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Symposium on Youth Policy Cooperation in South East Europe: focus on recognition of youth work & non-formal learning

salto|youth

Support, Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities
within the European Youth in Action programme

Tirana, Albania
1-3 October 2012

Report

SALTO-YOUTH
SOUTH EAST EUROPE
RESOURCE CENTRE



Education and Culture

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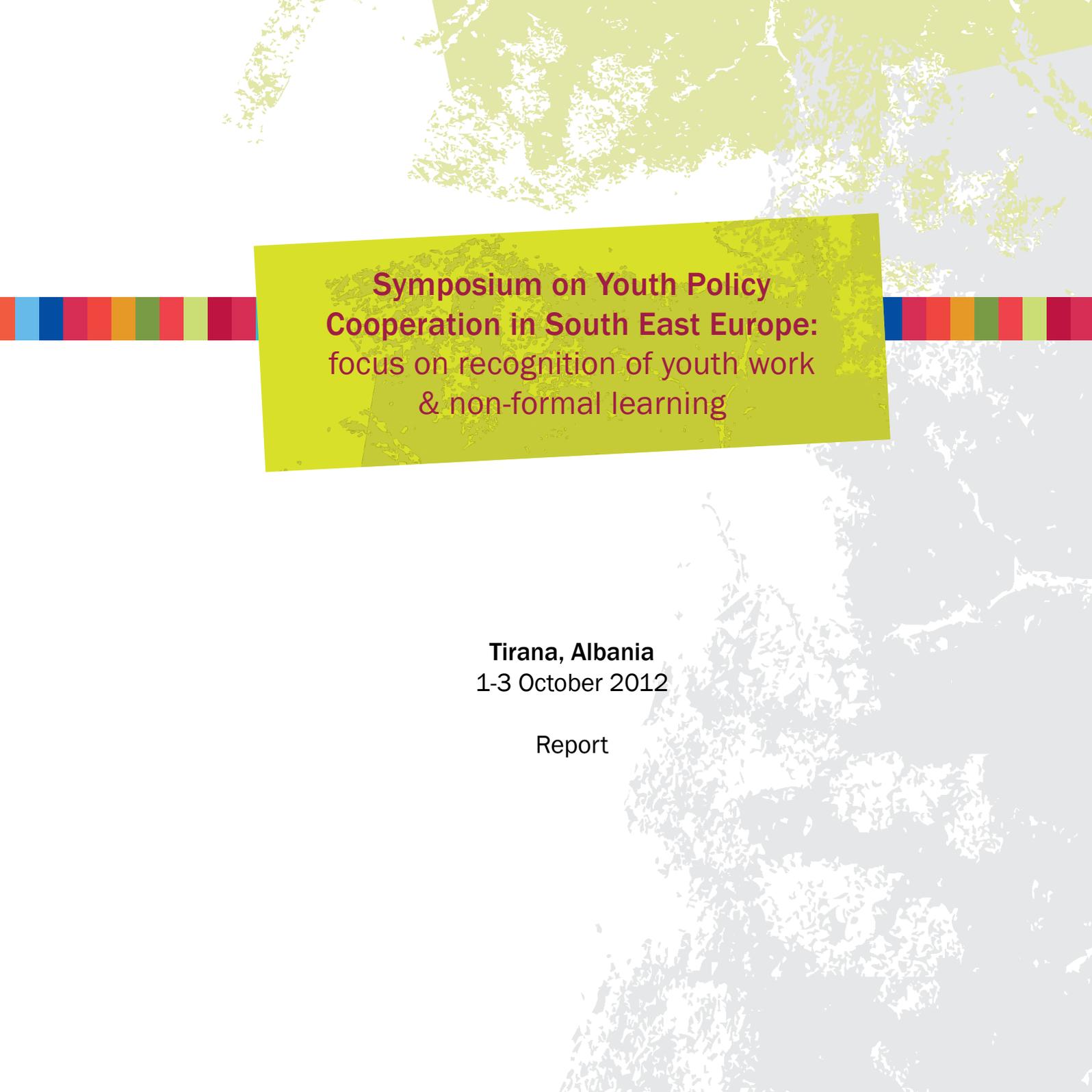
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Notes on the Author

Nik Paddison has a background as a youth worker from the UK. Over the last 15 years he has worked as a trainer of youth workers, leaders, volunteers and activists in the European youth field. He has been based in South East Europe since 2003. During this period he has been a part of youth work and non-formal education/learning recognition working with local and international organisations. Areas of work include: youth worker curriculum development; assessment processes; training of youth workers; training trainers/facilitators; conflict transformation; communication/presentation skills; Human Rights; Co-Working. Over the years he has developed numerous activities, theories and approaches related to the field in the context of non-formal education/learning. His work can be found in various publications including Coyote magazine. He has a relaxed and creative writing style and loves to create stories for work. For the last three years he has been working as a freelance trainer/writer/consultant/copy editor for youth NGOs, European networks, and the European Union and Council of Europe youth departments.

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**Symposium on Youth Policy
Cooperation in South East Europe:
focus on recognition of youth work
& non-formal learning**

Tirana, Albania
1-3 October 2012

Report



Glossary

Throughout this report the following always apply:

- **'Pathways 2.0'** is in reference to the; 'Pathways 2.0 Towards Recognition of Non-Formal Learning/Education and of Youth Work in Europe' working paper
- **'Strasbourg Symposium'** is in reference to the symposium; 'Recognition of Youth Work and Non-Formal Learning/Education in the Youth Field' that took place 14-16 November 2011 in the European Youth Centre Strasbourg, France
- **'Strasbourg Statement & Plan of Action'** is in reference to the; 'Statement & Plan of Action by Participants of the Symposium Recognition of Youth Work and Non-Formal Learning/Education in the Youth Field' 14-16 November 2011, European Youth Centre, Strasbourg, France
- **'Kosovo*'** is referred to in the following context; all reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo
- **'Tirana 2012'** is in reference to the symposium of this report; Symposium on Youth Policy Cooperation in South East Europe: Focus on Recognition of Youth Work & Non-Formal Learning



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Background

This symposium continued the reflection and exchange of views and development of ideas from previous symposia and other European level meetings, particularly the symposium; 'Recognition of Youth Work and Non-Formal Learning/Education in the Youth Field', that took place in Strasbourg, 2011, (Strasbourg Symposium). In recent years recognition has been a key issue in the region of South East Europe, particularly in the civil society sector and to a lesser extent on a Governmental level. This symposium continued to place the topic of recognition of youth work and non-formal learning/education on the political agenda of the countries of the South East Europe region and provided the possibility to focus on youth policy cooperation in the region.

The symposium was organised by the Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth together with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports of Albania, the SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centres for South East Europe, Eastern Europe and Caucasus, and Training and Cooperation, the Austrian National Agency for the Youth in Action Programme and the United Nations FPA.

The initial concept was to focus on South East Europe and be South East Europe centric. However as the symposium was being developed, other agencies and country based institutions asked to be involved. The involvement of the delegations from the Eastern European Caucasus Region and from the Programme countries of the Youth in Action Programme highlights the importance of exchanging good practice and of learning from each other. At the same time it highlights the importance of the topic of recognition of youth work and non-formal learning/education across Europe and beyond.



There were over 80 participants in attendance. The participants were a combination of youth workers from local youth organisations, freelance workers in the youth field, representatives of local and national Governments, representatives of international youth organisations, the European Union and Council of Europe youth departments. Participants and organisers represented 21 countries, (see participants list in Appendix 1).

The facilitators of the symposium programme were Gisele Evrard and Darko Markovic.

The basic questions on which the symposium was based were as follows:

- What do we understand by recognition of youth work and non-formal learning/education?
- Why do we want to further develop youth work and non-formal learning/education?
- What measures are needed/can help to promote the recognition at different levels?

The following were the objectives of the symposium:

- To strengthen the youth sector as an independent sector next to education
- To raise awareness and understanding of what non-formal learning/education in youth work means, what it can achieve, and what recognition can mean
- To increase recognition of non-formal learning/education in youth work in the countries of South East Europe and give a boost to measures in the field taken by public policies and NGOs at different levels
- To inform about developments in the field taking place at European level
- To encourage peer-learning and inspire participants to take initiatives after the conference

An Introduction to the Symposium



The symposium was three days of intense exploration, discussion and planning regarding the many issues surrounding the recognition of youth work and non-formal learning/education, specifically in the region of South East Europe.

The approach of the symposium was to reflect on what types of recognition already exists on a European and local level through inputs, presentations, exhibitions, sharing and discussion. Through a variety of activities and exercises, different types of recognition were explored. The results of this exploration and of the symposium itself were the plans developed by the participants for recognition on country and regional level.

The challenge of the approach was taking Europe wide practice and policy, making it available and adapting it to a region where cultural and historical factors require cultural contextualisation. As a region South East Europe is extremely diverse, especially in relation to youth work and non-formal learning/education, likewise for any region of Europe. As on a European level, the basic definition and understanding of youth work varies from country to country. Each country is at a different stage in its journey of recognition and each country's Government views youth work and non-formal learning/education with a different level of priority.

The intention was to promote awareness about the importance of all the dimensions of recognition. To create and develop partnerships and networks – between the youth sector and other sectors of civil society, educational institutions and ministries, etc. thereby showing that no one dimension can stand alone but that all the dimensions need to be developed together to create a full and holistic recognition. This required that the symposium consider the four aspects of recognition used in European strategies:

- Self-Recognition
- Social Recognition
- Political Recognition
- Formal Recognition

All four aspects were featured in the Strasbourg Symposium; their definitions appear in Pathways 2.0. Below are the definitions as drafted in Pathways 2.0.

Accompanying each definition is an addition that was developed as a result of this symposium which is a reflection of the process that took place.

a) Self-Recognition:

- Pathways 2.0: the assessment by the individual of learning outcomes and the ability to use these learning outcomes in other fields.
- Tirana 2012: recognition by the practitioner of who they are, what they do, the value their work has and who else is doing it.

b) Social Recognition:

- Pathways 2.0: that social players acknowledge the value of competences acquired in non-formal settings and the work done within these activities, including the value of the organizations providing this work.
- Tirana 2012: recognition by all members of a local community, valuing the positive impact of youth work and non-formal learning/education on young people and therefore on their communities as a whole.

c) Political Recognition:

- Pathways 2.0: the recognition of non-formal education in legislation and/or the inclusion of non-formal learning/education in political strategies, and the involvement of non-formal learning providers in these strategies.
- Tirana 2012: recognition in policies, taking the value of youth work and non-formal learning/education into account in political strategies and decisions.

d) Formal Recognition:

- Pathways 2.0: the 'validation' of learning outcomes and the 'certification' of a learning process and/or these outcomes by issuing certificates or diplomas which formally recognise the achievements of an individual.
- Tirana 2012: recognition by educational institutions and other sectors, particularly formal education and employers.



