and conditions for the development of youth policy.

The Law on Youth Policy Framework, approved in 2003 establishes principles of the implementation of youth policy, fields of the implementation of youth policy, organization and management of the implementation of youth policy. It also establishes the terms of youth organizations as well as youth organization councils. It names responsible institutions at the national level (State Council of Youth Affairs) and local level. The law establishes the role of municipal coordinators of youth affairs, councils of youth affairs and councils of youth organizations. The State Council of Youth Affairs is a collegial advisory institution, functioning under the Department of Youth Affairs under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour. In designing the Law on Youth Policy Framework young people and their representatives have been consulted by the responsible public authorities. These consultations with young people concerning its implementation and revisions happen systematically.

Training and profile

At the moment there is no general policy framework in recognition of volunteering activity, so neither about the youth animator profession in Lithuania. But there are ongoing debates on the issues related to the competence of the employees dealing with volunteers. Organizations involved in voluntary activities express the need to train competent coordinators/managers in order to facilitate the management of voluntary youth activities. No training system for volunteers, youth workers and animators has been established in Lithuania. Training related to volunteer management is mostly provided by some organizations for their own members. There is also a lack of systematic volunteering quality assurance system.

LEARN MORE...

Despite the lack of an official youth work system in Lithuania, there are some organization providing information on Youth Work:

Europos jaunimo portalas:

https://europa.eu/youth/volunteering/organisation/947299382_It

ACTIVEYOUTH: <https://activeyouth.lt/>

WORK HD: <https://learn.youthworkhd.eu/?lang=lt>

Agency of International Youth Cooperation: <https://www.jtba.lt/>

LUXEMBOURG



General info and definitions

The foundation of the National Youth Council (Conférence Générale de la Jeunesse Luxembourgeoise) and the National Youth Service (Service National de la Jeunesse) were important milestones of the professionalisation of youth work in Luxembourg.

The National Youth Service was founded in 1964. For the first time, public authorities created a separate body for youth work. According to its mission, the National Youth Service had to collaborate closely with youth movements. It was to build up an impressive programme of activities and also invest a lot of energy into the training of youth leaders and volunteer youth workers. In 1984, the National Youth Service was given the legal status of a public organisation and objectives and organisational issues were regulated by law for the first time.

The law defines its mission as developing open youth work in Luxembourg, supporting the creation of meeting places for young people and youth centres (Chamber of Deputies 1984).

As a consequence of professionalisation, the field of youth work has separated into two fields: the youth organisations and the professional youth centres, or what is commonly known as open youth work.

During the 1990s, the professionalisation of youth work progressed further. The creation of a Ministry for Youth and the introduction of the profession of educators who were working in the field of child and youth care contributed to this development. The salaries of professions in this field were defined in a collective agreement between trade unions and social work employers. Furthermore, this agreement allowed for numerous opportunities for mobility within the field of social work.

After the 1999 elections, youth policy and youth work were integrated into the Ministry for the Family. This ministry is a “generational” ministry, being responsible for policies pertaining to children, young people, elderly people and disabled people. Youth work policy was thus closer than ever to social work policy, yet still seen as in between education, social security and employment policies.

Legislative context and governance

Youth work in Luxembourg includes on the one hand professional youth work provided by youth workers in open youth work centres at the local level, and on the other hand voluntary youth work provided mainly by youth organisations.

Youth work is delivered by paid as well as by unpaid and volunteer youth workers. Generally, youth work is based on non-formal and informal learning processes focused on young people and on voluntary participation.

The different actors in the field of youth work focus on specific objectives. Youth organisations, for instance, are mainly active in the field of leisure time opportunities for young people at the local level (e.g. youth clubs). The promotion of social integration and political participation are less important for these organisations.

The political side of youth work is provided mainly by the National Youth Council and the youth parliament which was introduced by the 2008 youth law (Chamber of Deputies 2008). The youth council's role is to assist, support and guide the youth parliament. The open youth work centres focus on the promotion of social integration of young people. Their work is close to educational and social work. It helps young people, especially those with fewer opportunities, to find their way into society.

Organisations or services which offer youth work are defined by the revised 2016 Youth Law (Chamber of Deputies 2016). It distinguishes between three kinds of structures:

- Youth organisation (Organisation de jeunes): self-organised organisations, from young people for young people (e.g. youth club);
- Organisation in favour of young people (Organisation en faveur de la jeunesse): organisations where youth work is only a subordinated objective besides their main objective; and
- Service for young people (Service pour jeunes): particularly open youth work offered by local youth centres. Objectives of youth work are oriented towards the general objectives of youth policy defined in the Youth Law. The 2008 Youth Law (Chamber of Deputies 2008) and the revised 2016 Youth Law (Chamber of Deputies 2016) set the frame for youth policy making in Luxembourg.

Training and profile

Political recognition of professional youth work is strengthened by the legislation framework and the different laws adopted over the past decades. Non-formal education was strengthened especially by the revised 2016 Youth Law (Chamber of Deputies 2016) and the 2017 Grand-Ducal regulation (Chamber of Deputies 2017a) on the introduction of a national framework on non-formal education of children and young people. These legislations introduced a monitoring system for institutions of non-formal education (e.g. local youth centres) and define the objectives of non-formal education.

The formal recognition of non-formal education and learning in youth work is specified in the 2009 Grand-Ducal regulation on Youth (Chamber of Deputies 2009). The National Youth Service is in charge of the recognition procedure. Furthermore, the 2010 Grand-Ducal regulation (Chamber of Deputies 2010) defines the procedure of the Validation of non-formal and informal learning (Validation des acquis de l'expérience - VAE). Furthermore, the Certificat is an online tool that allows non-profit organisations to award their participants a certificate of competences. The tool is available to any organisation, club or institution that provides training courses, projects or other activities on a regular basis. It is based on predefined skills and thereby fosters not only the recognition of skills, but also the development of a consistent definition of the various kinds of skills.

There is no legal framework for the profession of youth work per se. The professional background of youth workers ranges from educators with a secondary education diploma (with specialisation in education or health; university graduates with a bachelor or master degree, for example in the field of educational/social science or psychology). The bachelor in educational and social sciences (Bachelor en sciences sociales et éducatives) offered by the University of Luxembourg is an important bachelor programme for students who aim at working with young people.

LEARN MORE...

Although there exists no legal framework for the profession of youth work, professionals working with young people have to fulfil basic requirements with regard to educational degrees/diplomas. The requirements are defined by the 1999 Grand-Ducal regulation (Chamber of Deputies 1999). Article 17 of this law calls for certain educational qualifications. Applicants must hold a Luxembourgish or equivalent foreign degree as a lawyer, psychologist, pedagogue, sociologist, curative educator, occupational therapist, social worker, social hygiene assistant or teacher (among others). Volunteers also have to fulfil specific qualification requirements (certificate for assistant facilitators (brevet aide animateur) or equivalent).



MALTA

General info and definitions

Malta's accession to the European Union in 2004 was to have significant consequences for youth work. Membership of the European Union provided youth work with new sources of funding, through Youth in Action, as well as a new and expanded policy horizon, through the Youth Working Party and the Council of Youth Ministers. The momentum generated at both national and European level culminated in the establishment in 2010 of Aġenzija Żgħażaġh, the National Youth Agency, which opened a new chapter in the history of youth work in Malta.

Legislative context and governance

The national youth policy Towards 2020 – A shared vision for the future of young people, which focuses on all 13 to 30 year olds, and which is being implemented by Aġenzija Żgħażaġh over the period 2015-2020, has two related aims:

- to effectively support and encourage young individuals in fulfilling their potential and aspirations while addressing their needs and concerns; and
- to effectively support young people as active and responsible citizens who fully participate in and contribute to the social, economic and cultural life of the nation and Europe.

The policy is being implemented through two specific but interdependent strategies that complement the two policy aims. Each of the two strategies has a number of designated Action Plans under which specific actions are being undertaken and implemented over the six-year timeframe 2015-2020.

