

What's Your NEET? - Evaluation Report

21st - 24th October 2014 Helsinki, Finland



Tagcloud of causes of NEET identified by Participants

abuse (3) addictions (3) area (3) aspirations (2) background (4)
black (2) cultural (2) differences (2) drug (2) due (2) economic (2) economy (3)
education (6) exclusion (2) experience (2) family
(11) financial (3) gaming (2) gender (2) health (3) illness (3)
inadequate (2) income (3) information (2) interest (2) issues (3) jobs (4)
lack (28) language (3) market (2) mental
(2) models (4) network (2) opportunities (4) personal (4)
poor (2) problems (7) qualifications (2) religious (2) role (4)
school (3) self-esteem (4) skills (3) social
(12) society (4) status (3) structural (2) support (7)
system (8) taking (3)

Background

About the seminar

“What is your NEET?” seminar was an international event about creating better opportunities for this vulnerable group in society and on the labour market. It gathered 35 professionals from different sectors: youth work, education, social work, employment... working on topic of NEET. Twenty European countries will participate in this seminar: Belgium-FR, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and UK. Workers from outside of the youth sector (teachers, careers advisers etc) and a variety of other backgrounds. Most participants could be better described as adults/professionals working with young people or on youth issues, rather than young people leading youth programmes. The seminar was organised and hosted by the Finnish National Agency for the Erasmus+: Youth in Action Programme - in cooperation with the SALTO Inclusion Resource Centre, Malta, UK and Estonian National Agency for the E+: Youth in Action Programme. Participants were from a variety of backgrounds, including youth workers, researchers, face to face workers.

Objectives of the seminar were:

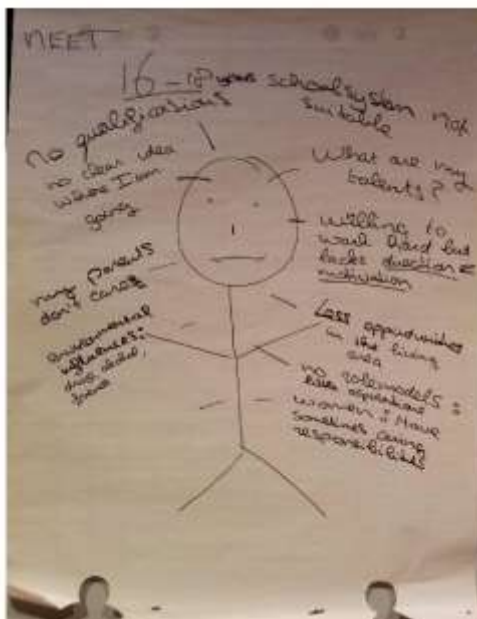
- To discuss and exchange on concepts and explore the classifications and reasons behind NEET and get a better understanding of the issues
- To exchange the possible ways to work together and methods to intervene
- Analysing the **role of different sectors** in the interventions and the relevance of participants to the issue,
- To explore possibilities of the cross-sectoral approach in creating better opportunities for NEET
- To get information about Erasmus+ programme: youth in action funding possibilities coming up with **action plan**

| | Tuesday 21st Oct Arrival day | Wednesday 22nd Oct Where am I standing? | Thursday 23 rd Oct Where could I go? | Friday 24th Oct How can I get there? | Saturday 25 th Oct Departure | |
|---------------|------------------------------------|--|---|---|---|------|
|- 9:00 | ARRIVALS by 17h | Breakfast | Breakfast | Breakfast | Breakfast | |
| 9:00 – 10:30 | | Introduction to Programme | Hearing from Experts: Participants Jury | Identifying Solutions | DEPARTURES | |
| 10:30 – 11:00 | | What is NEET? | | | | Café |
| 11:00 – 12:30 | | NEET and Exclusion | Hearing from Experts: Participants Jury | Support & resources from the EU | | |
| 12:30 – 14:00 | | Lunch | Presentation on the Finnish Youth Guarantee Policy | | | |
| 14:00 – 15:30 | | NEET in our home territories | <i>Leaving at 13h</i> Visit to local projects working with young people who are NEET | Taking Steps forward | | |
| 15:30 – 16:00 | | Café | | Café | | |
| 16:00 – 17:30 | | Sharing of own practise: Market Place and Open Stage | Reflection Session | Developing future ideas | | |
| 17:30 – 18:00 | | Reflection Session | | Evaluation Session – <i>finishing by 17h30</i> | | |
| 19:00 - 20:00 | | Dinner | Dinner Out | Dinner hosted by the Ethiopian organisation | | |
| 20:00 - | | Welcome Evening & Getting to Know Each Other | Optional evening activities | | | |