¹ Pathways 2.0: Towards Recognition of Non-Formal Learning/Education and of Youth Work in Europe. Strasbourg, 2011. p14

² Communication from the Commission: Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality. p31e

The Symposium Programme

Day 1

Introduction and Welcome

A number of activities and welcome speeches were made and games used to introduce the symposium as a whole, the participants and key speakers.

Welcome speakers:

Aldo Bumçi, Minister of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports of the Republic of Albania

Gert Bogdani, MP, envoy of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Albania

Francois Begeot, Head of Operations Section in the Delegation of the European Union to Albania

Marco Leidekker, Head of the Council of Europe Office in Albania

Zineb Touimi-Benjelloun, United Nations Resident Coordinator

Policy Research Report

After the initial welcome speeches and introductory elements, Ozgehan Senyuva from the Pool of European Youth Researchers, presented the report: 'Youth Policy in South Eastern Europe and Recognition of Youth Work and Non-Formal Learning in the Region: Presentation of the main outcomes of the comparative review of youth policies in South East Europe'.

Fair of Recognition

This was followed by the 'Fair of Recognition', a chance for all the participants to show different practices in Non-Formal Learning/Education and Youth Work recognition in the region and beyond. Participants created displays about their organisations, structures and their work. Everyone was encouraged to go around to visit each other's exhibition to make notes, contacts and to learn about what else is happening and where.

European Developments Inputs

After lunch of this first day the 'Highlights of Recent European Developments in the Field of Recognition' were presented, each speaker presented the work being done by their respective institution:

- Rita Bergstein (SALTO Training and Cooperation Resource Centre)
- Hanjo Schild (European Union – Council of Europe Youth Partnership)
- Fabienne Metayer (European Commission DG EAC, Youth Policy Unit)



Working Groups

This was followed by a number of simultaneous Working Groups on the theme of ‘Why Work on Better Recognition of Youth Work and Non-Formal Learning/ Education?’ under the following themes:

- Social Inclusion and Employability with Sonja Mitter, Hanjo Schild and Srd Kisevic
- Lifelong and Life Wide Learning with Darko Markovic
- Active Participation and Civil Society with Andrea Hollenstein
- Personal and Social Development with Gisele Evrard
- Youth Policy with Rita Bergstein

Geographic Action for Recognition Groups

At the end of each day there were geographically defined group meetings. For South East Europe these were country based – with the exception of Montenegro and Kosovo*, because of the lack of representation they were combined with other groups. The other two groups were participants of the Youth in Action Programme countries present and of the Eastern Europe and Caucasus region. The main aim of these groups was to reflect together and integrate the content of the day with their own local/ national/regional realities. Ultimately, this would lead to the development of action steps towards recognition to be implemented after the Symposium.

*Statement & Plan of Action by Participants of the Symposium Recognition of Youth Work and Non-Formal Learning/ Education in the Youth Field’ 14-16 November 2011, European Youth Centre, Strasbourg, France. pp3-4

Day 2

Panel Discussion

Day two began with a Panel Discussion with the theme, 'Challenges in Working on Recognition of Youth Work and Non-Formal Learning'. The panel was chaired by Gisele Evrard and consisted of the following members:

- Danijela Jovic (USAID/Chemonics, Serbia)
- Fabienne Metayer (European Commission)
- Simona Mursec (Advisory Council on Youth, Council of Europe)
- Nik Paddison (Freelance Trainer/Writer in the Youth Field)
- Ozgehan Senyuva (Pool of European Youth Researchers)
- Ana Dervishi (Beyond Barriers Youth Organisation, Albania)

Recognition Café

This was followed by the Recognition Café which was based on the world café concept. A series of statements in the form of challenges were placed on tables and the participants were invited to write comments linked to each challenge and thus discuss and develop each one further. The statements were taken from the 'Strasbourg Statement & Plan of Action', which was written by the participants of the 'Strasbourg Symposium'. Each one contained challenges identified for the recognition of youth work and non-formal learning/education. This Symposium took advantage of the possibility to work on them further.

Best Practice Workshops

In the second half of day two the Best Practice Workshops were introduced. Participants had an opportunity to attend 2 of them, one in the first part of the afternoon and another in the second part of the afternoon. Each workshop was designed to show different aspects of recognition that are taking place across the continent:

- NAPOR - National Association of Youth Workers of Serbia - on Networking and Professionalization of Youth Work
with Sever Dzigurski (Republic of Serbia)
- Unlocking Doors to Recognition
with Darko Markovic, Inside (Republic of Serbia)
- Youthpass Beyond the Youth in Action Programme
with Rita Bergstein, SALTO Training and Cooperation Resource Centre (Germany)
- Serbian Scouts Movement
with Ivana Andrasevic (Republic of Serbia)
- Recognition and Youth Information and Counselling
with Marc Boes, ERYICA (The Netherlands)
- Political Recognition of Youth Work and Non-Formal Learning in Germany
with Claudius Siebel, JUGEND für Europa (Germany)

- The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Foundation
with Alison Berks (United Kingdom)
- Community Youth Work Studies – SEEU and Triagolnik Centre for Non-Formal Education
with Elizabeta Jovanovska (Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)
and Nik Paddison (United Kingdom)
- Recognition in Ukraine
with Iryna Bodnar (Ukraine)

A description of each workshop can be found in Appendix 2.

Geographic Action for Recognition Groups

The day closed with the Geographic Groups



Day 3

Geographic Action for Recognition Groups

Day three began with the Geographic Action for Recognition Groups. The groups were now required to come up with proposals for action. These proposals were to utilise as much as possible all that was covered during the Symposium and existing work in the country or region the group represents. The groups' proposals were then presented to the rest of the participants.

See the 'Follow Up' chapter for full details of each Geographic Action for Recognition Group proposal for the actions proposed.

Evaluation and Closing

There were five reflective closing statements by the main organisers:

- Sonja Mitter, SALTO South East Europe Resource Centre
- Andrea Hollenstein, Interkulturelles Zentrum/Austrian National Agency for the Youth in Action Programme
- Hans-Joachim Schild, European Union and Council of Europe Youth Partnership
- Rita Bergstein, SALTO Training and Cooperation Resource Centre
- Srd Kisevic, European Union and Council of Europe Youth Partnership

A final wrapping up of the symposium was made by Nik Paddison in the form of a story. This was followed by evaluation forms being completed by the participants and the symposium being officially closed by the facilitators.



A Note to Readers!

This is not a narrative of the symposium and is not laid out chronologically; you can see the chronology in the Symposium Programme chapter. The subject areas are grouped together and explored. The four following chapters are the four main areas covered by the symposium: Self-Recognition, Social Recognition, Political Recognition and Formal Recognition. Different elements of the Programme, like the Panel Discussion or Working Groups, will be referred to throughout; their descriptions are in the Programme chapter.

Self-Recognition

- Pathways 2.0: the assessment by the individual of learning outcomes and the ability to use these learning outcomes in other fields.
- Tirana 2012: recognition by the practitioner of who they are, what they do, the value their work has and who else is doing it.

How do WE see youth work? What is non-formal learning/education? What is youth work? How do WE promote it? What are OUR values? What do we actually do and who does it?

In order to begin the process of recognition we need to recognise ourselves before others will start to recognise us. This is in relation to recognising who we are, recognising what happens to us as learners, and recognising what we do as practitioners. This was one of the main issues faced during the symposium. During the Panel Discussion especially, it became obvious that we were not all clear about what we were talking about or how we saw youth work and non-formal learning/education. Simona Mursec stated:

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“We need to clarify what is youth work? We need to understand better the value of what we do.”

This was echoed by Danijela Jovic who asked the question, “What is a youth worker?” Members of the symposium itself also asked the same questions.

A number of speakers from the two European institutions and Albanian Government had referred to youth work and non-formal learning/education as having a particular resonance in today’s climate of economic crisis with its potential to increase employability of young people. This is without prejudice to its value in other areas of the personal development of young people. In his opening speech Gert Bogdani alluded to how both youth work and non-formal education are important in supporting young people in finding employment. During the Panel Discussion Simona Mursec and Nik Paddison reminded the symposium that youth work also needs to be about creating actors for social change, independent thinkers; not just about creating access to employment.

Nik Paddison went on to share information from ‘Youth Work – A Model for Effective Practice’ from Northern Ireland. He explained the core principles of youth work as set out in this Model, that youth work at its heart should be about personal and social development of the individuals, therefore seeing youth work as a vehicle for social change; challenging values and beliefs, encouraging participation and promoting understanding of others. In reality young people

⁴ Youth Work: A Model for Effective Practice. <http://www.youthworkni.org.uk/curriculum/> (12th Oct 2012)

⁵ William Glasser Choice Theory. <http://www.choicetheory.com/ct.htm> & <http://heroesnotzombies.com/2008/03/25/william-glassers-five-basic-needs/> (12th Oct 2012)

want to be engaged with activities but they also sometimes want to have fun just for the sake of fun. As William Glasser points out in his Choice Theory, one of the human needs we have is to have fun, youth work is not just about non-formal learning, although this is a key part of it.

“Youth work takes place in the extra-curricular area, as well as through specific leisure time activities, and is based on non-formal and informal learning processes and on voluntary participation.”

“These activities and processes are self-managed, co-managed or managed under educational or pedagogical guidance by either professional or voluntary youth workers and youth leaders.”

Resolution of the Council of the European Union on Youth Work

There were several on-going discussions regarding the need to clearly define youth work and non-formal learning/education ourselves in order to move forward with recognition in other areas. However, it was also argued by some, in regards to youth work, that putting it in a box is too restrictive. One thing was clear, there is a need for practitioners to be more informative about what it is that they do. The practitioners themselves need to understand better the value of non-formal learning/education and this itself is a step towards recognition. One of the Working Groups on recognition, ‘Lifelong and Life-Wide Learning’, concluded that the subject of recognition is not only about qualifications, it’s also about quality assurance of the youth work being done and of non-formal learning/education.

Youth workers should reflect on what they understand by youth work in order to promote it – participation, values, diversity, personal and social development, for example, are all of high value within it. Rita Bergstein presented some definitions of both youth work and non-formal and informal learning/education.

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This is not the ultimate definition and probably there is not a single definitive one, however it is a starting point in the European level debate which should inspire the youth field. Below is the definition she presented on non-formal and informal learning.

∨

“Non-formal learning, understood as learning outside institutional contexts (out-of-school) is the key activity, but also the key competence of youth work. Non-formal learning process/education in youth work is often structured, based on learning objectives, learning time and specific learning support and it is intentional by the learner. It typically does not lead to certification, but in an increasing number of cases, certificates are delivered, leading to a better recognition of the individual learning outcome.”