- Strategy 1 – Youth work and services for young people
 - o Action Plan – New spaces at local community level for young people and youth organisations
 - o Action Plan – Awareness raising, listening to and supporting the voice of young people
 - o Action Plan – Initiatives for the active engagement, empowerment and participation of young people and youth organisations
- Strategy 2 – Cross-sectoral supports for young people
 - o Action Plan – Education and training
 - o Action Plan – Health and well-being
 - o Action Plan – Employment and entrepreneurship
 - o Action Plan – Arts and culture
 - o Action Plan – Social inclusion
 - o Action Plan – Voluntary and community activities
 - o Action Plan – Sport and recreational activities

NETHERLANDS



General info and definitions

Youth work is more or less an undefined field of activities. There is no legal basis for social work – let alone the youth worker as a professional. Neither is there a legal basis for youth work as such, or its definition and description. Localisation, privatisation and civil society approaches are hindering the development of a national, recognised framework even more. A still quite popular definition sees youth work as the non-profit oriented effort by adults to offer recreation, informal education and support to age-defined organisations of leisure time. The emphasis is put on “adults” because in this definition, youth organisations that are fully run by young people themselves – youth cultures, youth groups, gangs, youth actions – do not belong to the realm of youth work. The three core tasks of youth work are recreation, informal education and support, such as counselling, providing information, referring the young to agencies. The estimated number of youth workers is 1 700.

One of the problems with youth work is that there are endless ways of categorising it, all based on different criteria. A dominant one is by age group, thus 0-4 is preschool, 4-12 children in primary school, 12-15 teenagers and from 16 on, young people with flexible maximum ages (18, 21, 23, 27 even sometimes up to 30). A certain shift to earlier transitions in age groups is going on, thus being a teenager starts at 10, and a young person at 15 on.

A second system is target-group oriented, based on gender, ethnicity, social-economic standards or specific problems. A third categorisation system is based on field of activity, such as youth organisations, open youth work, outreach youth work, sports and so forth. Yet a fourth mechanism is to distinguish between core tasks, such as counselling, recreation, community building, participation, protection, correction. One can find all those categorisations and different combinations of them in the youth work literature.

The last one, field of activity, is the main divide between professional youth work and youth organisations. Youth organisations are volunteer organisations, supervised and counselled by adults with professional staff at national or regional level.

Scouting, most religious youth work, political youth work (trade unions, political parties, national and local youth parliaments or platforms) and special interest groups belong to this category. Professional youth work is youth work carried out by professionals together with volunteers, and includes open youth work and street-corner work.

Youth work and in particular youth workers are often perceived as being very singular and different from other services and professionals.

Resources and support are also being further developed and expanded with the twin objective of building the human and physical capacities of the youth sector, including the voluntary youth sector, and providing it with the skills and competences to support the development of young people.

The policy also includes a research programme that will help ensure that it continues to be both evidence-based and outcome-focused.

The implementation of the policy is being monitored on an annual basis and at the end of the period 2015-2020, an independent evaluation will be conducted on the overall impact of the policy and the benefits accruing for young people, the voluntary youth sector and the wider society.

Training and profile

The Youth Work Profession Act 2014 gives formal professional recognition and status to youth workers, as well as regulating the profession and determining the qualifications and conditions under which youth workers can acquire such recognition.

The Act provides for a Youth Work Profession Board that regulates the practice of and eligibility to practise youth work. The Youth Work Profession Board is an independent statutory authority under the provisions of the Act.

The Board promotes professional youth work standards and development and keeps and publishes a register of all recognised and warranted youth workers. As provided under the Act, the Board also drafted a Code of Professional Ethics for youth workers.

The Act defines youth work as follows: “Youth work” in Malta is a non-formal learning activity aimed at the personal, social and political development of young people. Youth workers engage with young people within their communities, including the voluntary sector, and support them in realising their potential and address life’s challenges critically and creatively to bring about social change. Youth work takes into account all strands of diversity and focuses on all young people between 13 and 30.

Youth work is politically and formally recognised through the Youth Work Profession Act 2014. This Act stipulates the requirements to practise youth work in Malta. The Act established the Youth Work Profession Board, which is charged with giving recommendations to the Minister responsible for youth to issue a professional warrant to prospective youth workers.

LEARN MORE...

The general process of validating informal and non-formal learning (VINFL) consists of:

- identification through dialogue of particular experiences of an individual
- documentation to make visible the individual’s experiences
- formal assessment of these experiences
- certification of the results of the assessment which may lead to a partial or full qualification. The present national youth policy, Towards 2020, will soon conclude and a new national youth policy will be developed over the period 2021-2027, to coincide with the new EU Youth Strategy, 2019-2027

A tense relationship exists between social work and youth work. In the Netherlands most youth work has been integrated into generic local social services (welfare organisations), combining youth work, community building, care for the vulnerable, multicultural and integration projects, child care and social case work. On the inside of these organisations, youth workers like to see themselves as different from social workers, and as expressing their own social pedagogical approach and having fully different target groups and specific methods. A second ambiguous relationship exists between youth work and youth care. There are more or less open borders between the two but most youth workers prefer not to be in the therapeutic or youth care corner, let alone in the disciplining corner from the justice point of view. A third problematic relationship exists between the youth worker on one hand and local social policy and its policy makers on the other. Youth workers often see themselves as exploited by politicians eager for short-term successes, and as being used to respond more to incidents than participating in long-term strategies.

Legislative context and governance

The Netherlands was the first country to open a school for social work (1899) and in the 1970s youth work became more or less a professionalized sector. Nowadays youth work in the Netherlands is mainly associated with professional youth work. Since the 1970s youth workers have been trained professionals, thus volunteer youth organisations are no longer at the forefront. They are in the same corner as sport clubs and art activities for youth.

The Dutch are often seen as merchants and pragmatists. A small country with big neighbours – leaving out Belgium – should be opportunistic and liberal. Since the 1970s the youth work debate has been mainly in the hands of policy makers and not scientist or researchers because they are not the ones who will pay for it.

Legitimizing youth work should to be done in the political arena, more so than in the scientific or pedagogical one. This political instrumental approach became even stronger after the universities closed their institutes of social pedagogy, agogy and andragogy, all newly constructed disciplines aiming at social processes of change. Over the last decades, the traditional universities showed a clear lack of interest in the work of social professionals.

Dutch social work and youth work has been mainly left to civil society, but since the 1980s the localisation of social services – including youth work – has become popular, and since the 1970s, privatisation of the market a new trend. The nation state is decentralising its social responsibilities to civil society, the market and the local communities. Youth work is an interplay between municipalities (financiers), NGOs (provision) and a market that is growing through tendering procedures and an increase in profit providers, in particular in childcare.

Training and profile

Another positive action is the strategy to set up professorships (lectoren) and research centres in the Hogescholen (polytechnics) and then to turn them into universities of applied sciences. Equally positive is the national infrastructure's (National Youth Institute) renewed interest in preventive youth work, including setting up a database for evidence based work and the creation of a national profile for the youth worker profession.

The profile introduces youth work as an easy accessible service for all young people from 12 to 23 years old. Changing behaviour, preventing youth from sliding downwards, neighbourhood learning centres, self organisation and promoting social resilience are summed up as important objectives. Youth participation, informal learning and social education, information, meeting and recreation are also on the list. The profile document also summarises core tasks, competencies and trends, and sets up a workable framework for improving and strengthening youth work.

POLAND



General info and definitions

Starting from 2011, Poland has developed a youth policy strategy at national level inside the wide long-term strategy "POLAND 2030. THE THIRD WAVE OF MODERNITY" (<http://zds.kprm.gov.pl/raport-polska-2030-wyzwania-rozwojowe>), aiming to create better conditions for a good life of youth people, shown as the one that has gone through the experience of radical changes. Despite that, there is no official definition of youth animator in Poland.

Legislative context and governance

A very peculiar trait of youth policy in Poland is that the Government bodies and other institutions concerned with youth policy are trending to be abolished rather than set up. There is a Ministry of National Education (<http://www.men.gov.pl>) and the Youth Department in the Ministry does not exist as a separate body. Youth issues are splitted within three different departments, depending on each youth topic:

- Strategy and International Cooperation Department: collaboration with youth organisations and other organisations in the area of education and learning, implementing strategies and laws, developing non-formal education of youth, developing system of information such as Eurodesk and Ploteus collaboration with international and European bodies dealing with youth issues, youth mobility and youth exchange.
- Department for Structural Funds: Erasmus+ National Agency.
- Educational Opportunities Department.