Workshop Outcomes

What is NEET Workshop:

NEET characters created by participants:



NEET and Exclusion workshop:

Causes of NEET identified by participants:

| Group 1 | Group 2 |
|--|--|
| <p>Social system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> social unrest social exclusion crime, vandalism existence of black market economy lack of trust in the society financial pressure on social services <p>Social expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> long term welfare dependency low levels of intelligence racism role models exclusion due to having different opinion | <p>Financial Situation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low household income <p>Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> lack of jobs in the area poor public transportation living in underdeveloped regions/lack of investments and creation of jobs <p>Health problems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> addictions: drug and alcohol abuse, gaming mental health issues <p>Social background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> taking part in alternative education system (not recognised by everyone) |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> change in school system lack of qualification/training/experience avoiding workforce substance abuses <p>Family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> social background too many responsibilities lack of support poor educational background of a family <p>Practical problems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> debts <p>Personal problems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> passive behaviour parenthood sexual abuse illness/disability addictions lack of self-awareness <p>Personal attitude</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> taking time out lack of confidence, low self-esteem isolation feelings of being a victim <p>Network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> dependency on social workers no support system/lack of opportunities <p>Geographic area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> long-term unemployment lack of opportunities <p>Economic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> black market economy entrepreneurship business models | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> family status and lifestyle role models and aspirations supported by a family <p>Personal characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> lack of self-esteem and ambition asocial lifestyle behavioural issues: criminal record not knowing how to improve oneself taking a gap year <p>Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> absence of local language skills inadequate education system/differences in national education systems no support for those with learning disabilities |
| <p><u>Group 3</u></p> | <p><u>Group 4</u></p> |
| <p>Being over-qualified</p> <p>Lack of skills and qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> lack of experiences dropping out from school too early lack of career counselling language skills problems of re-qualification | <p>Gender and family issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> dysfunctional social/family system parental role views on gender in a society race, ethnicity, religion <p>Social and cultural/education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> refugee status |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Lack of motivation Lack of goals in life No interest in work or study – voluntary illness Losing interest: being lost in the system</p> <p>Lack of network support No financial support from one's family: homelessness no family or/and friends precarious jobs/unstable income problems in a family (drug abuse)</p> <p>Negative school experience dropped out felt excluded/discriminated due to religious, cultural or other differences</p> <p>Addictions to drugs, gaming or other</p> <p>Structural problems low supply of (relevant) employment places lack of opportunities</p> <p>Victimisation Priority for day to day survival Low self-esteem</p> | <p>ethnic conflicts in a society lack of income importance of social status language barriers place of origin (rural area?, religious background)</p> <p>Personal de-motivation lack of self-esteem lack of opportunities lack of activating incentives lack of qualifications lack of role models in a family lack of aspirations lack of or no access to information</p> <p>Health problems mental illness disability</p> <p>Discrimination non-accepting society</p> <p>Lack of support no family guidance in setting future plans lack of social and psychological support</p> <p>Lack of information not understanding how the system works</p> <p>Economy in the country inadequate economic policy too many people applying for the same kind of jobs</p> |
|--|--|

Effects of being NEET identified by participants:

| <u>Group 1</u> | <u>Group 2</u> |
|---|---|
| <p>Negative effects identified as being mostly structural and individual nature</p> <p>Some positive effects: discussion is provoked on a policy making level</p> | <p>Democratic/political consequences decreased social mobility lack or losing trust in society political marginalisation/extremism</p> <p>Negative perception prejudice changes in how one views a given society as a whole</p> <p>Family issues violence conflicts</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| | <p>reproducing negative effects: generation issue</p> <p>Violent behaviour increasing crime rates</p> <p>Poverty</p> <p>Economic lower tax collection rates decreased budget for social support systems lack of competent workforce in aging society</p> <p>Emotional young people lose confidence and motivation feeling excluded/depressed lack of self-esteem anger feelings of victimisation</p> <p>Social exclusion losing support system decreased interests and possibilities</p> <p>Not one cause or effect is predominant. Causes and effects feed into each other!</p> |
| <p><u>Group 3</u></p> | <p><u>Group 4</u></p> |
| <p>Negative</p> <p>Substance abuse</p> <p>Homelessness losing access to housing</p> <p>Social exclusion losing freedom of choice becoming a target of abusive treatment by administration and crime groups losing connection to family and friends: lacking social contact</p> <p>Poverty no income</p> <p>Mental health problems eating disorders low self-esteem depression feelings of rejection</p> <p>Crime anti-social behaviour risks increase</p> <p>Long term: hopes and dreams losing the framework on which to build one's future</p> | <p>Social problems racism discrimination reproduction of gender roles societal prejudice social marginalisation increased inequality</p> <p>Anti-social behaviour crime conflicts in a society addiction problems delinquency</p> <p>Psychological problems depression low self-esteem suicide general and mental health issues</p> <p>Economical problems low national economic output poverty/lower income/income inequality lack of resources for enabling dignifying life</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Structural exclusion creates negative circle: falling out from the labour market system prolongs social exclusion</p> <p>Positive Voluntary NEETs may want personal experience that may be not recognised as a positive thing by the society</p> | <p>Abuse of the system increased pressure on the state aid system “assistentialism” (exploitation of social services)</p> <p>Human resources drain migration waste of resources poor quality of workforce poor cultural level of society</p> <p>Education lack of personal growth poor educational level</p> <p>Family issues family problems violence forming a negative image of a community</p> <p>Go Global! migration social backwardness lack of foreign investments, commercial exchanges</p> |
|--|--|

All groups identified the complex relationship between social exclusion and NEET - issues could not easily be reduced to cause and effect - NEET, was both a symptom and a cause of exclusion. There was debate around if working on NEET issues meant reducing exclusion as a way of reducing NEET, or reducing NEET as way of reducing exclusion.

NEET in our Home Territories Workshop

- There were more differences than commonalities
- Differences included:
 - Levels of understanding and usage of the concept amongst people working with young people /on youth issues
 - Differences in ages ranges
 - Differences in the concept of NEET, and what working with NEET would be addressing
- NEET was seen to be linked closely to exclusion and inequality in all countries as well as to benefit and social security systems. However because of the differences in patterns of inequality and social security and benefit systems, this often created differences in how the concept of identities of NEET play out.

Solutions to NEET Workshop

Group1: Improve inter-agency work

After having had introduced the 5 areas of redefining the NEET - developing European awareness, policy awareness, interdisciplinary work on NEET, bottom up work with YP, inter-agency co-operation - the group chose to focus on the inter-agency work. The group proposed that there are too many actors working in the NEET services field. There is a need to streamline the services: create a one stop shop for young people. Agency emphasis on producing competition and targets do not go hand in hand with the needs of young people. Services would be improved through streamlining. It would help in avoiding replication and the waste of resources. The access to the services should be made easier: enable follow up, improve training. Ultimately both, the bottom up and the top down approaches to solving the coordination issues is needed. Strategy needs to be supported by the governmental structures (incl. local organisational structure).

Group2: Listening to young people

The problem identified by the group was that the young people are not participating in the making of the decisions that affect them. Top down approach is considered to be not sensitive to the realities the YP face. The proposition is to create the system of preventative measures which would give the voice to the young and create trust in the community of NEET (groups, individuals, families).

Group3: Raise awareness in families

The group emphasised the problem of school dropouts. According to them there is a need to raise awareness of the problem by using preventative methods: educating parents on the benefits of their children going to school, providing training to teachers and community leaders so that preventative methods could be applied at an early stage.