“Youth work activities also provide many informal learning opportunities, as young people learn while simply being active, being a volunteer or just being with their peers. They learn informally in daily life and leisure time just as they learn informally in school, at work and in family life, just learning by doing; it is typically not structured and not intentional and does not lead to certification.”

Pathways 2.0

Both sets of definitions were received by the symposium with positive response but not a unanimous one – in a sense a simple sign yet again of the complexity we face to simply recognise ourselves.

Self-Recognition in South East Europe

In her closing speech Rita Bergstein talked about the need for maintaining a region specific focus;

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While it is important to have an overall European Union and neighbouring country wide perspective, each region also has its specific needs. This is linked to cultural, historical and economical aspects.

Over the years in the South East Region of Europe there has been a large amount of funding from the West for youth based projects, especially from the mid-nineties onwards. Throughout this time many developments, in youth work and training of youth workers, came from outside the region. They came with baggage from their other contexts of origin and were interpreted in specific ways by the organisations that adopted them or that were created out of them.

However, in the last five to ten years there has been a huge reduction in funding with many former funders pulling out from the region completely. This has the effect of leaving organisations with fewer and fewer funding opportunities since there is little to no support from state and only a few businesses are inclined towards philanthropy. As a result of this many organisations have to constantly reinvent themselves to adapt to what funding is available. As Ozgehan Senyuva pointed out during his reporting on the Policy Research Report, “[This] creates and promotes competition between organisations, not cooperation, and it does not create sustainability for the long term.” Ultimately this is something that does not support or promote self-recognition.

Another issue for South East Europe regarding self-recognition is the question regarding the role of youth work, should it be a form of social control or a force for social change. Stopping young people from ‘wasting their time’ is a regular reason for people wanting to engage as youth workers or create youth based organisations. For others there is a view that work with young people is a means of supporting them in their personal and social development.

With these contrasting views and each youth worker and non-formal learning/educator also having their own view, even being able to talk about youth work, promote youth work and push for better conditions is not easy. From this point it becomes clearer still that self-recognition within the youth work field will not be easy to achieve.

“It has been good to bring together such a group and I am impressed by the result. The next step is now to be looking at specific needs in the region and how these can be supported.”

⁶ http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/117874.pdf
⁷ Pathways 2.0: Towards Recognition of Non-Formal Learning/Education and of Youth Work in Europe. Strasbourg, 2011. p5

'Quality assurance is a pre-requisite for better recognition of youth work and non-formal learning/education. The development of quality in the youth field means increased professional support to those working in the youth field on both a voluntary and professional basis. Therefore training and capacity building measures are essential to meet quality standards as set in the youth field.'

"In general we need to be more visible and have more impact."

'The youth field is very diverse in its approaches, aims, methodologies and structure. This diversity is a value as it allows the field to address the very diverse needs of young people in Europe. This diversity is also a challenge as we need to develop structures to work together that don't lead to the disappearance of diversity. The huge difference in support for the youth field between the different countries is a related challenge.'

Assuring Quality

One area of self-recognition that was explored and talked about was from the Strasbourg Statement & Plan of Action titled; 'the challenge of assuring quality in youth work and in non-formal learning/education.'

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The symposiums response highlighted the need for a balanced approach of different categories of youth workers – those formally qualified, those paid but not qualified, and volunteers. It was agreed however that youth work needs a focussed quality standards criteria, for example; for youth clubs, youth programmes, evaluation, accreditation, and supervision... In general it was felt that youth work needs greater self-confidence, something that could come from such measures. Promotion campaigns and visible public relations strategies would also be healthy for a greater self-confidence. Simona Mursec confirmed this viewpoint at the end of the symposium;

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One factor that would support quality assurance would be through youth workers and trainers receiving regular and effective capacity building: training of trainers; training of non-professionals and volunteers; and on-going training and further education of youth workers.

Diversity

Another element of the Recognition Café that has a link to quality and therefore the promotion of self-recognition was from the Strasbourg Statement & Plan of Action titled; 'the challenge of maintaining and cultivating diversity' within the profession.

<<

The first point of recognition made by the symposium was that the youth field has a vast amount of diversity in its practice, in its values and in its principles. In regards to diversity and the need for diversity in the youth field, the symposium came up with the questions, "for why?", "for who?" and "by who?" and responded to these questions with, "for recognition", "for us and those we work with", and "by us". The main task we have in the field is to understand our common goals, interests, aims and questions. None of these have a single final answer but need constantly reviewing and answering. We can do this by the mutual sharing of good practice across the continent, we can do this by remaining flexible and maintaining that flexibility, and through respect and open-mindedness that

already exists in the youth field. The symposium itself has started this process, as Andrea Hollenstein said in the closing;

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Building Knowledge of Ourselves

Continuing on from the previous paragraphs, an important part of self-recognition is the building of knowledge of ourselves! The following from the Strasbourg Statement & Plan of Action titled; 'the challenge of building knowledge' was discussed:

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The discussions in response to the above statements centred on three response/question areas:

Who?

The symposium agreed that there was a need to make research into the work of youth work and non-formal learning/education. However it was stated quite strongly that any such research needed to be done by multi-disciplinary teams consisting of researchers, young people and youth workers. While it was important that experts designed the tools for research, the research itself was incomplete if it did not include the people it was about. A part of this involvement requires the inclusion of young people and practitioners in order to design effective research tools through needs assessments.

What Kind of Research?

The symposium felt there was a need for **more quantitative data** – this was stated in the knowledge that quantitative data itself does not lead to recognition as was pointed out several times by Ozgehan Senyuva during his input on the Policy Research Report. However the symposium felt this was an important aspect toward self-recognition as it was a way of seeing and understanding what is happening in the field.

There was also a suggestion that **long term studies** would be helpful, for example following a young person when they are 14 years, 17 years and then 25 years. As was pointed out in the Panel Discussion by Nik Paddison; "if you want to know if you are a good youth worker, wait for 10 years." Youth work generally does not show immediate change or results, they take time and therefore some aspects of research should acknowledge and respond to this. Long term research would

"This symposium has been a promotion of good experience and practices, it will be good to see the various national/regional working groups continue their work and it is good and encouraging to see the beginning of good practice being transferred from one country to another."

'An overview of existing youth work needs to be kept and the gaps filled. Most academic or institutional research on the impact of education misses out on the contribution of non-formal learning/education of the youth field. Research in non-formal learning/education too often focuses on the learning outcomes but does not investigate the process. It needs to be ensured that any knowledge gained becomes useful for practice and policy making and that the practitioners and policy makers can easily access the knowledge base.'

⁸ 'Statement & Plan of Action by Participants of the Symposium Recognition of Youth Work and Non-Formal Learning/Education in the Youth Field' 14-16 November 2011, European Youth Centre, Strasbourg, France. p3



show the impact of the work being done and as a result, in answer to a previous point, would encourage the promotion of the work and further support a self-understanding of the work.

The third part of this response was a desire to see **more research** done **on the impact of recognition tools**, such as Youthpass. It was felt that there was also space for producing **new tools**. More research and study into the tools would support the process of recognition in general.

Problems of Research?

Due to the vast nature of the field of youth work and non-formal learning/education the actual collecting of data is one of the biggest challenges related to any research. It must also be acknowledged that there are many in the field, particularly youth workers, who tend not to be efficient at responding to questionnaires and other forms of research. The funding of any such research was also seen as an issue, unless Governments and or other institutions are going to take youth work seriously, funding is not going to be forthcoming. Again linked to the vastness of the field, there is an issue with regards to understanding any data that is collected unless the research is done in a very narrow field which then negates the point of the research. Even with data the symposium was doubtful of the impact in practice, who would the results go to and what could they do about anything!

⁹ 'Statement & Plan of Action by Participants of the Symposium Recognition of Youth Work and Non-Formal Learning/Education in the Youth Field' 14-16 November 2011, European Youth Centre, Strasbourg, France. p4
¹⁰ Ibid. p4

- Pathways 2.0: that social players acknowledge the value of competences acquired in non-formal settings and the work done within these activities, including the value of the organizations providing this work.
- Tirana 2012: recognition by all members of a local community, valuing the positive impact of youth work and non-formal learning/education on young people and therefore on their communities as a whole.

How do we get local communities to recognise what we do? In South East Europe, people in small communities have in past years often considered local youth organisations as a 'sect' or 'cult', particularly those funded from abroad. Families of young people still see non-formal education as not serious and push that their children should focus only on school and University.

Many in the community see young people 'wasting their time doing nothing and generally being a cause of problems'. Ozgehan Senyuva stated in the Policy Research Report, that from the perspective of culture and leisure;

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The research shows that many young people are spending their time in cafes and bars. Nik Paddison pointed out in the panel discussion, that if we look back at our own teenage years, many of us would have spent a lot of time hanging out on street corners and cafés and yet we did not consider this to be a waste of time, it was time well spent with friends. Therefore as youth workers today we should respect young people's desires to do with their time what they want, while offering activities and space for young people within the context of youth work and non-formal learning/education. There can therefore be a contradiction between what the community wants and what young people want. The role of youth work is to work with the young people recognising and responding to their needs and wants – within the community context. However communities often want to see things changed to their way of thinking. If youth work is not directly responding to what the community wants it can work against youth work when it comes to social recognition. However, there are ways around this, intergenerational youth work or cross-sector youth work are approaches that work with young people in cooperation with other members and organisations in the community. One of the issues youth work can often face is being isolated because much of the work done with young people is in isolation from the rest of the community.

“young people are indeed consumers of time and products, they are passive consumers not productive, electronic media is used for killing time not for personal development.”

'Youth work and non-formal learning/education in the youth field are not sufficiently understood by broader society and their concepts differ greatly between countries. The challenge is how to effectively define and communicate the added value that youth work has for individuals and for society.'

"There is a lack of information about youth work in local communities, this makes it hard to sell youth work as a viable and important part of community life."

"Historically youth work and volunteering was connected to communism regime which was about physical labour and is seen now as the people being used and abused by the powers."

The following from the Strasbourg Statement & Plan of Action titled; 'the challenge of making the concept of youth work and non-formal learning/education' better understood'¹¹ was discussed in the Recognition Café:

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In the panel discussion Danijela Jovic added to this saying:

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There was a general agreement in the symposium that basically communities in the countries of South East Europe have little or no understanding of what youth work is let alone non-formal learning/education. There was a brief discussion and a few inputs on the concept and role of the youth movements that existed during communism. Ana Dervishi stated:

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Though because of the strong political agenda that was attached to these movements, amongst some people in the communities, there is a similar bias in thinking towards today's youth movements.