There are no plans to develop a new national youth strategy, as the issues of youth are dealt with in more strategies that are general such Poland 2030 or Development of Social Capital. Also the national report "Youth 2011" did not result in constructing a specific youth policy or strategy, but is considered a basis for strategic planning in the different policy fields.

A Polish Council of Youth Organisations PROM (pl. Polska Rada Organizacji Młodzieżowych - <http://www.prom.info.pl/>) also exist from 2011. Its aim is to be involved in the development of the youth policy, promotion of the concept of public involvement of young people, support of collaboration, exchange of information and experiences between youth organisations and youth unions and organisations acting on behalf of youth.

Training and profile

There are no training pathways designed to be a youth animator in Poland and, according to the experts and to the national context it is also trackable in the lack of definition and regulation of youth work in the Country. One of the threat of this situation is perceiving youth work as a profession of declining public confidence and stereotypical image of this type of activity that conducts to a lack of recognition of youth work and youth animator as a profession. There is a quite wide range of training course for youth animators but there is not an academic one in Poland.

LEARN MORE...

According to the Council of Europe, a European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy correspondent in Poland has to be confirmed. However, more information can be find at Fundacja Rozwoju Systemu Edukacji - Narodowa Agencja Programu Erasmus+ (<https://erasmusplus.org.pl/>) and Mladiinfo (<http://www.mladiinfo.eu/>).

PORTUGAL



General info and definitions

The concept of 'youth work' was difficult to translate in Portugal as there is no such concept in Portuguese although the practice of youth work exists. The term youth work was formally translated as 'trabalho socioeducativo em prol dos jovens', literally meaning 'social and educational work for youth'.

In Portugal, there is no real tradition or development of youth work, as youth organisations actions. There is no tradition of formal/professional youth work, the work with young people in associations was recognised and developed after the end of the authoritarian regime in 1974 and in 2016, the youth worker's professional profile was created.

The youth worker is a professional whose work is defined by 'intervening in the design, organisation, development and evaluation of projects, programmes and activities with and for young people, through domain methodologies of non-formal education, facilitating and promoting citizenship, participation, autonomy, inclusion and personal, social and cultural development'.

Legislative context and governance

The creation of the youth worker's professional profile has been developed by a work group in the field of youth, under the coordination of the State Secretariat for Youth and Sports and the Portuguese Institute of Sports and Youth, PI (IPDJ, I.P.), with the collaboration of the National Agency for Qualification and Professional Education – Education and Employment and Qualification ANQEP, I.P. It relied on the collaboration of youth associations and youth representative platforms – the National Youth Council (CNJ) and the National Federation of Youth Associations (FNAJ).

In regard to youth associations the Portuguese law distinguishes them from student organisations and defines their responsibilities. The legislative acknowledgment of its genesis is essential for its eligibility in funding applications. In Portugal, the work with young people is also supported on the basis of volunteering work.

It should also be noted that the organisational structure in the youth field maintained its proximity and geographic coverage principles, having services in the 18 continental districts, connecting technical staff and infrastructures (training rooms, auditoriums, youth hostels, info points "Lojas Já" link below).

There is specific legislation in place in Portugal regarding "associativism", youth camps and volunteering activities, however, there is no specific law that is targeted at youth work defined as 'trabalho socioeducativo em prol dos jovens'. Indeed, the various laws are very general and do not provide a specific professional status for youth workers or professional standards for the practice of youth work.

Training and profile

The main goal of professional training for youth workers is to qualify professionals that monitor children and young people, which collaborate in organising and developing educational activities, under the supervision of childhood educators/teachers or autonomously. However, there is no professional status associated with youth work in Portugal. It is neither a legal recognised profession nor a social recognised profession.

To a great extent, the staff of youth organisations is constituted of volunteers. Consequently, youth work does not exist as a formal/professional delivery in Portugal. There are no minimum qualification standards for youth workers in Portugal and youth work still does not exist as an academic subject in formal education.

Youth workers come from a range of extremely diverse educational backgrounds. Youth workers can come from all type of educational routes: biology, psychology, teaching, architecture, engineering, social work, international relations, high-school degree, etc.

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At the national level, there are some formal and non-formal training opportunities available to youth workers even though there is a lack of formal qualifications on youth work. Training courses in Portugal are offered by the IPDJ and by youth organisations themselves.

Non-professional patents

In Portugal, Socio Cultural Animation is quite decentralized and lot of training initiatives come from local authorities, who are taking a leading role in cultural initiatives at local level.

Portugal involves a complex network of providers. For instance, community or religious organisations, youth organisations, local authorities, civil society organisations, and private institutions might deliver youth work. Indeed, municipalities might work at the local level with schools in cooperation with local youth organisations.

Most of the training are provided by a social educational NGO like UPAJE União Para a Acção Cultural e Juvenil Educativa):

- Animadores de campos de feria,
- Cordenadores de campos de feria.

Professional certificates of youth work The Programa de Animadores Juvenis aimed at providing young people with basic training for them to become youth workers in socio-cultural and educational areas.

The Plano Nacional de Formação aimed at making available to youth leaders and youth workers training in specific areas such as communication techniques and leisure time occupations. The national programme 'Escolhas' implemented by the fifth consecutive time by the High Commission for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue (ACIDI) is one of the most visible actions having a positive impact in developing youth work in Portugal. Indeed, the programme funds projects of different kind of organisations (e.g. youth organisations, NGOs, local municipalities) with the aim of reducing the social exclusion among young people with a migrant/ethnic or disadvantaged background. The youth worker training is equivalent to a level 4 in the National Qualifications Framework (12th grade or senior year). The youth worker integrates the National Qualifications Catalogue, in cooperation with the PNFJ - National Plan of Youth Training, from the Portuguese Institute of Sports and Youth, PI (IPDJ, I.P.).

ROMANIA



General info and definitions

The Law of Young People defines the age limits for youth as a target group from 14 to 35. The new National Strategy on Youth (adopted in 2015) aims to support youth to participate to the economic, social, cultural and political life, ensuring equal opportunities to education, employment and decent life conditions to all youth, including vulnerable youth groups.

The Strategy integrates several policy domains in 4 main pillars/key areas of intervention:

- culture and non-formal education;
- health, sports and leisure;
- participation and volunteering;
- employment and entrepreneurship.

A fifth horizontal pillar/key area of intervention of the strategy is the social inclusion of youth.

The Youth Strategy is closely interrelated with the national strategies on employment, social inclusion, health, administration and education. However, none of these strategies, nor the Youth Strategy is directly referring to an overall national development policy.

Legislative context and governance

The dominant concepts in youth work are: participation, especially political and civic participation, leisure activities such as summer/winter schools, and counselling for young people on different issues concerning education, jobs, travelling, associations, information, training and voluntary work.

With regard to the institutions involved in youth work, in the last four or five years the role of non-governmental organisations in providing activities, programmes and projects has gradually been replaced by a better and broader involvement of national authorities both at national and regional/local level. A network of state institutions has been built under the coordination of the National Authority for Youth, the central administrative body in charge of coordinating, designing and implementing youth policy in Romania.

The Ministry of Youth and Sport (MYS) is the government authority responsible for the implementation, co-ordination and monitoring of the national Youth Strategy. However, an action plan allowing systematic implementation of the strategy, monitoring and evaluation the strategy was not adopted until April 2016.

The Ministry of Youth and Sport is responsible for the drafting, development and proposition for adoption by the Government as a whole of the Action Plan for the implementation of the Youth Strategy. Furthermore, the Ministry of Youth and Sport is the main responsible for the key area of intervention on participation and volunteering and for specific objectives related to non-formal education, sport and leisure.

The monitoring and evaluation of the strategy are also among the responsibilities of the Ministry of Youth and Sport. However, for the development of the action plan and for monitoring the Youth Strategy implementation the Ministry of Youth and Sport needs support and co-operation from other sectorial ministries (Education, Employment, Health etc.).

Subordinated to MYS operate the County directorates for youth, respectively of the Bucharest Municipal (City of Bucharest), the Students' houses of culture and Students' Cultural and Sports Centre "Tei" (in Bucharest). The county council is the authority of the local public administration set up at county level for the co-ordination of the activity of the communal and town councils to carry out public service of county interest.