Group 4: Improving the policy making level

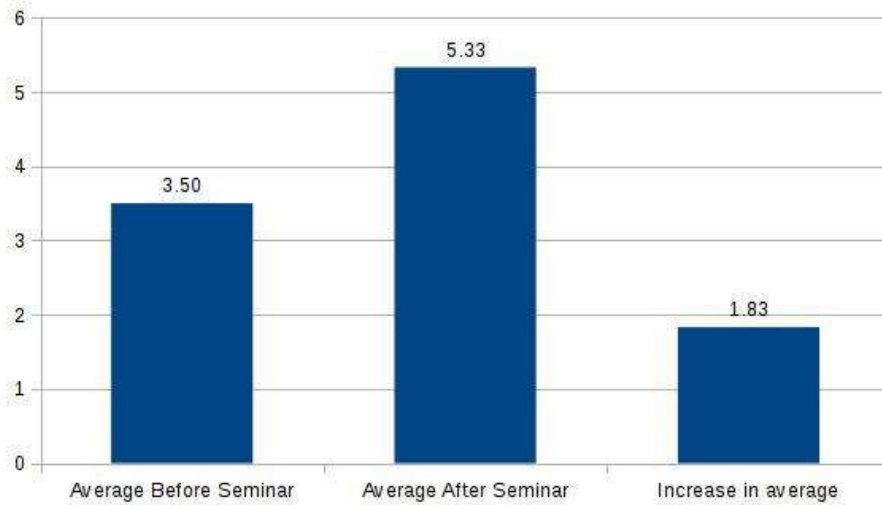
The biggest problem is identified as a lack of awareness. The group proposes to raise awareness and co-operation between the professionals (institutions and individuals). This could be done by increasing connections, enabling more events to helping the actors to understand how policy making works, how to influence it. Discussions and workshops are recommended by including diverse actors working in the field (incl. policy makers).

Participant Evaluation

Participants Increase in understanding of NEET issues

Participants were given questionnaires at the start of the course and asked to assess their understanding of NEET issues. A similar form was given out at the end of the course and participants were asked the same questions. Participants were not shown their original responses when completing the second questionnaire. The graph below shows the average score given by participants at the start and end of the seminar, and a comparison of the two average's shows the distance travelled of the group.

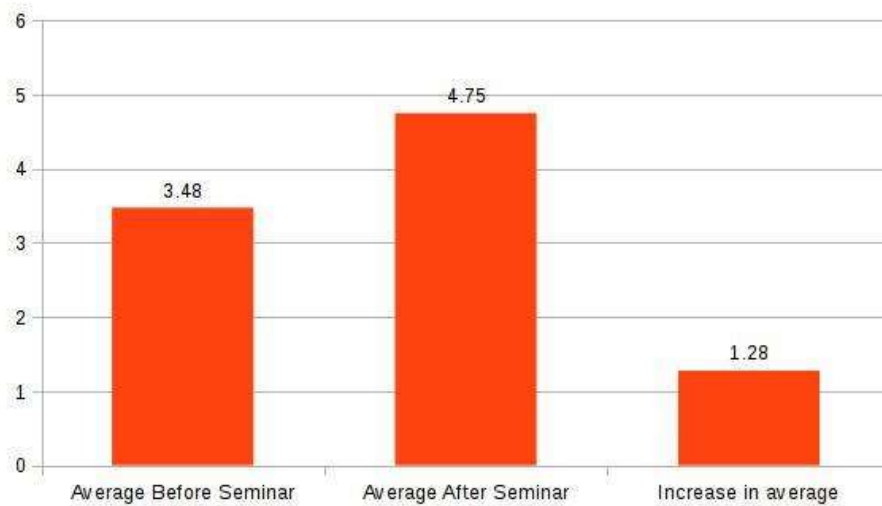
How well do you understand the concept of NEET?



Comments from Participants:

- *“Before the seminar I had no knowledge of NEET”*
- *“Its been very enriching, I also inform my colleagues about the issue who also work face to face with youngsters”*

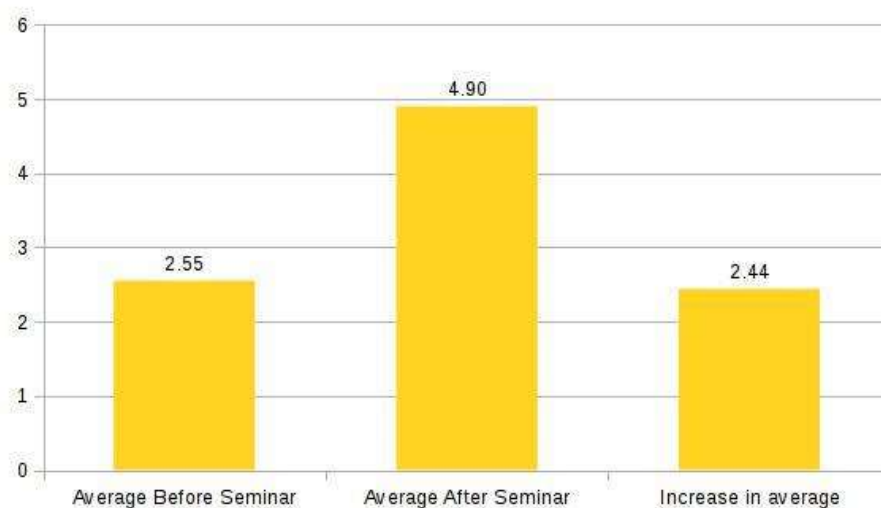
How able are you to address NEET issues in your work?