Other discussions took place, particularly in the Working Group on 'Active Participation and Civil Society' led by Andrea Hollenstein. These discussions included the raising of further questions and issues, the main two that came up were; 'how do we recognise small scale participation, for example things that take place on a neighbourhood level?' And; 'do we need to consider that different dimensions of participation may require different approaches...?' Answers to these two points were not immediately forthcoming and the issues remain open. The working group did go on to summarise some important points that were noted regarding the importance of recognition:

- in order for youth work to contribute more efficiently to society
- to keep high motivation for participation of young people
- it is important to assure quality development of civil society

In essence there are many aspects related to social recognition; the changing of negative and false impressions of what youth work is and the need for generating basic knowledge of the existence and value of the work being done with and by young people. Both need to be dealt with on an individual and societal level at the same time.

Another aspect of the difficulty faced with social recognition is the lack of cooperation and communication between civil society organisations. One of the main causes of this was explained by Ozgehan Senyuva during the Policy

¹¹ Ibid p 3.

Research Report. Lack of cooperation is based on youth organisations competing for foreign funds.

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Combining all the above reasons shows that social recognition is still a long way off. It was stated that there needs to be a general awareness raising in communities that shows that young people are a resource for their communities in the here and now as well as in the future. There also needs to be a visibility of impact through showcasing examples of good practice and building grassroots awareness within the 'sector', whilst simultaneously gaining recognition from other sectors. The symposium talked about the need for social recognition from civil society as a whole, from policy makers, from the media and relevant local/regional/national budget lines. Recognition in the media was specifically highlighted and was probably the single biggest response from the symposium as something that needs working on in regards to gaining social recognition – this was in relation to influencing, using and gaining coverage in the media.

Why is it important?

In the Working Groups on 'Lifelong and Life-Wide Learning' and 'Personal and Social Development', the aspect of why social recognition is important was explored. The following are the main points from various discussions from both these working groups.

Non-formal learning/education in youth work can contribute to intercultural competence development. Participation in youth work means the gaining of competences and skills to learn, learning to learn and lifelong learning. Non-formal learning/education in youth work is not necessarily only for personal development and education but it also contributes to the improvement of civil society in general, the development of a sense of citizenship, and social transformation. The activities that youth work provides (that schools do not provide), support young people to becoming more aware of, and gaining a greater appreciation for their environment, community, world... etc. Indeed participation in youth work develops and supports competencies for active participation, citizenship and social inclusion, meaning young people becoming more integrated into their communities and environment. Hanjo Schild extended this further explaining that it is not just about the young people but the organisations themselves that contribute:

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Involvement in youth work is motivational for many young people, the experience

“While EU and UN funding for the region is important for development, the influx of foreign investment is not good in the long term, it creates and promotes competition between organisations not cooperation and it does not create sustainability for the long term.”

“Youth work organisations are needed for the further development of civil society.”

often has a multiplying effect through sharing and learning from each other. Youth work has a strong inclusion aspect because it provides a space for young people who are not [anymore] in the formal education system and/or are on the edges of mainstream society for many different reasons.

As a result of involvement in youth work many young people become more open minded and more successful and competitive in the labour market; it also helps them in gaining self-confidence and to act independently. Through this building of self-confidence a part of the learning in youth work becomes self-directed: young people become more aware and develop the skills to understand and know what else it is they need to learn, and so self-awareness is also further developed. It is also necessary for young people to be aware of what choices are available to them, this is something that youth work helps with. It helps young people to be flexible and have the ability to adjust to change.

Even with social recognition much of the above youth work practice is not easy to achieve, without it, these things are so much harder.

It was noted by some of the symposium participants that there was a need and desire for regional cooperation on this road to recognition. This would require the development of a comprehensive approach. The reasons for recognition in each country of the region are all inter-related and so cross national boundaries.

Tools of Social Recognition

One of the tools that was shared in the Symposium was 'The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award'¹² which was presented by Alison Berks. The programme is one of the leading achievement awards for young people in the UK, bringing together practical experiences and life skills. The length of the volunteerism gives the volunteer recognition in the form of three awards after 6, 12 and 18 months of participation.

Another tool that supports social recognition, though it has a broader European base is Youthpass¹³. Youthpass is dedicated to the recognition of non-formal and informal learning within the Youth in Action Programme. Participants of an activity funded by the Youth in Action Programme – like Youth exchanges, European Voluntary Service, and training courses, etc. are individually entitled to receive a certificate which could include a part about their learning results.

Although both schemes have a place in all areas of recognition, they are highlighted here because they are useful tools for promoting and developing

social recognition. They are something that young people can gain as physical proof of their involvement in youth work and learning they have gained. A recognised certificate is a piece of paper that young people can hold onto and show to family and friends. Certainly in the case of The Duke of Edinburgh's scheme, it is something that can be awarded at a ceremony where family, friends and the media can be invited. From such a ceremony photos and text can appear in local media that highlight the work and learning of the young people. This in turn shows the local community very visibly how the young people have supported a local community somewhere. A local organisation supporting a young person to attend an international activity funded by the Youth in Action Programme could do the same with Youthpass, as could the hosting organisation in a partner country of any such activity.



¹² www.intaward.org/

¹³ www.youthpass.eu

Political Recognition

- Pathways 2.0: the recognition of non-formal education in legislation and/or the inclusion of non-formal learning/education in political strategies, and the involvement of non-formal learning providers in these strategies.
- Tirana 2012: recognition by policies, taking the value of youth work and non-formal learning/education into account in political strategies and decisions.

Political recognition is a complex topic covering a large number of areas. There is political will, or lack of it, toward young people and policy relating to young people, there is getting governments to recognise the profession of youth work and non-formal learning/education, there are pressures and influences such as unemployment and University education, and there are economic influences. Political recognition is a long road and across the region there have been success stories as well as frustrations. In the opening speeches it was clear that some members of the Albanian Parliament see the benefit of a political will aimed at young people. Gert Bogdani, Member of Parliament for the European Integration Commission, stated:

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“Albania is a strong voice for youth rights, youth policies and non-formal learning.”

This was not the only example, according to Francois Begeot, Head of Operations Section, Delegation of the European Commission in Albania, there is also movement on a European level.

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“Non-formal learning is gaining recognition and importance across Europe.”

Why do we Need Political Recognition?

In the Working Group on ‘Lifelong and Lifewide Learning’, the participants talked at length about how gaining recognition will provide greater support to school drop outs and young adults who do not have formal qualifications, and the unemployed. This was added to by Marco Leidekker, Head of the Council of Europe Office in Albania.

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“Long term unemployment does not just lead to poverty but to exclusion from society.”

Ozgehan Senyuva in the Policy Research Report explored a host of other reasons that recognition of youth work and non-formal learning/education is important on a political level. These included how young people are living longer at home for economic reasons, how this in turn is adding to the difficulty many young

people face in the transition to adulthood, and that even after marriage many young people continue to live at home. He reported that University education does not guarantee employment anymore and that young people are staying in education longer, undergoing multiple Master's degrees. When challenged about young people who are less well educated and for whom a University education is not an option he replied, "strategies to work with such young people are missing in some of the countries."

He went on to say about how unemployment is "not specifically a youth problem but young people are one of the most vulnerable groups." The research shows that one of the biggest issues for some of the countries of the region is the 'Brain Drain', "young people are dreaming, planning and taking action to leave their country.": 10% of young people in Bosnia-Herzegovina have taken action to leave their country; 73,000 young people migrated from Serbia between 1990 and 2000; the demographic in South East Europe is ageing as more and more young people leave.

Political recognition covers a broad perspective. There are young people and their needs in policy making at all levels: economic; education; mobility; employment; health and welfare. It also includes the recognition of the profession of youth work. All of these needs are a clear call for action to various stakeholders in our societies.

Examples of Political Recognition in Progress

Throughout Europe and the region there are a number of initiatives taking place. However it is still seen by many as an uphill struggle. Ozgehan Senyuva in the Policy Research Report stressed a need for more political recognition though recognised that;

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While this is not true for all authorities it certainly represents a feeling that many in the youth sector have experienced when trying to promote what they do. Danijela Jovic stated it differently in relation to youth work and non-formal learning/education, she said;

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In the Youth Policy Working Group the participants explored a number of points regarding political recognition. One of the things they discussed was that strong youth policies contribute to recognition of youth work and non-formal education and vice versa. Meaning it is not a question of which comes first, but rather a

"Authorities don't like to listen to young people, this [the Policy Research report] is a tool that can be used for lobbying, for supporting funding applications and for arguments."

"On the political level there is poor knowledge and a poor political framework."

need to ensure there is a continuous development of youth policies at the same time as working on other aspects of the recognition of youth work.

One of the things that can be pushed on the political recognition level is that youth work helps young people better integrate into the labour market, social life and education. It was also noted that recognition of non-formal learning/ education strengthens the collaboration between the youth sector and other institutions which impact the youth sector.

Below are four examples of political recognition in action from different countries.

Albania

During the Panel Discussion Ana Dervishi explored in more detail the situation as seen from her organisation in Albania. She explained how social work is recognised as a profession but youth work is still not recognised and nor is volunteerism. She went on to describe how they had worked in Albania toward recognition of volunteerism. She explained how they had established a centre for volunteering which networked various organisations. Through a long process of campaigning and promoting the idea of volunteerism, there is now legislation being drafted for a 'law on volunteerism'. This was a good example of cooperation and the transfer of knowledge between different sectors; the campaigning focussed on several different Ministries, not just one or two. (However, although her organisation Beyond Barriers received the support of the government for the project of the local volunteer centre, they could not manage to enter two institutions which work with disabled people and orphans since they did not recognize the work done by the organization and volunteers.)The comparison can be seen with youth work and the need in youth work to network and mobilise on a political level.

Serbia

Danijela Jovic, in the Panel Discussion, introduced the situation in Serbia. There is now a National level perspective through the development of a professional association of youth workers (NAPOR). This has been an important step towards political recognition in Serbia. The delegation from Serbia shared more of the current circumstances in their Best Practice Workshop¹⁴ which was led by Sever Dzigurski. NAPOR was created to; 'increase youth work quality and to advocate for recognition as the part of a systematic youth care network in Serbia in line with EU policies and strategies.' 'NAPOR gathers 90 NGOs and over 2,240 youth workers (2012 statistics), with various technical skills and operates under the paramount principal of consultative and participatory approach. For this reason, NAPOR is recognized by public authorities: the Ministry of Youth and Sport, the Provincial Secretariat for Sport and Youth, the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, and the University of Novi Sad. Because of growing recognition, NAPOR was invited to participate in the core working group (11 members consisting of Ministries, lawyers, representatives of CSOs), for creation of the 'Law on Youth' in Serbia that was adopted on July 5, 2011. Thanks to further lobbying by NAPOR, Youth Work has now gained its first legal recognition and official definition within the Youth Law in Serbia as a service for capacity building of young people.