Training and profile

According to art. 1, para. 2.b. of Law no. 350/2006, the youth activity is any form of action organized in order to improve the conditions necessary for the socio-professional integration of young people, according to their needs and aspirations.

In Romania there is a specific training for youth workers that is designed by the Romanian Agency of Work Qualifications and registered in the Register of Jobs. It can be delivered by any organization that is authorised by the Ministry of Education and the Agency of work qualifications. Usually the course takes 40 hours and some practice and you need to take an exam to obtain the diploma.

The occupational standard for "Youth Worker" (COR 341205) was elaborated in 2012 and has not been revised since then. At the same time, the occupation "Youth Counselor" (COR 235920) is included in the Romanian List of Occupations, for which, however, no occupational standard is included in the List of standards for vocational education and training. Thus, it is still unclear the differentiation of duties, responsibilities and competencies required for each of the two occupations and at this time it is not possible to employ youth counselors in public institutions, NGOs and private companies.

The main similarity between the worker and the youth counselor is their involvement in the youth activities.

a. The youth worker carries out directly youth activities. The main beneficiaries of its activity are young people. The interaction with the beneficiaries is direct, direct.

b. The youth counselor would indirectly carry out youth activities. The main beneficiaries of its activity would be the young people. The interaction with the beneficiaries would be a mediated one and would be achieved through policies and projects. These could be implemented with the help of the youth worker.

The main differences between the worker and the youth counselor are due to the minimum educational level required to perform the function and the duties specific to the function. Representatives of the non-governmental environment who have heard about the position of youth worker and the position of youth counselor argue that there are differences between them.

At the level of NGO representatives, a tendency to identify colleagues or themselves as youth workers can be observed even if they did not attend the qualification courses. They consider that working with young people recommends them as youth workers.

The youth worker could be employed by:

- Non-governmental organizations
- Youth and leisure centers
- State institutions • Culture houses
- County Youth Directorates
- Ministry of Youth and Sport and other Ministries (eg : Ministry of Labor, Family, Social Protection and Older Persons, Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research, Ministry of Health, etc.)

Non-governmental organizations would rather offer volunteer positions for the youth worker than internal (paid or unpaid) or employ them.

Major functions of the youth worker:

1. Gather information about young people through direct interaction
2. Provides guidance in the personal and professional development of young people
3. Organizes events for young people (for educational, recreational, informative, consultative, etc.)
4. Facilitates the process of non-formal and informal learning
5. Facilitates the relationship between young people and non-governmental organizations
6. Facilitates the relationship between young people and state institutions (eg Ministry of Youth and Sport, County Youth Councils, mayors etc.)
7. Provides information and general counseling to young people
8. Ensures community cooperation

Major functions of the youth counselor:

1. Gather information about young people through statistics and other reports
 2. Synthesize the information received from the youth workers
 3. Manages events for young people from an administrative point of view (eg deals with obtaining approvals, settlements, etc.)
 4. Develop policies, strategies and projects for young people
 5. Evaluates youth activities, projects, programs and policies
- The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) was used to identify the level of responsibility related to the Youth Worker position.

It is necessary for the youth worker to manage complex technical or professional activities or projects, by taking responsibility for them and being responsible for making decisions in unpredictable work or study situations. These competences are related to level 6 of the EQF.

Also, the youth worker should be able to review and develop their own and others' performances. This competence is related to level 5 (short-term higher education).

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The minimum educational level that the youth worker should have is the high school (12 completed classes).

The diploma issued after the qualification course is useful for recognizing the effort made by each participant and for future projects whose beneficiaries are young people. Also, obtaining the diploma as a youth worker represents a plus for a possible employment of the owner.

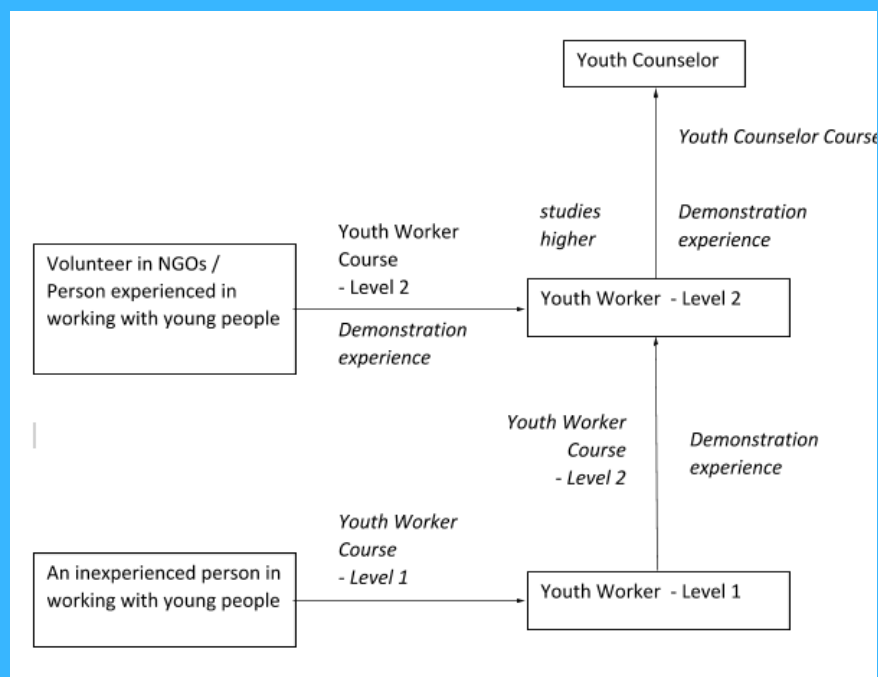
The additional courses of initiation, training and specialization are considered an advantage for the youth workers. The courses are: project manager, trainer, socio-educational animator, pedagogical course, communication and PR course and project writing course.

The representatives of the non-profit environment in Romania consider that they and their colleagues are "youth workers" even if they do not have a qualification course. The current activity of NGOs was not influenced by occupational standards. Experts from the Ministry of Youth and Sport believe that in NGOs the workers are the ones who work with young people and the advisor is the project manager.

The minimum educational level that the youth counselor should have is the degree cycle. The participants in the discussions did not want to limit the education of youth counselors through specializations. The specializations recommended for this function are: social assistance, pedagogy, psychology, etc. (personal secretary adviser of state MTS).

For the position of counselor, knowledge in psychology, pedagogy and sociology is recommended. Knowledge of a foreign language is considered necessary by a large part of NGO representatives.

Stages of vocational training for youth workers and counselors:



SLOVAKIA



General info and definitions

The change of regime in November 1989 signified a complete change in the field of non-formal education and informal learning as well as in the functioning of social organisations, including those working with children and young people. With the transition to democracy, organisations that had been banned during the communist period were reconstituted. With the logic of democratic development, following 1989 hundreds of new non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and private entities appeared, whose alternative programmes began to fill the space in the field of leisure time of children and young people.

IUVENTA is the Slovak Youth Institute and is in charge of the implementation of the state policy towards children and youth in Slovakia.

Since September 2008, the Slovak Republic has a specific law on youth work, the Act No. 282/2008 Coll, that defines:

- the basic concepts used in youth work and sets the highest age limit for young people in accordance with European documents for up to 30 years;
- the environment of youth work and specialised youth work, including entities working with youth at the national, regional and local levels;
- areas of youth work.

The act also regulates:

- the accreditation of educational bodies and programmes in the field of non-formal education for youth;
- the financing of youth work;
- the creation of youth work systems in municipalities and at the level of self-governing regions;
- voluntary youth work in accordance with EU law.

According to this act, youth work in Slovakia is defined as: “mainly an educational activity, a societal activity, an informational activity and an advisory activity for youth, young leaders, youth leaders and youth workers.”

The Strategy of the Slovak Republic for Youth for 2014-2020 was adopted on 23 April 2014 and defines the strategic objectives of the youth policy while reflecting youth’s needs, particularly in the field of young people’s education, employment, creativity and entrepreneurship, their participation, health, well-being and relation to nature, social inclusion and volunteering. It also tackles global themes and defines strategic objectives within youth work. The strategy aims to contribute to increasing the quality of young people’s lives, particularly through development of their personalities, by preparing them to work in a constantly changing democratic environment and use their creative potential in practice as well as in their active participation in the society. The strategy is a result of an active dialogue between youth and the representatives of the state administration, regional and local self-governments and the non-governmental sector.