Comments from Participants:

- *“I have a clear understanding and more info about what my organisation could do to tackle NEET”*

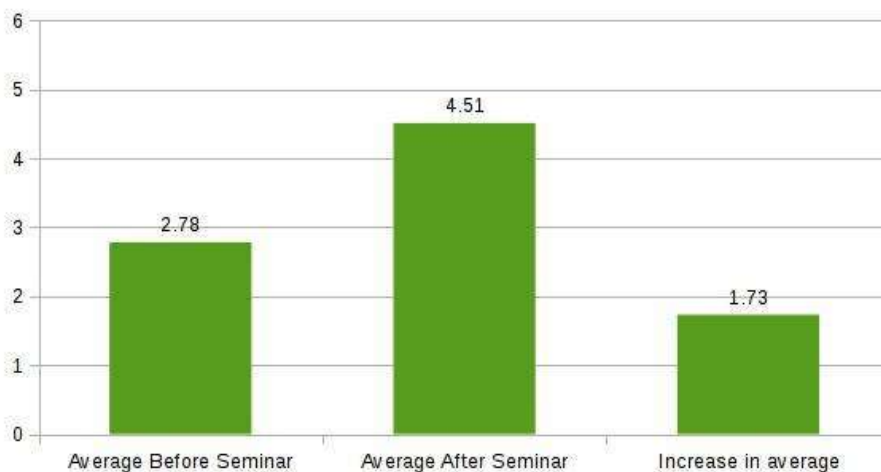
What is your understanding of NEET issues across Europe?



Comments from Participants:

- *“NEETS are not a problem they are an opportunity”*
- *“All the people have the same goals no matter where they are from”*

Are you able to use European Youth Programmes such as Erasmus Plus to tackle NEET?



Comments from Participants:

- *“I am in a better position to advocate for EU programmes to tackle NEET”*
- *“EVS is a perfect tool to tackle NEET”*

Additional feedback on second questionnaire

| Question | Answer |
|--|---|
| How would you rate the content of the course? | Average Response = 5.27 out of 6 |
| How would you rate the facilitation of the course? | Average Response = 5.42 out of 6 |
| Did the course reach its objectives? | 91% of people said "Totally" 6% of people said "Medium" 3 % of people said "More or Less" |

Additional comments on first questionnaire:

- *"Almost no clue what are the problems, methods etc"*
- *"New issue - what does NEET mean in real life?"*
- *"I would like to ask/understand how do NEET Issues/Problems/Practices vary from country to country across Europe? Are there any universal methods/abilities to tackle"*
- *"Excellent idea to organise seminars with youth workers, researchers and other people working with youth in different sectors"*

Additional comments from second questionnaire:

- *"Got contacts which is really hard for us"*
- *"Different Kinds of NEETs Causes and Effects are a circle we need to break"*
- *"Programme was a bit long each day, rather have shorter days and add one"*
- *"Presentation were too long and we needed more time to mingle"*
- *"Definitions should be adapted to the situations of clients"*
- *"It might have been good to see NEET projects in action and talk to young people"*
- *"The seminar opened my mind and my views"*
- *"Excellent accommodation, staff and facilities"*
- *"the seminar was extremely well organised and everyone involved was really supportive, I will happily recommend"*

Feedback from group evaluation:

- The feedback was very positive and the group felt they had developed their understanding of NEET issues and had a clear idea of the concept
- The group thought the accommodation was excellent
- The mix of sectors, such as researchers, youth workers and other sectors was seen as very enriching and positive
- The group said there were too many presentations and they would have liked to see projects in action on the field trips
- The group wanted to talk face to face with NEET young people
- The group felt the course was very well organised and facilitated
- The Ethiopian evening was felt to be a very positive experience - particularly interacting with young people