It is not all easy going; in Serbia there is currently a division between the Ministry of Youth and the Ministry of Education. Danijela Jovic explained that both Ministries want non-formal education under their umbrella... So where should non-formal education/learning be? For now it remains an unanswered question.

Germany

Political recognition of youth work and non-formal learning/education in Germany was given as another example in the Best Practice Workshops¹⁵ led by Claudius Siebel (Transfer Agency for Youth Policy Cooperation in Europe). 'The German Youth Ministry since 2010 has put a strong focus into implementing the EU Youth Strategy in Germany. For the first time in the field of Youth Policy, cooperation between the national level and the federal states has been established. Together they want to use the European impetus for the development of youth work and for developing further Youth Policy in Germany'. This is an important example for the positive impetus that policy making on the European Union level can have on member states. Strategies on youth policy and recognition of youth work and non-formal learning/education developed at European level provide input and inspiration for countries across the continent. Making use of these policy papers and tools is a perfect step forward and can push youth policy making on the national, regional and municipal level.

Ukraine

Another example from the Best Practice Workshops led by Iryna Bodnar is from Ukraine¹⁶. Indirect recognition also affects youth work both positively and negatively, in the Ukraine, the Law 'of voluntary service' was passed on the 19th of April 2011. This has provided a legal basis for the concept of volunteering in the Ukraine. However, one success opens the door to further issues and difficulties; there are several very crucial obstacles and limits now for NGOs and social institutions. One such problem is with the registration of foreign volunteers in Ukraine, for example; EVS volunteers, there is no legislation for this within the law.

¹⁴ Taken from the Best Practice Workshop Summary. See Appendix 2.

¹⁵ Taken from the Best Practice Workshop Summary. See Appendix 2.

¹⁶ Taken from the Best Practice Workshop Summary. See Appendix 2

European Level Political Recognition

“The Pathways 2.0 working paper brings together different bodies and institutions. The strength in the process is that so many actors are active.”

“The European Union is creating soft laws regarding recognition; they are not fixed laws to be imposed.”

“Ultimately the question remains, where should recognition come from and how much should it be pushed at each level?”

The movement towards the recognition of youth work and non-formal learning/education, based on over 10 years experience, has already shown an impact on the European level. One of the most recent developments was the publication of Pathways 2.0. This process and the developments on a European level as a whole have involved huge numbers of people and organisations. Rita Bergstein, during the European Developments Inputs, in reference to Pathways 2.0, summed it up like this:

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This advancement is a circular one. The European level of recognition is only possible because of the work conducted and achieved on local and national levels. At the same time what is achieved on the European level can feed back to support the work done on the local and national level. There was a question in the Panel Discussion regarding how much the European level and particularly the European Union was controlling the developments on the national levels, Fabienne Metayer responded to this by saying:

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As part of her input during the European Developments Inputs session, Fabienne Metayer highlighted the Council Recommendation on the Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning¹⁷.

Fabienne Metayer explored how we need to sell youth work better than we are doing so now. It is difficult to sell something where much of the basic information is not available, she gave examples of missing information as; numbers of youth workers, numbers of activities, the impact of youth work, no data on youth health, youth employment, etc. The upcoming study on the value of youth work in the EU will certainly contribute to ‘make the case’ for youth work. One of the main issues for recognition on a European level is the disparity between so many different countries on the most basic of questions: defining both youth work and non-formal learning/education.

She went on to say that the borders between formal and non-formal learning/education are becoming less clear. Recent studies suggest that the formal system is adopting and using approaches more commonly and historically associated with non-formal learning/education.

She closed with the following question;

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Another example of the European level recognition process and recognition success at work is the Advisory Council on Youth of the Council of Europe. This was shared by Simona Mursec during the Panel Discussion. In the Advisory Council there are 30 representatives of youth organisations and networks to advise on youth issues in cooperation with representatives of the Ministries responsible for youth. The Advisory Council has a co-decision mandate, which is a high level political recognition at work that does work.¹⁸



¹⁷ http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/informal_en.htm

¹⁸ http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Coe_youth/co_management_en.asp

Formal Recognition

- Pathways 2.0: the **'validation'** of learning outcomes and the **'certification'** of a learning process and/or these outcomes by issuing certificates or diplomas which formally recognize the achievements of an individual.
- Tirana 2012: recognition by educational institutions and other sectors, particularly formal education and employers.

The recognition of youth work and non-formal learning/education, in the formal context, has seen many advances in recent years, both in the region and on a European level. The three overarching areas covered by the symposium are that of education, employment and 'other sectors'.

Formal recognition by the education field can be seen as covering four interconnected recognition themes: the recognition of non-formal learning/education in general; the adoption of non-formal education principles and approaches in the formal education system; the education of youth workers; and the recognition of learning outcomes and prior experience, e.g. of experienced youth workers wanting to enter a youth work course.

Formal recognition by the employment sector covers the recognition by the employer of the competences/soft skills that a young person has gained as a result of being involved in youth work and non-formal learning/education activities.

The 'other environments' is related to the development of non-formal learning/education in sectors outside of the youth field and to the fact that youth workers are not the only ones who work with young people and non-formal learning/education.

In all of these areas, the sub-themes are all overlapped and so cannot be separated but can be found within the text below.

The 'Lifelong and Life-Wide Learning' Working Group explored this subject in some detail reinforcing the views that non-formal education is complementary to the formal system of education. It supplements formal education, promotes constructive attitudes among young people such as self-confidence and supports awareness of own learning. It also promotes intercultural education, develops awareness of different educational dimensions that exist and creates a bridge between non-formal learning and formal education. Added to this it offers practical experience and the gaining of skills as well as competences relevant in a lot of professional pathways. Formal recognition of non-formal learning/education is vitally important for the general welfare and education of young people – in other words their personal and social development.

In South East Europe there is a slow emergence of non-formal education principles and approaches being adopted in formal education institutions. The training and validation of youth workers is being seen as a particular field where the non-formal education approach is more than necessary to create competent youth workers. Indeed, much of the youth worker training across the region of South East Europe has been based on a non-formal approach for many years – though with the more recent development of a Bachelor and Master's degree in a number of Universities, there has been a drift back to the formal education approach.

The following is an example of formal recognition from the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The information below is from the Best Practice Workshop, 'Leadership and Developmental Community Youth Work Course, Triagolnik – Centre for Non-Formal Education and South East European University', led by Elizabeta Jovanovska and Nik Paddison. The organisation Triagolnik – Centre for Non-Formal Education, has been working in cooperation and partnership with South East European University. Together they are running the 'Leadership and Developmental Community Youth Work Course' through the Universities Public Administration faculty.

PRONI/Forum Syd introduced a 30/60ECTS youth worker course in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in 2002, originally this was through Jonkoping University in Sweden. In 2007 the international non-governmental organisation split itself into individual country based projects. Triagolnik – Centre for Non-Formal Education emerged. At the same time the university course was transferred from Jonkoping University into separate universities around the region, in Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia this the South East European

“Don’t define it too much, don’t ask only for degrees, we need more approaches than that, we need to recognise all levels of the education of youth workers.”

‘Not every activity within the scope of youth work is measurable and ought to be assessed and certified. Formal recognition of learning in youth work activities could lead to over formalising of youth work, i.e. the application of formal standards from other fields. Furthermore, youth work has many purposes, focussing for example ‘only’ on the labour market or the education system can devalue other aspects of youth work. Non-formal learning/education in the youth field is contributing to the preparation of young people for the knowledge and civil society engagement.’

University, Tetovo. Between 2007 and 2009 a team of Triagolnik trainers (former students of the youth work course), and teaching assistants from the university were coached and trained in non-formal learning/education methodologies, principles and values, and in the subjects of the course. Through support from the European Commission Tempus funding the course is now run at both Bachelor and Master’s degree level.

A shorter adapted version of the course is also being run with school teachers across the country. This provides them with youth worker competencies to better work with the young people in the schools they teach in. While there is still a long way to go in terms of recognition in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, it is clear that somewhere in the formal educational system someone has recognised the relevance and importance of youth work and non-formal learning/education. Through a lot of lobbying and negotiation South East European University decided to recognise youth work and took on non-formal education principles and approaches to teach the youth work course. The certificate level 60ECTS course is currently being implemented in Kosovo* jointly by Triagolnik and South East European University.

The concept of university qualified youth workers is an area that the symposium spent a lot of time discussing. Danijela Jovic said:

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Another area of formal recognition is the prior experience and learning achieved by existing experienced youth workers who do not have a formal qualification but who would like either to be accredited as professional youth workers or who want to apply for a University youth work course. Across Europe there are processes and debates linked to the opening up of National Qualification Frameworks, so the skills gained in non-formal settings can contribute to gaining qualifications at certain level. It is a process not yet visible in South East Europe, though the process is being started by NAPOR in Serbia (see the Serbia section in the Follow-Up chapter).

This is reflected in the following statement from the Strasbourg Statement & Plan of Action titled; ‘the challenge of risking formalisation of non-formal learning/education’.

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The symposium participants explored the statement and commented on it in the Recognition Café. The resulting discussions actually saw a clear divide. There were those who favoured formalisation and those against it. The basic arguments for formalisation of youth work training stated that they felt youth workers should have formal education university degree in order to be able to do

their job. Through creating a formal qualification, or certification, there would be a better chance for the employment of youth workers in various fields.

Those against argued that youth workers should not necessarily have a formal education background but should be recognised by policy makers as a professional service, not all good youth workers are academics and would have the ability to pass the formal system. It was also argued that the whole learning programme for youth workers should not be formalised. Nik Paddison in an open discussion shared experience from the youth work field:

“Two of the best youth workers I ever worked with were not qualified, in fact had no qualification at all, they just knew how to work with young people.”

In conclusion the group felt that a certain amount of formalisation is needed but it needs to be one that will not alter the essence of youth work. Also an approach is needed which will be flexible to changes in the working environment. If validation procedures will be offered to start a formalisation process it needs to have a youth friendly approach, taking into account recognition of competencies already gained by young people and youth workers through their experience. At the same time these recognition schemes (tools and/or frameworks), need to be acceptable by other sectors in order for the youth work sector to get involved in the consultation process with the other stakeholders.

Employment

For young people entering employment age, there is the issue of recognition of the competencies they have gained through taking part in youth work and non-formal learning/education activities. In terms of formal recognition, in his opening speech Gert Bogdani stated:

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Francois Begeot backed this up from another perspective, stating that:

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Both quotes are coming from people involved in European policy and politics and show the strength of feeling on a European level towards employment issues. A lot of discussion focussed on this subject. The ‘Social Inclusion and Employability’ Working Group tried to explore the subject from a number of different perspectives; employer, beneficiary, young person and youth worker...