A successful step was also the addition of the position of “Youth Worker” to the National Qualifications Framework.

Legislative context and governance

The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic is the central body of the state administration of the Slovak Republic, which ensures the implementation of state policy in relation to children and youth. Responsibilities toward the non-formal education of children and youth are covered by the Department of Youth, particularly in the following areas:

- preparation of strategic and standard
- setting materials in this area;
- awarding of certificates of professional qualification for specialised activities in the field of youth work;
- provision of methodological guidance for youth clubs (centres for leisure time activities and interest-based facilities);
- international co-operation in the field of youth;
- financial support for youth work

Since 2000, IUVENTA – the Slovak Youth Institute has been co-operating on various tasks assigned by the ministry and started to actively participate in the realisation of youth policy in Slovakia.

Other relevant actors with sub-national, specific youth-related scopes are the regional self-government offices, that ensure the administrative and organizational issues related to youth policy at regional level in the field of social support for youth; the regional youth centres within 3 self-government regions (Trenčín, Banská Bystrica and Košice): their main area of responsibility includes the coordination of the all institutions participating in the implementation of youth policy in the region (schools, educational and social institutions, civic associations, counselling services, municipalities etc.), but they also initiate and promote the process of implementation of youth policy and provide educational opportunities for youth workers; the regional Commission for the Work with Children and Youth: its members are representatives of expert and social institutions involved in various aspects of youth life (schools, educational facilities, representatives of civic associations, leisure-time facilities, church institutions as well as parents and representatives of the private sector). The main role of the Commission is to prepare regional measures for youth policy, but it also monitors the process of implementation, applies arrangements for their realisation and elaborates evaluation reports on task-performance for the relevant year, and carries out the dissemination of information and feedback to interested parties and initiates their co-operation in carrying out the coordination of individual tasks. Finally, following the adoption of the Act No. 282/2008 Coll. on support of youth work, also municipalities have a clear role on supporting the development of youth work.

Training and profile

There is no National Youth Work Competency Framework or standard-setting instrument and no examples of good practice for youth policy guiding youth workers in Slovakia. There is a definition of knowledge and skills requirements of youth workers in the National Qualifications Framework/National System of Professions.

Within the National System of Professions there are three competency profiles of workers in the field of youth work: Youth worker, Methodologist of youth work, and Lecturer in youth work. The National System of Professions defines general abilities, professional knowledge and professional skills for each profile.

There is a lack of social, formal and political recognition of youth work and youth workers. Youth work in Slovakia does not have the status of “professional work”. Underestimation of youth work, the low status of youth workers and the deficiency in funding in the youth sector does not help the situation.

Despite the legislative definition and definition of “youth worker”, “methodologist of youth work” and “lecturer in youth work” in the NSP, there are no universities where it is possible to study the field of “youth worker” and become a professionally certified youth worker. It is possible to study, for example, social pedagogy, pedagogy for leisure-time activities, specialised didactics, animation of free time activities, andragogy, etc.

LEARN MORE...

An important step for recognition of youth work was the creation of the Cross-sectoral Working Group for the state policy in the field of youth, which highlighted the importance of cross-sectoral co-operation. Recognition of quality for youth work and results of youth work is also achieved by the accreditation of specialised activities in youth work. Accreditation of specialised activities in youth work is realised by the accreditation committee, according to Act No. 282/2008 Coll. on youth work support, which enables organisations to become accredited educational facilities and to have their educational programmes accredited. The accreditation committee is an advisory body of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic and its role is to make the decision whether to recommend an educational programme for accreditation or not.

After successful completion of the accredited programme, the participants receive the certificate about the specialised skills gained either by study or praxis in the particular educational institution. The accredited programmes are more or less oriented on the methods and principles of non-formal learning in youth work, project management, co-ordination of volunteering; communication skills, establishment and leading the non-governmental institutions, organisation of children’s camps, the development of lecturer skills, social entrepreneurship in youth work and others.

On 21 June 2013 IUVENTA organised the signing of the Declaration on the recognition of contribution of non-formal education in youth work.

There are also others national initiatives supporting the validation and recognition of youth workers. They are usually connected with issuing the certificates which formally approve and recognise the competencies acquired through volunteering and youth work such as:

- an online validation tool for competencies and skills gained during volunteering called VSkills for Employment – “D-zručnosti pre zamestnanie”. The tool enables volunteers to get their competencies officially certified by a special committee at the University of Matej Bel in Banská Bystrica.
- Another online tool is VOLWEM – Volunteering as a Way to Employment, and is supported by the European Commission.
- OKO – Objav kompetencie online (Discover competencies online). This online game shows players what youth work can look like, what can be taught by youth work and what competencies can be developed <http://www.objavkompetencieonline.sk/hra/koordinator>
- In the voluntary field, a platform was created. The Platform of volunteer centres and organisations has developed quality standards for volunteer management and recommendations for youth work in the voluntary field.

SLOVENIA



General info and definitions

The Act on Public Interest in the Youth Sector, entered into force on June 2010, may be considered as the most comprehensive and binding official document that addresses the needs and/or rights of young people and stipulates how youth issues should be addressed.

The definition of youth work in Slovenia as established through the Act on Public Interest in Youth Sector provides a framework for all youth organisations and organisations working with young people. The definition adopted through this Act is broadly similar to the European definition in terms of its focus on activities, both by and young people with an emphasis on voluntary participation. Although the Slovenian definition does not directly mention that youth work belongs to the area of “out of school” education, the content of the whole Act carries this meaning and reinforces the importance of “non-formal education”.

Legislative context and governance

The Government of the Republic of Slovenia proposes a National Youth Programme for adoption by the National Assembly. This is the main document that forms the youth policy agenda and specific policy measures, also in the field of youth work.

The co-ordination of youth policy is delegated to the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport (Office for Youth - <https://www.gov.si/en/state-authorities/bodies-within-ministries/office-for-youth/>), but the implementation of various measures is a responsibility of competent ministries, namely Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Public Administration, Ministry of Infrastructure, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Justice.

Training and profile

The working groups preparing a competence model for youth workers defined a series of youth work activities that are mostly happening in the youth and youth work organisations, namely: workshops, work camps, youth campaigns, meetings of young people, street work, (international) youth exchanges, youth information and counselling, training of young people, leadership of youth organisations, youth cultural or youth sport events, youth initiatives, team animation, organisation of voluntary work, advocacy.

The development of a professional occupation status for youth workers in Slovenia is still underway.

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In 2017, youth work as a vocation has been recognised as part of the National Vocational Qualification System and with it, part of the Vocational Education and training system in Slovenia. The National Vocational Qualification is a Public Certificate based on the National Vocational Qualifications Act. It is an occupational or professional qualification required for different professions. Within this system, one cannot obtain the same title as in the educational system, but it provides individuals an opportunity to assess and validate knowledge and skills obtained through non-formal learning. National Vocational Qualifications attest to one's competence to perform a certain occupation. The certificate is not merely valid at a company level, but is also recognised at national and European levels.

There are two main legally acceptable ways for recognition of non-formal learning in Slovenia:

- The recognition of non-formal knowledge, skills and competence within the formal education system – through continuing interrupted education, as a follow-up after attaining higher levels of education, changing direction/sector in education etc. – when educational institutions recognise the acquired knowledge on the basis of relevant legislation and credit system;
- The National Vocational Qualifications System (Sistem nacionalne poklicne kvalifikacije) when non-formally acquired knowledge and skills is recognised by the labour market under the facilitation of the Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training. Youth work as a vocation was recognised through the latest system.

SPAIN



General info and definitions

In Spain, the tradition of youth work started with the transition to democracy (about 30 years ago) and is considered as the work done with young people especially in the field of non-formal education and based on non-formal learning. Its aim would be to ameliorate young peoples' lives by encouraging their participation and integration in different spheres of society.

The inexistence of a specific term for youth work or the lack of a translation of the concept into Spanish does not mean that youth work does not take place in the country.

Legislative context and governance

Youth work in Spain, understood as working with and for young people, has a strong implantation in governments (national, regional and municipal) through public policies on youth for those between 15 and 30 years old. Governments support youth associations, organisations delivering youth services and social entities that work with young people.