“Non-formal learning is very important in the search for employment, young people are asked at interviews ‘what is your experience?’ Often they don’t have any; yet engaging in non-formal learning gives a huge amount of experience.”

“75% of European Voluntary Service participants stated that their job opportunities increased.”

In summary they linked social inclusion and employment. The reason that unemployed people often feel excluded from society, and that marginalised young people find it very hard to find jobs, is a vicious circle of exclusion for many young people across Europe. They also noted that in their experience employers are looking for employees with so called 'soft skills'. This is something that youth work can equip young people with, through the building of personal and social development of young people.

The quality of youth work projects is key to the development of competencies. It is being argued by some that young people need to have a stronger individual awareness of competencies they have gained through youth work. If we focus only on soft skills do we miss what else non-formal learning within youth work is about... knowledge, attitudes, values, skills and competencies.

The Other Environments

'Youth work addresses many needs in society: it can be part of the educational, the social or the political system, it is part of civil society - the third sector - and leisure time which all have their own policies, structures and funding facilities. Providers of youth work have to adapt to many different and changing systems at European, national and local level, and this makes it dependent on the development of the other sectors.'

During the Panel Discussion Daniela Jovic took the step to challenge the thinking of the symposium by asking for greater cooperation and partnerships: cooperation between different sectors, different levels of government – local and regional – and the need to facilitate between the sectors. In each sector there is a lack of capacity, in the youth field we have the good will and readiness but it is not enough, we need to broaden the base of support.

The challenge presented in the Recognition Café from the Strasbourg Statement & Plan of Action was titled; 'the challenge of being dependent from different other sectors'.

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The symposium responded with the need to be clear on the key principles and values of youth work in order to clearly communicate with other sectors.

As a starting point the group responding to the above challenge then set out the foundations for developing cooperation and communication with other sectors. The following are the key points:

- We need to carefully map the important sectors for recognition of youth work and non-formal learning/education
- We need to understand how other sectors/structures work in order to be realistic about our expectations, proposals and ideas
- We need to understand other processes in other sectors in order to collaborate better

- We should be a part of specific sectorial developments in the field or those who are already working on it not dependent on them

They concluded with the statement:

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The other input specifically on this area that the symposium had from the Strasbourg Statement & Plan of Action and was titled; 'the challenge of creating partnerships':

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In response to this challenge the symposium group working on this pushed the need to identify relevant stakeholders, for example: young people, youth NGOs, institutions, public and private sectors, media, local community, researchers, etc. They also felt that there was a need to raise awareness among stakeholders in order to increase communication and cooperation. From this point different actions and measures could be employed.

The 'Lifelong and Life-wide Learning' Working Group came up with a specific example of youth work cooperating and combining with the education system. When there is a lack of competences among teachers for some of the specific issues that young people face, it is youth workers that can deal with these things. In most schools there is no time allocated in the curricula to support young people in ways that youth work can. Youth organisations can provide expertise in the form of qualified and experienced youth workers who can support programmes with the young people to support them in the needs that the schools and teachers do not have the capacity for.

'Knowing all this, we should not be afraid to take the lead from time to time.'

'The context in which youth work exists today requires that youth work establishes many partnerships with other actors from all levels such as social and welfare organisations, sports, culture, civil society, education providers, employers, etc. It is necessary to identify the common ground for an on-going cooperation. This challenge of cooperation and partnership is also present within the youth field itself where many organisations feel they lack the partnerships and exchanges with other non-formal learning/education providers to work jointly on recognition.'

Follow-Up

The way the programme of the symposium was designed meant that country and regional groups met each day to discuss about the daily programme. This provided time to reflect on what is happening in terms of recognition locally and across the continent and to reflect on what their next steps should be, as an individual, an organisation/institution, or regionally.

On the final morning of the symposium these geographically based groups met one last time to put together their action plan or follow-up proposal. These were not just action plans created by a small group of anonymous youth workers from small local organisations (however valid such action plans are). These action plans were created in cooperation between stakeholders from the local level, national level policy actors and politicians. The following are the basis of the commitments made by the members of the symposium and are listed in alphabetical order.

Albania & Kosovo*

These two were combined because of the lack of representation from Kosovo*. There were three elements developed by this group. Firstly they plan to list the competencies that can be acquired through non-formal education, this would be done through policy development (achieved through similar means as happened with volunteerism), and through the lobbying of all stakeholders. This would be done in cooperation and/or partnership with employers, trade unions and the national authorities.

Secondly they will be working towards further recognition of youth work and volunteering, through policy development, youth NGOs, creating better visibility, validation, qualifications, better financial support and stakeholders. They would do this with the formal education sector, parents, community, and young people.

Thirdly this group wanted different institutions, organisations and agencies to provide non-formal education, again this would be achieved through policy development, accreditation and creating understanding among stakeholders. This can be achieved with the support of policy makers and national authorities responsible for the accreditation process.

Bosnia Herzegovina

Bosnia Herzegovina is covered in three parts, the country as a whole, the Federation, and Republika Srpska.

Bosnia Herzegovina:

In 2012, the Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina took action on the formation of the Inter-departmental 'Commission for Development of a Qualifications Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina'. This will develop and propose an agenda for all major activities under the framework of the Nation Qualification Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina (including the methodology, standards, funds needed, deadlines, operational teams, etc.). It will define coordinate, manage and locate the qualification structure of 8 reference

levels, some of which may have sub levels. Each reference level will comprise of a defined combination of competencies and the standard of achievement in the previous qualification level.

The Commission was adopted by the Council of Ministers of BiH in January 2013. The commission consists of representatives of the Ministries of Education, Rector's Conference, Agencies for Education at the state level, Agencies for Statistics, Ministries of Labour and Employment, employers and the union. The mandate of the Commission is one year.

Last year the implementation of the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) project, 'Capacity Building of Human Resources in BiH' began. This will ultimately result in a document entitled 'Principles and Standards in the Field of Adult Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina' (instead of the Framework law on adult education, which it was originally intended to produce). It is anticipated that this document will be adopted by the Council of Ministers as a legally binding document.

The Commission for Coordination of Youth Issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina, according to its work programme for 2013, is planning to draft a document entitled 'Coordinating Youth Policy in BiH'.

The six programme areas that the document should contain have been defined as follows: employment and measures against unemployment, youth entrepreneurship, formal and informal education, lifelong learning, health and preventive care, reproductive health of young people, social policy, youth participation in public life, civil society and volunteer work, information and mobility, culture and sport, and the use of leisure time.

Bosnia Herzegovina – Federation:

Most imminent is a law on volunteerism – which will create recognition of voluntary work, this should be passing through parliament on the 10th October 2012.

It is foreseen that there is a need for research on the 'needs and problems of young people', which would create the conditions for a Youth Strategy. This would be done by field research and quantitative analysis with the Ministries, Institute for Youth Development and Culture, and the civil sector. This should be completed before the end of 2012.

This group wants to see the development of a Youth Policy, this would be achieved through working groups with various stakeholders during 2013.

They also want the recognition of several programmes (youth officers, youth leaders...), and a law on adult education. During the period of 2013/14 they will organise consultations with various ministries, relevant agencies and civil society organisations. This will be done through drafting proposals, processing and public consultations.

Bosnia Herzegovina – Republika Srpska:

Here they want to produce their first scientific research on youth work, they would do this through field

research and quantitative analysis with the support of the Academic Society, various ministries and youth organisations. This would be set for 2013.

In 2014, they foresee being able to draft a Law on Youth Work. This would be achieved through working groups with relevant Ministries and youth organisations. Also in 2014 they want to be able to standardise the conditions of work and programmes of youth centres. For this they will need to set up working groups for quality assurance with the support of youth organisations and relevant Ministries.

By 2015 they want to have created an educational profile of 'youth worker' and have created a system of non-formal education and licences of youth workers. For this they will need working groups made up of relevant Ministries and youth organisations and the Bureau for Adult Education.

Croatia

They want to get an insight into the situation regarding non-formal learning/education in National Youth Policy. They will appeal and lobby for implementation of measures in National Youth Policy. They foresee that they will need to create mailing lists – informal coalitions of interested civil society organisations, Croatian Youth Network, and National Youth Council. They will need the support of the Office for Non-Governmental Organisations and to ask the Government what is happening at the moment – this being the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports. They hope to achieve this in the following timescale: 2012 October – mailing list. November – establishment of a coalition. December – analysis and preparation. 2013 January/February – lobbying. March/April – Meetings. May/June – Evaluation.

Eastern Europe and Caucasus countries

This group was made up of several different countries from that region and so their action plans became country based, they did however have 2 points of general agreement.

- To be realistic – to base future plans on the real capacities of the presented organisations
- To focus on recognition on social and personal dimensions. It is too early to work for political and formal recognition in EECA region

Country Based Action Plans:

Azerbaijan:

- (1) Info-seminars on non-formal learning in universities organised by student organisations.
 - (2) Non-formal learning as a new opportunity to support/to finance youth initiatives in the field. The Youth Foundation will highlight this priority for different granting programmes.
 - (3) Info-seminars/distance learning.
- Mass-media will be involved by individual organisation which will be in charge of the activity.

Belarus:

- (1) Information meeting with the members of our organisations/discussions on it. Internal training.
- (2) IV Festival of Non-Formal Education, 7-9 December 2012 – this is an all-national event, <http://www.eaea.org/events.php?aid=118609>. The main topic for this year is 'Education for All Generations'. Workshop on

recognition of non-formal learning. The concrete topic will be defined later.

- (3) Article for the magazine, 'Educator'.
- (4) Centre of volunteering – promotional campaign – advertisement at the streets and in the public transport.

Moldova:

- (1) The analysis, 'How we can Recognise Non-Formal Learning', will be ready in December 2012 (initiated by CNTM and National Council for Participation (umbrella organisation of 30 organisations)). When the analysis is completed the workshops will be organised where the results will be introduced and discussed (the Ministry of Youth and Sport will be involved).
- (2) The new Youth Law will be approved in 2013. The definition of 'youth worker' will be included. It will be a legal base for future recognition. In 2010 we used the experience of a Dutch partner concerning the formal educational programme for youth workers. The Tempus programme could be involved to finance this cooperation in order to establish an academic programme for youth workers (to use experience of Serbia – NAPOR).

Russian Federation:

Coordination Council for International Cooperation was established in Sept 2012. It will be good to use this institution for information and promotion campaigns.

- (1) Information meeting with the members of our organisations/discussions on it. Internal trainings.
- (2) To translate Youth Portfolio in Russian.
- (3) To promote non-formal learning as a selection criterion for the projects granted by different Russian Foundations.
- (4) Seminar on social entrepreneurship. Target group: school pupils. The plan is to implement non-formal learning workshops in schools.
- (5) Research of youth workers (Foundation).
- (6) Civic diplomatic corps – to include modules of non-formal learning. Welcome lessons.