There is no specific law regulating « youth work » in Spain at the national level and currently there are no plans to create one, as the responsibility for youth falls to the Autonomous Communities. However, although no specific law exists, the article 48 of the Spanish Constitution states that “the public authorities shall promote the conditions for free and effective participation of youth in their political, social, economic and cultural development”. This has been put in practice through the creation of the Spanish Institute for Youth, which started a firm commitment of public powers to develop youth policies and youth work that were almost in-existent before the setting of democracy.

The Spanish Institute for Youth (Injuve) was created in 1977, and has a nationwide reach; and though the youth competencies are in most cases in hands of the regional administrations, some important youth policies are implemented by Injuve, like those that have an international dimension or that touch to more than one region.

From this moment, Autonomous Communities were given exclusive responsibility for youth and they have developed their youth policy in line with their political priorities. At the same time, municipalities also have their own competences in developing youth policies and most of them have a specific department for youth. The bodies governing youth work in Spain are the Autonomous Communities.

Training and profile

Although there is not a youth worker profession established as such, formal youth work is delivered by “youth technicians” at the regional and local level and in youth information centres. They are mainly people with a university degree in social education.

There are no minimum qualification standards for youth work in Spain.

LEARN MORE...

Non-professional patents

Youth workers in Spain are trained via other professions like social workers, social educators, sociocultural animators and civil servants working with young people, informally known as “youth technicians”. Social workers and social educators are in both cases higher education degrees; both last 3-year and combine theory with practice. These degrees lead to management positions in local youth services to work specially with disadvantaged youth.

Vocational training schools offer 2-year courses for the title of higher technician for social services and socio-cultural animators, as well as the following courses: Management and coordination of educational leisure activities for children and young people; Stimulation of educational leisure activities for children and young people and Youth Informer. Finally, at volunteer level, voluntary youth associations offer training for volunteers which may be coordinated by regional adult education centres which result in certificates. These courses do not require a university degree.

Non-formal youth training is also delivered by leisure time organisations, youth associations or social educational youth NGOs.

Professional certificates of youth work

The title of “Monitor de Ocio y tiempo libre” (OTL), which is achieved through the realization of a monitor course, allows and professionalizes the performance work in leisure activities such as summer camps, weekend trips of course or extracurricular activities. It is a title issued by the competent public body of each autonomous community (for example, the youth, tourism and sports council) with recognition throughout the national territory.

In order to obtain the degree, a theoretical-practical and an exclusively practical phase must be passed in an entity publicly recognized as such, and organized by a leisure coordinator whose title is in force and approved.

The monitor courses must be taught in leisure schools recognized by the competent autonomous community. The training they offer must be approved and structured according to an educational plan configured by three areas: Sociocultural, educational, techniques and resources for animation.

Furthermore, a university degree on voluntary work and cooperation is available. The main way for qualification on specialised youth work is postgraduate studies.

SWEDEN



General info and definitions

In Swedish national youth policy, the concept of youth work is almost non-existent. Instead, a related concept is used, namely meaningful leisure activities (meningsfull fritid) that mainly relates to activities preferably taking place in recreational centres and in youth organisations.

The Swedish youth policy consists of a long-term orientation as well as an action programme. The action programme focuses on three main areas: transition from school to work and society, young people's power and participation and young people's leisure time, organising and well-being.

Unlike at the state level, the concept of youth work is somewhat more used in the work of the municipalities. At the municipal level, leisure is most commonly under the responsibility of the committee of culture and /or sports. It is up to the municipality to decide whether and how leisure activities are formed, as no legislation or other national steering policies exists, requiring specific actions from the municipalities in the field of leisure.

Legislative context and governance

The Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society (MUCF) is a government agency for matters relating to youth policy and civil society; this agency works to ensure that the objectives of youth policy and of civil society policy will be achieved by: developing, collecting and disseminating knowledge; distributing government grants; collaborating with civil society organisations in order to safeguard their knowledge and experiences.

Different from many other European countries, youth work is not a commonly used concept to define initiatives directed towards young people in Sweden. Therefore, there are no legislative frameworks or other national level policy documents addressing youth work. The Swedish Government's main tool for activities with and for young people of a social, cultural, educational or political nature is the national youth policy.

The main themes for Swedish youth policy according to the government's priorities in the budget proposal for 2018 were:

- transition from school to work and society, mainly relating to employment, education and housing;
- young people's power and participation;
- young people's leisure time, organising and well-being.

In Sweden, municipalities have considerable autonomy on how youth policy is implemented. Therefore, while the national youth policy is compulsory for ministries and central government agencies, it is only advisory at the local level.

Training and profile

Sweden is in the process of developing a structure for validation of non-formal and informal education. When it comes to social recognition and self-recognition, learning in the youth work context has not been on the political agenda. Instead, formal education at upper secondary level for all and preventing early leaving from education and training have been the top priorities.

LEARN MORE...

Non-professional patents

In Sweden, youth work training is not yet regulated; non-professional trainings are given by numerous types of bodies, like church, scouts, municipalities, NGOs, youth movements and associations.

Quality and expertise in co-operation - KEKS (Kvalitet och kompetens i samverkan) is a network for youth work. The network has existed since 2005 and builds on common goals and a common system of quality assurance. KEKS provides its members with competence, methodological and organisational development. Peer-learning initiatives for how to assess quality in youth work have been taken by the KEKS-network and the Research and Development Centre for Youth Work.

Professional certificates of youth work

Most staff members working in recreational centres or youth/culture houses are trained recreation leaders from the two-year vocational training programme at the folk high schools, leading to a diploma in youth work. All folk high schools with a recreation leader programme follow a common training plan/curriculum.

The Folk High Schools is an educational body that offers education for adults, but does not have university status. This, as a result, ranks the youth leader (youth work) qualification lower than the social work degree, which in practice has consequences for job opportunities and salary level.

UNITED KINGDOM



General info and definitions

England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland have recently developed new youth work strategies:

- The Children Act 2004 provides the framework for youth policy in England, seeking to provide a new approach to the well-being of children and young people up to age 19. It aims for every child and young person to have the support they need to be healthy; stay safe; enjoy and achieve; make a positive contribution; and achieve economic well-being. These five outcomes underpin all aspects of government policy relating to children and young people. The Act also introduced requirements for local authorities to cooperate with partners to achieve these outcomes.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 includes a duty that local authorities must secure access for young people in their area to sufficient positive activities. The Children's Plan, published in December 2007, set out the government's vision for children, young people and families and includes measures relating to youth provision, children and young people's health, youth justice, and a focus on schools working in partnership with other agencies to deliver integrated services.

- In Wales, Extending Entitlement provides the framework for youth support services, bringing together all services, support and opportunities for young people aged 11 to 25. Young People's Partnerships have been established in each local authority area to coordinate services for 11-25 year olds.

- In Scotland, a national youth work strategy was published in 2007, setting out the role of youth work in achieving the broader aims of the Scottish Executive - that young people are nurtured, safe, active, healthy, achieving, included, respected and responsible. The strategy covers young people aged 11 to 25.

- In Northern Ireland, the Children and Young People's Unit was set up within government to ensure that the rights and needs of children and young people are given a high priority. The unit was responsible for developing a 10-year overarching strategy which aims to ensure that by 2016, all children and young people are fulfilling their potential. The strategy covers children and young people up to 18 (or 21 for those who are disabled or have been in care). The Department of Education developed a youth work strategy for 2005-08, which aims to promote the development, well-being, rights and participation of young people aged 4 to 25.

Legislative context and governance

The Department for Children, Schools and Families' Joint International Unit has overall responsibility for representing UK youth policy within Europe and abroad.

Ministries in charge of youth:

- England: The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). DCSF leads work across government to ensure that all children and young people:
 - stay healthy and safe
 - secure an excellent education and the highest possible standards of achievement
 - enjoy their childhood
 - make a positive contribution to society and the economy
 - have lives full of opportunity, free from the effects of poverty
- Scotland: Department of Education and Lifelong Learning, Scottish Executive. Branch Three of the Looked After Children and Youth Work Division in the Education Department is responsible for policy on youth work.
- Wales: Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills, Welsh Assembly. Extending Entitlement is the Welsh Assembly Government's flagship policy for youth support services in Wales. It includes all services, support and opportunities for young people between 11 and 25, wherever they happen, whoever is delivering them and wherever the funding originates.
- Northern Ireland: Department of Education - The Children and Young People's Unit within the Good Relations and Reconciliation Unit of the Office of the First Minister and Deputy Minister coordinates Northern Ireland's strategy for children and young people. It set up an inter-departmental group to take forward its work. The Youth Services Branch of the Department of Education is responsible for the youth service.