Ukraine:

To start discussions about the nature of youth work and non-formal learning! Recognition of non-formal learning is possible if the state structure will understand that it is needed. They want to organise a survey on non-formal learning and check social awareness about possible benefits of the recognition of non-formal learning – is it better than formal learning? We have to define the non-formal learning.

- (1) Information and promotion of the state governmental institutions concerning the need of recognition for non-formal learning in Ukraine. At the moment information about non-formal learning will be provided to the stakeholders. To include a chapter about the recognition of non-formal learning to the Annual Report of the State Committee of Youth and Sport for the Ukrainian President/Parliament.

SALTO EECA:

- (1) To establish a working/expert group on the recognition of non-formal learning and youth work in EECA. To organise meetings of this group in 2013.
- (2) To organise a conference on the recognition of non-formal learning and youth work in EECA in 2013.
- (3) To use an E-Platform for communication.

Montenegro

This is not a proposal for action from a working group but an update on developments/plans for action provided by Bojana Bulatovic of the Directorate for Youth and Sport, under the Ministry of Education.

Based on national priorities and the youth situation in Montenegro, as well as identified challenges in the field of implementation of youth policy, there are certain policy, legal, and practical steps that will be a focus in the forthcoming period: the Law on Youth is currently being developed and is expected to be finalized by the end of 2013; the new Youth Strategy will be developed in the following two years. These strategic documents will be harmonized with EU policies.

A new national Youth Strategy will be developed on the basis of evaluation results of the previous one (NYAP 2006-2011), and will be evidence based. Research on the needs and situation of young people in Montenegro will start during 2013, so that the process of drafting the strategy will be possible in 2014. The new Law on Youth and Youth Strategy will, among other issues, cover measures for improving and setting up a solid basis for the areas of youth research and cross-sectoral cooperation, as well as youth work, youth information, youth participation and non formal education for young people.

Serbia

Aim: to make the tool for the recognition of competencies, that participants will use...

Elements to explore/use:

- NAPOR accreditation tool for organisations – to be improved in the way to focus on non-formal learning/education
- The tool of scouts for a) reflection and b) translation of gained competencies into language understandable for employers during the job interview
- Future Ministry of Youth and Sports pool of trainers
- Development of a national level tool (mechanism), for recognition of young people's competencies gained in the youth work projects funded by Ministry of Youth and Sports. This future mechanism could use the good practices of Youthpass and other existing national tools (e.g. Luxembourg), as well as the research on competencies already done within the National Employment Service. In order to achieve its full legitimacy, the following stakeholders should be involved in its development: Ministry of Youth and Sports/grant scheme to serve as the programme framework, National Employment Service
- NAPOR, Civil Society Organisations, International development agencies (e.g. USAID/Chemonics), and other ministries?

The idea is not to have youth work serve the National Employment Service, but to recognise the learning outcomes that are already there and use them for higher employability of young people. The tool should serve other purposes as well - gaining better social recognition for the value of youth work, developing self-recognition of the learning process and achievements, recognizing participation of young people in youth work etc.

However, some practical questions still remain:

- Who will be issuing/signing?
- What should be the format of the tool (e.g. certificate/portfolio, paper/digital)?
- How to combine self-assessment and external point of view?
- Quality assurance mechanism?
- Should it be activity based or something to build on/continuously add to...?

In 2013 it is planned to start with a mapping of processes and stakeholders (with their strategies), the conceptualization of the tool, the establishment of a steering group and developing relevant steps.

Slovenia

This group wants to work towards the professionalization of youth worker as a profession in the time period between 2012 and 2013. In 2013 they want to meet with the key stakeholders and extend an invitation to NAPOR – Serbia, from the Office of Youth. They want to make a map of existing practices of youth worker trainings in Slovenia (Institute of Education, Office for Youth, National Youth Council, MaMa Network of Youth Centres). They want to begin a monitoring of the formal education of youth workers. All of this depends on the adoption of the National Programme for Youth and its action plan.

The Slovenian group also focussed on gaining visibility of Youth Work, this is envisaged for 2012 to 2013. This would require meeting the Office for Youth and National Youth Council on strengthening ‘National Youth Award Activities’ (until mid November 2012), and creating a National Award Ceremony – spring 2013.

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

This group wants to continue to work on the recognition of the profession of youth worker by connecting already existing processes, standardisation, advocacy and action on local and national level with the relevant ministries, Parliament and local municipalities. They will create regional consultations for youth work as a profession and strengthen capacities of the Agency of Youth and Sport and Association of Youth Work Practitioners. All the while they will continue to work on social recognition.

Youth in Action Programme Countries

The members of the Youth in Action Programme countries were from Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Germany, Greece, Netherlands, Sweden and UK, (Slovenia was not included in this group because of the large number of participants from Slovenia). The feeling from this group was a desire to organise national conferences for greater recognition of Youthpass; to organise international conferences; and create national quality criteria of recognition. On the European Level: they wanted to see a further development of Youthpass – linking Youthpass to Europass and implementation of a youth programme into the new programme – 2014 onwards.

Conclusions



During the Symposium many aspects emerged, which needed to be followed up and many more needed to be gone into in more detail. Despite the impossibility to discuss all challenges sufficiently, much was achieved thanks to the direction of the organisers, the motivation and commitment of the participants, and skill of the two facilitators.

This symposium stands out for its achievement of bringing such a diverse group of people together. Below is a brief summary of the conclusion of each of the main subjects.

Self Recognition

One of the conclusions regarding self-recognition is that as people who work with young people and practitioners of non-formal learning/education we cover a very broad spectrum of areas of work. A fear expressed by some was that if we define youth work and non-formal learning/education too narrowly would we in effect restrict it so much that it would end up excluding many who currently consider themselves as practitioners. On the other hand, leaving the defining too open and broad can work against youth work being recognised, if we don't know who we are, how will anyone else!

At the very least in the long-term, youth work practitioners themselves need to be able to describe what they are doing and what is important about that engagement. In the best possible way they should be able to define their scope of youth work.

Another conclusion with regards to self-recognition is that communication between practitioners and organisations is extremely important. There can be no self-recognition where there is isolation, ignorance and competition within and between the youth work field, and other sectors.

Social Recognition

Ozgehan Senyuva stated from the Policy Research Report, that spending time in youth organisations is being recognised by individuals as a good thing, although social recognition is still low in the public eye. Social recognition should perhaps be easier to reach than other parts of recognition, simply because so much of it is in our own hands as practitioners. Almost all aspects of youth work and non-formal learning/education point towards inclusion and participation in society. Many of the things undertaken and done in the field can



be shown and promoted, all of which will be positive steps towards legitimisation of what we do and therefore social recognition.

Political Recognition

Political recognition is an exciting and constantly developing area of recognition. There are many levels from local to regional to national to the European level. On each level political recognition is about the inclusion of young people, about young people having a voice, about their topics, and the basic recognition of youth work as a profession. Taking another perspective, recognition has implications for the economy, employment, education, etc. The European level can and should influence the national level and what happens on a country level can influence the European level. This is one of the most fluid and difficult areas of recognition because of all the variables. At the same time it is an area that has a huge amount of support in terms of the European institutions and local youth organisations.

Formal Recognition

Youth work and non-formal learning/education are gaining ground in terms of formal recognition. It was clear from the examples of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (there are similar examples in Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia Hercegovina, and Kosovo*), that organisations are pushing youth work onto the agenda and getting recognised in small ways. There has been a European Commission Tempus Programme running across the region for the last 4 years working with Universities and youth organisations to introduce a Youth Work training course at Bachelor and Master degree level. There are still misunderstandings of what youth work and non-formal learning/education are about. There is still a lack of full comprehension about the role of non-formal learning/education in the training of youth workers in a University but it is happening.

This symposium stands as a point from which recognition can be built on, for the region it was originally intended for, for Europe as a whole and it seems for East Europe and Caucasus region – which has become inspired to create a similar symposium on recognition in 2013. For this region of South East Europe, the process has been moving forward, this symposium hopefully has given an injection of impetus.

List of Participants

NAME	ORGANISATION / INSTITUTION
Albania	
Ms Ajsela Spahija	Albanian Forum for Alliance of Civilizations
Ms Zoica Bardhi	National Commercial Bank, BKT
Ms Irena Myzeqari	European University of Tirana
Ms Alketa Lamani	Vlora Youth Center
Mr Erlind Plaku	Aksion Plus
Ms Ana Dervishi	Beyond Barriers
Ms Argyrina Jubani	Albanian Youth Council
Ms Neriona Vorpsi	Young European Federalists
Mr Qamil Dika	National Council of Students
Ms Anisa Proda	Ministry of Labor
Mr Dritan Ziu	Roma Active Albania
Azerbaijan	
Mr Orkhan Arabov	Youth Foundation of Ministry of Youth and Sport of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Head of strategic planning and international relations sector
Ms Habiba Sadigli	Azerbaijan State Oil Academy Student Youth Organization, Chairwoman
Belarus	
Ms Olga Shmigelskaya	League of Youth Voluntary Service, Head
Ms Yuliya Stankevich	NGO "Fialta"
Belgium	
Mr. Matthias Christensen	European Youth Forum
Bosnia and Herzegovina	
Ms.Sanela Turkovic	Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Department for Education
Ms.Belma Gijo	Institute for Youth Development KULT
Mr Alen Hadžiefendić	Youth Resource Centre Tuzla
Mr Bojan Grebenar	Youth Council of Republika Srpska
Ms Nela Sladojevic	Ministry of Family, Youth and Sport of the Republika Srpska
Bulgaria	
Mr. Ivan Modev	National center "European Youth Programmes and Initiatives" – National Agency for the Youth in Action Programme
Mr. Petyo Kanev	Ministry of Education, Youth and Science
Croatia	
Mr. Marko Kovacic	Croatian Debating Society
Mr.Goran Jelenić	PRONI Centre for Social Education