As for the regional level, only England has a regional structure competent for the youth policy. There are nine government offices for the regions in England that help implement policy for 11 central government departments, supporting policies for children and young people, managing some programmes and budgets, and making links between different government policies which may affect children, young people and their families. There are also nine regional youth work units across England which support youth work and work with young people in the statutory and voluntary sector.

LEARN MORE...

There are a number of ways to become a youth worker:

- Through a youth work apprenticeship (<https://www.gov.uk/topic/further-education-skills/apprenticeships>)

An apprenticeship is a way for young people and adult learners to earn while they learn in a real job, gaining a youth support worker level 2 or 3 certificate in youth work practice and real experience of working with young people. As an employer hiring an apprentice provides you with the opportunity to develop workers' talents and gain a motivated, skilled and qualified workforce.

Many youth work providers are now employing youth support worker apprenticeships. Find out more about getting onto a youth work apprenticeship.

- As a youth support worker (<http://nya.org.uk/careers-youth-work/getting-qualified/>)

Most people enter youth work as either a volunteer or a paid worker/apprentice and are typically called youth support workers.

Youth support workers is a youth worker who has achieved a level 2 or 3 qualification or a diploma in youth work practice. These are qualifications for people who work with young people using youth work principles and practice. The level 2 is for 16+ age group and the level 3 is aimed at the 18+ age group.

To find out more about getting a place on a course contact the awarding organisation direct.

- As a professional youth worker

If you have gained a qualification that enables access to degree level learning, you can move on to gain a professional level youth work qualification such as:

- BA (Hons): three years full time (and part time equivalent) – level 6
- PG Dip: one year full time (and part time equivalent) – level 7
- MA: one year (and part time equivalent) – level 7
- Graduate Diploma: two years full time – level 6

These courses are offered by universities or colleges of higher education. Your course will need to be 'JNC recognised' and validated by the National Youth Agency for you to gain the status of qualified youth worker.

JNC recognition ensures your degree reflects the current demands of the role and that the course delivers a suitable level of work experience too. You cannot change the status of your degree later so think carefully before embarking on a course of study which is not JNC recognised.

The courses reflect different occupational needs, and have a range of titles, including:

- youth and community
- community and youth studies
- youth and theology
- informal and community education.

Whilst most universities will have entry requirements, all institutions offering youth and community courses will welcome applications from those without academic qualifications providing they have relevant experience and interest in working with young people. Contact the institution for details (<https://nya.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/MASTER-Validation-Database-Sept-2018-v1.pdf>)

Since 2010 Honours Degree level is the minimum requirement for conferring professional status for Youth Work in England.

The professional validation of courses in Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic, is undertaken by the Youth Council for Northern Ireland. <https://youthcouncilni.org/>

The JNC recognition of courses in Wales is coordinated by the ETS Wales Advisory Committee at the Welsh Assembly Government.

The qualifications obtained by graduates of professionally validated programmes in Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and Wales are all recognised by the JNC, and entitle the graduates to work in England.

In Scotland, the minimum qualification for professionally qualified status is a degree. Programmes of study leading to professional status are validated by CLD Standards Council for Scotland, www.cldstandardscouncil.org.uk.

Traditionally these Scottish qualifications have entitled the graduate to professionally qualified status at the discretion of the individual employer.

YOUTH ANIMATOR – EU COUNTRY ANALYSIS MATRIX

EU28 Countries	Definition for youth animator (YA)	Legislative framework	Body(ies) with a responsibility for governing YA	Minimum qualification standards for YA	YA as a recognised profession/ occupation	Availability of formal, dedicated qualifications	Education background type
Austria	No	Yes	Department for youth affairs and department for youth welfare of each federal state.	No	No	No	
Belgium	Yes	Yes	Flemish/Walloon/Brussels Ministry of Culture, Youth, Sport and Media	No	No	No	Part of a wider social work bachelor study programme
Bulgaria	Yes	No	National centre for European Youth Programmes and Initiatives; Youth Directorate of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Science	No	No	No	Ad hoc trainings organized within the informal training system
Croatia	No	No	Ministry for Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy (expert group); Institute for social research (contact point)	No	No	No	Graduate diploma

Cyprus	No	No	Cyprus Youth Board (not explicit)	No	No	No	Education; Social work
Czech republic	Yes	No	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports; Ministry of Labour and Social Issues	Yes	Yes	Yes	Youth work; Social work
Denmark	No	No	Ministry of Children and Education, Ministry of Social Affairs and Integration, Ministry of Employment, Ministry of Science, innovation and higher education.	No	No	No	Social workers, pedagogist; university
Estonia	No	Yes	Ministry of Education and Research	Yes	Yes	Yes	VET, Universities programmes
Finland	Yes	Yes	Ministry of education and culture; local authorities; NGOs; Regional state administrative agencies; Local youth councils	No	Yes	Yes	Doctoral programmes, VET, Universities
France	Yes	Yes	Directorate for youth	Yes	Yes	Yes	professional diplomas, VET trainings

Germany	No	Yes	Federal Ministry for Youth	Yes	No	No	Non-formal and informal trainings, volunteering
Greece	No	No	General Secretariat for Youth of the Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs	No	No	No	Volunteering
Hungary	No	No	Ministry of National Resources	No	No	No	-
Ireland	No	Yes	The Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs is part of the Department of Health and Children; Vocational Education Committees and National Youth Council of Ireland.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Youth work, volunteering, non formal education
Italy	No	No	Department of Youth, Regional and local authorities	No, however some regions have minimum qualification standards	No	Yes	Science Education, psychology sociology but even a limited number of persons whose background is not related at all with youth work.

Latvia	Yes	Yes	Ministry of Education and Science	Yes, statutory youth work	for	Yes	Yes	Pedagogical education
Lithuania	Yes	Yes	Ministry of Social Security and Labour; Department of Youth Affairs	No		No	No	Volunteering and non-formal education
Luxembourg	No	Yes	National Youth Council and National Youth Service	No		No	No	Psychology, social and educational sciences
Malta	Yes	Yes	Aġenzija Żgħażaġh (National Youth Agency)	Yes, regulated by the Youth Work Profession Board according to the Youth Work Profession Act (2014)		Yes	Yes	University department of Youth and Community Studies. Non-formal or informal learning is validated by the National Commission for Further and Higher Education (NCFHE).
Netherlands	Yes	No	National Youth Institute	Yes		Yes	Yes	Professorships and research centres within the "hogescholen" (polytechnics); universities of applied sciences

Poland	No	Yes	Ministry of National Education and other Ministries, regional and local authorities, and their consultative bodies, NGOs	No	No	No	Minimum Bachelor degree, in rehabilitation, education/pedagogy, sociology etc.
Portugal	Yes	Yes	State Secretariat for Youth and Sports; Portuguese Institute of Sports and Youth (IPDJ); National Agency for Qualification and Professional Education; National Youth Council; National Federation of Youth Associations	No	No	No	No specific educational route nor academic subjects in formal education. Training courses are offered by the IPDJ and by youth organizations themselves.
Romania	Yes	Yes	Ministry of Youth and Sport; National Authority for Youth; County directorates for youth	Yes	Yes	Yes	Specific training (40h, practice and test) delivered by authorized organizations

Slovakia	Yes	Yes	Ministry of education, science, research and sport; IUVENTA - Slovak Youth Institute	No	No	No	No specific educational route: it is possible to study e.g. social pedagogy, animation of free time activities, andragogy etc., and to be recognised an Accreditation of specialised activities in youth work or to receive the VSkills for employment certificate
Slovenia	Yes	Yes	Ministry of Education, Science and Sport	No	No	No	Non-formal learning path leading to a specific National vocational qualification certificate
Spain	No	No	INJUVE Spanish Institute for Youth	No	No	No	Non-formal learning paths leading to "youth technicians" profiles.A "Monitor" course and University degrees on relevant fields are available.