Ms Jelena Likić	Bioteka-NGO for promotion of biology and related sciences
Ms Ivana Furlic	Ministry of Social Affairs Policy and Youth
Mr Vinko Zidarić	Interculture – The Intercultural Centre
Mr Petar Puntijar	The Youth Advisory Board of the City of Zagreb
France	
Mr Gilles Baccala	CALLIOPE
Germany	
Mr.Claudius Siebel	JUGEND für Europa – Transfer Agency for the Youth Policy Cooperation in Europe
Greece	
Ms Mary Drosopoulos	YMCA
Kosovo ²²	
Mr. Xhevat Bajrami	Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, Director of Youth Department
Mr. Imran Rasimi	Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, Officer for Youth Policies
Moldova	
Mr Donea Ion	Ministry of Youth and Sports of the Republic of Moldova, Head of Youth Programs Department
Mr Eduard Mihalas	National Youth Council of Moldova, President
Montenegro	
Mr. Miloš Marković	Secretariat for Social Affairs and Youth – The Old Royal Capital of Montenegro-Cetinje
Ms Bojana Bulatovic	Directorate for Youth and Sports /Ministry for Education and Sports
Ms Linda Dusevic-Dusaj	OJQ “Koha Jone” (NGO “Our Time”)
Russian Federation	
Ms Mariya-Nadezhda Voronova	Coordinator of Civic Diplomacy Corps - Foundation for Development of International Cooperation
Ms Safiya Hafizowa	Foundation for Development of International Cooperation’
Serbia	
Ms Aleksandra Mitrovic Knezevic	Ministry of Youth and Sport, Sector for Youth
Mr. Smiljka Zivanovic	Youth policy making, Cooperation with Youth NGOS and Local Youth Offices
Ms Gazela Pudar	EURO<26 Serbia Association
Ms Danijela Jovic	USAID Sustainable Local Development Project
Mr. Sever Dzigurski	NAPOR – National Association of Youth Workers
Ms Ivana Andrašević	KOMS – National Youth Council of Serbia
Slovenia	
Ms Barbara Zupan	Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth
Ms Simona Mursec	Advisory Council on Youth, Youth Department of the Council of Europe
Ms Irena Mrak Merhar	National Youth Council of Slovenia, Vice-president
Ms Sanela Gracan	Municipality Črnomelj

²²This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

“The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”

Ms Elizabeta Jovanovska	Triagolnik Centre for non-formal education
Mr. Jetmir Ziba	Youth Educational Forum
Ms Zorica Stamenkovska	Agency of Youth and Sport
Ms Ivana Davidovska	Center for Intercultural Dialogue (CID)

The Netherlands

Mr. Marc Boes	ERYICA
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Turkey

Ms Zuhul Akdag	Turkish National Agency
Mr. Ozgehan Senyuva	Pool of European Youth Researchers of the EU-CoE youth partnership

Ukraine

Mr Anatoliy Bilyi	State Committee of Youth and Sport, Head of Youth NGOs Unit
Ms Iryna Bodnar	All-Ukrainian Assosiation “Aternative V”

UK

Ms Alison Berks	Duke of Edinburgh’s Award International Foundation
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Organisers – institutional representatives

Ms Migena Reci	General Director of Youth and Sport, Ministry of Tourism, Cultural Affairs, Youth and Sports
Ms Brisida Kertusha	Director of Youth Policy, Ministry of Tourism, Cultural Affairs, Youth and Sports
Ms Jehona Roka	Specialist of Youth Directory, Ministry of Tourism, Cultural Affairs, Youth and Sports
Ms Envina Zavalani	Specialist of Youth Directory, Ministry of Tourism, Cultural Affairs, Youth and Sports
Ms Fabienne Metayer	European Commission, DG EAC
Mr Joachim Schild	Secretariat of the partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth
Mr Srd Kisevic	
Ms Viktoria Karpatska	
Ms Rita Bergstein	SALTO Training and Cooperation Resource Centre, Germany
Ms Sonja Mitter	SALTO SEE Resoure Centre, MOVIT NA MLADINA, Slovenia
Mr Tomasz Bratek	Polish Agency of the Youth in Action Programme, Deputy Director of the Foudation for Development of the Education System
Mr Andrij Pavlovych	SALTO EECA Resource Centre, Poland
Ms Andrea Hollenstein	Interkulturelles Zentrum - Austrian National Agency for the Youth in Action Programme
Mr Darko Markovic	Facilitator
Ms Gisele Evrard	Facilitator
Mr Nik Padisson	Rapporteur

Opening speakers

Mr Aldo Bumçi	Minister of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports of the Republic of Albania
Mr Gert Bogdani	MP, envoy of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Albania
Mr Francois Begeot	Head of Operations Section in the Delegation of the European Union to Albania
Mr Marco Leidekker	Head of the Council of Europe Office in Albania
Ms Zineb Touimi-Benjelloun	United Nations Population Fund Albania

Best Practice Workshop Summaries

Empower Yourself!

Ivana Andrasevic

This tool enables young adults to highlight their skills and give them value in four simple steps. The first step consists of assessing the skills acquired through non-formal learning/education in Scouting. In the second step users are supposed to analyse their skills, identifying the skills they have already gained and the ones they still need to work on, reflecting on their personal experience. In the third step, skills are put into the context of the future career path or towards future profession, recognizing preferable skills that are already obtained, as well the ones that still need to be improved. Final step guides users in how to present the skills that are relevant for their career path, giving the examples from their scouting experience.

The tool is both young person friendly and employer friendly. The tool has been used by many National Scout Organisations and has been translated to English, Spanish, Serbian, Danish, Portuguese and Czech language. Soon, it would be available in Finnish, Swedish and Hungarian. It was presented and used during various scout events and feedback from the users helped to improve the tool.

www.scout.org

Leadership and Developmental Community Youth Work Course, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Elizabeta Jovanovska

Nik Paddison

PRONI/Forum Syd introduced a 30/60ECTS youth worker course in Macedonia in 2002, originally this was through Jonkoping University in Sweden. In 2007 the international non-governmental organisation split itself into individual country based projects. Triagolnik – Centre for Non-Formal Education emerged, added to the university course was transferred from Jonkoping University into separate universities around the region, in Macedonia this was the South East European University, Tetovo. Between 2007 and 2009 a team of Triagolnik trainers (former students of the youth work course), and teaching assistants from the university were coached and trained in non-formal learning/education methodologies, principles and values, and in the subjects of the course. Through European Commission Tempus funding the course is now run at both Bachelor and Master's degree level.

The certificate level 60ECTS course is currently being implemented in Kosovo. A shorter version is also being run with school teachers across Macedonia.

www.triagolnik.org.mk/

www.seeu.edu.mk/

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award

Alison Berks

The programme is one of the leading achievement awards for young people, bringing together practical experiences and life skills. The length of the volunteerism gives the volunteer recognition in the form of three awards after 6, 12 and 18 months of participation. The organisation has sought new methods to evaluate its impact through a combination of using methods including qualitative and quantitative research. They have also liaised with the academic sector to bring in expertise into their evaluation of the impact.

www.intaward.org/

Political recognition of youth work and Non-Formal Learning in Germany

Claudius Siebel

The German Youth Ministry since 2010 has put a strong focus into implementing the EU Youth Strategy in Germany. For the first time in the field of Youth Policy, cooperation between the national level and the federal states has been established. Together they want to use the European impetus for developing further Youth Work and Youth Policy in Germany. As one of the main topics to be dealt with recognition of Non-Formal Learning/Education has been chosen.

<http://www.jugendhilfeportal.de/eu-jugendstrategie/> (in German)

<http://www.jugendpolitikineuropa.de/thema/die-eu-jugendstrategie-2010-2018.137/seite/1/> (in German)

Webbies Workshop

Marc Boes

To explore about the opportunities and dangers of the online environment and discuss how to behave online in a fun way.

<http://eryica.org/>

NAPOR National Association of Youth Workers of Serbia - on Networking and Professionalization of Youth Work

Sever Dzigurski

Through the participative development of quality assurance mechanisms, advocacy and capacity building, NAPOR was initiated in May 2008. This was a reaction of civil society organizations to the absence of legitimate national professional associations in the area of youth work that would influence policy development and quality assurance mechanisms for its implementation on the national and local levels.

NAPOR gathers 90 CSOs and over 2240 youth workers with various technical skills and operates under the paramount principal of consultative and participatory approach. For this reason, NAPOR is recognized by public authority (Ministry of Youth and Sport, Provincial Secretariat for Sport and Youth, Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, University of Novi Sad, etc.), in the field of youth policy as the legitimate national body of the civil society, representing voice of professionals working with diverse groups of young people.

NAPOR serves to increase youth work quality and to advocate for its recognition as the part of systematic youth care network in Serbia in line with EU policies and strategies. It also strives for

recognition of professional youth work practice as a youth empowerment tool for active participation in democratization process.

www.napor.net

Recognition of volunteering in Ukraine

Iryna Bodnar

The Law of Ukraine 'of voluntary service' passed on the 19th of April 2011. With regard to this law we do have volunteering in the Ukraine. From another side there are several very crucial obstacles and limits now for NGO's and social institutions. One problem is with the registration of foreign volunteers in Ukraine (for example, EVS volunteers).

<http://www.alternative-v.com.ua/en>

Youthpass – Recognition of non-formal and informal learning within the Youth in Action Programme

Rita Bergstein

An update about the Youthpass development and its current directions – political and educational – was given. The experience with Youthpass in the South East Europe region was highlighted especially and its potential use to support the youth field stakeholders in the development of recognition strategies. If time wise possible we will also see the potential of the Youthpass and its support to learning processes for individuals.

www.youthpass.eu

Unlocking doors to recognition

Darko Markovic

The handbook was developed to support work on recognition of youth work and non-formal learning, primarily at local and national level. It was inspired by the long-term training course, 'Let's Train: Recognition of Non-Formal Learning in Youth Work', realized from 2010-2011. The main idea of this handbook is to assist youth workers in designing their own path on how to work better and more effectively for the recognition of youth work and non-formal education/learning in their own working and living reality. It offers both conceptual inputs and practical exercises aimed at helping the reader in deepening their understanding of recognition and setting concrete strategies appropriate to their own context. The handbook was written with the support of SALTO Training and Cooperation Resource Centre, SALTO South East Europe Resource Centre and the Slovenian National Agency. As said above, the main target groups are youth workers and youth organizations, but it could be useful for other actors in the youth field, (e.g. policy makers, trainers, researchers).

To download a copy of the handbook, follow these links:

<https://www.youthpass.eu/en/youthpass/downloads/>

<http://www.salto-youth.net/rc/see/resources/seepublications/>

In recent years recognition of youth work and non-formal learning has been a key issue in the region of South East Europe, particularly in the civil society sector and to a lesser extent at Governmental level.

The 'Symposium on Youth Policy Cooperation in South East Europe: focus on recognition of youth work & non-formal learning', held in October 2012 in Tirana, Albania, continued the reflection, exchange of views and development of ideas from previous European level meetings. This is particularly in reference to the symposium; 'Recognition of Youth Work and Non-Formal Learning/Education in the Youth Field', that took place in Strasbourg, 2011.

Bringing together 80 stakeholders from all over Europe, the symposium continued to place the topic of recognition of youth work and non-formal learning/education on the political agenda of the countries of South East Europe.

This report describes the reflections and outcomes of the symposium in a way that offers information and insights into the different aspects and levels of this complex topic. As such it can serve as an inspiring tool for further work in this field.



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