Sweden	Yes	No	Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society; Local committees of culture and sports	No	No	No	The validation of non-formal and informal learning is not yet available. Most professionals are trained at the Folk High Schools, providing adult education and leading to a diploma.
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United Kingdom	Yes	Yes	Department for Children, Schools and Families' Joint international unit; Regional youth work units	Specific situations in England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland	Yes	Yes	Multiple options: apprenticeship; volunteering; various degrees offered by universities or colleges of higher education.
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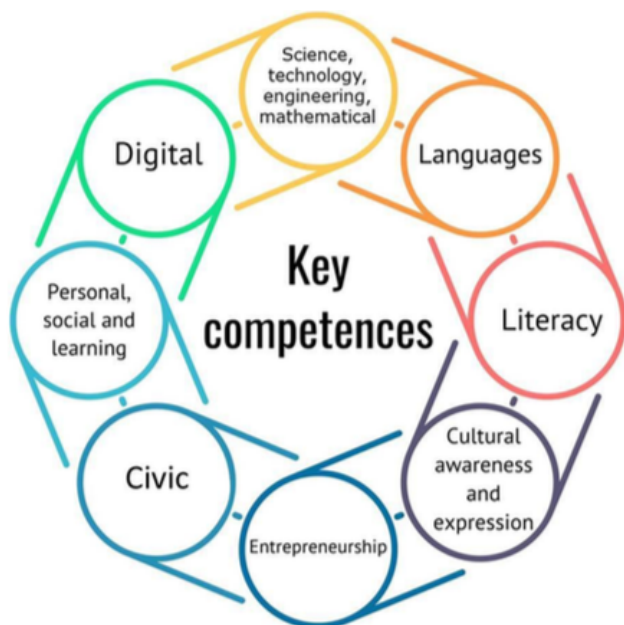
EUROPEAN YOUTH ANIMATOR CORE CURRICULUM

The country analysis proposed shows a jeopardised framework as for the Youth animator's profile and its minimum qualification standards in terms of Knowledge, Skills and Competences (KSCs). A unified European curriculum is prototyped below and derives from a synthesis of the core KSCs drawn upon the Member States' investigation. In a view to establish a coherent and transferable terminology, the "KSCs" concepts are used in accordance with the Cedefop's (2006, 2008 and 2014) definitions of:

- *Knowledge*: includes theory and concepts and tacit knowledge gained as a result of the experience of performing certain tasks. A distinction is often made between general knowledge, which is essential irrespective of any occupational context or so fundamental as to be considered basic life knowledge, and knowledge that is specific to a sector or particular group of occupations and only likely to be encountered in such context;

- *Skill*: usually used to refer to a level of performance, in the sense of accuracy and speed in performing particular tasks and solving problems, both mentally and manually related. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, skills are described as "cognitive" or "practical";

- *Responsibility and Autonomy*: ability to apply learning outcomes adequately in a defined context (education, work, personal or professional development) or ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations, in professional and personal development. Competence is not limited to cognitive elements (involving the use of theory, concepts or tacit knowledge); it also encompasses functional aspects (including technical skills) as well as interpersonal attributes (e.g. social or organisational skills) and ethical values.



Source: youthworker.it

Moving beyond the common ground analysis, the European Youth Animator curriculum proposed integrates key competences, knowledge, skills and attitudes considered essential for lifelong learning and needed by all for personal fulfilment and development, employability, social inclusion and active citizenship (Council Recommendations (2018/C 189/01) – see also the scheme on the left). This, will be considered in line with the objective of ultimately contributing to the main policy priorities set in the new European Union's strategic agenda 2019-2024 and related thus to four main strands:

- protecting citizens and freedoms;
- developing a strong and vibrant economic base;
- building a climate-neutral, green, fair and social Europe;
- promoting European interests and values on the global stage.

	Knowledge	Skills	Responsibility and Autonomy
Europe and human rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fundamentals of youth policy in Europe • fundamentals on equality policy 		
Fight against discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fundamentals of social inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduce the risk of social exclusion among young people with a migrant, ethnic or vulnerable background 	
Security and prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fundamentals of health and wellbeing • fundamentals of childcare and youth-care • fundamentals of sport instruction • basics of nonviolent communication 		
Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fundamentals on human resources management policy • fundamentals of pedagogy, education and training • fundamentals on individual and group counselling • fundamentals of informal and non-formal learning • fundamentals of psychology • fundamentals of sociology/business basics • fundamentals of project management • fundamentals of arts and culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • data analysis • ICT and social media skills • help young people think from different perspectives and leave stereotypes behind • find and use relevant and credible sources of information (online and offline) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plan own tasks • take a responsibility • undertake activities to disseminate the results of young people's work

- financial and material sources for volunteering (namely fundraising)
- fundamentals of employment and entrepreneurship

Team-work and networking

- principles of continuous self-development
- voluntary work functioning
- basis of community management
- soft-skills
- leisure-time based activities for children and youth
- calibrate the best communication technique according to the specific audience (e.g. paying attention to intercultural issues)
- communicate in different languages (namely English)
- establish and maintain cooperative and confidential relations with a young person
- work with young people in groups and teams
- gather information from young people through direct interaction
- design, implement and evaluate youth programmes in cooperation with young people
- make decisions
- favour interaction, cooperation and networking among different cultures
- favour networking and fruitful communication between young people and the civil society, the institutions, NGOs and the policy level
- ensure the quality of one's work
- enable young people to acquire competences
- boost social resilience
- favour active engagement, empowerment and participation of young people
- promote self organization

CONCLUSIONS

Who is the ideal European Youth Animator? Does he/she hold any unique feature, knowledge, competence, skill, experience...? While the literature and the policy documents are populated by different definitions of a Youth worker depending on the specific national contexts, there is a lack of a univocal description that could fit for the whole European level while embracing the complexity of today's socio-economic context. This is precisely the ratio behind this work, conducted in the frame of the EUROPEAN ANIMATORS FOR YOUTH project.

In the last decades, the role of youth work is more and more growing despite the persistence of huge gaps among the countries analysed (EU-28), and it can be generally defined as a multiple ecosystem in which opportunities and synergies are created in a view to develop young people's potential towards a fairer world.

A non exhaustive taxonomy of the brand new European Youth Animator profile has been outlined around 5 learning areas (European Union and human rights; Fight against discrimination; Security and prevention; Management; Team-work and networking) as a result of a country-analysis investigation aimed at detecting national features (National Qualifications Frameworks - NQF, as well as the status of relevant informal and non-formal learning opportunities within the 28 Member states) but also the EU-level requirements around the Youth worker job, with the aim of contributing to the achievement of the four recent priority areas 2019-2024, identified by the European Council on June 2019 and taken towards the Europe 2020 targets: protecting citizens and freedoms; developing a strong and vibrant economic base; building a climate-neutral, green, fair and social Europe; promoting European interests and values on the global stage.

The developed curriculum will serve as a basis for further improvements in the standardization and readability of the different qualification systems around Europe, in a knowledge-based and more inclusive society (namely in the form of a European Qualifications Framework). The research developed within the EUROPEAN ANIMATORS FOR YOUTH project will contribute to widen lifelong learning opportunities and increase the learning and labor mobility, employability and social integration of the workforce around Europe, while respecting the rich diversity of the national education and training systems.

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- the German Youth Institute (Deutsches Jugendinstitut, DJI)

- the Dortmund Office for Children and Youth Services Statistics (Dortmunder Arbeitsstelle Kinder- und Jugendhilfestatistik) as part of the Research Alliance of DJI and Dortmund University (Forschungsverbund Deutsches Jugendinstitut/Technische Universität Dortmund)

- the Research Group Youth and Europe at the Centre for Applied Policy Research (Forschungsgruppe Jugend und Europa (FGJE) am Centrum für angewandte Politikforschung (CAP)) and

- the JFF - Institute for Media Research and Media Education (JFF - Institut für Medienpädagogik in Forschung und Praxis)

Information on youth work can be found at:

- Portal for specialists in child and youth services > Youth work (Fachkräfteportal der Kinder- und Jugendhilfe > Jugendarbeit)

- Portal for specialists in child and youth services > Youth research (Fachkräfteportal der Kinder- und Jugendhilfe > Jugendforschung).

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Latvia

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